

HOW DO WE TELL

GOOD OR BAD COPS?



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Observational Notes

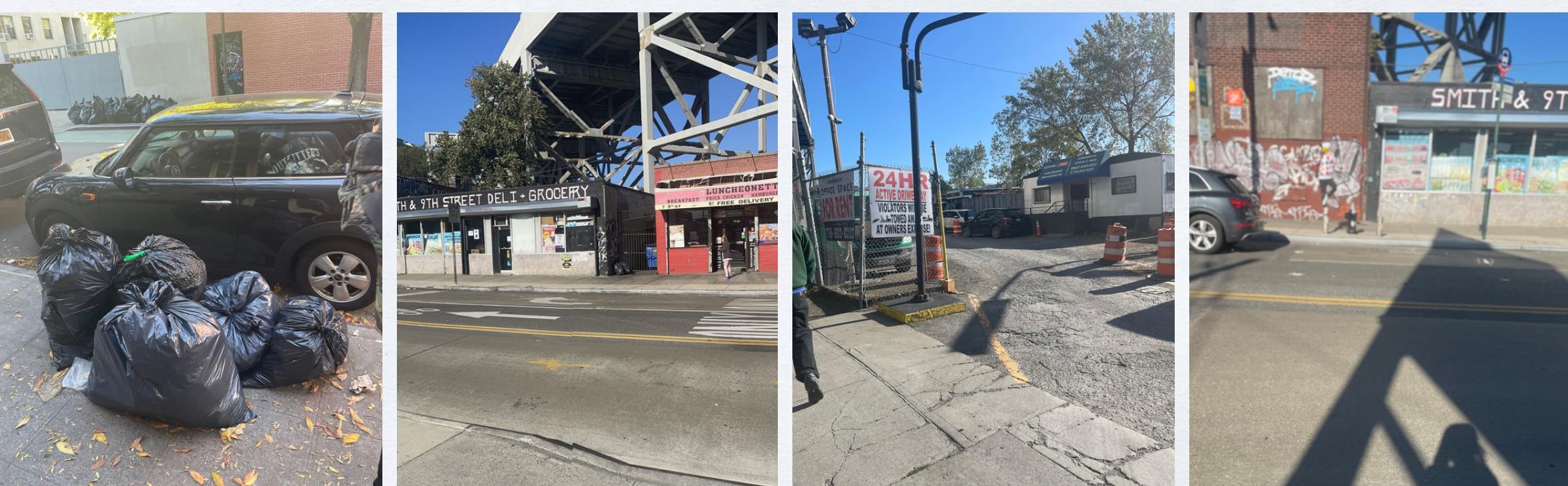
Location 1: Smith Street and 9th Street Train Station

- There are a lot of people who like jogging pass the train stations
- There was this couple or just a female and make biking together
- The police watching was watching the station but there was people who still went through the turnstiles without paying
- Grocery person talking about the garbage and leaving it pulled up
- A lot trucks pass by
- Garbage piles on each end of the corners
- No one helped lady with her stroller while she was trying to get down the little stairs

Observational Notes

Continued

- No one helped lady with her stroller while she was trying to get down the little stairs
- A lot of traffic through the station
- A lot of people walking with headphones and on their phones
- School kids on the way from school
- This kid trying to balance himself on a pole but (I didn't want to really take pictures of people and kids)
- There's a diversity mix of people passing this area
- It's mostly quiet area even with people going back and forth



Observational Notes

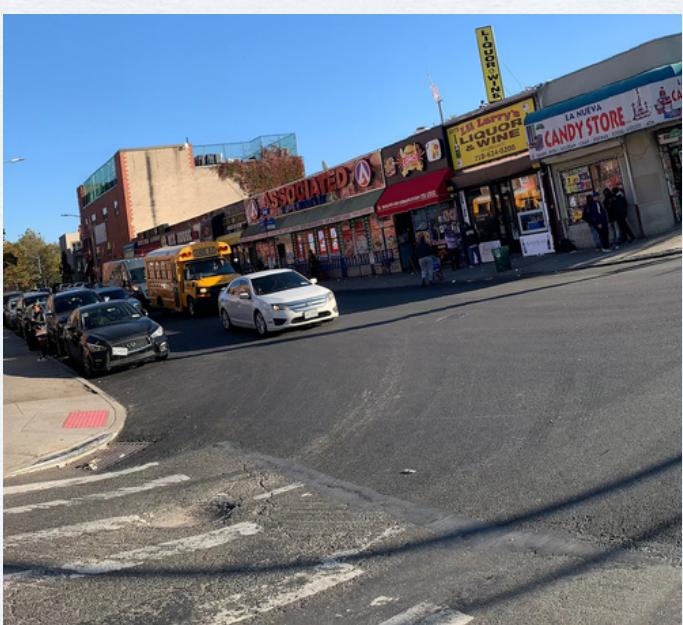
Location 2: Lorraine Street and Columbia Street
Intersection

- There was a man arguing with someone on the 61 bus
- A lot of people/kids waiting for the bus
- A lot of street traffic with the cars
- School busses pass the area
- There's always trash on top of this box by on Loraine there was a bowl this time
- People hanging out to the side by the building
- A lot of adults hanging outside of the liquor store
- There was guy with a random shopping cart outside of the supermarket
- 5 minutes later the guy leaves the shopping cart on the corner and someone put it to the side
- There's a lot of traffic going through associates

Observational Notes

Continued

- Kids on their way home from school
- A lot of adults are familiar with everyone in the community
- Some people was packing their car up



Interview with Generra Garris, RHI Employee

November 18th, 2022

Endiya:

Hi. My name is Endiya, and I'm at RHI with...

Generra Garris:

Generra Garris, the job readiness specialist from the Young Adult Workforce team.

Endiya:

Yes. I'll be asking you a few questions, and, just to let you know, it'll be recorded. Do I have your consent?

Generra Garris:

Yes. You do.

Endiya:

Okay. So, now, what is your connection to Red Hook?

Generra Garris:

My connection to Red Hook is I have family, friends who live in the Red Hook community. I attended the alternative high school in the back on Conover Street by the name of South Brooklyn Community High School. I'm affiliated with the Red Hook community in those ways.

Endiya:

Okay. And how does the community look to you?

Generra Garris:

Great, question. I don't even think that I've ever been asked that question. Red Hook, to me, looks like a community that, it used to look like an abandoned community,

but, now, post pandemic is looking like a community that is finding different ways to come together and refurbish their community and just make the community more of a sustainable community, and I see Red Hook everyone really coming more together and supporting each other.

Endiya:

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

Generra Garris:

I've been working in Red Hook for three years now, if not, a little bit over three years. I've been hanging around the Red Hook community since I was six years old.

Endiya:

Okay. And what changes have you seen in the community since you first came to Red Hook?

Generra Garris:

From when I was younger, there was a greater sense of togetherness that I am now seeing being restored to the Red Hook community. Before Red Hook felt like home, It didn't. There was no real sense of Red Hook feeling like it's been deserted or just not really being loved on the way I felt like it used to.

I used to... I'm from a close neighborhood, so I was coming back and forth and I felt like Red Hook was just my second home, and it's lost that throughout the years.

But I feel like, since the pandemic and even coming out of it, everyone is trying to regroup and find a way to come together and just show up for each other.

Endiya:

Okay. How do you feel about the food access in Red Hook?

Generra Garris:

I feel like there's a lot of fast food options rather than healthy affordable food options. I do respect and appreciate the business owners that have moved in to Red Hook and do their best to give back to the community by hiring within the community and hosting free food drops and things like that. Yeah, I would say that there's a lot of fast food options, More than there are healthy food options that are affordable.

Endiya:

How can we bridge the gap between the different generations within our community knowing that there's a lot of violence?

Generra Garris:

Bridging a gap? Personally, I feel like I don't know. I'm going to say that I think everyone needs to be a little bit more conscious of the fact that everyone is living in a town where we're all dealing with similar things and we all have a preview to certain people's lives more than we would like to.

I feel like that right there is something that we need to put a little bit more respect on, because we see the struggle, we hear the struggle, we... not really compared, compared not the word I'm looking for, but we all share similar stories, and I feel like everyone needs to be a little bit more kinder to each other and more aware of the fact that we're all really going through similar things and we can all do a little bit better by,

if not living a help hand, than just being a little bit more present in our journey, I think that'll help us be a little bit more aware of the fact that everyone is kind of similar, going through similar things, and that'll help us be a little bit more supportive of each other, hopefully.

Endiya:

Okay. What do you believe the role of the police should be in terms of community safety?

Generra Garris:

I believe in the role of police, in terms of community safety, I would say, for one, I would like to think of police or people with authority. Who are supposed to be providing, if not security, than a safe space for us to be a little bit more approachable.

They should be or, if they can, work a little bit more towards finding different ways to be available and present at community events, because I remember when I was growing up, we would be walking down the block and I would see some of the teenage girls actually playing jump rope and police officers either turning or just having to turn away for their turn to jump in.

And I feel like we need to get back to a space where police officers aren't only the authority and our protection, in a sense, but they're also a part of the community. If they can try to figure out certain ways to do their work, but, also, allow themselves to feel or be more a part of our community if that's through events or just stepping up and trying to be a little bit more approachable or just approaching us a certain ways that maybe we haven't seen them do before.

I feel like that right there will either, not only bridge the gap, but try to rebuild a bridge of some sorts with the Generation Z in the older community as well.

Endiya:

I completely agree with that.

Generra Garris:

Thank you.

Endiya:

What are some pros from Red Hook?

Generra Garris:

Friendship. I have a lot of friends and friendships that I was able to, if not just restore, then just build from people that I've met while working at Red Hook Initiative that have started as coworkers but became family, friends, people that I've saw growing up in the community but never really hung out close with them and now they're close to me. I forgot your question.

What was your question?

Endiya:

The pros.

Generra Garris:

The pros, so I feel like the people, the pros are the people and the connections that I make and the people that come into inside the community and stay inside the community and find a way to build community within the community that isn't really theirs but they feel a part of. So I think that's the pro.

Endiya:

That is, and thank you.

Interview with Lakisha, Former Community Center Employee

November 20th. 2022

Endiya:

Hi, my name is Endiya . I'm from RHI, and I'm here with ...

Lakisha:

Lakisha.

Endiya:

So this is going to be recorded and transcribed. I'm just asking for your consent to be recorded.

Lakisha:

Absolutely.

Endiya:

Okay. So what is your connection to Red Hook?

Lakisha:

I used to work for the New York City Parks Department, and I was a Field Plant Operator for Red Hook Community Center, Red Hook Recreation Center, I'm sorry, correction.

Endiya:

And how long you been working in Red Hook?

Lakisha:

I worked in Red Hook about nine and a half to 10 years, seasonally.

Endiya:

What would your vision of a safe Red Hook look like?

Lakisha:

Well, years ago it was worse you couldn't even go to the grocery store without getting mugged, or jacked or shot. But, these days, Red Hook has improved a lot due to the community coming together and cleaning up the parks and taking, cleaning up the trash ups in the streets.

Endiya:

Okay. What do you believe the role of the police should be in terms of community safety?

Lakisha:

I believe for, to start with, community safety, you have to be involved with community. That means talking, saying hi, greeting the community instead of just coming up and arresting and assuming and just using your authority, abusing your authority. Once police start communicating with regular society, it could be a little bit better. And then, at that point, let's work together.

Endiya:

Okay. And what are some changes have you seen in Red Hook over the years?

Lakisha:

For instance, Coffee Park is wonderful. They also have a farm that's awesome, that's being utilized. On Saturdays and Sundays they have food trucks out there, which is great because now that's a different ethnicity and people of different races are coming together. They have soccer games, they have baseball. Numerous different programs for the youth.

Endiya:

What resources would the community need to achieve that vision?

Lakisha:

Would I need more? I say PSA, just going up inside of Red Hook projects frequently, not just phone calls. They would need more lights because on Lorraine Street it's really dark on Bayside. I would think the street lights should be more brighter because, with the lights that dim, you get robbed and all kind of things like that.

Endiya:

Would you consider Red Hook as a safe community?

Lakisha:

In 2022? Absolutely. Absolutely.

Endiya:

Okay. How do you feel about the food access in Red Hook?

Lakisha:

Red Hook food access is amazing. First of all, let's start with the supermarket, which is Food Bazaar, right over there on Van Brunt Street. We have the fire department come once a year. They have cook shows, cooks off. We also have wonderful restaurants.

As you go up Smith, then you come down to Lorraine Street, the grocery stores has amazing food there. We also have the Mexican food trucks that come out on Saturdays and Sundays. So I believe that the Red Hook food source is wonderful and not leaving out the farm that's down the block.

Endiya:

Okay. How can we bridge the gap between the different generations within our community?

Lakisha:

Older generations have to be more patient and more understanding of the new X Generation that's coming up and the new generation have to show some respect to those who came before them. And communication, it's just communication, just getting involved and Big Brother program, Sister program, mentorships, things like that.

Endiya:

Okay. How can we make housing more accessible to people that live in Red Hook?

Lakisha:

Well, what kind of housing? Was it a housing development? Or was it NYCHA or just regular housing?

Endiya:

Just regular housing.

Lakisha:

Regular housing... Well, first of all, we have to control the rent and then we have to make sure that... because if you also starting from the Fort Green area down to us that way, Jewish people are buying up everything. They're trying to buy black folks out and relocate. But how many times are you going to relocate someone? I just believe in just building bridges. Just building bridges because that is a very difficult avenue of housing in Red Hook because Red Hook is really an industrial area.

Endiya:

And what social events could change the way the younger generations, such as children, like to see if they could play in the neighborhood or something? How can we change that?

Lakisha:

Well, they have already been making changes. Like I said, they have the soccer program that is across the street from Red Hook Recreation Center. They also have the Recreation Center who has numerous of programs, swimming, gym, yoga, planting food. They have that. They also have a soccer camp, a football camp that they do every year. They have that. So there's a lot of new programs that's out there.

And thanks to Carmelo Anthony, because he's also... he puts in millions and thousands of dollars within Red Hook. He put in a new basketball court over there at the Community Center and comes through every year, make sure he gives out, hand out school supplies, Christmas gifts and things of that nature. So there's a lot of programs. It's just about finding ways to obtain the information. So it has to be a way where the information of these programs is more knowledgeable and accessible to the youth and to the adults.

Endiya:

Okay.

When we were growing up, we used to be able to go to Valentino Pier and hang out, nobody would say anything to us. It's just now you go over there and people are looking at you weird, and people are calling the cops. It gets weird because I grew up here and you did not.

I've been in Red Hook since I was five years old and you just got here two years ago, you know what I mean? So there's definitely a divide. Once you cross that Coffey Park, there's a whole completely different situation. They have access to a lot of things and stuff like not having water would not happen to the residents of Van Brunt. They're not going to tear down the playgrounds at Van Brunt.

So I just feel like me growing up, even though it was a little bit more dangerous, there was definitely a little bit more sense of community, in some weird way, and there was less gentrification. Even you go in a store, things are costing more than they used to because you have people with money, that are on Columbia going to the deli, buying things.

You can come over here, but we can't go over there to access the stuff that you guys have. And it's very strange. I just think that it's very strange to me personally.

Christian:

Thank you for your time, bro. Good stuff.

Tashawn:

You got anything else to say?

Christian:

Power to people. I mean, I hope red hook develops and I hope everybody, the community is safe and has access to all of the things that they need like education, jobs, etc.

How do we tell Good or Bad Cops?

Public safety is more critical now in society than ever. The dangers I've had over the years have become harder to deal with, and the safety issues need to be addressed. Public safety is a system, a community where people can worry carefree about harassment and dangers that our neighborhoods have today. It also includes the negative output that law enforcement contributes to us. Crime is an ongoing trend when one seeks to harm, suffer and punish another—leaving loved ones scarred for the rest of their lives, having qualified immunity, corruption, and lies.

Although in a court of law, the Prosecutor only has to prove to the presiding Judge that the accused committed the crime based on evidence beyond a reasonable doubt. However, do you question yourself why the individual committed the crime in the first place? What was their intention? What are they to gain out of bodily harm or death? Criminology not only examines the scientific aspect of crime but who commits crime but also evaluates the behavior and impact of accused criminals based on the extent of the crime.

Criminology is divided into several theories on why a person would ruthlessly commit a crime for their self-interest. A citizen could get on the train and see three cops, and be on high alert. In contrast, police officers are intimidating and scarring the community. If there were a kid who saw a cop in public in today's generation, they would think to stay clear. Why are the young people running away from the people who are supposed to protect us? How would law enforcement if everyone was to walk up to them and say they're corrupt?

Just because there are cops that make mistakes or harm the community on purpose doesn't mean all cops are the same. I'm discussing the choice/social, behavioral, and psychological theories and how we are supposed to tell the good from the bad cops.

Who are we supposed to go to if the people who were sworn to protect us can't? Police officers don't join in on community events or participate in conversations or even try to blend in with the community, babies, or kids. They are sworn to protect, but they are using their power against us to get an upper hand that no one on earth was born with.

With my own experience and my own words, I have been a witness and target for the police profiling me and some friends. There was a night when my good friend was driving, and in her car were two other people and me; we were on our way to my friend's birthday party. We got stopped by the cops, and they explained to us that they had received an alert to look out for a specific car that looked like my friend's. No one knew what was going on. We knew nobody did anything, but they held my friend's ID and made us wait until she was cleared. Finally, they came back and said we're fine. I

t was a mistake about fifteen minutes later. In my head, a quick assumption I thought of was that they just wanted to check her license plate or for a warrant. Never have I been randomly stopped in a car, and I was so confused. There's a problem in the system that has never been solved, and it's making assumptions and profiling the wrong people. It needs to stop; too many families have lost children under the age of 18 over a little mistake.

In today's society, how would we know who's here to protect us or harm us.

and what can we do to fix the situation? A lot of communities need to figure out who to trust when it comes to the people who have the power to create a change that they can't see. But the neighborhoods and the people can see that vision. Today police officers and law enforcement agencies need rehabilitation through education and interaction with the community,

I believe that would create a change in their perception and view of everything. A shift that everybody in the neighborhood has been asking for. Going out into the community we need to figure out how badly we need to stay cautious. Every time we see a cop in the train styles, in the parks, by our schools, homes and jobs. We as citizens do our own profiling of the police; how are we supposed to know which police officers are the good ones and which ones are the bad ones?

I have gone to college to study criminal justice and have always had a passion for forensics. My interest starts from introductory chemistry to forensic biology and sociology. Knowing that anthropology and sociology are both social sciences that focus on the study of the behavior of humans within their societies, these are also the classes these "officers" are supposed to take. You can see these two disciplines' differences and similarities, and a person can be an exam away from becoming one. But I also feel that this generation of police officers has evolved differently, and as our society evolves, we both don't understand each other.

In a recent study I conducted while working as a public safety organizer, I conducted two interviews with the views of the neighborhood. I spoke with a fellow worker Of the Red Hook community, and I asked them what role should the police officers okay in our community, and they stated,

"I believe in the role of police in terms of community safety; for one, I would like to think of police or people with authority. Who is supposed to provide, if not security, a safe space for us to be more approachable? They should be or work a little more towards finding different ways to be available and present at community events because I remember when I was growing up, we would be walking down the block.

I would see some of the teenage girls playing jump rope and police officers either turning or just having to turn away for their turn to jump in. And I feel like we need to get back to where police officers aren't only the authority and our protection, in a sense, but they're also a part of the community. If they can try to figure out certain ways to do their work, but also allow themselves to feel or be more a part of our community if that's through events or just stepping up and trying to be a little bit more approachable or just approaching us a certain way that maybe we haven't seen them do before."

Here in New York, some police officers believe they're doing good, and others would disagree. In the police force, they can't understand the toxic actions that they put out. Most citizens would agree that some officers don't manage how they treat those they encounter. We need to see a change and more solutions that benefit the community, not only for their image in how society portrays them but also for the community to come as one.

Some answers I came across with neighbors, teens, and workers were that there needs to be careful in the system. If we don't see an effort in being polite or saying hi to kids walking down the block, a step forward, we need to bridge the two halves.

We need permanent changes such as being one, understanding cops and the people in Red Hook. Culture, it is the base of every community and defines every single person on this earth. To start I believe culture is the way of life and everything we put our energy into defines culture. For example, defining culture there are categories such as food, language, traditions, practices or religion, music, morals and ideals.

The topic of culture is an extremely broad topic to talk about because culture has so many impacts on human thoughts and actions all over the world. We learn and pick up things naturally that's in our surroundings. We can all understand each other much more by knowing our similarities and differences.

There was a time where I seen this come together. I was a young girl who used to be very active with my old neighborhood BedStuy. I joined a PSAL group that was help at the present every Saturday and each time we got to know our community. We got to see what it was like from the police point of view. I wasn't old enough to be an intern this wasn't that kind of place. It was volunteered and asked for by the police, also participating and engaging with us with conversations. There's a difference between seeing people as a threat and seeing them as family.

This experience only lasted less than a year and I loved it, it was a great way for the community to grow and there was no doubt that crimes was happening. But I knew if someone got sent to that prevent specifically they would be take care of and my evidence is my own big brother experience and he's never slipped up after. Instead he joined the program until it ended with me. I've never had faith in the police as much I used to back in my youth. I see some same faces in those uniforms everyday on the train and every day patrolling around. Engage and learn and that's what we need today in the community.