At the Limits of Community: Anti-Black Security Practices in a Montreal Public Housing Complex

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis argues that contemporary security practices, mainly community policing and defensible space, are conceived epistemologically and operationalized empirically through anti-blackness. To make this point, I provide an in-depth analysis of a major community policing project in operation in Plan Robert, a North-Montreal public housing complex, since 1996. I pay particular attention to the important role of discourses of community in licensing two decades of community and defensible space interventions in the complex. I show how, while seemingly benign, these discourses allowed for the state's interference in the Black community of Plan Robert to control and disrupt residents' relationship to the public space. Combined, the high-level theory and the site-specific empirical evidence, which this thesis introduces, aim to contextualize this contemporary historic instance in North America's longer history of anti-blackness, and the state's ongoing obsessions with Black communities since the formal abolition of slavery, up until today. It also demonstrates that, forged through anti-blackness, the category of community, as a category of the modern Human, is site of re-elaboration of subjugation of blackness rather than a figure that rescues the Black person.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

> There is something organic to black positionality that makes it essential to the destruction of civil society. There is nothing willful or speculative in this statement, for one could just as well state the claim the other way around: there is something organic to civil society that makes it essential to the destruction of the Black body (Wilderson, 2003b).

In Montreal, as in much of the world, blackness is often associated with criminality. Geographically, discourse of criminality is most apparent in the Black neighbourhoods at the periphery of urban Montreal, including Saint-Michel. A marginalized neighbourhood in North East Montreal, Saint-Michel is mostly known in the public discourse for security issues, specifically for Black youth's involvement in street gang criminal activity (Johnston, 1990; Gagnon, 2008; Encrenoir, 2016; Maunay, 2016). The history of this crucial discussion goes back to 1995 (Symons, 1999), when gang activity in Montreal became a focus of policing and municipal policy, and "gang member" became synonymous with blackness. Saint-Michel is home to almost 60,000 residents of which 42 percent are immigrants born outside of Canada. The largest portion is of Haitian origin (13 percent), followed by residents from North Africa (11 percent) (Montreal, 2011). Plan Robert (also referred to as Habitations Saint-Michel Nord) is the largest public housing complex in Saint-Michel. Plan Robert shares many of the features of the broader neighbourhood. It is Saint-Michel's largest housing complex with 180 residential units housing an ethnically diverse population of 650 residents, 265 of which are youth under the age of 25 years (OMHM, 2016).

In the last two decades, Plan Robert has become the site of application for a new policing approach that relies on collaborations between state and non-state agents to address security issues (Dagher, 2011). In this approach, community organizations operating in or near Plan Robert (e.g., Mon Resto, La Maison des Jeunes, Pact de Rue, Tandem) work in partnership with the Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM, i.e. Montreal Police). This intervention in Plan Robert is of great importance because of the scale of the community organizations' operations (e.g., number of

organizations working closely with residents on the terrain and the high level of involvement in all aspects of the lives of residents) and the major influence their work has on the lives of Black residents of Plan Robert.

In the public discourse, this collaborative approach in Saint-Michel appears to trace its origins back to 2004, when the SPVM, responding to charges of racial profiling, shifted from a straightforward repressive approach to street gangs to an "Integrated Prevention Strategy" (Dagher, 2011). In 2004, the police did officially adopt this "less repressive" approach, promoting its collaboration with community organizations (Dagher, 2011). Further investigation, as this research will show, demonstrates that the shift to more collaborations with community organizations in Plan Robert began in the early 1990s, when the first community initiatives, responding to police requests, started to appear and operate on the terrain (Marsolais, 1995). The strategy, since the beginning, brought together institutions at the federal, provincial, and municipal level, as well as private and community organizations to fulfill a "global vision" that has as its main objective "the prevention and social inclusion of new immigrants, especially youth" (Dagher, 2011). While celebrated as a successful policing model (Dagher, 2011), community policing in Plan Robert has not eliminated police abuses (Livingstone & Rutland, forthcoming) and raises questions, therefore, about the boundaries of community and the elusive line between the "protected" and the "protected from", shaped through discourses of community the community workers adopt in their work in Plan Robert.

In addition to the shift toward policing through community work, in the last decade, Plan Robert has also become the site of application of new security practices focused on the physical form of the complex. These practices parallel Oscar Newman's well-known conception of "defensible space" (Newman, 1972). The creation of a defensible space, for Newman, is achieved through the development of a residential social housing model capable of creating a socio-physical barrier to criminality, through the enhancement of a "sense of community" that positions

the "potential criminal" as an intruder, to community and thus to the public and semipublic space (Newman, 1972). The OMHM, together with the other community organizations involved in Plan Robert, focused on this specific aspect, altering the physical arrangement of the public and semipublic spaces in and around Plan Robert to resolve security issues in the complex. By adopting minor and major architectural interventions in these spaces, the OMHM's aim was to repurpose their functions in order to encourage their use by certain residents of the community and render the spaces amenable to observation, thus defending these spaces against other (potentially criminal) residents. Consistent with Oscar Newman's thinking, this approach to security management focusing on the physical aspect of the residential environment relies on notions of community and raises questions, again, about the practical boundaries these notions entail. The OMHM's early work in Plan Robert suggests the existence of a dividing line between the protected and the protected-against in the agency's vision of who deserves to be in the space and who does not, including certain members of the community, while failing to include Black youth over the age of 18.

Combined, the two forms of security practices, community policing and defensible space, call attention to the important role of discourses of community in shaping the boundaries between who is considered community and who is not. It also demonstrates how policing of certain communities is conceived and operationalized through a double operation: one that targets conjointly both humans (through social interventions) and space (through physical interventions). This raises important questions regarding the role of discourses of community in bringing together the two approaches to community policing and the kind of interventions taking place in Plan Robert. Furthermore, it sheds light on the role of discourses of community in legitimizing and licensing the major policing operation in Plan Robert.

The concept of community, of course, has long been treated with scepticism in critical social scientific literatures (Herbert, 2006; Chacko & Nancoo, 1993; Murphy, 1988). These

literatures, in their different ways, show that the seeming inclusiveness of the concept is belied in practice. Scholars have critiqued the concept of community as it operates in the two forms of security practices: community policing (Schrader, 2016; Gilmore & Gilmore, 2016; Williams, 2004) and the creation of defensible spaces (Lee & Herborn, 2007; Herbert & Brown, 2006; Cupers, 2016; Shabazz, 2016;). The work of these scholars demonstrates how the two forms of security practices – community policing and defensible space – perpetuate control over and violence toward various marginalized populations (including but not only Black youth), despite the seemingly inclusive discourses of community and the seeming change in policing approach to less repressive policing strategies the notion of community suggests.

Absent from existing critical work, however, is an explicit attention to the role of anti-blackness in constituting the boundary between community and its outside. Recent work on anti-blackness, though it has not explicitly examined community (as a modern category of Humanism), provides useful insights here in its attention to the eviction of Black people, from the era of racial slavery onward, from a series of related categories of the modern human, including civil society, justice, and freedom (Hartman, 1997; Silva, 2013; Wilderson, 2003a; Walcott, 2014). Frank Wilderson (2003) argues that such categories provide no possibilities for Black subjectivity, precisely because racial slavery and the resulting anti-blackness lie at the base of their constitution. In this regards, he notes:

> the structure by which human beings are recognized by other human beings and incorporated into a community of human beings, is anti-slave. And slaveness is something that has consumed Blackness and Africanness, making it impossible to divide slavery from Blackness … we [Black people] cannot enter into a structure of recognition as a being, an incorporation into a community of beings, without recognition and incorporation being completely destroyed. We know that we are the antithesis of recognition and incorporation (Wilderson, 2014, pp. 8-9).

Given how concerns about security in Plan Robert are linked to Black youth, there is reason to engage this work and ask how discourses of community are constituted, where blackness is

situated in relation to community and whether anti-blackness constitutes community by positioning Black youth outside it.

The proposed research examines how community operates in Plan Robert within the aforementioned two forms of security practices: community policing and defensible space. It focuses on two research questions in particular:

(1) How are conceptions of community and its outside (threat) produced and mobilized through (a) community policing and (b) the creation of defensible space in Plan Robert? And to what extent do discourses of community, as produced and circulated through community work targeting Black communities, play a role in shaping conceptions of blackness? How do these conceptions justify the state's interventions in Black communities?

(2) How are Black youth positioned in relation to these discourses of community? What role does this positioning play in conceptions of Black communities as dysfunctional? And to what extent is this positioning a continuation of the 500-year-old structure of anti-blackness in Quebec, specifically, and in the world, more generally?

These questions are meant to shed light on community as site of re-elaboration of white supremacy and a crucial contemporary threshold in the constitution of whiteness and blackness. They are also meant to interrogate the role of discourses of community in depicting Black communities as dysfunctional, to justify, I suggest, the state's intervention to control Black communities. Ultimately, I would like to call attention to a longer history of anti-blackness and the state's obsessions with Black communities since the era of racial slavery, up until the present time. Pursuing these questions will make it possible to better understand how discourses of community operate, empirically, in the two forms of security practices: community policing and the creation of defensible spaces, and call into question and potentially interrupt their operation in the unfolding present.

I begin with a literature review of the work of Black critical thinkers who question the role of modern knowledge production mechanisms in constituting blackness by looking at the modern categories of Humanism (e.g., justice, freedom, reason), largely perceived as universal, and the the raciality embedded in these categories in order to unravel the exclusion from these categories of Black people. Within this work, I focus on the modern category of civil society and interrogate whether civil society (which is examined in the literature) and community (which is not) are related concepts. I also review the literature on contemporary security practices, mainly community policing and defensible space, as site of application of discourses of community. This work, though often attentive to the oppression of Black people, has not engaged with the literature on anti-blackness. New insights may be possible, then, by examining security practices through the lens of anti-blackness, and asking whether discourses of community, as they operate in these practices, are indeed anti-Black. Following the literature review, I offer an outline of my research, and a detailed methods section that shows how I designed my research and the different steps lying ahead, necessary in my attempt to answer my guiding research questions.

1.1 *Literature review*

1.1.1 *On the Genesis of Anti-blackness in the Philosophies of Modernity and Humanism*

Violence against Black people has been a subject of analysis in the work of numerous scholars. One of the contributions of this work, relevant to my own, is its grounding of contemporary forms of anti-blackness in a longer history beginning, in most cases, with the European colonization of the "New World" and the development of transatlantic slavery. Walter Mignolo (2011), for example, argues that the Columbus Expedition and the subsequent colonization and enslavement of the New World(s) by Europeans signalled the beginning of the modern age and new conceptions of the human being. Distant from Europe, geographically and culturally, the colonizers of the New World created the conditions for modern humanism by colonizing time and

giving meaning to the past and the present in relation to modernity. The world's non-European histories were rendered invisible as they came to an end in 1500 and a new modern history was formulated in the West (Mignolo, 2011, p. 193). Through Europe's two modern colonizations – the 16th century's discovery of the New World and the 18th century's capitalist colonial expansion – economy and knowledge joined forces (Mignolo, 2011, p. 185). Mignolo writes: "Modern European languages embodied, during and after the Renaissance, the 'spirit' of epistemology, and emerging capitalism embodied the 'spirit' of economy" (p. 183).

Europe's imperialist project of modernity altered the globe (Mignolo, 2011, p. 184). For the primary goal of accumulating benefit and increasing production, human lives became irrelevant and expendable. Enslaved Africans became both labour to produce commodities and bodies as a commodity owned and transported (p. 184). Anti-blackness was born in the process. Concretely, slavery positioned Black Africans outside the categories of modern humanism. Such categories include European conceptions of emancipation (through the notion of citizenship in the state), economic freedom (through the development of wage labour), and civilization (through aesthetic and national culture) (Lowe, 2015).

Numerous scholars of Black Studies investigate the origins of anti-blackness in philosophies of modernity and humanism. Their critical work is instrumental in confronting the universality of modern knowledge underlying most of our understandings of our modern society and related modern notions such as justice, law, freedom, reason, and, above all, humanity. While operating in different geographical contexts, the work of these scholars has given rise to a literature that sees anti-blackness as global because it is rooted in the global project of modernity. Within this literature, the work of scholars Frank Wilderson (2003a), Jared Sexton (2010) and Saidiya Hartman (1997) has focused on the US context; the work of scholars Denise Ferriera da Silva (2007), Jaime Alves (2012) and Costa Vargas (2012) has focused on the Brazilian context; and the work of scholars Rinaldo Walcott (2014), Charmaine Nelson (2010), and Katherine McKittrick (2007) has

focused on Canada. As these scholars demonstrate, it is necessary to look at blackness within the constituent elements of modernity to better understand the positions that whiteness and blackness occupy in the social order, and the kind of violence these differences in social position produce for Black people.

In an especially important contribution, Denise Ferriera da Silva (2007) locates contemporary conceptions of race in the making of Western modernity. Enlightenment philosophies, for Silva, were crucial in shaping the modern encounter between the West and the New World, and race played a major role in justifying the violence embedded in such encounter. Enlightenment philosophy created new ways of understanding "man," namely as rational being and "self-determined subject," who emerged from a state of nature. This conception of man required a constitutive outside subject, an "outer-determined" Other who, in contrast, cannot progress out of nature. Silva states:

> While the tools of universal reason (the "laws of nature") produce and regulate human conditions, in each global region it establishes mentally (morally and intellectually) distinct kinds of human beings, namely the self-determined subject and its outer-determined Others, the ones whose minds are subjected to their natural (in the scientific sense) conditions. (2007, p. xiii)

Race was deployed in order to distance the modern subject (white) from its Other (the Black slave), both socially and morally (Silva, 2014). This distance underpinned the violence embedded in the antagonistic encounter between the West and the New World. It ensured that violence was directed toward those left outside of modernity (Europe's Others, the colonized, the slave) and therefore provided an essential precondition to the establishment of the New World as a European-dominant territory.

Silva (2007), while interrogating Enlightenment philosophy in general, pays special attention to the work of GWF Hegel. In his 19th century investigation of the "truth of man," Hegel sets the line of division between the self-determined subject and the outer-determined object and positions the "outer-determined" object as a temporal moment in the trajectory through which subjects

achieve self-consciousness and consequently become a "self-determined" subject. This framing positioned the Others of post-Enlightenment Europe as outsiders to self-consciousness and reason, making them incapable of self-determination and universality (p. 70). In a particularly important passage, Hegel states:

> Negroes are enslaved by Europeans and sold to America. Bad as this may be, their lot in their own lands is even worse, since there a slavery quite as absolute exists; for it is the essential principle of slavery, that *man has not yet attained a consciousness of his freedom*, and consequently sinks down to a mere Thing—an object of no value (cited in Silva, 2013, p. 43, emphasis mine).

Hegel's Thing – an object of no value – is a passive universality, signified by negation and exclusion from the properties the modern individual possesses, such as the consciousness of 'his' own freedom and self-determination (p. 46). In Silva's (2013) opinion, this constitutes the Thing as "violated/violent person by the also already valued/protected white other…" (p. 52). The Thing is thus excluded from the "active" properties of humanity that, for Silva, reside at the foundation of modern conceptions of justice, the right and the good (p. 70). Her work, then, reveals the limits of modern universals, such as justice, which continue to organize modern society and shape, through their practical limits/exclusions, the contemporary violence against Black people.

Silva's focus on the limits of modern conceptions of humanity is mirrored in much of the literature on anti-blackness. Indeed, one of the categories of the modern world that has interested scholars of anti-blackness is the category of "the human" (see Walcott, 2014; Silva, 2007; Wilderson, 2003a; Hartman & Wilderson, 2003; Sexton, 2014). Rinaldo Walcott (2014), for example, examines how post-Colombus colonial frames of Humanness exclude the Black slave from such frames. Slavery, for Walcott, is central to Europe's colonial project as well as to its Enlightenment narratives of the Human. Walcott states:

> What it means to be Human is continually defined against Black people and blackness … The profound consequences of having Humanness defined against Black being means that the project of colonialism and the ongoing workings of coloniality have produced for Black people a perverse relationship to the category of the Human in which our existence as human beings remains constantly in question and mostly outside the category of a life. (2014, p. 93)

Similar to Mignolo (2011) and Silva (2007, 2013), Walcott (2014) looks at the European antagonistic encounter with the New World. However, Walcott offers a more specific reading of modernity focused on the positionality of the Black slave through conceptions of the human rather than the modern subject. For Walcott, it is conceptions of the "Human" rather than conceptions of reason, rationality, consciousness, and so on, that inaugurate and sustain anti-blackness across the modern world.

A similar emphasis on the relationship between the human and the slave can be found in Saidiya Hartman's (1997) influential work. Through a genealogical analysis of slavery, Hartman reflects critically on liberal notions of freedom, enjoyment, and right that have been seen as essential to the human being. Constructed around slavery, such notions continue into the present; tracking their limitations, then, becomes essential in revealing the continuities between slavery and freedom. Blackness, Hartman agues, disarticulates conceptions of freedom, for a relation to blackness outside the terms of black property is not possible, "even the status of free Blacks was shaped and compromised by the existence of slavery" (Hartman, 1997, p. 24). The Black slave, as property, had no access to freedom; the freed slave is in a similar position. In a conversation between Hartman and Wilderson (2003), Hartman problematizes modernity's language of freedom, which she argues is the site of re-elaboration of the condition of the slave rather than what rescues her/him from her/his slavery (Hartman & Wilderson, 2003). By understanding the position of the slave and the role the figure of the slave played in conceptions of the human and its properties (e.g., freedom), we understand that a transformation in concepts like the human are necessary to end the ongoing reproduction of "racial inequality, racial domination and racial abjection," produced across generations (Hartman & Wilderson, 2003).

In addition to this discussion with Hartman, Wilderson's own work unravels the anti-blackness embedded in the Humanities' claims to universal applicability. He argues:

> The Humanities assume the corporeal and psychic integrity of all sentient beings. Afro-
> pessimism [as a discipline within Black Studies] argues that that integrity is vouchsafed by

its absence in the figure of the Black; and that violence is key to this—in the words of Fanon —"species divide." (Wilderson, 2016, P. 7)

Wilderson 'pathologizes' (2016) humanity itself "for its violent consumption of blackness" (p. 7). By highlighting the 'antagonisms' at the foundation of the exclusion of Black people from 'Human recognition and incorporation' (p. 7), he disrupts the constituent elements of the Humanities.

Anti-blackness, though constituted at the scale of the globe, is recognized to exhibit local, regional, and national specificities. Paul Gilroy (1993), whose major works preceded the above-cited scholarship on anti-blackness, makes a point that bears emphasis. He warns against circulating obsessions with 'racial purity' and, through his investigation of the Atlantic, argues in favour of understanding identities as "always unfinished, always being remade" (Gilroy, 1993, xi). It is necessary, then, to look into the specificity of the different sites of violence against Black peoples and to acknowledge the differences, and not only commonalities, among the situation and social position of Black communities around the world (Vargas, 2012; Walcott, 2014). Recent work on Brazil (Vargas, 2012; Alves, 2014; Rocha, 2012; Da Costa, 2014) offers an important contribution to these discussions, as it takes work on anti-blackness beyond the present focus on the United States. Work in Germany (Broeck & Carsten, 2011; Kerner, 2013), France (Rocchi, 2008), the Netherlands (Nimako & Willemsen, 2008), and South Africa (Maart, 2014) performs a similar purpose.

In Canada, research on blackness is longstanding and relatively diverse in its conclusions (Thobani, 2007; Austin, 2013; Tator et al, 2009; Thomas & Clarke, 2006; McKittrick, 2007; Walcott, 2014; Nelson, 2010). Some scholars focus their studies on Canada's colonial past, as well as Canada's British/French master narratives, which, they argue, have omitted and continue to omit the history of Black people (among other racialized groups) (Austin, 2010). Others turn their attention to the present, and investigate how anti-blackness (combined with other racisms) is embedded in the life of the nation. The nation-state project in Canada has resulted in contemporary race ideologies and discursive formations, such as narratives of multiculturalism

(Thomas & Clarke, 2006), citizenship and nationhood (Nelson, 2010; Austin, 2010), and democratic racism (Henry et al, 2009). This work is extremely useful to understand the historical and geographical context within which Canadian anti-blackness, among other forms of racism, emerged. However, it does not *always* provide the theoretical tools necessary to distinguish anti-blackness from other forms of racism. Nor does it always shed light on the specificity of Canadian anti-blackness. Thus, with a few exceptions (discussed below), the existing literature stops short from situating Canada within academic debates on global anti-blackness.

The last decade, however, has given rise to a new generation of Canadian scholars interested to join broader discussions of anti-blackness. Walcott (2014), McKittrick (2006) and Nelson (2010), among other scholars, contribute to the debate on the 'globality' of anti-Black violence while examining Canada's historical and geographical distinct blackness. Charmaine Nelson (2010) investigates the position of the Black Canadian within global discourses of blackness, and states:

> Twenty-first century Canada, as other parts of the west, is in the grip of colonial racial ideologies, largely inherited from eighteenth and nineteenth-century human science discourses of race as a biological set of visual corporeal marks, traits and characteristics of bodies... (regardless of whether or not most scholars obviously dispute race as a biological category). The fact of the matter is, that for a person who is identified as Black in Canada today, there are very real social, cultural, material and psychic repercussions (many if not most, negative) that follow from the identification, whether the identification be internally or externally assigned. There are possibilities and laminations that the dominant white mainstream societies seek to attach to Black bodies which we may or may not be able to wholly avoid, ignore or contest ... Blackness then as a racial identification or position within the diaspora and within the Canadian nation state must be addressed at multiple levels - as bodily marks, as cultural imagination, as social practice and as psychic or material experience (pp. 14-15).

Nelson suggests that Black people in Canada, similar to other marginalized groups, have become consumers of white outside projections of blackness as marginal and Other, and now see and are seen through the limits of colonial stereotypes and "western cultural imagination" (p. 14). She urges the reader to examine Canadian blackness through a larger frame of time and space, and to see conceptions of race in Canada as global and historical.

Rinaldo Walcott (2014) engages with contemporary debates on settler colonialism in the nation of Canada and argues that "the very invention of Black people as art and parcel" of

European colonial expansion has aided the practice of settler colonial societies and simultaneously undermined them by producing a new kind of indigeneity of the West. The invention of Black people troubles understandings of land, place, indigeneity, and belonging because of the brutal rupture that produced blackness and severed Black being from all those claims now used to mark resistance to modernity's unequal distribution of its various accumulations (p. 95). While recognizing the specificity of the colonial context within which Canadian anti-blackness emerged, Walcott, McKittrick, and Nelson's work situates Canadian anti-blackness in global narratives of modernity.

Similar to the work of Hartman (1997) on US slavery and its relation to black positionality today, scholars Charmaine Nelson (2016), Katherine McKittrick (2006) and Afua Cooper (2006) consider slavery in Canada (British North America and New France) in relation to contemporary Canadian blackness. Nelson (2016) states that despite attempts of generations of historians to efface or downplay the existence of Canadian slavery, slavery was indeed "an inherent part of the earliest colonizing process in what is today the nation of Canada" (p. 59). In a similar vein, McKittrick argues that while generally depicted as land of opportunity for Black people from the Caribbean or as a safe refuge for US escaped slaves, Canada continues to deny its own history of slavery, which is often deemed too insignificant to earn the attention it deserves (McKittrick, 2006, p. 97). Slavery in Canada does not match US and Caribbean large-scale slave institutions; nonetheless, it did exist and lasted with its brutalities for over 200 years. According to McKittrick (2006), the "smallness" of the history of slavery in Canada renders Canadian blackness invisible (p. 97). The denial of a Canadian history of slavery results in a similar denial of a longer history of Canadian blackness. This continues to shape the absence of blackness in the present and is reason behind the perception of Black people in Canada as non-Canadian and always belonging elsewhere (p. 99).

The work cited above is helpful in tracing the constitution of anti-blackness within world-spanning relations of settler colonialism and racial slavery. It is also helpful in examining how anti-blackness lies at the base of the constituent elements of modern notions that are still operating in our contemporary (modern) society. In addition, as I now want to show, the literature on anti-blackness offers insights on how to interrogate the category of community as site of exclusion for Black people. This literature, though it does not engage the notion of community itself, does engage the related notion of civil society. Through this body of work, it is possible to examine the constituent elements of the category of community (elements that are also present in the category of civil society) and stake out an examination of the possible connections between community and the related notion of civil society. This can help me examine how discourses of community operate within practices of community policing and defensible space in Plan Robert.

Silva (2013), for example, examines how the Hegelian notion of civil society is at the base of the exclusion of the Black subject from modern and contemporary systems of justice. In Hegel's own words, civil society is:

> an association of members as self-subsistent individuals in a universality which, because of their self-subsistence, is only abstract. Their association is brought about by their needs [economic], by the legal system — the means to security of person and property — and by an external organization for attaining their particular and common interests (cited in Silva, 2013, p. 45-46).

Civil society, for Hegel, is an entity that exists because of the association between different individuals to achieve common interest, and as means to guarantee security. It arises through the passage from the particular (the disintegration of the family) to the universal (a plurality of families). This passage signals what Hegel names the "stage of difference" or "civil society."

The issue with Hegel's conception of civil society, for Silva (2013), is twofold: first, justice is theorized as finding its site of applicability in civil society, rather than in the state; second, Black people are outside the categories of modernity, including civil society, since the modern subject is

formed in opposition to the Black slave. The result is that Black people are excluded from the applicability of justice. Silva states: "the excess that is the never-exposed violence, the violence resolved in law, the state, contained in Hegel's civil society, enters into the very constitution of the political categories themselves, in blackness and whiteness" (2013, p. 52). The concept of justice, because it must be applied in a social field (i.e., civil society) cleared of blackness, cannot provide Black people with solutions against violence but rather becomes site of elaboration of black and white positionalities. All of this entails the violent consumption of the Black body.

Like Silva, Wilderson (2003a) also interrogates notions of civil society. His focus, however, concerns the paradox lying at the base of Gramscian theories of civil society. Quoting Hortense Spillers (1987), Wilderson explains: "'the socio-political order of the New World' ... was kick-started by approaching a particular body (a Black body) with direct relations of force, not by approaching a white body with variable capital" (Wilderson, 2003a, p. 229). In spite of this, neither Marx nor Gramsci examine the place of the slave in the modern socio-political order. Instead, they focus on the subjugation of the white waged worker in this order. Gramsci and other Marxists, Wilderson explains, continue to make the waged labourer the centre of their argument, and hence fall short of explaining black subjectivity and the power relations shaping modern society. They fail, as well, to envision a place for Black people in the revolutionary process – a process that Gramsci locates precisely in his conception of civil society. For Gramsci, civil society is site of elaboration of a revolutionary strategy, a "War of Position," and the space where the coercion of the state can be combatted through a united social organism capable of eliminating all the divisions imposed by the ruler. Gramsci, because he fails to consider the place of the Black slave in the constitution of civil society, ultimately advances a theory of revolution that reinforces black subjugation. Gramsci's revolution, writes Wilderson, "requires the intensification and proliferation of civil society's constituent element: black accumulation and death" (Wilderson, 2003a, p. 234).

Gramsci's conception of civil society – and Wilderson's critique of it – is useful to my research. Gramsci defines civil society as the "ensemble of so-called private associations and ideological invitations to participate in a wide and varied play of consensus-making strategies" (p. 228). It is distinguished from what Gramsci calls political society, meaning "a set of enforcement structures [the courts, the army, the police…] which kick in when that ensemble is regressive or can no longer lead" (p. 228). There is an opening here, I think, to interrogate the category of community. First, like civil society (as Gramsci defines it), community is the realm of non-state agents, community partners, and social workers. These agencies, conceptually distinct from the state, function as an extension of the state. While these agencies have as their main goal social control, they exercise it by employing consensus-making strategies rather than enforcement. Second, a seemingly benign force, community is likely to be constituted in the same way as civil society: constituted, that is, through black exclusion. The result, crucially, is that not only does civil society include certain people and exclude others, but also that the sphere of inclusion depends on what is excluded. All this means that conceptions of civil society – and, I hope to suggest, community – need to be rebuilt, given that their conception relies on the dividing line of exclusion.

This critique of civil society and community as anti-Black may allow for a new interrogation of community policing and the creation of defensible spaces. Both of these security practices rely centrally on conception of community. To the extent that I can show that community entails the same constitutive exclusions as civil society, I will be able to bring a new critical perspective to community policing and defensible space. My contribution, then, is to literatures on anti-Black security practices, which I look at through notions of community. By establishing the connection between civil society and community – both critiqued by Black scholars – I contribute to understandings of community and to examinations of civil society. Further, through this association, I aim to contribute to the more general body of literature on anti-blackness.

1.1.3 *Community Policing*

There is, of course, a critical literature that examines community policing. Stuart Schrader (2016), for example, examines community policing by looking at it from the standpoint on the paradoxical relationship between the police and the community and the important role the police plays in shaping the boundaries between who is part of the community and who is not. He warns against a simplistic understanding of the notion of community policing. The concept of community, he argues, ignores "how community creates adhesion among people … hidden by the embedded assumptions of boundedness, cohesiveness, and harmony in typical usage." The concept, he argues, "erases politics, erases the vast inequalities in access to power and resources that structure and striate this gathered-together confraternity called community" (Schrader, 2016, ¶ 3). Enrolled in policing practices, the concept of community creates new problems. Though it seems to involve a partnership between the police and the 'people they protect', community policing actually uses social inequalities to further empower their agents and, by targeting potential offenders, the police define "the boundaries of community through exclusion and punishment and to realize capitalist economic interests within those boundaries" (Schrader, 2016, ¶ 4).

Kristian Williams (2004), rather than focusing on the conception of community, examines the problematic ways through which community policing has been operationalized. Williams argues that community policing is born from the police's need to change its tactics and to renew its approaches to respond to the crises of the 1960s, related to Black Panther Party. In order to balance the use of excessive force, the police developed a strategy toward community policing, which does not replace the trends to militarization but is rather complementary. Indeed, Williams sees no distinction between the efforts to develop a community policing approach and the already operating militarization of the police:

> The overall result of these efforts is to increase the police role in the community, meaning that the coercive apparatus of the state will be more involved with daily life. The state, and the police in particular, will have more opportunities for surveillance, and can exercise

control in a variety of ways besides arrests, citations, or physical force (Williams, 2004, p. 242).

Policing, for Williams, takes advantage of community's "expertise and resources" and makes them available to the police by transforming a wide range of "institutions into tools for law enforcement" (2004, p. 242). In addition, the police use community meetings and platforms where the community can express dissatisfaction in order to turn such meetings into inclusive environments where the police could achieve propagandistic ends into their favour. While forming some kind of partnership between the police and the community, the police keep the senior position in such partnership.

Along similar lines, Ruth Wilson Gilmore and Craig Gilmore (2016) examine the operation of community policing in the context of Los Angeles. The authors ground their analysis in the longer tradition of the neoliberal state since the 1970s to respond to state legitimation crises through state-shrinkage and the extension of state control to local and non-state actors (p. 174). As one of the apparatuses of the state, the police had its first legitimation crisis in the 1970s – following the adoption of paramilitarized policing strategies to respond to Watts black rebellion of the 1960s and the consequent "increasing militancy and resistance to the police" in some neighbourhoods (p. 182). The police shifted its approach in order "to soften the image of late 1960s and early 1970s militarized police" (p. 183). For instance, this shift saw the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) adopt community-policing models to maintain order through enhanced relations with people and community (p. 182). In the years since, this approach has been refined to include numerous state and parastate agencies in policing practices. In general, this approach aims to replace the older "counter-productive, overbroad suppression approach" with a new "strategic suppression," improve the "negative perception of law enforcement by the community," and build a relation of trust between "the police and the policed" (p. 181). By doing so, the police extended its role to include community organizations and, simultaneously, used discourse of street gang activity to justify its mass criminalization of Black youth and its continuous violence against

Black people (p. 180). This model sought to resolve the "legitimation crisis of US policing" and make sure that riots of the like of "Rodney King riots" do not repeat (p. 181).

Research on community policing in Canada is more limited. There is a small literature on community policing in Canadian cities (Chacko & Nancoo, 1993; Beauchesne, 2011; Murphy, 1988; Morin, 2008). There is indeed some research on community policing in Saint-Michel (Dagher, 2011; Livingstone & Rutland, forthcoming). This literature shows, for example, that in the last decade, Saint-Michel witnessed a shift in the paradigm of policing operating in the neighbourhood, from an intensified policing strategy to a preventive strategy in collaboration with community partners and the OMHM, to respond to claims of racial profiling against the police (Dagher, 2011). Meanwhile, Black youth in the neighbourhood report being often subjected to intensified police surveillance, harassment, and violence (Livingstone & Rutland, forthcoming). Consistent with the findings of the US literature, then, existing work in Canadian cities suggests that a shift to community policing has not upended the repressive and racist operation of policing. Indeed, the broader literature on policing and racism in Canada situates practices of racial profiling and carding precisely in the period in which community policing gained precedence (see Charest, 2009; CDPDJ, 2011; Ezeonu, 2014; Boudreau, 2013; Wortley and Tanner, 2007; Douyon, 1993; Symons, 1999).

These accounts of community policing are part of an extensive body of literature that shows how community policing is, in fact, a continuation of conventional (repressive) policing. This work provides an in-depth analysis of the institution of community policing and the strategies it adopts. However, it does not draw attention to the role of anti-blackness in the constitution of community or the practices deployed in its name. This work could be enhanced by mobilizing recent work on anti-blackness to think about how community, as discourse and praxis, defines the boundaries between who is community and who is threat – between whiteness and blackness. Drawing such connections could bring new insights to the literature on community policing. It

could also bring new insights to the literature on anti-blackness, which has sometimes analyzed the operation of the police (see Sexton and Martinot, 2003), but has focused on its more conventional (non-community) forms. How can community policing be looked at through the lens of anti-blackness? How does community policing blur the lines between who is the community and who is the police? Here, then, is one of the contributions I hope to make in my research: connecting the anti-blackness literature's interrogation of civil society (and, thus, community) to the operation of community policing.

1.1.4 *Defensible Space*

Like policing, the idea of community has shaped the development and management of public housing. Central to these dynamics is the work of Oscar Newman and his concept of "defensible space." Newman (1972) defines a defensible space as:

> a model for residential environments, which inhibits crime by creating the physical expression of a social fabric that defends itself. All the different elements which combine to make a defensible space have a common goal – an environment in which latent territoriality and sense of community in the inhabitants can be translated into responsibility for ensuring a safe, productive, and well-maintained living space (p. 3).

A space arranged in this way, for Newman, creates a socio-spatial barrier to criminality. It demonstrates to the potential criminal that the space is inhabited and defended and, thus, deters the criminal from being there. "The potential criminal," writes Newman, "perceives such a space as controlled by its residents, leaving him an intruder easily recognized and dealt with" (p. 3).

One of the keys to the creation of defensible space, for Newman, is to instil in users of the space a sense of ownership and responsibility. Newman argues that the very form of buildings and their architectural arrangement could encourage or discourage "people to take an active part in policing while they go about their daily business" (p. 3). Newman examines in detail the architectural models and the different physical characteristics that should be adopted in the defensible space model in order to achieve the objective of creating a community of individuals

capable of policing and controlling their space. He also discusses the importance of built-in surveillance – architectural features that make spaces (and people) amenable to observation. "Improved surveillance," he writes, "operates most effectively when linked with the territorial subdivision of residential area, allowing the resident to observe those public areas which he considers to be part of his realm of ownership and hence responsibility" (p. 79). For Newman, in public housing projects, visibility is key. Newman states that most crimes happen in the semi public interior spaces of buildings that are visually deprived of the "continual surveillance of residents" (p. 80). Newman, thus, makes the association between visibility (or surveillance more broadly) and crime deterrence. According to Newman, it is important to enhance visibility through the physical modelling of housing developments and that all public and semipublic areas "come under continual and natural observation" in order to increase security (p. 80).

Newman's program for the creation of defensible space ultimately rests on four elements of physical design: (1) territoriality: the subdivision of areas with designated functions that enhance residents' sense of ownership and influence; (2) surveillance: window positions that enhance visibility of nonprivate areas; (3) image and milieu: neutralized building forms that conceal the image of isolation and vulnerability of inhabitants; and (4) geographical juxtaposition: location of housing projects in functional 'sympathetic' urban areas that enhance a sense of safety (Newman, 1972, p. 9, 50; Cozens & Love, 2015, p. 395). Newman locates the solutions to security issues and crime in the spatial reorganization of public housing following these four principles. One example is Newman's emphasis on the clear division between public and private spaces and paths as means to achieve territoriality and hence deter crime. Practically, by eliminating the ambiguity regarding the functions of each space, residents attain more clarity concerning their behaviour and thus a sense of territoriality (p. 96). It is the physical setting, then, that helps develop a clear behavioural guideline capable of holding residents responsible of and accountable for their social behaviour and hence enhance a sense of security (p. 166-167). In Newman's hypothesis, only

through the architectural modifications of the physical setting social management of public housing is achieved.

Newman's defensible space is largely recognized to have had a huge impact on the development and management of public housing projects (Jacobs & Lees, 2013; Coley & Kuo & Sullivan, 1997; Chang, 2011; Park, 1995; Hillier, 2003; Shu & Huang, 2003; Greene & Greene, 2003) and on urban governance more generally (Cozens & Love, 2015; Lee & Herborn, 2007; Herbert & Brown, 2006). Scholars Jane M. Jacobs and Loretta Lees (2013) trace the uptake of the concept, since its development in New York in the 1970s and its transfer to the UK context a decade later. In the UK, the concept had a major influence during the extensive housing policy revisions that took place in 1980s' Thatcher era (p. 1559). The concept was imported into British housing policy by Alice Coleman, a geographer at King's College in London and advisor to the Department of Environment on housing policy under Thatcher's regime (p. 1575). Coleman elaborated Newman's theories and translated them into the British context and, by gaining Thatcher's support (p. 1575), she was able to advance her studies and disseminate the theories in the UK, shaping housing policymaking for years to come. By studying how the urban concept was mobilized and transferred geographically from the US to the UK context, Jacobs and Lees (2013) draw attention to the important role this concept has had in shaping housing policymaking worldwide.

Because of the governmental endorsement the concept gained in both the US and the UK, it had a huge field of applicability in policymaking and urban management practices. In addition, the concept continued to be influential in academic work and theories on public housing. Rebekah Coley, Frances Kuo & William Sullivan's (1997) focused study is one example of how the concept evolved in theories on public housing design. The authors examine the correlation between the presence of green elements in outdoor areas in public housing and social interaction. For the authors, the natural landscaping of such spaces encourages use by youth and adults and

hence plays a major role in developing a sense of community, a foundational element to the creation of defensible space.

With time, the concept of defensible space extended to include other types of built environment and other geographical contexts. Dongkuk Chang (2011) applies the concept in non-Western contexts. Chang investigates the relation between burglary rates and urban spatial structures in Korean cities. He engages with several studies that have done similar work, and recognizes their importance as site of application of defensible space theoretical frameworks. Among those studies are (Park, 1995) also in South Korea, (Hillier, 2003) in English and Australian cities, (Shu & Huang, 2003) in Taiwan and (Greene & Greene, 2003) in Chile.

Since the 1990s, "defensible space" transitioned from an urban concept limited to studies of how the built environment deters or encourages crime to become an urban planning approach to crime-prevention adopted by governments on a global scale. Paul Cozens and Terrance Love (2015) trace the current status of "crime prevention through environmental design" (CPTED) since its origins in Newman's work (p. 396). The authors argue that the concept continued to evolve since the 1970s and witnessed a major shift in the 1990s from being solely an architectural concept focused on the physical aspect of the built environment to include the social dimension through "social programs and community participation to promote self-policing by the community" (p. 397).

Scholars interested in this shift locate the concept within neoliberal urban governance. The work of such scholars is mainly critical of the way the concept has been instrumentalized in neoliberal city management. For instance, scholars Murray Lee and Peter Herborn (2007) discuss how local and community-based crime prevention is part of a larger "shift from state-centred forms of social control to forms of regulation developed and implemented at local levels by local governments" (p. 26). It is part of the tendency of the state to withdraw from its obligations and

extend them to include parastate actors that, in resonance with neoliberal affinities, become increasingly responsible for crime prevention strategies.

Steve Herbert and Elizabeth Brown (2006) shed light on the spatial transformations resulting from the neoliberal approach to urban needs of the last three decades (p. 755). They focus on the two widely influential criminology theories – broken windows and situational crime prevention – and argue that they are "responses to the contemporary problems of globalization … the newest innovations in state management techniques" (p. 766). The authors explain how the two theories have at their core Newman's defensible space. These theories suggest "the semiotics of landscape" (p. 762), specifically, landscapes' capability to convey messages regarding "defensibility" (p. 763) and vulnerability to crime. This positions everyone as a "potential criminal" (p. 763) and neutralizes criminality as a category where people sit as either "inside" or "outside" of criminality (p. 763). In Newman's defensible space, the authors note, the solution to the symbolism of landscape (i.e. vulnerability to crime) is community. A healthy community is capable of transmitting symbols of sovereignty over space. Through communal organization, residents become responsible for their own space and are able to deter crime. The assumption then is that community possesses an intrinsic biological characteristic: a sense of territoriality. Territoriality becomes means of differentiation between who is a "potential criminal" and who is a "potential victim" (p. 764).

Like Herbert and Brown (2006), Kenny Cupers (2016) pays attention to the concept of territoriality. He argues that defensible space has played an important role in rationalizing the "demise of public housing" in the 1990s. The shift away from public housing in the West is symptomatic of the neoliberal "restructuring of state governance away from public welfare" (p. 166) and a result of neoliberal rationalities that neglected and privatized existing public housing as well as the withdrawal of the state from its obligation to provide housing. He notes though that this shift is not only economical but is also epistemological (p. 166). For Cupers, "territoriality," one of

the four constituent elements of defensible space, is key to this epistemological evolution. He traces the concept of "human territoriality" from its origins in 1920s zoology, which lead to understandings of animals, and humans later on, as "territorial species." Robert Ardrey, an influential proponent of the concept of territoriality since the 1960s, defines territory as: "an area of space, whether of water or earth or air, which an animal or group of animals defends as an exclusive preserve ... A territorial species of animals, therefore, is one in which all males, and sometimes females too, bear an inherent drive to gain and defend an exclusive property" (p. 174).

Ardrey's conception of territoriality, Cupers shows, made the association with the notion of human property. Newman adopted such ideas of human territoriality in his theories of defensible space and with such concept in mind he aimed to respond to societal problems (p. 175). Human territoriality positioned property at the base of social organization (p. 175). Cupers explains: "Human territoriality was based on the innateness of private property, which is what ultimately legitimized the ongoing transformations of housing policy and finance during the 1970s… a shift that culminated in Margaret Thatcher's "right to buy" scheme of 1980" (p. 167). Cupers analysis pays close attention to how the epistemology of defensible space served the needs of neoliberalism and played a major role in diluting the states obligations to provide housing. Part of what makes Cupers research useful in my studies is the critical lens through which he looks at conceptions of community. Newman, he argues, "implicitly placed older ideals of citizen participation and organic community in the service of what was essentially a neoliberal management approach" (p. 178). Human territoriality, instead of enhancing a sense of communality, ended up supporting individuality through the association Newman made between territoriality and private property. Private property, a neoliberal desire, paradoxically became reason to organize contemporary society (p. 178).

Despite the intensive body of literature available on Black geographies and anti-Black urban governance, the literature on anti-blackness has paid little attention to the crucial role of

defensible space in shaping such spaces and practices. There is an opening though in the work of Rashad Shabazz (2015) where he critiques Newman's work as an expression of "carceral power." For Shabazz, one of the main points of interest in theories of defensible space refers to surveillance:

> the need to make habitable spaces open, visible and cooperative to surveillance that was hidden in plain site. Like Bentham's panopticon prison design, which used architecture to 'induce in the inmate a state of consciousness and permanent visibility,' the insertion of surveillance in the intimate lives of residents made it possible for security forces to monitor resident activity (p. 66-67).

While focusing on the applicability of Newman's theories in the US context, such as the RTH – a housing project in Chicago – Shabazz highlights one of the most dangerous aspects of Newman's architecture and planning theories is their ability to normalize policing. Residents were being surveyed without their consent and without being able to identify the observer – "the omniscient eye" (p. 67). The carceral power operating in RTH, according to Shabazz, created a "spatial nexus between home and prison, captivity and freedom. The normalization of security and surveillance in the spaces where Black people live make of such spaces a "liminal space" between home and prison.

Shabazz's critique of surveillance dovetails with the arguments of Simone Browne (2015), which focus on surveillance in its many forms. Browne engages Fanon's account on surveillance to argue that in public spaces shaped by whiteness, the public acts or merely the presence of Black youth in a public park, are 'coded' and 'abnormalized' through surveillance mechanisms and result in punitive measures (Browne, 2015, p. 17). Seeking to situate the present within a longer history and geography, Browne traces the surveillance of blackness through a long series of spaces (Bentham's Panopticon, the Brooks slave ship, the airport, Internet art) and segments of time (slavery, the American Revolution, Post-9/11). Metaphorically and materially, Browne argues, blackness is the invisible substance that "structures the universe of modernity" and can be detected, like a black hole, by its effects on the region of space where it is located. Put in other

words, the major role blackness has in shaping practices of surveillance has been long neglected. Therefore, surveillance should be examined and theorized specifically through its effects on Black people (Browne, 2015, p. 9).

For both Shabazz and Browne, surveillance is a constant feature of Black life. When present in the public space, the Black body is considered a signifier of 'excess' (Silva, 2014; Razack, 2015). It seems, then, to require observation, its movements need to be observed, guarded against, and ultimately disciplined. If the Black body – represented in public discourses as young, criminal and threatening (Symons, 1999) – cannot be eliminated from the public space, its presence can be reduced or controlled by means of police intensified surveillance. The police cannot 'efface' the Black body; hence, it 'secures' its presence in the public space (Razack, 2015, p. 44). Missing in Shabazz and Browne's theses on surveillance of Black people is a closer attention to the important role of the state and state agents, including the police as well as community organizations, in constructing communities capable of auto-surveilling their residents. Is this not what Newman's project is all about: putting Black communities under surveillance by the community of residents itself? Is he not calling for the production of a space that is "defensible" because it enables such form of auto-surveillance through both the physical rearrangement of space and the social rearrangement of community?

These questions point to a possible fracture in the notion of community that Newman's work invokes. There have been criticisms of Newman's work and of surveillance. My second contribution to the literature in this thesis is to use such work and connect it to recent scholarship on anti-blackness in order to examine the raciality embedded in discourses of community (as produced and circulated by community organizations) in order to shed light on how community is constituted through anti-blackness. By focusing on discourses of community, I aim to contribute to literatures on anti-blackness and anti-Black surveillance. Further, such work could add to the available critical literature on defensible space.

*1.2 **Research Design***

*1.2.1 **Research Outline***

Plan Robert, as I noted above, is the site of application of a pair of security strategies: community policing and the creation of defensible space. The proposed research examines how discourses of community operate within these two forms of security practices in Plan Robert. It focuses on two research questions in particular:

(1) How are conceptions of community and its outside (threat) produced and mobilized through (a) community policing and (b) the creation of defensible space in Plan Robert? And to what extent do discourses of community, as produced and circulated through community work targeting Black communities, play a role in shaping conceptions of blackness? How do these conceptions justify the state's interventions in Black communities?

(2) How are Black youth positioned in relation to these discourses of community? What role does this positioning play in conceptions of Black communities as dysfunctional? And to what extent is this positioning a continuation of the 500-year-old structure of anti-blackness in Quebec, specifically, and in the world, more generally?

Pursuing these questions will make it possible to better understand the operation of community policing and the creation of defensible spaces. It will allow me to bring recent scholarship on anti-blackness into discussions of both forms of security practices. It will seek to understand how, as in the constitution of civil society, the making of community operates through anti-Black exclusion – the exclusion, in particular, of the Black youth who reside in Plan Robert. It will also allow me to interrogate the important role discourses of community play in constituting who is community and who is not, and to reflect on the different ways through which anti-blackness continues to develop and adapts according to contemporary ways of governance operating in the modern society within which we live. Looking at how discourses of community operate in Plan Robert, empirically, in the

two forms of security practices – community policing and the creation of defensible spaces – is a crucial part of my research, because it provides empirical evidence to the theory my literature review emphasizes. This work, in addition to contributing to the scholarly literature, will help to interrupt these practices as they presently operate.

*1.2.2 **Research Methods***

In order to achieve the above, I will develop my empirical work around two main lines of inquiry. The first considers the operation of community policing in Plan Robert. In this part, I focus on the role of community organizations in shaping community policing and the way it is operationalized. As the literature on community policing shows, the shift in policing strategies to 'softer' ways of control is achieved through the extension of the obligations of the state to include local non-state agents. There is reason to believe that security management in Plan Robert and the shift toward community policing is a result of the failure of the police to "control" the housing complex through a repressive approach, hence the need for the intervention of non-state agents. My task is to trace the work of community workers who operate on the terrain to provide empirical evidence to the otherwise theoretical concepts that are often hard to reify, demonstrating how these 'softer' policing strategies, carried out by non-state agents who collaborate closely with the police and other state agents (e.g., OMHM and municipality), are not necessarily less repressive.

Community policing, different from the more traditional policing of citizens by the police, depends on the direct contact between community workers and residents, and on building relations of trust with the residents of Plan Robert to perpetuate control through other ways, different from the more direct interventions of the police. More importantly, it also involves rallying certain community members against others through the discourses of community the community workers produce and circulate, constituting the divisions between who is part of the community and who is not, the protected from and the protected against. My task, in addition, is to examine

the raciality embedded in this discourse, and how the resulting notion of community is thus the cutting edge between whiteness and blackness.

The second line of inquiry focuses on the creation of defensible space. This thesis explores how the OMHM, together with the police and community organizations, as a state agent operating at the municipal level, is adopting defensible space mechanisms in its approach to security in public housing, and how this is crucial in shaping the dividing line between who is community and who is not, between blackness and whiteness. This part focuses mainly on the interventions of the institutional partners (i.e., the police and the OMHM) and their collaboration with community workers to manage space and to enact surveillance mechanisms in space. I focus specifically on the role of the OMHM in shaping the physical environment and the role the physical plays in changing the lives of youth. In this part, it is also important to highlight how discourses of community are crucial in conceptions of space and Black communities as dysfunctional, thus in need of the state's intervention.

Following the two lines of inquiry, I make the community worker the centre of my analysis and focus on the role s/he plays in defining the line between who is community and who is not. Methodologically, in order to do this, my empirical work includes attending consultation tables ("tables de concertation") that bring together different state and non-state agents to discuss security issues in Plan Robert. These consultation tables take place in Plan Robert on a regular basis, bringing together the OMHM, community partners and the police to discuss different aspects of the lives of residents of Plan Robert, mainly revolving around security issues. I have attended three consultation tables focused on security: le comité de pilotage Action Saint Michel Est (ASME), comité qualité de vie and la Concertation en sécurité de Saint-Michel, since the summer of 2015 and was able to observe some of the important ways through which the committee operates. The three consultation tables take place every 2 months and comprise different community workers (e.g., representatives of Mon Resto, Tandem, La Ville de Montreal, la Maison des jeunes) depending

on the social issues the committee discusses. An ethnographic analysis of such consultation tables has proven to be a useful tool in understanding how in practical terms state-society relations develop and how the work of community workers is central to policing of Black youth in public housing.

Most importantly, attending these consultation tables led to an invaluable opportunity, when in March 2017, I was tasked by the committee with documenting its history and was granted access to +/- 500 documents comprising: action plans, evaluation reports, subvention requests, budgets, meeting minutes, research material and studies, covering the period from 1996 until 2017, but mostly the period between 2001 and 2012. This period is mostly covered because of the funding applications the committees have submitted in order to operationalize their security programs. In these funding requests, community workers address the state (e.g., the police, the OMHM) regarding security issues and Black youth. They also justify their raison d'être and provide evidence to why their programs should continue to operate.

In writing my thesis, I have employed content analysis of these documents. These documents have proven to be a fundamental methodological resource because they (1) provide factual data regarding the history of the neighbourhood (e.g., reports, historical context, demographics, statistics, meeting minutes describing events and interventions); (2) cover the work of the committee and its progressive development as an organization, interventions, objectives, theoretical framework and philosophy of intervention and helps in mapping out the different state (e.g., SPVM, OMHM) and non-state (e.g., Tandem, Mon Resto, La Maison des jeunes) agents operating in Plan Robert, identifying the different collaborations and connections between these different agents, and identifying the different municipal, federal and provincial programs that have been put in place in Plan Robert by these agents; (3) shed light on the important economic value of the work of the committee and the role the funding programs played in fulfilling the committee's exigency to legalize its presence and hence guarantee its durability in time. Those funds played an

instrumental role in the committee's development and its operation but also shaped Black youth as valuable economic epistemological subjects; and (4) unfold the discourses of community the committee produced and circulated, as well as the different knowledge production mechanisms behind the committee's theoretical framework, highlighting the shifts in the language adopted, whether internal within the work of the committee or external narratives that dissipate into the public discourse regarding the housing complex and its residents.

In adopting the above methodology, I aim to bring attention to how discourses of community were instrumentalized since the beginning of the policing operation in Plan Robert to justify the shift from state to parastate control in the 1990s, and from repressive police control to preventive strategies in Montreal, in accordance with the neoliberal shift that was taking place elsewhere in the world. The language used in the conversations around security issues that take place within the committee's consultation tables, the adopted actions and the committee's modes of intervention position Black youth outside conceptions of citizenship and community, as external threat, and shape conceptions of space. This is crucial in conceptions of Black communities as dysfunctional and needing the state's intervention and control.

1.2.3 *Methodological considerations*

This is not, I should emphasize, a study of an isolated "case" or "location." My aim is not, that is, to produce a detailed understanding of Plan Robert, alone. Rather, I approach Plan Robert as part of broader network of knowledge and power. The convergence of different political actors and events in the geographic site of Plan Robert constitutes a significant spatiotemporal *node,* and a particular site through which to look empirically at the world-spanning processes that shape the life conditions of Black youth and discourses on Black criminality.

Doreen Massey (1993) sheds light on the importance of developing a 'progressive sense of place'; one that understands place as non-static. She explains how different intersections of

economic, political and social relations, each with their internal structures of power and domination, shape the geographies within which they form. These intersections help understand the space as having no boundaries and that if there is a division line from an outside, this line should operate as linkage to rather than a division from the outside. She states:

> The uniqueness of a place, or a locality … is constructed out of particular interactions and mutual articulations of social relations, social processes, experiences and understandings, in a situation of co-presence, but where a large proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are actually constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street, a region or even a continent. Instead then, of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings. And this in turn allows a sense of place which is extraverted, which includes a consciousness of its links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive way the global and the local (Massey, 1993, p. 67).

In my research, I adopt a similar approach and consider the policing project in Plan Robert as an intersectional moment of articulation in the making of global anti-blackness. I bring grounded empirical research together with Montreal-focused-literatures on racialized policing and global literatures on anti-blackness, in order to look at the specificity of Plan Robert as site of anti-Black violence and contextualize this site within the larger picture and patterns of global anti-Black violence. Instead of exploring the spectacular repetitive killings of Black people in the US and elsewhere in the world, through my empirical work in Plan Robert, I want to focus my attention on community, and dislodge the role of the community worker in shaping conceptions of blackness, and as a neoliberal non-state agent in a governmental structure of control and power.

In order to do so, I borrow the thesis of Frank Wilderson (2003a) and Denise Ferriera da Silva (2013) who argue that the origin of anti-Black violence is embedded in the universal constitution of the modern categories of the human, specifically civil society, and the theories that have shaped our modern society (such as Marxism, Gramsci or Hegel), which are unable to respond to black subjectivity. Notions of civil society are important in our understanding of community today as site of re-elaboration of the position of the Black subject in our contemporary society. My research will explore how such notions are involved in the reproduction of white

supremacy, which renews itself in different spatiotemporal historic instances and adapt to the social and political requirements of the context within which it develops. Engaging with events and people who operate and move back and forth between the political society and civil society, in the particular case of Plan Robert, is a valuable opportunity to examine how the idea of civil society and the exclusion of Black people from it is a continuation of a 500-year old anti-blackness.

Another important methodological consideration in my research concerns discourses. In his studies of knowledge systems, Foucault focuses on discourses, as important sites where to interrogate knowledge and the mechanisms that produce them. His critical analysis sees discourses as more than just a translation tool, or merely means to express thought, devoid of laws and possibilities (Burchell & Gordon & Miller, 1991, p. 61-63). For Foucault, discourses are interesting because they undergo constant transformations, and are shaped and reshaped by new beginnings. In Foucault's analysis, content and style and grammar and meaning, and the laws that structure discourses take a step back to make up space for the more beneficial interrogation of the field of application within which they emerge, operate, transform and disappear. In more practical terms, this means looking at the social circumstances that produce them and allow them to persist.

The above considerations open venue for a critique of history, which is otherwise perceived as constant, never changing. For Foucault, through discourse analysis, history is no longer an archive of accumulated surviving texts, constant and inert, but rather a dynamic field where it is possible to capture transformation, thresholds, divergences, differences, oppositions, illuminating the knowledge systems, as well as the institutions, social, political and economic conditions that produce such moments (Burchell & Gordon & Miller, 1991, p. 61-63).

Though race was not a focal point in Foucault's analysis of discourses, following an approach similar to his in my research may prove helpful in identifying the moments in the recent history of Plan Robert where certain conceptions of blackness forged. Through my research on Plan

Robert, I trace the transformations and discontinuities in the discourses the community workers in Plan Robert adopted, and analyze the interventions, which shaped and were shaped by these discourses. These interventions cannot be looked at in isolation from the discourses that shaped them, and the complex networks of state/non-state collaborations, human resources and finances that permitted their emergence. In doing so, I aim to unravel the conditions surrounding their emergence and the different transformations and effects they enabled.

In Plan Robert, discourses of community started to shape in the early 1990s, around the time of the establishment of the first committee, the Comité Sécurité Qualité de Vie (CSQV). Tracing the conditions that allowed for the CSQV's discourses (and discourses of the other committees established later on) to rise and persist will contribute to broader critiques of contemporary forms of anti-blackness, specifically those concerned with security practices targeting Black communities, as well as the longer history of the state's obsessions with Black communities. The state's aptitudes toward these communities, specifically in the North American context, as my research would like to highlight, spans hundreds of years, beginning with the colonization of the Americas, the global project of slavery and formal emancipation. In the contemporary instance, it is important to show how this is ongoing, and translates into violent security practices that aim to control, surveil, and, to some extent, disrupt the presence of Black communities. Through my analysis of the discourses the community workers produced and mobilized, and of the social and physical interventions enacted in Plan Robert, I wish to capture the present moment and contextualize it within a longer history that goes beyond the years of the community project in Plan Robert, contributing, hopefully, to the literatures on anti-blackness. This is the work I aim to do throughout my thesis.

Based on the above, in the next two chapters, I will (1) introduce the history of the committee, its philosophy of intervention, who is involved, organizations and individuals, its objectives and modes of operation; (2) analyze the important ways through which the work of the

committee focused on the social construction of the community; and (3) discuss the important ways through which the work of the committee shaped the physical space with focus on strategies of securitization. Through my site-specific investigation of the community policing project currently in operation in Plan Robert, my intention is to bring to the fore the empirical ways through which the state exercises control over Black communities in the present moment but also in relation to the longer history of anti-blackness in North America. The community policing operation in Plan Robert, I show, is constitutively anti-Black, and so are the social and physical interventions this operation enables

CHAPTER TWO

The Birth and Development of the Policing Project in Plan Robert

In the summer of 2015, I met with the OMHM community outreach in Plan Robert to discuss my research interest and the possibility of getting the OMHM's authorization to conduct my fieldwork in the complex. After the brief conversation we had at the OMHM's office, located on the ground floor of one of the buildings, the OMHM's agent gave me a tour. While roaming the different parts of the complex, public, semipublic, and interior common spaces, it was particularly interesting to observe the facility with which the agent moved around these spaces, accessing one building after another, moving through staircases and the common services areas, hence reflecting the kind of authority her position as OMHM agent granted her. As we continued the tour, the conversation went on, and the agent introduced the work of the OMHM in Plan Robert.

The OMHM intervened, she told me, mainly on the physical aspect of the complex, focusing on structural issues and concerns related to sanitation. Nevertheless, the role of the OMHM in Plan Robert was not limited to the physical aspect, but rather extended to include intervening on the social aspects related to the lives of the community of residents. This work occurred through its collaboration with community organizations working intensively in Plan Robert, such as Mon Resto and la Maison des jeunes. All of this work, both physical and social action, ultimately pivoted around the OMHM's concern with security, especially in relation to the presence of youth in the public and semipublic spaces. The agent pointed at the spaces where the youth congregate, making a clear point: there is a strong association between sentiments of (in)security and the presence of youth in the physical space. This theme, I later learned, has pervaded the work of the OMHM, its partners, and the committees that unite them – the Comité Securité Qualité de Vie (CSQV), and later, la Table Multidisciplinaire, and Action Saint-Michel Est

(ASME) – for two decades. Securing public space from racialized/Black youth is the various committees' raison d'être.

This chapter provides a high-level history of the committees, as it appears in the documents I obtained and analyzed, from their formation (beginning with CSQV) in 1996 until the present. It will trace the different organizational, economic, and epistemological shifts I was able to identify in the documents, and that are, in my opinion, crucial to understand how the policing project in and around Plan Robert was enacted and sustained over time. I divide what follows into four chronologically ordered sections. Section 1 focuses on the early years of the committee, when it was first established and its philosophy of intervention was defined (1996–1999). Section 2 highlights the major shift consequent to the arrival of government funding in 1999 and what that funding brought about in terms of organizational and epistemological change (1999-2003). Section 3 focuses on an important change related to the police's increased direct involvement in the complex (2003-2004). Section 4, finally, covers the period between 2004 and 2012, which was marked by an increased involvement of the OMHM, closer collaboration between the institutional partners (mainly the OMHM and the police), and a greater focus on physical interventions and the securitization of space.

In each of the sections, I describe the work of the committee, the different members that joined the committee, and how their role expanded or narrowed. I also emphasize the role of two important elements in shaping the work and development of the committee during each of the phases: (1) the knowledge production mechanisms and their role in constructing the discourse the committee adopted, legitimizing its work and decisions to intervene on the physical and social aspects; and (2) the governmental funding programs the committee adhered to and their criteria, which were reason behind some of the shifts the committee underwent. By focusing on those two elements, in particular, I aim to elucidate how the committee's thinking in relation to security evolved, influencing consequent modes of interventions. The committee's thinking developed in

time, its operations varied, and so did the range of government funding programs that financed them. Surveying the different moments of change will allow me to reconstruct the committee's genealogy, and demonstrate that, while seemingly undergoing drastic epistemological and organizational shifts, the committee's work continued to pursue one mission: securing public and semipublic spaces from Black youth, in and around Plan Robert. The following chapter will examine how this thinking was practically put into play and translated into actual socio-physical interventions.

2.1 The Early years of the Organization: 1996 - 1999

It is not a random coincidence that the community intervention targeting security in Plan Robert began its operations in 1996. In that year, the SPCUM (currently known as SPVM, Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal) adopted a strategy focused on community policing to counter youth gang activity, and located "a prevention and community relations service" in each neighbourhood police centre (Symons, 1999). The SPVM's focus on youth gang activity, mainly those of "ethnic minorities" (Symons, 1999), goes back to 1989, when the anti-gang section at the department of the police of Montreal intensified its operations, and, as one police agent put it, "began functioning at full speed" (as quoted in Symons, 1999, p. 127). In 1996, following some major reorganizational restructuring, the police "designated youth and street gangs an organizational priority" (Symons, 1999, p. 127) for the five years following 1996.

In this new policing strategy, solutions to youth gang activity were located in a double operation: repressive and preventive. Repressive tactics operated "at the level of the gang's hard core" (Symons, 1999, p. 134), while prevention, according to the police's definition of it, included intervening "at the level of recruitment of young people and sensitization of both partners and schools to the dangers inherent in street gangs" (Symons, 1999, p. 134). This two-fold operation relied on a distinction between two categories of youth: those susceptible to rehabilitation through

prevention tactics, and those "hard core" gang members, subject to the more repressive tactics of the police. Those last are defined by the police as people who are "criminally active, immune to rehabilitation influences, and have abandoned any possibility of returning to school or to the work force" (Symons, 1999, 127). It was largely the second operation, focused on prevention, that called for the involvement of (non-police) institutions and community organizations. It was this operation that the committee was created to serve. And yet, as I will show, the distinction between two categories of youth would shape the committee's operation in the preventative realm.

The creation of the CSQV (later ASME) in 1996 produced a highly operational space of collaboration between the police, the OMHM, and various community organizations present on the terrain of Plan Robert. Among the community organizations, the oldest was la Maison des jenunes par la Grand'Porte (Dubois, 2001), a youth-serving organization established in 1983. Another organization, the food-serving organization Mon Resto, was established in 1995. These two organizations, together with 1, 2, 3 ! Go Saint-Michel, CECRG, OMHM, and CLSC Saint Michel became the founding members of the committee.[1,2] Soon after its establishment, the committee included other community organizations such as Tandem-Montréal and Eco-Quartier Saint-Michel, as well as other institutional partners such as the SPCUM's PDQ 30, and the Ville de Montréal-SSLDS.[3]

Since the beginning, the main aim of the committee, as described by the committee itself, was to create an informal space of encounter for its members to discuss security issues in the neighbourhood.[4] They clearly stated the scope of their operation as "changing the social structure of the community by intervening on the social components of sentiments of security" (translation

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[1] Historique du comité sécurité qualité de vie, the CSQV, 2005

[2] HLM St-Michel Nord, état de la situation, Luclie Dubois, 2001

[3] Ibid., 3

[4] Mise en contexte à propos des liens à établir entre les différentes instances de concertation dans le secteur Jean-Rivard, Yimga Maneffoming, animatrice de milieu et Donald Dubuc, coord. de la concertation Habitations St-Michel-Nord et voisinage, 2005

mine).[5] At this point, "sentiments of insecurity" were concentrated "in the vicinity of park René Goupil."[6] Located one block to the North of Plan Robert, Park René Goupil, is the nearest park to the housing complex and the most frequented by its residents, especially youth. While focusing on the spaces of the park René Goupil in the proximity of the housing complex, security was made the main objective of the work of the committee, and the socio-physical interventions the committee adopted served this objective. In the following years, the focus on security and related social-physical actions continued to operate in the park, while expanding to include the spaces of the housing complex.[7]

The committee pursued these aims through information exchange[8] and citizen mobilization.[9] In the years following its foundation, the committee became a space for the institutional partners (the police and the OMHM) and community organizations to work together, share information, and design and enact unified interventions. It also allowed the members to work together to mobilize citizens in the area by working closely with (certain) residents, building relations of trust, and bridging the gap between residents and institutional partners (police and OMHM).[10] This second (mobilizing) function was important. It was here that the committee played a vital role in administering the relations between residents, the police, and the OMHM. In doing so, it would help to normalize the police's and the OMHM's intensified presence in the neighbourhood.

The focus on citizen mobilization reflects the committee's approach to security management in Plan Robert, which relies on the principles of defensible space (Newman, 1972). Newman's conception of defensible space presumes that it is possible to create a socio-spatial

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[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] HLM St-Michel Nord, État de la situation, Luclie Dubois, 2001

[8] Plan d'action « Animateur de milieu/Veille environnementale », Axe II : Intervention dans le HLM Saint-Michel-Nord,

[9] Ibid.

[10] HLM St-Michel Nord, État de la situation, Luclie Dubois, 2001

barrier to criminality through the development of a residential social housing model that enhances certain residents' sense of community, thus rendering them responsible for defending the residential environment against other potential criminal residents (Newman, 1972). This conception of community entails a division within the community: some residents are perceived as part of the community, while others are perceived as a threat to the community. The creation of defensible space works through this division. Some residents, in effect, are rendered participants in policing their residential environment, and are rallied against some other residents. This way of thinking is at the basis of defensible space theory. In the following chapter, I will make the point that the community policing operation in Plan Robert is indeed guided by this conception of community and aims to create a defensible space in the complex.

To fulfill its mobilizing function, the committee relied on certain conceptions that racialized Black youth, and made blackness symptomatic of crime. In line with the police's newly adopted strategy to counter Black youth gang activity, the committee implicitly designated the Black youth of Plan Robert its main security concern. In doing so, it reiterated the police's distinction between two categories of youth, the potential criminal and the already criminal. But there was more at stake than just the pathologization of youth. In legitimizing its rise and its operations, most of the narratives the committee mobilized concerning Plan Robert portrayed a pathological environment (space and community), where such security phenomenon (i.e., Black youth gang activity) thrived. In this view, the specific security issue of youth gang activity necessitated the state's intervention through a major community intervention, because the community and its residential environment were dysfunctional. To fix the security concern with Black youth, the community as a whole needed to be fixed.

The committee's pathologization of the community in and around Plan Robert was consistent with contemporary media representations. A major article in La Presse, published one year before the founding of the committee, linked the crime problem around Plan Robert to its

demographics. The area, the article reported, was the densest of Montreal, with the highest number of residents per residential unit, a high percentage of 'ethnic' residents (mainly of Haitian origins), and a high percentage of single-parented families (Marsolais, 1995). These facts were meant to demonstrate the area's root problems, the symptom of which was a high crime rate. As the SPCUM's commandant at the time, Jean René Tremblay, explained: "the poorer you are and if you're an ethnic minority, the more tempting it becomes to join a gang" (Marsolais, 1995, translation mine).

The use of statistical data that link security issues in and around Plan Robert to the demographic composition of its population as predominantly Black continued to appear in the committee's discourse. Indeed, this data played an important role in shaping the committee's conception of the community, its thinking, and later on, its socio-physical operations.

One of the most important uses of demographic data occurred in Lucile Dubois's influential neighbourhood-portrait of Plan Robert, produced for the committee in 2001. In the portrait, she describes the drastic demographic change that occurred years before the foundation of the committee, in the 1980s, with the arrival of immigrants from Haitian origin, whose numbers increased to represent 50% of the population residing in the housing complex, reducing the percentage of French-Canadians (originally the majority) to less than 25%.[11] In Dubois's study, the demographic composition of the community is behind its segmentation in different ethnic groups, and is cause of the conflicts between residents.[12] This focus on the conflictual relations between the different ethnic groups constituting the community racialized the whole of the community and pathologized its residents. It anchored the association between ethnicity and conflict. In the case of Plan Robert, ethnicity meant blackness given the demographics provided referring to the Haitian origin of its residents.[13] While notions of community usually reflect a sense of unity, in the case of

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[11] HLM St-Michel Nord, état de la situation, Luclie Dubois, 2001

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

Plan Robert the community was portrayed as inherently prone to conflict because of blackness, thus necessitating the state's interference to fix the community and render it secure.

Aside from data, another way the committee pathologized the community was through descriptions of the relations between residents and the police. Dubois describes the creation of "mistrust" in the community, following a series of events in the late 1990s:

> At the end of 1995, two violent crimes (settlements between gangs of young people) occurred on the site of the housing complex, marking the spirits [shaking the residents]. Following these violent events, *a climate of fear and mistrust* took hold over the plan [Plan Robert]. The number of young people and several gestures of intimidation posed by them provoked among tenants of the social housing complex and their neighbours sentiments of insecurity. Undertaken in isolation, the actions of the police weren't sufficient to restore a climate of trust. Consequently, social workers and the OMHM made the social housing complex part of their targeted sectors of intervention (emphasis mine, translation mine).[14]

This passage portrays the community as dysfunctional, necessitating the intervention of the police and the committee in Plan Robert. The problem, in this passage, lies with the presence of youth in the spaces of the complex, a presence that reportedly incites a climate of violence and fear among other residents. In addition, Dubois clearly states that the police were not able to respond to this issue, signalling the urgency for a community intervention in Plan Robert.

Dubois's study, while pathologizing the entire community, also enacts divisions between different groups of residents. In addition to the 1980s' demographic change she describes, and the focus on the conflictual relations between different racialized groups, Dubois presents other statistical information to reinforce the focus on youth by providing demographics that refer to their numbers. The high percentage of youth among the population of residents (i.e., 61.5% of tenants under the age of 24 and 77.5% under 40),[15] the racial factor linked to youth, and inscribing them as the cause of violence and mistrust created a distinction between this particular group (Black youth) and the rest of the community.

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[14] HLM St-Michel Nord, état de la situation, Luclie Dubois, 2001

[15] Ibid.

The kind of language present in Dubois's above passage, appears elsewhere in the committee's discourse, and often circumscribes security concerns, specifically those related to youth gang activity, within the community of residents itself, justifying the intervention in the neighbourhood as a benevolent act aimed at the good of the community as a whole. In the next chapter, I will look closely at how this categorization of residents was constructed and how it was instrumental in the committee's approach to citizen mobilization, dividing the community into different categories, bringing some of the residents closer to the police and rallying them against others (Black youth of the complex).

Dubois's study was one of many reports undertaken or commissioned by the committee. Since the beginning, the committee published studies concerning some social and racial factors related to Plan Robert. In so doing, it constructed its discourse regarding the need to intervene in Plan Robert and how to intervene. This discourse dominated the committee's theoretical framework, its philosophy of intervention, and its objectives, and sustained its raison d'être and two decades of extensive interventions, affecting the lives of residents and their relationship to their residential environment. The different knowledge production mechanisms, such as collaborations with academic institutions and the media to produce surveys, university research, reports, documentaries, interviews and articles in newspapers were fundamental for the committee in promoting its mode of operation.

The early years of the committee (from 1996 to 1999) involved certain interventions in the community, and also laid the basis for subsequent interventions. The primary result of this period was the creation of a partnership between community workers and state agents. While facilitating the exchange of information between community organizations, the committee also strengthened the state's strategies by providing a space for the community workers and state agents (such as the police, the OMHM, the municipality) to discuss security issues and make decisions regarding security. Further, the committee played the role of the mediator between the state and the

community, and intervened on behalf of the state, enacting, as I will show, social and physical interventions. In the next few years, these initial efforts expanded and shifted toward the pursuit of funding, mainly those provided by governmental programs within the framework of crime prevention, funding opportunities which would help the committee finance its operations, hence sustain its presence. While operating specifically in the preventive realm, through these programs, the committee enabled the police's strategy targeting Black youth of Plan Robert.

2.2 The Arrival of Funding: 1999 - 2003

In its quest to formalize its presence and expand its operations in Plan Robert, the committee made an organizational shift in 1999 when it began to submit requests to certain governmental programs to acquire funds. The governmental programs the committee had access to were mostly concerned with security management through community work, and the operations they financed can be grouped into three categories: (1) crime prevention, (2) social integration, and (3) urban development. In the work of the committee, these three categories of government-financed interventions translated into operations targeting (1) the social aspects of the lives of residents (e.g., alimentary services, scholar and extracurricular activities, sports, cultural activities, etc.), and (2) the physical aspects related to the residential environment where the community of residents resides (e.g., housing conditions, public and semipublic spaces, common services facilities, community organized events in space, etc.). While taking different names and slipping under different bureaucratic categories, both kinds of operations aimed to secure (or clear) public and semipublic spaces from Black youth. These governmental funding programs aligned with the committee's existing thinking, its objectives, and its operations in Plan Robert. And yet, in this section, I look at things the other way around and show that the programs (and the funding tied to them) had a significant effect on the committee's thinking, its objectives, and its operations.

One of the committee's first efforts to obtain funds took place in the summer of 1999, when the committee designated a fiduciary for the committee and deposited a request to the Ministry of Public Security under the Programme de financement issu du partage des produits de la criminalité.[16] Through this program, grants were available to community organizations that have as their objective "crime prevention among youth" (MSP, 2008, translation mine). This program enabled the committee to involve some of its members in working closely with youth on the terrain, in order to prevent their adherence to gang activity, or to discourage the adherence of those already implicated in gang activity. This funding continued to support this objective until 2016, by funding community organizations such as PACT de rue (MSP, 2008), and la Maison des jeunes (MSP, 2016) who, through their services (e.g., sport activities, scholastic and extracurricular programs), had direct access to youth.

Another significant grant came in 1999, funded by the municipal-provincial program Quartiers Sensibles de la Ville de Montréal (i.e. sensitive neighbourhoods of the city of Montreal). The program's principal objective was to "combat poverty and social exclusion" (translation mine)[17] by prioritizing interventions in certain neighbourhoods of Montreal because of the social needs of such neighbourhoods. Plan Robert was enlisted among the 11 neighbourhoods designated by the Ville de Montreal as "sensitive neighbourhoods" ("quartiers sensibles").[18] While targeting social aspects of the lives of residents in "sensitive neighbourhoods", governmental programs such as Quartiers Sensibles (and Contrat de Ville as I show in the next paragraphs), clearly focused on security and, by funding community organizations such as CSQV, whose work is mainly concerned with security, ended up anchoring certain associations such as "poverty" and "social exclusion" with security concerns and Black youth criminality.

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[16] Historique du comité sécurité qualité de vie, the CSQV, 2005

[17] HLM St-Michel Nord, état de la situation, Luclie Dubois, 2001

[18] Ibid.

Quartiers Sensibles funded Dubois's aforementioned portrait of Plan Robert. Dubois's study

provides a clear example of how government-financed projects played a major role in shaping

discourse on security in the specific site of Plan Robert. Her study was produced in collaboration

with and upon the request of CSQV, whose members agreed on the importance of producing a

general portrait of the housing complex Plan Robert to get a better sense of what was happening in

the neighbourhood, and, above all, to intervene conjointly with the residents in the objective of

improving their lives. "The realization of this portrait on the housing complex" (translation mine),[19]

Dubois says, "is the first step in the action plan aiming to produce a process to take control over

the social housing complex Saint-Michel Nord [i.e., Plan Robert] by the residents themselves,

supported by the partners operating on the terrain, to identify the situation they should modify and

the means necessary, and evaluate the impacts" (translation mine).[20]

The study provided a rich portrait of the neighbourhood, listing, as I show in the previous

section, demographic and statistical data on the community of Plan Robert, details regarding the

physical/architectural composition of the housing complex, and extensive descriptions of the

security conditions the neighbourhood suffers from. In addition to this, the study also made the

phenomenon of gangs de rue a key point of analysis, linking the phenomenon to the conditions it

portrayed. In one instance of her study, Dubois declares:

> The housing complex is a recruitment pool for street gangs. In the territory of the housing
> complex, by tradition, there have been gang wars, with peaks of violence. Gang culture is
> anchored in this area, and according to the participants of the focus groups [the author
> conducted], there has been an outbreak in the gang phenomenon and drug traffic. There is
> a come-and-go of people "foreign" to the housing complex, the possession by some youth of
> knives ("armes blanches") and [how the youth gather in] mobs suggest that the housing
> complex is becoming a pool for gang recruitment in the neighbourhood. This gang problem
> is associated, more specifically, to youth of Haitian origin (translation mine).[21]

Here, the problem of gangs moves from gang-involved youth to the people and spaces of Plan

Robert. In underlining that the youth of Plan Robert who are involved in gang activity are of

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19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

Haitian origin, security concerns became directly associated with the presence of Black youth in space. There is also an important reference to the number of youth who, while occupying these spaces, gather in "mobs." This focus on the number of youth, and the pejorative connotation related to their gathering in space, became a recurrent theme in the committee's documents and reports. Constructing Black youth of Plan Robert as the main reason behind sentiments of insecurity in Plan Robert, and other related pejorative connotations, pathologized Black youth and their presence in space, but it also pathologized the physical space of Plan Robert, because of the presence of Black youth. Youth gathering in space, regardless of their relationship to gangs, became in itself a security concern. This conception of space as pathological is at the base of a lot of the work of the committee, which, as I show in the next chapter, targeted the physical space (public and semipublic), but also social interventions, concerned with residents' relation to space.

The committee continued to obtain funding from different programs and shifted its approach to security consequently. Another important grant, under the Contrat de Ville program, was first obtained in 2003. Contrat de Ville signalled the beginning of a long-term partnership between the Ville de Montreal (i.e. the City of Montreal) and the government of Quebec, with focus on urban revitalization[22] in certain areas of Montreal. In 2003, the Ville de Montreal signed a 5-year agreement with the government of Quebec, introducing an intervention-based strategy targeting the urban environment. The program engaged 10 departments and aimed to implement concrete measures for the sustainable economic, social, cultural, and community development of the city of Montreal "to achieve a number of objectives in the area of housing, urban revitalization, infrastructural renewal, road and collective transport, social, community, economic and cultural development" (Montreal, 2003, translation mine). Similar to the project Quartiers Sensibles, under

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[22] Contrat de Ville entre la Ville de Montreal et le Gouvernement du Quebec 2003-2007, retrieved from: https://www.mamrot.gouv.qc.ca/pub/metropole/documentation/contrat_ville_montreal.pdf

Contrat de Ville, the Ville de Montreal identified priority areas of intervention where efforts of the province and the city must be directed.[23]

CSQV framed its work, in its grant application, mainly within the program's "Integrated Territorial Approach and Priority Areas of Intervention" (translation mine).[24] Some of the program's objectives that mostly aligned with the work of the committee included: "encouraging citizen participation, sense of belonging and control over [residents'] residential environment; encouraging social and physical development; providing citizens with the support needed in their mobilization surrounding the parks of the sector with focus on security issues; encouraging the appropriation of common spaces by citizens" (translation mine).[25] Because of the program's focus on urban renewal, the committee, in its approach to citizen mobilization, put more emphasis on residents' relation to the physical environment. Occupying space became an intrinsic part of the work of the committee and translated into actual interventions in space, such as community-organized events that aim to occupy the public and semipublic spaces of the complex, in order to render these spaces more secure (I discuss these events in detail in the next chapter). The committee encouraged residents' participation in its community interventions. Here, residents became active actors in resolving security issues, through their *physical* presence in the public and semipublic spaces of the housing complex, which became necessary to counter security concerns.[26] These objectives guided the work of the committee during the 2000s and continued to be a focal part of the committee's operation in Plan Robert, for years after. This raises important questions regarding conceptions of the community in Plan Robert, the dividing line between residents deserving of space and those other residents perceived as threat, and hence excluded from the right to space.

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Formulaire de présentation de projet, Contrat de Ville entre la Ville de Montreal, CSQV, 2005

[26] Ibid.

As the next chapter will demonstrate, most of the work of the committee that targeted the social aspect of the lives of residents relied on conceptions of citizenship. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, the committee constructed the dividing line between citizen residents (having right to space and hence are part of the community), and non-citizen residents (threatening space and hence are outside of the community) by rallying some residents (citizen residents) against other residents (Black youth). This affected the physical interventions as well. The committee's work encouraged those "citizen residents" to occupy space, through community-organized events, and by remodelling the architectural spaces and repurposing their use, with the aim to push Black youth outside of space, conceiving them as non-citizens, and threat to the social order of the complex. The above two aspects of the work of the committee, social and physical interventions focused on certain conceptions of the community, parallel typical defensible space mechanisms. As we will see in the next chapter, defensible space theories played a significant role in shaping the work of the committee in Plan Robert, specifically, and conceptions of blackness, more generally.

2.3 The Year of the Crisis: 2003-2004

Governmental funding programs made community workers into quasi-state agents. They allowed the state's intervention in certain areas, such as Plan Robert, avoiding the 'need' for a police's coercive approach that might generate negative charges of racial profiling against the police.[27] Governmental funding programs steered the work of the community organizations in Plan Robert, through the funds they provided. As evident from the above section, the committee CSQV indeed served this particular objective. Under the pretext of crime prevention, it allowed the state to expand its operation in Plan Robert and continue to intervene in the complex and control its community of residents.

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[27] Rapport d'évaluation présenté au Fonds d'action en prévention du crime (FAPC), ASME, 2010

Since the formation of the committee in 1996, the community workers focused most of their efforts on building relations of trust with the residents. Those efforts were jeopardized when, in the summer of 2003, a year often described as the year of *the* crisis, the police undertook a "coercive" intervention in Plan Robert,[28] arresting residents. This caused a crisis of confidence between the residents and the police. The residents of the housing complex reacted badly to this operation, considering themselves victims of prejudices of the police.[29]

The events received major media attention. A first article, published on the 15th of September, 2003, appeared on the front page of La Presse (Péloquin, 2003), recounting the events that victimized the residents of Plan Robert and their response. Residents of Plan Robert, the article reported, filed a lawsuit against the Ville de Montreal, the PDQ 29 and PDQ 30 (which later merged under PDQ 30), accusing the police of harassment and racial profiling (Péloquin, 2003). Youth of Haitian origin (among other racialized groups) were targeted by the police, and contested being fined simply for sitting in front of their homes or for wandering ("flânage") in green spaces around the complex (Péloquin, 2003). The youth also contested police agents' racist remarks. One youth was reportedly told that it is better if he stopped wandering around and went clean "his Port-au-Prince," referring to the Haitian origins of numerous youth of the sector (Péloquin, 2003, translation mine). Further, the article states, the residents filed a complaint to the Commission des droits de la personne, charging the OMHM, as well, for allowing the police's harassment of residents, when it is within their mandate, as owners of the housing complex, to protect residents (Péloquin, 2003).

The police's response was published the following day, on the 16th of September, 2003, also appearing on the front page of La Presse (Laroche, 2003). The police denied the claims of racial profiling. However, Pierre Savard, the commandant supervisor of the PDQ 30, confirmed that the police had intensified its presence in the housing complex during the month of August,

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[28] Procès-verbal, table multidisciplinaire dossier H.L.M. Saint-Michel Nord, Assemblée tenue le 26 mars 2004

[29] Rapport d'évaluation présenté au Fonds d'action en prévention du crime (FAPC), ASME, 2010

2003, and that some of its operations responded to the request of "citizen" residents of the complex, who demanded the police's interference. Some of the operations, according to the commandant, are justifiable (Laroche, 2003). The response from the police did not resolve the issue of the crisis, and the years that followed necessitated further action on the part of the police, actions that sought alternative ways to control the community that would not result in the response from residents the crisis provoked.

In effect, following the 2003 crisis, and the media coverage that brought the issue to the front page of one of Montreal's most read newspapers, the police made a strategic shift in its approach to youth gang activity in Plan Robert, from the previous traditional "zero-tolerance" approach to the "Integrated Prevention Strategy" (Dagher, 2011). The police's new strategy continued along the same lines of work of CSQV, bringing together institutions at the federal, provincial, and municipal level, as well as private and community organizations to fulfill a "global vision" that has as its main objective "the prevention and social inclusion of new immigrants, especially youth" (Dagher, 2011). This is the policing approach that was officially embraced by the police in 2004 and made Plan Robert its site of application (Dagher, 2011). The committee, here, was integrated in the police's global vision of Saint-Michel, through the police's greater involvement in the work of the committee.

This greater involvement of the police in Plan Robert is mostly apparent through the work of Pierre Savard, the aforementioned commandant supervisor of the PDQ 30 at the time, whose work embodied the police's new approach to security in Plan Robert. To respond to the crisis of 2003, Savard established the committee la Table Multidisciplinaire St-Michel-Nord[30] This committee soon changed name and came to be known as the committee Concertation Habitation St-Michel-Nord et voisinage (CHSMNV). Both names continued to appear in the committee's documents and are used interchangeably. For simplification, and because it appears more

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[30] Ibid.

frequently in the various committees' internal documents, in what follows, I will refer to this committee using the name la Table Multidisciplinaire.

The new committee, la Table Multidisciplinaire, included some community workers already involved in Plan Robert, most of them also members of the CSQV such as the OMHM and the Ville de Montreal. La Table Multidisciplinaire included, in addition, the PDQ 30, represented by Savard, who participated directly in the work of the committee. The police were not formal members of the CSQV. The roles adopted by the participating members in this last committee la Table Multidisciplinaire did not differ much from the previous committee CSQV. Nonetheless, the approach to security adopted changed. The committee, guided by Savard, sought alternative ways to manage security, ways that would not provoke a crisis similar to the one witnessed in the summer of 2003. Like the CSQV, the new committee focused much of its energy on the phenomenon of Black youth gang activity. The new committee's approach to this phenomenon was to adopt what it termed a Proximity Approach ("approche de proximité"), "positioning citizens as central to its work," and "targeting families and youth under the age of 15" (translation mine).[31]

This Proximity Approach saw Savard take an active role in building direct relations between the police and Plan Robert's community, by organizing meetings with certain groups of residents, such as those he conducted with the women of Plan Robert in October of 2003 to raise awareness regarding preventive policing.[32] He also approached the larger Haitian community to establish connections with some of its members, such as the time when he attended the forum organized by la Communauté chrétienne haïtienne, where police agents ("agents de la paix") and more than 50 youth met to discuss the rights of citizens versus the rights of police agents.[33] In addition to the above, as I will show in detail in the next chapter, some other influential programs resulted from this Proximity Approach and led to more direct relations between the police and

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[31] Contrat de Ville entre la Ville de Montreal, Formulaire de présentation de projet, CSQV, 2004

[32] Procès-verbal, table multidisciplinaire dossier H.L.M. Saint-Michel Nord, Assemblée tenue le 4 novembre 2004

[33] Ibid.

different groups of residents, in different capacities. These programs included sports participatory activities where police agents played soccer with youth, community-organized events in parks, as well as the creation of a tenants' association. These efforts to engage multiple actors were similar to the work of the CSQV. La Table Multidisciplinaire, however, placed more emphasis on the police's direct engagement in the work of the committee and in building contacts between the police agents and certain residents.

In order to achieve the above, Savard's work in Plan Robert marked the beginning of a decade of intensified collaborations between the police and the OMHM, and more strategic collaborations between the police and the OMHM, and the community organizations members of la Table Multidisciplinaire. It built on the CSQV's first efforts to anchor the presence of the community organizations and the institutional partners in the complex and to establish the first contacts with members of the community of Plan Robert. Building on the work of CSQV, indeed, the direct participation of Savard in la Table Multidisciplinaire aimed to steer all the different efforts of state and non-state agents in one direction and to have a more unified strategy where all different interventions are coordinated.[34] These new ways of operating relied mainly on rendering some residents' participant in policing their residential environment, aligning the committee's objectives with those of certain residents. Countering the issue of Black youth and their presence in the public and semipublic spaces became a common goal where the police and some residents work together to resolve.

2.4 Increased Institutional Collaboration and Securitization of Space: 2004-2012

The police's greater involvement in the work of the CHSMNV went hand in hand with more emphasis on the physical securitization of space. Given the shortcomings of previous policing approaches to secure the public and semipublic spaces of the complex from Black youth –

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[34] Ibid.

including the 2003 crisis they provoked – the committee directed its efforts toward the creation of a defensible space in Plan Robert. Defensible space entails the creation of an environment in which the architectural arrangement of buildings becomes means to instil in users of the space a sense of ownership and territoriality (Newman, 1972, p. 3). Ownership and territoriality, the theory assumes, translate into a sense of responsibility, which becomes the motivating engine that would push certain residents to take an active role in protecting the residential environment against the criminals within the community.

The socio-physical interventions adopted by the committee under the police's Proximity Approach appear to mirror similar principles. Social interventions targeting residents were combined with physical interventions to reconfigure space. While the former orchestrated the relations between different groups of residents (determining who is community and who is the potential criminal), and the relations of residents to their residential environment (determining who deserves to be in the space and who does not), the latter aimed to repurpose the spaces (through major and minor physical modifications of space and the enactment of a variety of surveillance mechanisms), making the public and semipublic spaces accessible to certain residents (families and children) and unaccessible to other residents (Black youth). Together, the two kinds of operations, social and physical, ultimately aimed to create a community that polices its residential environment against Black youth.

The drift toward more focus on defensible space mechanisms necessitated the greater involvement of the OMHM and the municipality, who, through their capacities and finances enacted physical interventions in the complex. The committee's action plan, which was presented to the committee's members in February 2004, specified the police's, the OMHM's and la Ville de Montreal's newly adopted roles in the complex.[35] While continuing to have as their main objective countering the issue of gangs de rue, by targeting families and youth under 15, la Table

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[35] Plan d'action HLM Saint-Michel nord et voisinage pour l'année 2004 présenté à la table de travail multidisciplinaire suite aux événements de l'été 2003 « Dossiers Gangs de rue», 2004

Multidisciplinaire directed most of its efforts toward the securitization of spaces, with focus on public and semipublic spaces, parks and leisure centres.[36] Most of these interventions focused on enacting surveillance mechanisms in space. Some of the examples include installing lighting in parks, intensifying the police agents' presence by increasing the number of patrols on foot, intensifying the presence of OMHM agents, and multiplying the occasions of contact between police and OMHM agents and residents, whether through these agents' presence on the terrain or through community-organized events.[37]

This new work was paralleled by an increase in the number of committee members and, eventually, a major institutional reconfiguration. As the committee la Table Multidisciplinaire intensified its work in the complex, the organizations increased in number, and their roles expanded. By 2005, it included more than 30 actors participating in different capacities in more than 30 different activities (including consultation tables, committee meetings, workshops on community work, information exchange sessions, trainings, etc.).[38] At this point, it became superfluous and unnecessarily complex to maintain two committees focused on the Plan Robert area. To facilitate the coordination between the now numerous members, the Comité Sécurité Qualité de Vie (1996) and la Concertation Habitations St-Michel-Nord et voisinage (2003) merged in 2005, giving rise to a new consultation table: the committee Action sécurité qualité de vie St-Michel-Est (ASQVSME).[39] For abbreviation, the name of the committee changed to Action Saint-Michel Est (ASME) in 2008[40] and continues to be known as ASME until today.

Similar to the previous two committees, CSQV and la Table Multidisciplinaire, the main objective of ASME was to bring together residents, SPVM agents, community organizations, and

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[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Rapport d'Étape (Mi-étape ou final) Développement social, Renouveau urbain, Contrat de Ville – Développement social – lutte à la pauvreté, concertation Habitations St-Michel Nord et voisinage, 2005

[39] Centre national de prévention du crime, Demande de financement, Fonds d'action en prévention du crime, ASQVSME, 2006

[40] Rapport d'évaluation présenté au Fonds d'action en prévention du crime (FAPC), ASME, 2010

public institutions, and adopting actions of "dissuasive or repressive nature" in order to "reduce youth enticement toward [the phenomenon] gangs de rue, and to allow the population to take control over its environment through a process of appropriation of the urban space, in the aim of developing a healthy [community] neighbourhood life" (translation mine).[41]

In its work, ASME continued to intervene in the physical space and mobilized residents to occupy space through community-organized events. Some of the concrete actions proposed by the committee included: "surveillance, presence and intervention of the police ... maximizing the use of public spaces by the organization, through sport and cultural activities, as well as community events in parks ... reaching out to youth at risk and youth involved in prostitution ... organize encounters with the population to raise awareness ... organize encounters with youth to raise awareness ... promoting a positive model for youth of the neighbourhood" (translation mine).[42]

The increased involvement of the institutional partners in the daily lives of residents coincided with the participation of two committee members, in specific: Fady Dagher, the commandant of PDQ 30 at the time, and Yves Sauvé, the security director of the OMHM. In 2008, Fady Dagher made the decision to "increase the formal presence of the police (e.g., patrols), as well as the informal presence of the police (e.g., lunches at Mon Resto)" (translation mine).[43] Yves Sauvé, on the other hand, highlighted a needed shift in the OMHM's activities to increase its involvement in its capacity as landlord, specifically in areas related to security, mainly the issue of youth gathering in space ("attroupement").[44] The work of the PDQ 30 and the OMHM under the supervision of the above-mentioned agents differed little from the previous work of other members representatives of institutional partners. Their involvement, nonetheless, entailed a slight intensification in the use of surveillance mechanisms, such as the installment of video camera

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[41] Centre national de prévention du crime, Demande de financement, Fonds d'action en prévention du crime, ASQVSME, 2006

[42] Cadre logique, Projet financé dans le cadre du Fonds d'action en prévention du crime, ASQVSME, 2007

[43] Compte-rendu, Comité de pilotage, October 2008

[44] Compte-rendu, ASME, February 2009

surveillance and the OMHM hire of security agents present on the terrain on a regular basis. The institutional involvement of these two members, because of the reinforcement of the above surveillance mechanisms, provoked some turbulences in the internal relations between committee members, as well as in the relations between the committee and the community of residents,[45] an aspect I will expand on in the next chapter.

In this period, the committee obtained funds under the governmental program Le Fonds d'action en prévention du crime (FAPC), available under the Ministry of Public Security, for the years between 2007 and 2010. FAPC offers financial contributions for initiatives of determined duration in relation to crime prevention within small and large collectives.[46] The federal program operates on a regional level by bringing together different organizations and creating partnerships between provincial governments and the private and non-profit sectors in the objective of augmenting the community's capacity to prevent crime through social development. FAPC is part of the Strategie nationale pour la prévention du crime (SNPC), which aims to "reinforce sustainable community action, to prevent crime through social development, elaborate and expand efficient strategies and projects that focus on the social aspects [of the community]" (translation mine).[47]

The effects of the work of institutional partners were not limited to the socio-physical interventions adopted in Plan Robert but expanded to include knowledge production. In 2012, an UdM student, Marilou Pelletier, published a study[48], introducing the security issue "small delinquency" in public spaces in Montreal ("Petite délinquance dans l'espace public"), specifically in the two case studies: (1) parc René-Goupil in Saint-Michel and (2) the intersection Pascal/Pierre in Montreal Nord (the intersection close to park Henri Bourassa where Fredy Villanueva was killed by the police).

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[45] Compte-rendu, Comité sécurité HLM Nord, September 2009

[46] Centre national de prévention du crime, Demande de financement, Fonds d'action en prévention du crime, ASQVSME, 2006

[47] Ibid.

[48] Petite délinquance dans les espaces publics de Montréal et stratégies d'intervention : Les modalités de concertation et de collaboration dans deux secteurs de Montréal, Rapport final de recherche, Faculté des arts et sciences École de criminologie, Université de Montréal, SPVM, Marilou Pelletier, 2012

The student's research was part of her internship at the SPVM department of research under the supervision of Isabelle Billette, conseillère en planification de la section recherche et planification.[49] The study, like other reports commissioned by the committee, emphasized the 'unhealthy' presence of youth in parks and public spaces as a major security concern that needed to be countered through citizen mobilization, to allow (other) residents to take control over their residential environment. According to the researcher, the role of community workers in resolving the issue of small delinquency is foundational, through crime prevention. Community workers should intervene in the physical space and involve citizens, whose role is important in re-appropriating the space through the 'positive' use of the space by citizens.[50]

The organizational changes in the work of the committee, and consequent strategic changes in the committee members' roles, have an immediate effect on knowledge production mechanisms and the discourses that are produced. Pelletier's study on the issue of Black youth's presence in space is not a novelty, yet, it highlights how discourse on Black communities is perpetuated through knowledge production mechanisms. Pelletier reintroduced certain concepts, prominent in Dubois's study, published more than a decade earlier, anchoring conceptions of Black youth criminality, instead of questioning them and interrupting the operations that rely on them.[51]

The next chapter will pay close attention to how the committee's thinking, its analysis of the problems in Plan Robert, and its discourses translated into physical and social interventions that were enacted in Plan Robert. These interventions also mobilized discourses on Black youth and the Black community of Plan Robert, by empirically constructing and anchoring certain conceptions related to Black youth and the Black community of Plan Robert.

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[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempted to trace the complex genealogy of the community policing project that has been in operation in Plan Robert since 1996. It is a result of the SPCUM's 1996 strategy to counter Black youth gang activity through community policing. This strategy called for the involvement of (non-police) institutions to enable the work of the police in certain neighbourhoods of Montreal through preventive tactics. This is the part of the policing approach the different committees (CSQV, la Table Multidisciplinaire, ASME) were created to serve. Through their work, these committees relied on certain conceptions that racialized Black youth, implicitly designating the Black youth of Plan Robert its main security concern. They also mobilized certain narratives that pathologized the community as a whole, justifying the major policing intervention in the complex as a benevolent act aimed at fixing the community, shaping conceptions of blackness through the discourses they mobilized, and the internal space of conversation they created between different state and non-state entities.

To draw the timeline of Plan Robert's community project, I identified the different organizational, economic, and epistemological shifts it underwent. The different committees that operationalized this project over two decades took different names (e.g., CSQV, CHSMNV, ASQVSME, ASME), adopted seemingly different positions and roles, enacted varied activities and interventions (e.g., food services and educational services), and attained funds under a wide range of government programs (e.g., Quartiers Sensibles, Contrat de Ville, FAPC). The state and non-state organizations members of these committees (e.g., OMHM, PDQ 30, Maison des jeunes, Mon Resto) operated a complex web of collaborations, activities and finances, and, conjointly, enabled this state-administered project aimed at policing Plan Robert's community of residents, specifically Black youth.

Given the shortcomings of previous policing approaches (e.g., the ones preceding the crisis of 2003), the different committees directed their efforts toward the creation of a defensible space in

Plan Robert. They put in place social and physical interventions, targeting the social construction of the community of residents, and the physical spaces of the complex with the aim of creating a community capable of policing its residential environment against Black youth. These are part of the state's efforts to intervene in Black communities to regulate Black people's relationship to society and the public sphere. They reflect the longer history of the state's obsessions with Black communities, since the era of racial slavery and continuing through formal emancipation. Pursuing this analytical work will make it possible to better understand the major role of conceptions of community (contemporary and historical) in enabling state-administered security interventions targeting Black communities, and call into question and potentially interrupt their operation in the unfolding present.

In the following chapter, I will zoom in on certain programs and analyze the social and physical interventions that were enacted in Plan Robert, which, combined, created a defensible space in the complex. I will also shed light on the empirical ways through which discourses of Black youth criminality, and discourses that pathologized the community of Plan Robert, were constructed to legitimize the intensified community policing operation in the complex. I will also contextualize this site-specific investigation within the larger geographical and historical global networks of anti-blackness. The contemporary security practices operationalized in Montreal, specifically those resulting from the shift to community policing, play a major role in constructing and mobilizing conceptions of Black youth criminality and the more general pathologization of Black communities. Shedding light on the details of this project, and the focus on community as a category of the human, serves the more purposive scope of bringing to the fore the empirical ways through which anti-blackness operates in Black geographies, and how the dynamics of Black subjugation are perpetuated though contemporary security practices.

CHAPTER THREE

The Making of (anti-)Black Geographies: Plan Robert as Defensible Space

The work of the various committees in Plan Robert, as I argued in the last chapter, was to introduce a community policing project to Plan Robert and the surrounding area. This work involved mobilizing community organizations and residents to work together to improve security – in a particular way. The way that the committees sought to improve security was through the logic of defensible space, an effort to transform the Plan Robert complex into a defensible space. This involved a double operation: social interventions targeting residents and physical interventions targeting space. The former relied on the committees' citizen mobilization function, and aimed to break the community into segments, where some police others. The latter relied on the committees' operations to securitize space, and aimed to remodel public and semipublic spaces to make them accessible to certain residents and unaccessible to others. Ultimately, both kinds of interventions worked together to create a community that polices itself.

Conceptions of community had an instrumental role in enabling the defensible space operation in Plan Robert. In this chapter, I will shed light on some of the ways through which the committees constructed conceptions of community, all of which were based on the exclusion of Black youth. The committees' discourses of Black youth criminality positioned Black youth outside of conceptions of community. This shaped the dominant understandings – both among the committee members and the community of Plan Robert – of who was part of the community and who was a threat. Families and children were generally considered part of the community; Black youth were considered a threat. This exclusionary construction of community ultimately shaped the committees' activities, especially its twofold efforts to create a defensible space in Plan Robert. Both the committees' social and physical interventions had, as their aim, the regulation of the Black youths' presence in space.

As I discussed in the introduction, there is now a large literature that questions and critiques dominant conceptions of community. This chapter contributes to that literature by analyzing how constructions of community occurred in the community policing project in Plan Robert. And yet, the chapter also intends to situate conceptions of community in their longer history in North America. I, therefore, contextualize my analysis within the work of scholars of anti-blackness (Wilderson, 2003a; Silva, 2007; Sexton, 2010; Browne, 2015; Walcott, 2014). These scholars, in their own distinct yet complementary ways, pay special attention to the various categories of the Human and the exclusion thereby of blackness. They argue that it is necessary to investigate such categories from their genesis to reveal their limits. For these scholars, through such investigation, it is possible to understand the perpetual exclusion of Black people from contemporary conceptions of Humanity and how this exclusion results in anti-Black violence.

Within this literature, the work of Saidiya Hartman (1997) is particularly illuminating because of its specific attention to community as a category of the Human – a category in which Humans are gathered socially. Her focus on the construction of Black communities, since formal emancipation in the United States, as well as on the context of disruption and isolation that gave rise to them, unravels the limits of the category from its genesis. My work in this chapter builds on Hartman's. Engaging Hartman's work will demonstrate that the category of community, in its current denomination and use in Plan Robert, perpetuates anti-blackness, because it is (re)constructed through the exclusion of Black youth. Regardless of its seemingly inclusive traits, "community" is constitutively anti-Black, and so are the security practices it enables.

In doing the above, I divide the chapter into three sections. In Section 1, I focus on discourses of Black youth criminality and their role in pathologizing Black youth and the spaces where they were present. In Section 2, I explore the social part of the defensible space operation. The committees (CSQV, la Table Multidisciplinaire, ASQVSME, and ASME), based on discourses of Black youth criminality, intervened on the social construction of the community, broke the

community into segments, defining who is community and who is not, and, through their mobilizing function, rallied part of the community to police Black youth. In Section 3, I focus on the physical part of the defensible space operation, which the committee adopted to repurpose the public and semipublic spaces and make them amenable to surveillance, ultimately to control Black youth's presence and eventually expel Black youth from these spaces. My objective is to demonstrate that the creation of a defensible space in Plan Robert relied on conceptions of community that were constituently anti-Black. A defensible space is thus an anti-Black space.

3.1 Constructing the Pathological Resident and the Pathological Space

Between 1998 and 2000, members of the CSQV (representatives of OMHM, CLSC, Mon Resto, Maison des jeunes and others) wrote conjointly a series of alarming letters to different agents of the Ville de Montreal, voicing concerns regarding security issues in the parks of the sector Jean Rivard (the sector where Plan Robert is located), and demanding funds in order to intervene. "The current situation in the parks of the territory is one of major despair" (translation mine),[52] one letter contended. "If direct and concise actions aimed at restoring the situation are not undertaken in partnership with the forces of the neighbourhood, citizens' quality of life will only deteriorate" (translation mine).[53] The kinds of actions the committee envisioned were suggested in another letter from this period of time. In the letter, the committee members wrote:

> The climate in the park has changed significantly. The actions undertaken to get the population to appropriate this green space, as well as interventions targeting young people and adolescents have ensured a higher attendance in the park ... We believe that the more the equipment [we install] address the needs of all age groups, the more these groups will use the park, leaving less opportunity for an exclusive appropriation by a particular group (translation mine).[54]

Improving security, the above letter suggests, was a matter of population management: moving some people into the park and moving others out. Further, the language present in this passage

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[52] Lettre à Madame Nicole Roy-Arcelyn, Conseillière municipale de la Ville de Montréal, CSQV, March 2000

[53] Lettre à Madame Nicole Roy-Arcelyn, Conseillière municipale de la Ville de Montréal, CSQV, March 2000

[54] Lettre à Monsieur Réal Travers, Agent de développement Service des sports, des loisirs et du développement social, CSQV, July 1998

reflects the atmosphere of fear within which the committee kickstarted its operations around Plan Robert. It also reflects the means through which it believed these fears could be abated, the beginnings of the committee's epistemological construction of the security issue in the neighbourhood as strictly tied to the Black youth's presence in the spaces of the park René Goupil[55] [56] (Marsolais, 1995). While not explicitly identifying the "particular group" appropriating the park in the letter, it is evident from the language adopted, as well as in other internal documents I analyzed, the clear reference, even if implicit, to Black youth. Black youth were the main users of the park, whose presence was perceived, as early as the formation of the first committee CSQV, as a major security concern the committee members worked to resolve.[57] Evident in the passage, in addition, is the exclusionary construction of community, integral to the formation of the various committees, which would shape the committees' operations over the next two decades.

The issue with the Black (specifically male and young) presence in public spaces has been interrogated extensively in the work of notable scholars. To borrow the thesis of scholars Densie Ferreira da Silva (2014) and Sherene Razack (2015), whose work casts light on the ways in which the Black person is conceived in relation to the public sphere, the Black person is considered a signifier of 'excess' (Silva, 2014). Her/his presence cannot be eliminated from the public space, thus it is sought to be reduced or controlled by means of police intensified surveillance (Razack, 2015). Simone Browne, an important scholar of Black surveillance, reiterates that, in a public space, the Black person's presence is 'coded' and 'abnormalized,' requiring constant surveillance. She adds that surveillance practices, first, abnormalize the Black person's presence in the public space, and then invite its regulation by means of surveillance (Browne, 2015, p. 17). This is mainly due to the longer history of surveillance conceived to monitor Black people since slavery. Indeed,

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[55] Compte-rendu de la réunion du « Contrat de Ville », November 2003

[56] HLM St-Michel Nord, état de la situation, Luclie Dubois, 2001

[57] Ibid.

Browne situates the issue with Black surveillance in a larger geographical and historical context, surveying a series of spaces (e.g., Bentham's Panopticon, the Brooks slave ship) and segments of time (e.g., slavery, the American Revolution). In doing so, Browne urges further investigation of how surveillance continues to shape and be shaped by anti-blackness in the present time. This work is useful, in that it traces the longer history and the broader geography in which Black people in public space have been seen as problematic and, thus, regulated. It provides some context, that is, to the committees' operation in Plan Robert.

In Plan Robert, the Black youth's presence was first 'abnormalized' epistemologically, and then subject to 'regulation' through the enactment of various surveillance mechanisms. Practically, this 'abnormalization' was constructed through the language the various committees adopted in their internal conversations and circulated documents, often making pejorative references to the ways Black youth related to space. This abnormalization was already present in the letter concerning park René Goupil, cited above. In the first years after CSQV was established, the discourses linking security concerns to the Black youth's presence in the park René Goupil quickly extended to include the spaces of Plan Robert. These spaces were both public (such as courtyards) and semipublic (such as staircases).[58] Dubois's study provides a clear example. In her chapter titled "An Unsafe Social Climate," Dubois reflects the general climate of the time and the overall perceptions of insecurity related to Black youth in Plan Robert. She states:

> The [issue of] invasion of common spaces by youth was discussed during the [different] focus groups. This [issue] concerns the little ones who run, play outside, and make noise until late at night, [as well as] the adolescents who [meet] outdoors or in the halls. [The latter] occupy the staircases and interior corridors, as well as the entrances of buildings. Tenants complain about the noise that these groups cause, and the intimidating behaviour of the youth towards [residents]. "Youth come into the entrances to smoke pot, they mutter, go from one address to another through the corridors. It becomes unsafe." "[The youth] sit downstairs up to the second floor. Sometimes we cannot even access our homes, and if we tell them something, they threaten us verbally. Once there was one who replied: you rented your apartment, you did not rent the block (translation mine).[59]

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[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

In this passage, by citing some of the interviews conducted with residents of Plan Robert, Dubois signals a shared concern among residents of the community regarding the Black youth's presence in the spaces of the complex. Dubois does not refer clearly here to the Black youth of the complex, however, in other parts of her study, the author does make the explicit link to the Haitian origin of the youth in question.

This and the preceding passage reflect the general perception of Black youth as threat regardless of whether they were involved in crime or not. It is rather their presence in space a major security concern in and around Plan Robert. In the above mentioned interviews, one community member expresses discontent with the ways in which Black youth use the public and semipublic spaces of the complex and yet makes no reference to whether the youth in question are involved in crime or not. He states: "[Youth] take possession of the whole block" (translation mine).[60] Complaining about the "intimidating behaviour" of youth, another community member contests the youth's "gathering outside of buildings, their music, their cries, their conversations, their movement back and forth" (translation mine).[61] The community members saw the presence of Black youth as problematic, and the problematic presence, this community member indicates, is not limited to the interior of the Plan, but includes the entire complex. Commenting on the general perception of the presence of Black youth in the spaces as problematic, Dubois adds:

> This appropriation of spaces [by youth] is perceived as "dis-appropriation" of the adults' environment. All participants agreed that not all youth disturb and spread terror, but a [certain group among them], that is known and identifiable. However, for fear of being retaliated against, tenants who witness suspicious behaviour "close their eyes" (translation mine).[62]

As highlighted from the previous passages and this passage, "appropriation of space" started to appear frequently in the committees' documents. Concretely, "appropriation of space" referred to Black youth's presence/being in space. This presence was problematized by other residents as well,

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[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

who saw the "appropriation" of space by youth as a "dis-appropriation" of others' uses of space. "Appropriation" of space by Black youth, the passage suggests, is a physical/material problem related to Black youth's mere presence in the spaces, a presence other residents witness as a "dis-appropriation," an impediment to their accessibility to space. This logic is crucial to the committees' thinking and adopted solutions to security focused on "citizen mobilization" to encourage "citizen" residents to "re-appropriate" the space, to (re)take possession over the space, by occupying it physically, pushing Black youth out of space.

Dubois's study, providing the first comprehensive neighbourhood-portrait of Plan Robert, perpetuated the use of a certain grammar that defined the Black youth's relation to space. This grammar continued to appear in the committees' documents, such as those produced by CSQV, dominating its discourses for years to follow. For instance, this same language was adopted in the government programs the committee applied for to finance certain interventions. This includes the municipal-provincial program Quartiers Sensibles de la Ville de Montréal (i.e. Sensitive Neighbourhoods of the City of Montreal) and the governmental program Contrat de Ville. Aligning its work with the requirements of these programs, the CSQV saw solutions to the issue with Black youth's presence in public space through:

> citizen participation, enhancing residents' sense of belonging and control over the residential environment; encouraging social and physical development; providing citizens with the support needed in their mobilization surrounding the parks of the sector with focus on security issues; encouraging the appropriation of common spaces by citizens (translation mine).[63]

Once again, promoting security was a matter of appropriating space – ensuring, in effect, that the right residents (the "citizens") appropriated space. The same (appropriation/dis-appropriation/re-appropriation) logic appears in the evaluation reports the CSQV produced and submitted to the government under these programs. In order to counter the issue of "appropriation of space" by

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[63] Formulaire de présentation de projet, Contrat de Ville entre la Ville de Montreal, CSQV, 2005

Black youth, the committee envisioned the "appropriation of space" by other residents as the necessary collective response of the community.

By mobilizing "appropriation of space" as a viable solution to security issues, the CSQV, and the various committees later on, reiterated ideas present in Oscar Newman's (1972) theory of defensible space, which I expand on in the next section. Suffice it to say, here, that Newman sees only certain residents as collaborators in policing public spaces of housing complexes. He also ascribes certain human traits to these residents, such as a sense of territoriality and ownership, constructing in opposition to other residents who he expels from these traits and thus pushes out of public space. The above-mentioned (appropriation/dis-appropriation/re-appropriation) logic clearly reflects the principals present in Newman's defensible space theory. These principles appear in the various committees' thinking and philosophy of intervention mainly in relation to the construction of "community" in/around Plan Robert. Like in Newman's defensible space, only certain ("citizen") residents of Plan Robert, the committees saw, possessed certain human traits, giving them right to "appropriate" the spaces of the complex. Black youth, on the other hand, were perceived as lacking these same traits and thus portrayed as threat to other residents' right to be in space. The Black youth's mere presence in the spaces was perceived as threat and acted against.

Epistemologically, the two above-mentioned programs, through the finances they provided, played an important role in shaping the different committees' approach to security issues through defensible space mechanisms. It also anchored conceptions related to Black youth's presence in the public space, which pahtologized Black youth and portrayed them as threat. But there is more than just this effect. These programs, because of their criteria focusing on the urban aspect of neighbourhoods, also pathologized the spaces where the youth were present.

For instance, under the program Quartiers Sensibles, Saint-Michel was designated as one of the 11 "sensitive neighbourhoods" of the city of Montreal.[64] This put Saint-Michel on the map of

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[64] HLM St-Michel Nord, état de la situation, Luclie Dubois, 2001

priority zones of state intervention because of a series of social and physical conditions that ostensibly made them vulnerable to crime, such as poverty and familial structure (e.g., mono-parental families) and high immigration rates.[65] Similarly, under the governmental program Contrat de Ville, the Ville de Montreal identified "priority areas" where interventions were most needed, for similar conditions reflecting the vulnerability of theses areas.[66] CSQV framed its work, in its grant applications, mainly within the program's "Integrated Territorial Approach and Priority Areas of Intervention" (translation mine).[67] These programs, by introducing the concept of priority zones, and relating the need to intervene with certain social and physical conditions symptomatic of crime, ended up pathologizing these areas and the communities inhibiting them.

The pathologization of spaces did not only work on the level of Saint-Michel. In some cases, it was more specific and described the spaces of Plan Robert. Dubois's study, which was funded by the program Quartier Sensible, provides a somewhat detailed account of the physical aspect of the residential environment of Plan Robert. She states:

> The residential structure [of the housing complex] is characterized by its fragmentation into various types of buildings that form homogeneous blocks in space ... the lack of continuity between the buildings may contribute to perceiving the residential buildings as "ghettos.". In the housing complex Saint-Michel Nord, the presence of a fence and barbed wire, separating the plan from the single-family houses on Saint-Léonard, reinforces this perception ... With regard to the physical quality of the overall plan, there are a few hidden spots, notably on the allée Robert and the allée Jean Rivard, that are poorly lit and make these places unsafe for tenants who reside in proximity. Youth hide and can follow a person to their home (translation mine).[68]

The details presented in this passage clearly depict the spaces of Plan Robert as pathological, and the references to the lack of visibility and lighting are meant to reinforce perceptions of youth as threat. Indeed, the two pathologizations seem to work together: some spaces are pathological because they allow pathological people to use them.

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[65] Ibid.

[66] Contrat de Ville entre la Ville de Montreal et le Gouvernement du Quebec 2003-2007, retrieved from: https://www.mamrot.gouv.qc.ca/pub/metropole/documentation/contrat_ville_montreal.pdf

[67] Ibid.

[68] HLM St-Michel Nord, état de la situation, Luclie Dubois, 2001

The solution to these apparent social and spatial problems, for Dubois, was to rally organizations and residents to re-appropriate the spaces of Plan Robert. Concretely, Dubois suggests the need for a greater presence of the institutional partners, namely the OMHM, as source of authority, as well as the greater participation of residents. She states:

> [the committee] should develop greater presence of the OMHM on the site and find a way to make the OMHM's involvement of greater importance. It would be beneficial if the OMHM organized information sessions for the tenants and explained [to tenants] the role of concierge, who should control the common interior spaces [of the complex], how the complaints services and maintenance function, in order to limit all sorts of misunderstandings.[69]

For Dubois, increasing the visibility of the organizations on the terrain is crucial. So is a greater participation of residents. She suggests the creation of a tenants association to facilitate the contact with residents and the ability to mobilize residents. Assisted by the committee, the tenants association was indeed established a few years later.[70] In this way, the committee not only brought the various community organizations in Plan Robert into a common fight; it also brought many residents into the fight. Dubois emphasizes that improving consultation with the police is also necessary, another agent in the fight. All of these agents would become the "community" that would re-appropriate the spaces that had been problematically appropriated by others – the Black youth who the committee expelled from the category of community.

Clearly, during the first years of its existence, the work of the committee relied significantly on knowledge production. Discourses of Black youth criminality pathologized Black youth, and their presence in space, regardless of whether they were involved in criminal activity or not. Black youth's presence in space was itself constructed as a symptom of insecurity and crime. More than just pathologizing Black youth, these discourses pathologized the entire complex (spaces and people). Black youth became the crack through which the entire community, with all its residents and spaces, would ultimately fall apart. The committee anchored its presence in the complex

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[69] Ibid.

[70] Rapport d'Étape (Mi-étape ou final) Développement social, Renouveau urbain, Contrat de Ville – Développement social – lutte à la pauvreté, CSQV, 2004

based on the idea that there is an immediate urgency for a major community intervention targeting all aspects of the lives of residents, as well as their physical residential environment, to resolve the security issue related to Black youth.

In the next section, I will show the practical ways through which the committee expelled Black youth from conceptions of community. Through its social interventions, the committee broke the community into segments, shaping understandings (among the committee members and the community of Plan Robert) of who is community (families and children) and who is threat (Black youth). In doing so, the committee aligned its objectives with the community (Black youth excluded), and enabled its mobilizing task, aiming to rally certain residents to occupy space. This social part of the work of the committee, I argue, is important. Coupled with the physical interventions in space, as I show in the following section, the committee was able to pursue its objective and transform Plan Robert into a defensible space.

3.2 Social Interventions: Mobilizing the Ally Resident

Mobilizing the community was clearly essential to the committee's project in Plan Robert. In this work, the committee's approach mirrors the principles of defensible space outlined by Newman. For Newman, it is possible to create a socio-spatial barrier to criminality through the reconfiguration of public spaces to enhance certain residents' "sense of community," territoriality, and ownership (Newman, 1972). In its consideration of the social aspect of the operation, the theory presumes that, if arranged in a certain way, the public space acquires a semiotic capability, driving certain residents to take an active role in defending it against other (potentially criminal) residents (Herbert & Brown, 2006, p. 763). Between its lines, the theory makes an important assertion: community and public space are interrelated, and so are the positions humans occupy in relation to one and the other. If assumed to be part of the community, the human acquires the

right to be present in the public space. If excluded from community, the human is consequently deprived from the right to be present in the public space and thus expelled from it.

While many scholars have criticized Newman's theory (Herbert & Brown, 2006; Cupers, 2016, Lee & Herborn, 2007; Shabazz, 2015), I believe the theory – and its application in Plan Robert – needs to be examined through the lens of anti-blackness. To develop this analysis, I turn to prominent scholar Saidiya Hartman (1997) who, in a particularly illuminating passage of her book *Scenes of Subjection,* reveals the raciality at the basis of the above-mentioned interrelation between community and public space. Tracing the genealogy of community, Hartman shows how Black people were expelled from the category since its establishment and thus positioned outside of the public sphere. As Hartman argues, to understand this positioning of the Black person, "it is crucial to engage the issue of community through the disruptive antagonisms that are also its constituents" (1997, p. 60).

The notion of community, Hartman argues, acquired new importance after the formal abolition of slavery in the United States in 1865. This event saw four million Black people transferred from slavery to freedom (Hartman, 1997, p. 183). The categories of citizenship, right, and entitlement, until abolition, exclusively ascribed to white people, were now accessible to Black people. This generated a collective anxiety (among white people) regarding the new social order where "former masters and former slaves" were meant to be equal members of society, sharing the same access to right, entitlement, and citizenship (p. 183). This newly conceived national community was thus quickly framed in relation to the supposed "dangers posed by association and intimacy" to the Black person (p. 169). Hartman states:

> The emergence of the social can be mapped in terms of the shift from the 'power of police'
> all whites exercised over slaves to the supreme police power exercised by the state, and
> what occurred in its wake was the banishing of blacks from public society (1997, p. 170).

This passage traces the complex social reconfigurations that accompanied the abolition of slavery. Black people, while formally free, were subject to new powers of exclusion, especially exclusion

from public space and society. At the same time, a new conception of society emerged – a form of society produced through Black exclusion, a form of society that required Black exclusion. As Hartman explains, the state became the guardian of the population's health and morality; for the state to fulfil this duty and "to protect the health and morality of the population, it entailed the isolation of blacks" (p. 170). The public sphere, then, must be white; it must exclude Black people. The presence of the Black person needed to be regulated by means of "surveillance and regulatory interventions of the state" (p. 169), to protect white people's privilege to exclusively access the public sphere.

Hartman's analysis sheds light on the longer history that shaped the state's obsessions with Black communities and the Black person's presence in the public sphere. While focusing on the US context, it invites further investigation of "community" as it operates beyond the US. By illuminating the empirical ways through which the state continues to exercise control over Black communities in the specific case of Plan Robert, I wish to draw the parallels, and demonstrate that, forged through a shared history of North America's 500 years of anti-blackness, the Montreal-site-specific example manifests similarities. Clear in what follows, the state continues to intervene in Black communities to control them and define how they relate to the public sphere. The mere demographic composition of these communities, as predominantly Black, calls for their regulation. It is their mere existence that poses a threat to the social order. This view of blackness, I now want to show, is evident in the committees' efforts to mobilize the community in the interest of security.

At a high level, we can see that the committees' (starting with CSQV's) conception of "community" never included all residents of the area. Early on, it provided demographic descriptions of the situation in Plan Robert, linking security concerns in the area to demographic data such as the density of the population, the high percentage of immigrants of Haitian origin, the high percentage of mono-parental families, and the high percentage of young people among the community of residents (Marsolais, 1995). These descriptions pathologized the whole of the

community, but also suggested that certain members of the community were the source of the pathology– the community was pathological, in other words, due to its high numbers of Black residents. At a finer scale, it is clear that the committee saw Black *youth* as a particular problem. The various committees, through their interventions and the discourses licensing them, constructed two main categories of residents: the general population (also termed "families" or "citizens") and Black youth.

This general logic of exclusion is evident, in varying ways, in all of the committees' practical efforts to mobilize the community. The Contrat de Ville program, begun in 2004, provides a striking example. Under the program, the CSQV formed two projects, targeting youth in two age groups in very different ways.[71] The first, named Projet 13-17, targeted youth in the age group between 13 and 17. This project involved members from École secondaire Louis-Joseph-Papineau, la Maison des jeunes, PACT de rue, and the Ville de Montreal. The second project, named Projet 18-24, targeted youth in the age group between 18 and 24. This project included members from Tandem, Maison d'Haïti, the Ville de Montreal, among others.[72] The two projects had as their main objective addressing the issue of the presence of youth in parks and metro stations. Under this project, the CSQV adopted two kinds of approaches depending on the age group: a preventive approach targeting the youth in the age group 13-17, and a curative approach targeting the youth in the age group 18-24.[73]

This distinction between preventive and curative approaches is important for many reasons. For one thing, it parallels the police's distinction that appears in the police's 1996 community policing strategy to counter Black youth gang activity (Symons, 1999). The police, in its definition of the security issue, made the distinction between two groups of youth: youth who are susceptible to rehabilitation through prevention tactics, and youth who are "hard core" gang members,

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[71] Compte-rendu de la réunion du « Contrat de Ville », November 2003

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

immune to prevention, and thus, subject to the more repressive tactics of the police (Symons, 1999). Through its adoption of a similar distinction between the approaches (preventive and repressive), and associating the first to youth under 18 and the second to youth above 18, the CSQV anchored understandings of Black youth criminality by reiterating the police's distinction between the category of the potential criminal youth (susceptible to prevention) and the category of the criminal youth (immune to prevention).

The CSQV's efforts to "cure" youth between 18-24 were not overtly repressive. They did, however, treat this category of youth as a pathological element, an element outside the "community" that required special interventions to be integrated and normalized. For instance, the projet 18-24 had as some of its objectives: "creating a space of universal multicultural creation for the youth between the age of 18 and 24 (Music-dance-graffiti-painting-drawing); bringing together active youth in different organizations, and providing them with the support needed corresponding to their reality; guiding youth towards the organizations and resources that are able to *respond to their needs for social integration*"[74] (emphasis mine, translation mine). The youth, it is assumed here, are located outside the community; an effort is required, then, to socially integrate them. The same assumption was voiced during a February 2004 meeting. Here, committee member Nathalie Langlois (from PACT de rue) suggested creating an informal space for youth, a space that is thought of in function of the youth's interests, proposing cultural activities aimed at social integration such as music, and other cultural activities.[75] While seemingly benign, the assumption that youth require "integration" pathologizes young people regardless of whether they were involved in gang activity or not. They are seen as criminals/potential criminals that need the state's intervention.

This assumption shaped other projects as well, including the CSQV's work with the police. Following the crisis of 2003, when the residents, specifically Black youth, contested the police's interventions in Plan Robert and accused the police of racial profiling, the police responded with

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[74] Programme «Création culturelle et artistique» Projet 18-25 ans, PACT de rue, 2004

[75] Compte-rendu de la réunion du sous-comité 18-24 ans « Contrat de Ville », January 2004

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its Proximity Approach ("approche de proximité").[76] This approach saw Savard, the commandant of the PDQ 30 at the time, actively build connections between the police agents and the residents. This included meeting with members of the community, women from the complex, and playing soccer with youth. The CSQV played an important role in facilitating Savard's work by anchoring the committee's involvement in and around Plan Robert, and by focusing on the establishment of relations of trust with certain community members.

While appearing less repressive, these efforts to build close community relations allowed the presence of the police, normalizing its intensification in the complex. It also had particular implications for Black youth. One of the police's most prominent initiatives under the Proximity Approach was named Projet Rebondi. Thirty organizations collaborated in this project and coordinated their efforts to allow youth from the Petite Maison des Jeunes to play soccer with community workers and police agents. The police operated this project under the section "youth prevention" in 2004 and targeted youth under 15 specifically.[77] The project's objectives included: promoting sport as an *alternative to delinquent behaviour*; allowing *part* of the youth to channel their energies into constructive and rewarding activities; encouraging police, youth and community to come closer; raising awareness of the significant actors of the *community* by mobilizing them in a project aimed at improving the quality of life of *youth* (emphasis mine).[78] Here again, we see the distinction between the "community" and the "youth." The youth, moreover, seem to have two options before them: participation in a police-run sports program or "delinquent behaviour." Many youth, finally, would not be part of this program. How would these youth be seen?

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[76] Formulaire de présentation de projet, Contrat de Ville – Développement social – lutte à la pauvreté, Revitalisation urbaine intégrée, Table de concertation locale, 2005

[77] Rapport d'Étape (Mi-étape ou final) Développement social, Renouveau urbain, Contrat de Ville – Développement social – lutte à la pauvreté, CSQV, 2004

[78] Projet pilote rebondi, Section prévention et intervention jeunesse Nord, 2004

This view of youth had important effects. On the surface, Projet Rebondi was a kind of police reform. The principle idea behind the project was to change the way the police approached youth.[79] The police saw "physical activity" as a way to change the dynamics between the police and youth, different from the "traditional repressive ways" (translation mine).[80] As stated in an important document I obtained, ultimately the police envisioned that "before a group of [unemployed] youth, the police agent has the reflex to offer [youth] a ball instead of an unending investigation and a ticket" (translation mine).[81] But, of course, the police continued to issue tickets and arrest youth in the neighbourhood. The Proximity Approach expressed through Projet Rebondi, then, did not replace police repression, but supplemented it and, thus, increased the police presence in the lives of Black youth. Madame J., an active resident of Plan Robert, acknowledged that "the day of inauguration, there were many patrolling cars and blue uniforms [referring to the SPVM agents], but for the first time, it wasn't to arrest someone" (translation mine).[82] The police now had a new reason to be in Plan Robert in the absence of any threat of criminality.

Another important project involving the police in the prevention work of the committee, and targeting youth above 18, is the project Gang Prevention through Targeted Outreach 18-25. This project was operated by the committee ASQVSME between 2006 and 2008.[83] The project was created to respond to the security concern related to the presence of youth in the spaces of Plan Robert, mainly those in the age group 18-25. The OMHM observed an important increase in the number of requests to change residence because of alleged acts of violence and intimidation (8 cases between April and November 2008); these alleged problems were linked to the presence of numerous youth in the age group between 18 and 25 along the parameters of buildings, in parks,

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[79] Rapport d'Étape (Mi-étape ou final), CSQV, 2004

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Lettre d'intention, à l'attention du Centre national de prévention du crime, par la Maison des jeunes par la grand'porte, January 2009

and in the alleyways of the sector.[84] This major security issue required the ASQVSME's immediate intervention. The OMHM demanded the collaboration of different partners, involving different community organizations, including la Maison des jeunes, Centre de Ressources Éducatives et Pédagogiques (CREP), Emploi-Québec, Carrefour jeunesse emploi, Insèrejeunes, Pact de Rue, les Monarques, and the police and the OMHM.[85]

The pathologization of the youth in the specific age group 18-25, is clear here. The documents the committee ASQVSME submitted under this project referred to the presence of youth in space and described youth as mainly men, with criminal precedents related to drug use and gang activity. The youth were also described as having precedents at the level of "incivility, fighting, and intimidation" (translation mine).[86] This made the direct association between youth in the age group 18-25 and gang activity. It also made the direct association between conceptions of criminality and the presence of Black youth in the spaces. Like in other instances in the work of the committee, while not explicitly referring to Black youth, this project, also, provided statistical data describing the population of Plan Robert as young with a high percentage of immigrants of Haitian origins, making the implicit association between the issue of the presence of youth in the public and semipublic spaces and Black youth.[87]

In this project, the committee adopted the approach it named "Gang Prevention through Targeted Outreach."[88] While conceived for youth between 6 and 18, the committee members saw that it was appropriate to use the finances available under this project to target youth between 18 and 25. The pretext was that the age group 18-25 presented similar risk factors to the age group 6-18.[89] While anchoring conceptions of youth criminality, the age-based distinction is hazy.

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84 Ibid.

85 Ibid.

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid.

88 Ibid.

89 Ibid.

Instead of constricting criminality to one group, by drawing the parallels between the two groups and extending the approach to include the age group 18-25, the committee ended up criminalizing all men of Plan Robert between 6 and 25. These individuals were clearly not part of the "community" that the committee aimed to mobilize. Indeed, they constituted a threat to the community.

Gang prevention was the preventive aspect of the project. Another aspect, central to the Comprehensive Gang Model this project employed, involved intervening coercively if needed. This aspect required the participation of different community organizations, along with the institutional partners, the City, and the police. The model introduced 5 strategies, aiming, as I mention above, to resolve the issue of youth's presence in the spaces of the complex: (1) community mobilization; (2) social interventions: reaching out to young people who do not attend organizations and resources; (3) social opportunities: individualized services based on the needs of each participant; (4) suppression: surveillance, arrest, probation; and (5) development of local groups or organizations: working in collaboration, consultation, based on the expertise of each partner.[90]

The fourth strategy, "suppression: surveillance, arrest, probation," merits close attention. The different community organizations working on this Comprehensive Gang Model intervened in the preventative realm. Nonetheless, by including youth in the age group above 18 in their work, they also allowed the use of coercive measures. The adoption of such coercive measures, as part of the committee's preventive approach, is justified in the police's 1996 definition of its community policing approach targeting youth. The police condoned the inclusion of repressive measures in the community workers' interventions, indeed, making the clear cut distinction between two groups of youth based on the approaches they will use: the first susceptible to prevention and the second immune to prevention, thus requiring more repressive tactics. Based on this distinction between the two groups of youth, the committees (CSQV, first, and ASQVSME, later on) grounded

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[90] Ibid.

understandings of youth as a particular pathological group sitting outside of conceptions of community, and the interventions they adopted to address security issues under this project clearly depended on the exclusion of Black youth.

This logic of distinction between the above-mentioned two groups of youth - those who were susceptible to preventive tactics and those who were not - shaped other governmental projects the committees operated under. Appearing more consistent with the requirements of the preventive task the committees were created to serve, ASME obtained funds under the governmental program Le Fonds d'action en prévention du crime (FAPC), to prevent crime through social development.[91] It targeted youth between the age 6 and 17.[92] Between 2006 and 2009, the main objective of the project under FAPC was to "reduce youth incitement to gangs de rue and prostitution, and allow the *general population* to take control over its environment through a process of *'appropriation'* of the urban space, in order to develop a healthier neighbourhood [community] life" emphasis mine, translation mine).[93] Here again, the project involves a distinction between the "community" and the elements that threaten it. The main strategy of the project was to mobilize different institutional and community partners, schools, and "the general population" support the ASME's approach (reaching out). The main targeted groups of this preventive work are "families and residents," who through the work of the committee would be able to take control over their lives and public spaces. All of these groups are considered part of the community. Located outside the community are "youth between 6 and 17." This group is targeted for change; through prevention, it was hoped that this group would develop some alternatives and recognize a positive model to follow.[94]

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[91] Centre national de prévention du crime, Demande de financement, Fonds d'action en prévention du crime, ASQVSME, 2006
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.

This distinction between the community and youth was clearly central to the project. The aims of the project, for example, are described as follows:

> Provide support to tenants' committees, maximize the use of facilities and public spaces through the organization of sports and cultural activities for youth, community organized activities and community events in parks, neighbourhood beautification, multicultural events, formative and instructive activities for youth, "reaching out" work and references for youth at risk and young prostitutes, surveillance, presence of the police and targeted police intervention, public visibility and promotion of other possibilities and positive models for youth and support for families at risk, etc. We want to help change the climate of fear, resignation or indifference that has been installed in the environment, by demonstrating that, together with the population and through resources, it is possible to modify this dynamics and regain control over our environment (translation mine).[95]

In this passage, the distinction between the category of "youth" and the categories "population" and "families and residents" reappears. The effect of the distinction is to further enhance conceptions of community as cleared of Black youth, and to isolate youth as individuals sitting outside the collectivity of residents or the ensemble of families. The work under this project also pathologized the category itself by dividing the targeted group of youth as either 'youth at risk' or 'young prostitutes'.[96]

Through these distinctions between youth and the rest of the community, or between different groups of youth, the committee was able to firmly ground certain conceptions of youth as a category outside of community. Its work targeted youth, particularly, but it also involved the rest of the community. Under its function, citizen mobilization, it obtained various funds and organized numerous events in parks and in the public space with the aim of encouraging the community to occupy space, to displace youth. In addition, through its "citizen mobilization" function, the committee foresaw the general population as collaborators and aimed to encourage greater information exchange.[97] [98] It based a lot of its work on building connections with residents. Earlier efforts to involve residents saw the committee include resident representatives and tenants

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[95] Ibid.

[96] Inscription pour une demande d'aide financière, Municipalité, ASME, 2009

[97] Rapport d'Étape (Mi-étape ou final) Développement social, Renouveau urbain, Contrat de Ville – Développement social – lutte à la pauvreté, concertation Habitations St-Michel Nord et voisinage, 2005

[98] Plan d'action « animateur de milieu/veille environnementale », Axe II : Intervention dans le HLM Saint-Michel-Nord, 2001

in some of the committee's consultations.[99] It also initiated information exchange processes, where committee members and residents participate, whether through consultation tables or other organized periodic encounters. In one instance, the committee discussed the importance of giving residents the possibility to call the OMHM or the SPVM anonymously regarding the specific issue of the presence of youth in the semipublic spaces of the housing complex, in the corridors and in front of building entrances.[100]

Similar initiatives to mobilize citizens continued to appear in the committees' work. One example is the creation of a "Citizens' Space" (i.e. espace citoyens) at Mon Resto. In this project, the committee la Table Multidisciplinaire mobilized tenants to meet and discuss social issues of the community, but focused mainly on the issue of violence against children at school and on the trajectories to school. Citizens became active actors working in the search for solutions to problems that affect them, rather than spectators.[101] Mobilized in this way, the committee sought to transform certain residents to become agents of security.

Another example saw the committee assist residents in the creation of a tenants association. Recommended as a necessary action by Dubois[102] in 2004, nearly three years after the publication of Dubois's study and various committee consultations, the committee helped draft the association's general regulations. The association had as its main objectives: the protection of the rights of residents and working closely with families to build a united collective.[103] At the time of its establishment, the committee comprised "8 women citizens,"[104] who met regularly to discuss social issues related to families. They participated in 6 encounters following the establishment of

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[99] Ibid.

[100] Compte-rendu de la rencontre partenaires du comité sécurité HLM Saint-Michel-Nord, Juin 2013

[101] Mise en contexte à propos des liens à établir entre les différentes instances de concertation dans le secteur Jean-Rivard, 2005

[102] HLM St-Michel Nord, état de la situation, Luclie Dubois, 2001

[103] Rapport d'Étape (Mi-étape ou final) Développement social, Renouveau urbain, Contrat de Ville – Développement social – lutte à la pauvreté, CSQV, 2004

[104] Ibid.

the association.[105] The establishment of the association and the participation of women from Plan Robert was considered by the committee as a means to "crack the isolation of residents" (translation mine).[106] Establishing the tenants association was seen by the committee members as an important mechanism through which to collaborate with the community and render certain members among the community - in this case "women citizens" - part of the policing project targeting the Black youth's presence.

As apparent from the committees' interventions discussed above, the social element of the committees' work involved mobilizing part of the community to participate in policing the residential environment against Black youth. Mirroring Newman's defensible space theory, the creation of a defensible space in Plan Robert relied in part on this social aspect of the work of the various committees. The committees (in different ways, at different stages) intervened on the social construction of the community, defining who is part of the community and who is not, who has right to be present in the public/semipublic space and who does not, rallying those residents who had right to access space against Black youth who did not share that same right.

The social part of the defensible space operation is inherently anchored in contemporary conceptions of community, the boundary of community and its outside, the boundary between whiteness and blackness in the present time. But these contemporary understandings of community, which displace blackness from its remit, has a longer history that spans centuries. This history is traced in the expansive literature I reviewed in the introduction. Particularly salient here is Hartman's (1997) analysis of "community," which demonstrates that the antagonism embedded in constructions of "community" has its origins in the formal abolition of slavery, the historic instance that witnessed the introduction of four million former slaves to society and to the public space. By looking at the origins of the relation of the Black person to community and public space, Hartman's analysis helps understand the basis of contemporary anti-Black conceptions of

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[105] Ibid.

[106] Association des locataires de l'habitation St-Michel, Règlements généraux, 2004

community and public space. Battling to conserve the rights until then exclusive to its white population, society needed alternative ways to perpetuate the exclusion of Black people from their newly acquired right to be part of society and the public sphere. These alternative ways saw the state intervene to control and regulate the ways through which Black people relate to society and public space. The idea was to reduce Black people's access to their right to access society and the public space.

In Plan Robert, the state-administered community operation transforming the complex into a defensible space firmly grounds this logic: excluding Black people from community is means to exclude them from the public space. Defensible space mechanisms, relying on social interventions targeting the composition of its community, are contemporary attempts to regulate the Black person's relation to community and thus her/his presence in the public space. Defensible space provides an alternative way to perpetuate the same logics of exclusion of Black people from community and public space in operation since the formal abolition of slavery, up until today.

The social operation adopted in the complex was complemented with an equally important operation targeting the physical aspect of the complex. In the next section, I focus on this part of the defensible space operation enacted in Plan Robert. I show how this aspect of the work of the committee aimed to transform spaces and make them more amenable to observation, by enacting physical surveillance mechanisms in the spaces (e.g., video camera surveillance and lighting), mobilizing citizen residents to occupy the spaces and by enhancing the direct contacts between committee members (in different capacities) and youth.

3.3 Physical Interventions: Surveilling Black Youth

To operationalize the defensible space project in Plan Robert, the committee (CSQV, la Table Multidisciplinaire, ASQVSME, and ASME) coupled social interventions targeting residents with physical interventions targeting space. Presenting elements of Newman's theory, the physical

aspect of the operation relied on the creation of a residential physical model that enhances the community's ability to police and control its spaces (Newman, 1972). "Improved surveillance," Newman writes, "operates most effectively when linked with the territorial subdivision of residential areas, allowing the resident to observe those public areas which [she/he] considers to be part of [her/his] realm of ownership and hence responsibility" (Newman, 1972, p. 79). In his theory, the objective behind the physical modelling of public and semipublic areas is to increase the use of the spaces by residents so that the spaces "come under continual and natural observation" (p. 80).

The physical aspect of defensible space has been subject of analysis in the work of numerous scholars. Their scholarship emphasizes the role of the theory in shaping contemporary urban governance, specifically in relation to security practices and crime management (Cozens & Love, 2015; Lee & Herborn, 2007; Herbert & Brown, 2006). The theory, this literature shows, is important because of its effects on contemporary surveillance practices targeting marginalized communities (Herbert & Brown, 2006; Cupers, 2016, Lee & Herborn, 2007). Within this body of literature, the work of Rashad Shabazz (2015) reveals the theory's capability to subject Black communities to intensive surveillance. For Shabazz, the theory is dangerous specifically for Black communities because of its capability to subject Black people to intensified policing while normalizing such policing mechanisms. Defensible space, for Shabazz, is an explicit expression of "carceral power". (Shabazz, 2015). It transforms the residential environment where Black people reside into a "liminal space" between home and prison.

There is also a large body of literature on "community" as it operates in security practices: community policing (Schrader, 2016; Gilmore & Gilmore, 2016; Williams, 2004) and the creation of defensible spaces (Lee & Herborn, 2007; Herbert & Brown, 2006; Cupers, 2016). This literature focuses mainly on the role of "community" as notion and praxis in enabling the shift in the state's policing strategies to seemingly less repressive approaches, enabling the state to adapt its modes of

policing and perpetuate its control over and violence toward various marginalized populations. These practices, this literature shows, are an extension of the same coercive mechanisms of the state in their effects on marginalized communities (including but not only Black communities).

The above two bodies of literature on defensible space and "community" are important because they help understand the important role defensible spaces play in shaping contemporary security practices and surveillance mechanisms in marginalized communities. They also allow us to understand the state's adaptable strategies to policing, specifically those enabled through the notion of community. Both literatures, nonetheless, do not pay the necessary attention to the role of anti-blackness in constituting "community," the boundary of community and its outside, the boundary between who gets to be surveilled and who does not. The notion of community is crucial to the applicability of defensible space. "Defensibility" of space - that is the capacity of the space to encourage certain residents among a community to defend the space against (potential criminals) - relies on the distinction between who is part of the community and who is threat, who deserves to be in the public space and who does not, who surveils and who is surveilled. Without the major line of distinction between community and its outside, the creation of defensible space would not be possible.

Hartman's analysis of community (as a modern category of Humanism) provides the most useful insight for my research work because of its ability to reveal the anti-blackness embedded in "community." "Community" is defined through the exclusion of Black people. This, Hartman tells us, has a longer history that spans centuries. The Black person was evicted from community and the public sphere since the era of racial slavery onward (Hartman, 1997). Engaging Hartman's analysis demonstrates that conceptions of community are inherently anti-Black.

The spaces created by the defensible space operation in Plan Robert are shaped by conceptions of community (inherently anti-Black). These spaces, thus, like the public space of the post-slavery era Hartman talks about, do not include the Black person. They are rather shaped by

the exclusion of the Black person. The most important aspect of the theory, I think, is the important role of community and the longer history of the entanglement between the position the Black person occupies in relation to society (or community) and thus her/his relation to the public space. By looking at the physical aspect of the work of the committee in Plan Robert, we can see the empirical ways through which state-administered operations targeting Black communities continue to shape the physical public and semipublic spaces of the complex as cleared of blackness, specifically through their constructions of community as cleared of Black youth. The category of community, in its current denomination and use in Plan Robert, continues to adopt a logic similar to the one produced by society in the post-slavery era, perpetuating anti-blackness, because it is (re)constructed through the exclusion of Black youth.

Most of the committee's interventions in the physical realm, specifically in the first decade of operations, featured the above-mentioned defensible space traits. Relying on anti-Black conceptions of "community," the defensible space mechanisms enacted in Plan Robert demonstrate that the space these mechanisms constitute is constitutively anti-Black. In the years between 1996 and 2008, the committee targeted the public and semi public spaces in and around Plan Robert to repurpose their functions and change the ways residents use the spaces. It also focused on mobilizing residents through community-organized events to maximize the use of these spaces and guarantee the physical presence of committee members and residents in the public spaces on a regular basis. This aspect of the work of the committee, mobilizing certain residents to occupy space as means to change the use of space and regulate the use by Black youth, continued to be one of the major functions of the committee in the complex.

The committee's first physical interventions targeted the park René Goupil, the committee's priority area of intervention since 1996 and where security concerns with Black youth's presence first registered. Targeting the infrastructure of the park, with its limited funds of the time,[107] the

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[107] Lettre à Monsieur Réal Travers, Agent de développement Service des sports, des loisirs et du développement social, CSQV, July 1998

CSQV intervened to repurpose the use of the park and to guarantee the physical occupation of its spaces by different age groups with the aim of reducing the "exclusive" use by Black youth.[108] Intervening to install lighting and picnic areas,[109] even if seemingly minor, was able to change the park's use drastically, displacing Black youth.[110]

The committee's early work continued to have park René Goupil as one of its targeted areas of intervention and the committee's location for its most frequented community-organized activities and events. Acquiring funds under Renouveau urbain - Contrat de ville – Développement social – lutte à la pauvreté-Revitalisation urbaine intégrée, the committee "redevelop[ed] the park by installing permanent soccer goal nets, in order to give youth the opportunity to channel their energy in positive activities and encourage their development" (translation mine).[111] It also "consolidat[ed] community-organized activities that give rise to more innovative projects that aim to improve citizens' quality of life and their taking charge [over their lives]" (translation mine).[112] Under this and other government programs, the committee organized various activities in the parks such as cultural festivals and participatory sports activities.[113]

The physical aspect of the committee's intervention, while continuing to have the park René Goupil as one of its main targeted areas, soon expanded to include the public and semipublic spaces of Plan Robert. Following the crisis of 2003, the committee emphasized the importance of securitizing the public and semipublic spaces of the complex. This necessitated the greater involvement of the OMHM and the municipality, who through their capacities and finances had more flexibility to enact physical interventions in space. In 2004 the committee listed the

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[108] Ibid.

[109] Lettre à Madame Nicole Roy-Arcelyn, Conseillière municipale de la Ville de Montréal, CSQV, March 2000

[110] Lettre à Monsieur Réal Travers, Agent de développement Service des sports, des loisirs et du développement social, CSQV, July 1998

[111] Plan d'action « animateur de milieu/veille environnementale », Axe II : Intervention dans le HLM Saint-Michel-Nord, 2001

[112] Ibid.

[113] Projet pilote rebondi, Section prévention et intervention jeunesse Nord, 2004

Municipality's, the OMHM's, and the police's new roles in the complex, with an evident interest to securitize space.[114]

For instance, the Ville de Montreal had to "ensure the securitization of [public and semipublic] spaces and guarantee that they are inviting to users, whether the spaces themselves or their perimeter; install adequate surveillance services in parks; raise awareness regarding different issues related to the use of parks, such as lighting, use of drugs in parks, and surveillance; follow up on maintenance works in leisure centres; follow up on requests to improve parks" (translation mine).[115] The OMHM's role included "increasing physical security in spaces; multiplying the occasions of contact with residents through more presence [of OMHM agents]; maintenance of [external] lighting; more presence of different agents of the OMHM; establishing a working group to study and develop new approaches to increase security; decreasing response time to tenants' requests" (translation mine).[116] The police's role, finally, focused on traditional policing tactics comprising "increased police agents' visibility; [reinforcing] the laws and regulations; higher number of patrols on foot in the complex; undertaking police operations; [intensifying the] presence [of police agents] during [community-organized] events; responding to citizens' complaints; use of tactical analysis on criminality" (translation mine).[117]

The institutional partners, following the crisis of 2003, expanded their roles to include the spaces of the complex while they continued to operate in the park René Goupil. The years following the crisis witnessed more focus on increasing the formal institutional presence in the complex, as well as the physical securitization of the public and semipublic spaces in and around Plan Robert. This physical securitization of space was a clear expression of this intensified institutional presence, whether through the presence of police and OMHM agents on the terrain or

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[114] Plan d'action HLM Saint-Michel nord et voisinage pour l'année 2004,Présenté à la table de travail multidisciplinaire suite aux événements de l'été 2003 « Dossiers Gangs de rue», 2004

[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Ibid.

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the installment of video-camera surveillance and external lighting. The objective of these interventions, like in other instances, was to control the Black youth's presence in the public and semipublic space, reduce it, and eventually eliminate it.

The police were important to many of the committee's efforts to transform space in the post-2003 period. Here, the committee aided the police's newly adopted Proximity Approach, which saw the police attempt to build direct connections with residents of the complex. The events that the committee organized, events meant to re-appropriate public spaces, were usually attended by the police, guaranteeing the direct contact with youth and the rest of the community that the police desired. These interventions, like in defensible space theory, aim to rally residents to occupy space in a certain way to change the use of the space. Organizing certain community events in these spaces was meant to change the function/use of certain public and semipublic spaces, from spaces where Black youth used to be present, to spaces where committee members (community workers and institutional agents) and community members (other than Black youth) are present. Increasing the physical presence of these groups of people in the public and semi-public spaces was also meant to bring spaces under continuous surveillance by the residents themselves, and by the committee members who observe residents by building direct connections with them. This is aimed to render these spaces unaccessible to Black youth, who would be expelled from the public and semipublic space that is now occupied by other groups of residents as well as the committee members.

Projet Rebondi is an important example of such activities. As mentioned above, the project brought together police agents and youth from the complex (specifically in the age group under 15) to play soccer in the newly redeveloped park René Goupil.[118] The project brought youth under 15 to play soccer in the park, changing the function of the park by enacting activities that are monitored by committee members. It also brought the targeted group of youth under the police's

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[118] Projet pilote rebondi, Section prévention et intervention jeunesse Nord, 2004

direct surveillance. Ultimately, through these activities, the park was kept constantly occupied by certain groups of residents, displacing Black youth (over 15), originally the main users of the park. Similar activities, such as the BBQs organized by the police in the spaces of the park,[119] were undertaken, achieving similar objectives. Both the above activities, and other activities undertaken in the park, were celebrated by the committee as major successes for having attained their aims and reducing the numbers of youth frequenting the park.

The committee continued its defensible space operations through the rest of the decade, repurposing the use of spaces and encouraging residents' physical occupation of space. Defensible space mechanisms also assisted the committee in anchoring the presence of its members, specifically the institutional partners, and their ability to intervene in the complex. This anchoring of the committee's institutional partners in space had important effects. Toward the end of the 2000s, it facilitated a shift to more coercive control over space and more explicit forms of state surveillance.

In 2008, the participation of two committee members – Fady Dagher, commandant of the PDQ 30, and Yves Sauvé, the security director of the OMHM[120] – changed the committee's approach to its physical interventions in the spaces in and around Plan Robert. With the clearly stated aim to resolve the issue of youth gathering in space ("attroupement"),[121] the committee, led by these two members, made a shift toward more visible manifestations of physical securitization of spaces, including the use of video camera surveillance. It also shifted toward increased direct institutional involvement in the daily lives of residents, including increased police patrols, both formal and informal, and the OMHM's hiring of security agents present on the terrain on a regular basis.

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[119] Fonds d'action en prévention du crime (FAPC), Rapport d'activités de projet, ASQVSME, 2008

[120] Compte-rendu, ASME, February 2009

[121] Ibid.

The police intensified the presence of police agents "increasing the formal presence of the police (e.g., patrols), as well as their informal presence (e.g., lunches at Mon Resto)" (translation mine).[122] The police also "[created] bicycle patrols to increase visibility and contact with citizens, [allocated] police officers to work with all schools in the area on a regular basis to get to know and work with staff and pupils, and [ensured] the presence in all the 'hot spot' areas to get to know the areas better and develop individual relations with the population in those areas" (Dagher, 2011, p. 132). Both the formal and informal presence of the police was an expression of "defensibility" of the public and semipublic spaces in and around Plan Robert. Such presence was meant to make the spaces appear less vulnerable to crime. This of course targeted Black youth, who were seen as outsiders to community and threat. The presence of the police made the spaces unaccessible to Black youth, who would feel they are constantly being observed by either other groups of residents, as I show above, or police agents. This is the logic that shaped the physical operation of the various committees and aimed to expel Black youth from the public and semipublic space.

The OMHM, the committee's other important institutional partner, established the Centre de coordination de la sécurité in May 2008. In order to guarantee the regular presence of OMHM security agents in the housing complex, OMHM official Yves Sauvé established a "solidarity cooperative" instead of hiring an external security private agency.[123] The security agents were OMHM agents. They "wear a uniform and [are] equipped with an anti-bullet vest, a staff and cuffs, but they are more sensitive and adequate to the kind of cliental residing in the housing complexes" (translation mine).[124] In addition to the OMHM security agents, the OMHM installed video camera surveillance, following a decision that was contested by both residents and community partners.[125] These two adopted surveillance mechanisms aimed to "ensure surveillance of the spaces of the

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[122] Compte-rendu, Comité de pilotage, October 2008

[123] Compte-rendu, ASME, February 2009

[124] Ibid.

[125] Compte-rendu, Comité sécurité HLM Nord, September 2009

housing complexes and the continuous exchange with residents" (translation mine).[126] During a meeting where Sauvé presented this new approach to security, Fady Dagher confirmed that the OMHM security agents will work in collaboration with the police and will be in direct contact with the police agents.[127]

In September 2009, an important discussion took place regarding the OMHM's new "coercive" approach to security in Plan Robert. Some of the committee members expressed concern regarding this shift and its impact on the work of the partners and the relations of trust they have with the residents.[128] The partners opposed the installation of video cameras. They argued that it is risky for the relation of trust that the partners who work on the terrain have established with the residents. The committee members also contested the presence of the OMHM's security agents. Judith Paradis from PACT de rue, the social worker who works closely with the youth of the complex in the age group 18-25, explained that the patrollers are not credible in the eyes of targeted youth. In response, Sauvé declared that, as owner of the property, the OMHM would impose certain rules that tenants are obliged to adhere to.[129]

Sauvé's reaction solicited discomfort among the partners, to which the official responded by reiterating the importance of the OMHM's new involvement in questions of security, and claiming that if necessary, the OMHM would "take care of the process" without the collaboration of the partners, given the urgency. Responding to the objection to the instalment of video camera surveillance, he discarded it by stating that the decision has already been made, and that it is not subject of discussion with the tenants. He also hinted that eviction is one measure that could be undertaken as a solution to security issues.[130] Evident from the above, the community of residents, specifically Black youth, continued to express discontent with the committee's intensified physical

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[126] Compte-rendu, ASME, February 2009

[127] Ibid.

[128] Compte-rendu, Comité sécurité HLM Nord, September 2009

[129] Ibid.

[130] Ibid.

securitization of space. Nonetheless, the committee's logic of exclusion, understandings of the community as cleared of Black youth, continued to shape the committee's interventions. Judith Paradis expressed that the youth in question, the main target of the work of the committee, were not satisfied with the intensified presence of security agents. Her attempt to include the youth in the discussion was dismissed and the committee's work continued to target the Black youth of the complex while excluding them from the discussions that concern them. While having Black youth as their main target, the committee's work continued to shape Black youth as a category sitting outside of conceptions of community.

Reflecting the atmosphere within which the work of the committee was developing as a result of the greater involvement of the institutional partners, in February 2010, the committee members expressed concerns regarding the relationship between the OMHM and the police. The expressed concerns, specifically, about the extent of the authority the police on the territory of the OMHM housing complexes, and raised questions regarding the existence of a formal agreement, a protocol, that regulates such presence. The members agreed that a meeting between Fady Dagher and Yves Sauvé was necessary in order to define the protocol between the two institutional partners. The members argued that it was very important that the police receive a mandate from the OMHM defining its authority and extent of intervention on the territory of the OMHM and whether the police could have access to the video camera surveillance images, installed by the OMHM. The members concluded that the two institutional partners should be aware of the consequences of an absence of an agreement between the two.[131] The greater involvement of the institutional partners was manifest in the intensified physical securitization of space (e.g., presence of OMHM and police agents and installment of video-camera surveillance and external lighting). This increased involvement of the police and the OMHM in the complex and its physical manifestation seemed to provoke discontent from residents and from the committee members

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[131] Compte-rendu, Comité de pilotage, ASME, February 2019

themselves who saw the work of the institutional partners and their adoption of more coercive surveillance mechanisms a threat to their work and roles in the complex.

The committees' intensified physical and social operations in Plan Robert did not eliminate the Black youth's presence in the public and semipublic spaces. Even if generating momentary results, displacing Black youth from public spaces to others, the issue with the Black youth's presence persisted for the committee. In fact, the Black youth's presence cannot be eliminated, given the demographic composition of the community as predominantly Black. Black youth are residents of the complex thus they are present in its spaces. After more than a decade of attempts and a wide range of approaches and programs, Yves Sauvé planted the seeds for a drastic change in the committee's vision of the solutions to the major security issue related to the Black youth's presence in the complex. Led by the OMHM, starting from 2013, the OMHM announced its intention to redevelop the entire housing complex.[132] As I discuss in the conclusion, this redevelopment aimed to improve the security of the complex by changing the architectural configuration of buildings, and public and semipublic spaces. The newly adopted architectural plans will see a major street cut the complex longitudinally, eliminating the public and semipublic spaces where Black youth used to be present. This aims to improve visibility and accessibility to the complex. The major redevelopment operation would also allow the OMHM to displace all of the complex's current residents for a two-year period and exert great influence over who will, and will not, be allowed to return.

3.4 Conclusion

The physical part of the defensible space operation played a crucial role in transforming the public and semipublic spaces of Plan Robert into spaces that are constantly under surveillance. Depending on conceptions of community (defining who is community and who is not), these

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[132] Compte-rendu de la rencontre partenaires du comité sécurité HLM Saint-Michel-Nord, Juin 2013

spaces encouraged certain residents to occupy spaces and participate in surveilling Black youth in order to push them out of space. Conceptions of community, conceived through the social part of the committee's work (as I show in the previous section) played a crucial role in facilitating the physical part of the operation, because they defined who is community and who is not, who had right to be in the space and who did not, who was surveilled and who was not.

Mobilized by the various committees' members, these conceptions of community are the engine that defined the use of spaces by giving some residents of the community more right to space and by portraying Black youth as lacking this same right to space. The physical aspect of the operation also helped enhance this sense of right to space. Arranged in a certain way, the public and semi-public spaces acquired new functions (e.g., a space for community-organized activities or sports), encouraging certain residents to be present in space. These residents became participants in policing the residential environment against Black youth, merely by being present in the spaces. This is what Newman's theory is calling for: the production of a space that is "defensible" because it enables such form of auto-surveillance through both the physical rearrangement of space and the social rearrangement of community. Relying on conceptions of community, defensible spaces construct communities capable of auto-surveilling their residents. The defensible space operation undertaken in Plan Robert provides a clear example to how defensible space, relying on anti-black conceptions of community (cleared of Black youth), creates spaces that are constitutively anti-Black.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusion

This thesis makes two main claims: one, contemporary security practices (namely community policing and defensible space) are conceived epistemologically and operationalized empirically through anti-blackness; two, community, as a category of the Human, is a contemporary site of re-elaboration of subjugation of blackness. Playing an instrumental role in licensing contemporary security practices, discourses of community perpetuate anti-blackness because the category of community itself is constitutively anti-black. The above two claims are manifest in Plan Robert, a marginalized Black housing complex of North-East Montreal, where a major community policing project is in operation since 1996. This site presented an important opportunity where to interrogate contemporary anti-Black security practices as they unfold in the present, and demonstrate the ongoing anti-Black violence they produce.

In chapter two, I delved into the details of the community policing project. I provided a high-level history of its genesis, tracing the different organizational, economic, and epistemological shifts as they appear in the 500 plus documents I obtained and analyzed. Identifying these shifts was crucial because it helped illuminate how the project was enacted and sustained over time. The community policing project in Plan Robert, this history shows, was the result of the police's 1996 adopted strategy to counter Black youth gang activity through community policing. The first committee, CSQV, was established that same year, to fulfill the police's mission, enabling a complex web of collaborations between the police and non-state agents who coordinated their efforts to facilitate the police's intervention in the complex. This project also included the important involvement of the OMHM who played a major role in enabling the project since the beginning.

The community policing project in Plan Robert, this thesis demonstrates, adopted seemingly benign policing mechanisms. It mobilized (non-police) community agents to establish relations of trust with the residents of Plan Robert. These community workers intervened in all aspects of the lives of residents, adopting and mobilizing discourses of community to justify their intensified presence in the complex. Using discourses of community suggested a shift to seemingly 'softer' policing strategies, nonetheless, these approaches were not necessarily less repressive and did not eliminate police abuses.

The crisis of 2003 provides striking evidence. Residents of Plan Robert, specifically Black youth, contested the police's intensified presence in the complex, accusing the police of racial profiling. They also filed charges against the OMHM, as owner of the housing complex, for allowing the police's harassment of residents, when it is within their mandate to protect residents. Despite residents' dissatisfaction, the community workers continued to intervene in Plan Robert and mobilized discourses of community, facilitating the state-administered policing interventions as a benevolent act aimed at the well-being of the community, while it is clear these operations had as their main objective intervening in Black communities to surveil their residents. This calls into question the notion of community and its limits.

In chapter three, I showed how discourses of community were produced and mobilized in Plan Robert mainly through the defensible space operation the community workers, together with the police and the OMHM, adopted in the complex. In line with Oscar Newman's defensible space theory, the community workers in Plan Robert enacted minor and major architectural interventions to change the physical arrangement of the public and semipublic spaces in and around Plan Robert. For Newman, the rearrangement of the physical setting in a certain way changes the functions of spaces, enhancing certain residents' "sense of community" because they feel a sense of territoriality over space. They "appropriate" the space because they feel ownership over it. Certain residents' mere presence in the space acquires meaning. It reinforces the

"defensibility" of space against (potentially criminal) residents, who does not share this same sense of territoriality and ownership over space, and are positioned as intruders to community and to the public and semipublic space, and thus pushed outside it. But there is more than this simple definition of "defensibility" of space to crime. Between the lines of the theory is a more dangerous assertion. Relying on notions of community in its definitions of who is criminal and who is not, who possesses a "sense of community" and who does not, the theory points to a possible fracture in the notion of community.

In Plan Robert, for instance, adopting similar ideas of defensibility of space, the community workers established a dividing line between the protected and the protected-against, shaping conceptions of who is community and who is threat (Black youth), who deserves to be in the space and who does not. Indeed, Black youth were positioned at the centre of discourses of community. Through circulated ideas about Black youth criminality, regardless of whether they were involved in gang activity or not, Black youth were positioned outside of conceptions of community, defining the boundaries of community and its outside. Community was forged through the exclusion of Black youth from its conceptions.

The repercussions of this definition of community in this specific way are huge. These conceptions of community cleared from Black youth enabled the community workers to align their objectives with those of the rest of the community of residents, making the issue of the presence of Black youth in the public and semipublic spaces a shared security concern. It, also, legitimized the need to enact various surveillance mechanisms in space, including those achieved through the physical occupation of space (by residents and community workers) to make spaces amenable to observation against Black youth. The defensible space operation brought together state and non-state agents, along with certain residents, in their shared mission to defend the community of Plan Robert against Black youth. Through discourses of community, those residents were held as part of the community, and, rallied against Black youth, who were permanently excluded from

community and the public/semipublic space. The community of Plan Robert, reconstructed through the exclusion of Black youth, was meant to participate in perpetuating the anti-black policing project targeting its residents. This pathologized the whole of the community and necessitated the state's intervention to perpetuate control over all of its Black residents. These residents were seen as closer to conceptions of citizenship (closer to whiteness) if they participated in the state's interventions targeting their community. They were excluded from conceptions of citizenship (from whiteness) if they resisted the state's interventions and attempts to disrupt their lives. Blackness, indeed, defined conceptions of community. A community cleared from Black youth through these specific interventions is a community cleared from blackness.

But there is more than this local effect on the lives of the Black community in the specific site of Plan Robert. The literature on anti-blackness tells us that the issue with the exclusion of Black people from the categories of the Human (in this case community) is not coincidental. Scholars of anti-blackness suggest that modern categories of the Human (such as freedom and justice and right) provide no possibility for Black people because they are inherently anti-black. It is necessary, these scholars emphasize, to reveal the raciality embedded in these categories from their genesis in order to understand how such categories were forged through the exclusion of Black people. This is means to understand the longer history of anti-blackness, constituting contemporary patterns of subjugation of blackness.

It is for this specific reason that I engaged with the work of scholars Wilderson (2003a); de Silva (2007); Sexton (2010); Browne (2015); Walcott (2014); Hartman (1997), who pay special attention to the various categories of the Human and the exclusion thereby of blackness. Indeed, surveying the literatures on anti-blackness was extremely helpful to contextualize my site-specific investigation of Plan Robert within the larger geographical and historical patterns of global anti-blackness. Within this literature, I initially put special emphasis on the category of civil society, as elaborated in the work of scholars Silva and Wilderson, for the similarities "civil society"

manifested in relation to "community." This literature was extremely useful as it provided a methodological example to how I should approach the category of community as yet another category of the Human, constituted today as site of re-elaboration of the position of the Black person in our contemporary society. Nonetheless, this literature did not pay attention to the longer history of anti-blackness through which "community" was forged.

In addition to the above literature on anti-blackness, I engaged closely with the critical literature available on contemporary security practices. There is an important body of literature that focuses on Oscar Newman's defensible space theory (Lee & Herborn, 2007; Herbert & Brown, 2006; Cupers, 2016). This scholarship emphasizes the role of the theory in shaping contemporary urban governance, specifically in relation to crime management, as well as its effects on contemporary surveillance practices targeting marginalized communities. There is also a large body of literature that interrogates community policing and the important role of notions of "community" in security practices (Schrader, 2016; Gilmore & Gilmore, 2016; Williams, 2004). This literature focuses mainly on the role of "community" as notion and praxis in enabling the shift in the state's policing strategies to seemingly less repressive approaches, enabling the state to adapt its modes of policing and perpetuate its control over and violence toward various marginalized populations. Both literatures on defensible space and community policing are important because they help understand the adaptable nature of the state's security interventions in marginalized communities including Black communities. Nonetheless, they fall short from explaining how, relying on "community," constitutively anti-Black, these security practices perpetuate anti-blackness.

The work of Saidiya Hartman (1997) provided the most useful insight for this thesis because of its specific attention to the category of community. It revealed the anti-blackness embedded in the category from its genesis. It also elucidated the important effects of "community" on the position of the Black person in relation to the public sphere. The Black person was evicted from

"community" and the public sphere since the era following the formal abolition of slavery. Hartman's analysis demonstrates how "community," as a category of the Human, is inherently anti-Black.

Engaging the work of Black critical thinkers, I was able to understand several things. The spaces the defensible space operation in Plan Robert created are shaped by conceptions of community, which are inherently anti-Black. These spaces, thus, like the public space of the post-slavery era Hartman talks about, do not incorporate the Black person. They are rather shaped by the exclusion of the Black person. Mobilized by community workers, the category of community, as the Plan Robert example showed, continues to adopt a logic similar to the one produced by society in the post-slavery era, perpetuating anti-blackness, because it is (re)constructed through the exclusion of Black people from conceptions of community and from the public space. Community as a category of the Human is a crucial contemporary threshold in the constitution of whiteness and blackness, a continuation of the same anti-black mechanisms that constituted community and its outside and shaped the relations between Black communities and the state for 500 years.

Through this thesis, I was able to provide empirical work that brings to the fore actual terrain interventions to demonstrate how the state continues to intervene in Black communities to control such communities and define how they relate to the public sphere. As I showed, the mere demographic composition of these communities, as predominantly Black, calls for their regulation. Their mere existence is perceived as a threat to the social order. In Plan Robert, the community workers, the police and the OMHM intervened to control the social construction of the community to regulate how Black people related to community and to the public space.

After more than two decades of operations and attempts to regulate/reduce/eliminate the presence of the Black youth of Plan Robert in the public and semipublic spaces in and around the complex, in 2013, the OMHM finally announced its intention to redevelop the entire housing

complex, and sought funds to do so.[133] It developed architectural plans for the physical reconfiguration of the residential, public, semipublic spaces to resolve the main security issue guiding its mission since 1996: the presence of the Black youth of Plan Robert in the public and semi-public space in and around Plan Robert. The newly adopted architectural plans were meant to improve security by enhancing visibility and accessibility to the public and semipublic spaces where Black youth used to be present. Indeed, the newly adopted architectural plans saw a major street cut the complex longitudinally, eliminating the public and semipublic spaces where Black youth used to be present.

These initial plans to redevelop the entire complex concretized in February 2017, when the OMHM announced the beginning of the major redevelopment as well as the eviction of the entire population of the housing complex. The news came as no surprise to the committee members gathering around the consultation table, as efforts to seek funds to redevelop the complex, aiming to resolve both structural and security issues, have been ongoing since 2013.[134] On the other hand, the news surprised, if not shocked, the residents of Plan Robert, as the first news concerning the redevelopment project guaranteed that the redevelopment will be managed in phases, which would have allowed the residents to stay in the complex and avoid evictions. A few months after the announcement was made, the entire community of Plan Robert was evicted. Today, Plan Robert is a construction site.

While residents were granted the right to return to their homes at the end of the construction work, the OMHM has it within its capacities to manage the population of residents, and decide who is allowed to return and who is not. The risk of dispersing the community of Plan Robert is real.

The community project in Plan Robert, first, excluded Black youth permanently from community, second, conceived of the rest of community as state allies participant in the exclusion

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[133] Compte-rendu de la rencontre partenaires du comité sécurité HLM Saint-Michel-Nord, Juin 2013

[134] Compte-rendu du comité sécurité du HLM Saint-Michel Nord, Juin 2010

of Black youth from community and, third, mobilized the community to displace Black youth outside of space by encouraging those other residents to occupy space instead. Black youth were permanently positioned outside of the category of community, outside the category of citizenship, and from the physical space. But the Black youth's presence cannot be eliminated, given the demographic composition of the community as predominantly Black. After more than two decades of intensive interventions, and when efforts to eliminate the presence of Black youth had failed, the committee concluded its operation in Plan Robert by eliminating the space itself.

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