

When Police Fail to Protect:  
Remembering the Tulsa Riot of 1921

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Historical Paper  
Paper Length: 2,493 words

On May 31, 1921 in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Dick Rowland, an African American man, was accused of assault by a young white woman. In the days that followed, a riot broke out and several city blocks of the African American neighborhood of Greenwood - known as “Black Wall Street” - were burned to the ground, leaving many dead and others homeless. A pre-existing environment of racial tension, conflict sparked by an alleged assault, and the failure of police to attempt a compromise led to the destruction of Tulsa’s African American community, which was slowly rebuilt over the next decade.

The “Roaring Twenties,” as the era was called, was a time of great change that stressed the very fabric of America (Zeitiz). The twenties marked the end of World War I, in which many black soldiers fought to prove themselves worthy of full citizenship rights. These soldiers returned home after several victories in Europe, only to find that their efforts were not acknowledged and segregation remained across the nation (“Black Men”). As the war began to wind down and a labor shortage arose in the North, an estimated six million black people moved northward toward urban centers between 1910 and 1940, in what became known as the first Great Migration (“The Great Migration”). This sparked a period of rapid urbanization, resulting in the spread of many ideas and the development of a rural-urban divide (Zeitiz). A so-called “cultural civil war” began and Americans debated political issues such as women’s rights, Prohibition, and racism (Mintz). Over the course of the early twentieth century, race riots were prevalent. Most notable were those in East St. Louis, Chicago, and Detroit. Rumors played a key role in a number of these riots and the police often escalated the violence (Gibson).

It did not take long for racial conflict to reach the city of Tulsa. Tulsa is located in the Northeastern corner of Oklahoma, a state that had a white majority in the 1920s (United States

Census Bureau). Tulsa was known as the “Oil Capital of the World” during the early twentieth century when the oil industry boomed and brought wealth to the city (Johnson, *Tulsa’s* 7). Publicized as a “High Class Order for Men of Intelligence and Character,” the 1915 national revival of the Ku Klux Klan appealed to the middle class white population. The Klan was founded in 1865 as a white supremacist organization known for terrorism. The early twentieth century resurgence was started by William J. Simmons and flourished after the release of the film *Birth of a Nation*, which spread pro-Klan propaganda and promoted the myth that black men were rapists. As a result, the United States experienced over one hundred acts of KKK influenced violence in 1921 (Rothman). The KKK was reintroduced to Oklahoma in 1920, and the number of members reached a record of two thousand after the Tulsa Riot in 1921 (“Ku Klux Klan”). Though the KKK was not directly responsible for the riot, white supremacist ideas fueled the anger and hatred that led to violence that day.

The racial tension in Tulsa created an environment of impending conflict. Despite widespread racism in Tulsa and the rest of the nation during the early twentieth century, Tulsa’s African American Greenwood District became the center of business and entrepreneurship, gaining the name “Negro Wall Street” from Booker T. Washington (Johnson, *Tulsa’s* 7; *Greenwood Cultural Center*). As the Greenwood Cultural Center describes the prosperity, “Blacks had created their own businesses and services in this enclave, including several groceries, two independent newspapers, two movie theaters, nightclubs, and numerous churches. Black professionals—doctors, dentists, lawyers, and clergy—served the community.” Though the Greenwood District was renowned for its success, white supremacy still dominated the minds of many Tulsans. Dr. Saleb A. Ridley, a white Atlanta preacher said in a 1921 address at Tulsa’s

Convention Hall, “A white man is a white man, whether he lives in New Jersey, Indiana, Kansas, Illinois, Oklahoma, or Georgia. And a white man’s job is to see that civilization comes under the domination of no inferior race so long as he lives” (“Klan Head Asks Tulsa to Rally”). The success of the Greenwood District contrasted with the common view of black inferiority, creating an environment of racial tension in Tulsa (Johnson, *Tulsa’s* 7).

In May of 1921 an accident prompted a young woman to accuse a black man of sexual assault, an allegation that would later become the catalyst for a riot. Dick Rowland worked as a shoe shiner, and his boss had arranged for him to use the restrooms in the Drexel Building across the street from where he was working. On May 30, he was in the elevator when it suddenly lurched causing him to fall over onto Sarah Page, the young white elevator operator. Though accounts differ, he either stepped on her foot or accidentally grabbed her arm while trying to steady himself. After Page screamed, Rowland fled, knowing that any form of physical contact with a white woman could quickly escalate into a rape charge. He was arrested the next day and when Page was questioned, she admitted that it was likely an accident (Johnson, *Black* 36-37; Hirsch 78).

The local newspapers played an integral role in escalating the accusation into a much larger conflict. The story was not run in Tulsa’s main newspaper, the *World*, likely due to police uncertainty that a crime had been committed. However, the *World’s* competitor, the *Tribune*, had a different outlook on the incident and ran the headline, “NAB NEGRO FOR ATTACKING GIRL IN ELEVATOR.” The paperboys were on the streets shouting “EXTRA! EXTRA! TO LYNCH NEGRO TONIGHT! READ ALL ABOUT IT.” The papers were quickly purchased and soon a mob formed and headed to the courthouse where Rowland was detained (Madigan

69-70; Hirsch 79). Hours later, word got around that Rowland was going to be lynched and a group of around thirty African American men marched toward the courthouse, armed in order to protect him (Hirsch 83; Johnson, *Black* 39).

In the riot that ensued, Tulsa police officers heightened the level of conflict rather than attempting compromise. When the white mob and the group of black men from Greenwood met, a white police officer ordered an African American man to hand over his pistol. When he refused, gunfire erupted (Johnson, *Black* 40). In an interview for the *Chicago Defender*, Thomas Higgins, a white Tulsan who was present at the scene, explained how the struggle intensified: “To my personal knowledge, at least a dozen negroes were shot to death by officers of the law while their hands were in the air and in some instances, these same men set fire to the homes and business places of Negroes. The most feeble effort was made to stop the great damage that was wrought” (“White Man Says Police Burned Homes in Tulsa”). Van B. Hurley, a police officer at the time of the riot said in a report that, “Several prominent city officials who he declared met in a downtown office and carefully planned the attack on the segregated District by the use of airplanes.” Hurley also explained that, “They [the city officials] gave us instructions for every man to be ready and on the alert and if the niggers wanted to start anything to be ready for them. They never put forth any efforts at all to prevent it whatsoever, and said if they started anything to kill every b---- son of a b----- they could find” (“Ex-Policeman Claims City Officials Planned Riot”). The actions of the Tulsa police demonstrate that African Americans were violently attacked, rather than protected by the police.

The riot progressed from a shootout into a major act of arson lasting long into the night. George Douglass Monroe, a survivor who was five years old at the time of the riot, told the New

York Times that he remembered hiding under the bed with his siblings as white men broke into his home. "They went straight to the curtains of the house and set them afire," Mr. Monroe said. "As they walked past the bed, one of the men stepped on my finger. As I went to scream, my older sister, Lottie, put her hand over my mouth. That's something I will never forget" (Verhovek). Airplanes, flown by civilians at the request of the Tulsa police, began dropping nitroglycerin on the Greenwood District, setting homes and businesses on fire (Keating et al. 106). Families ran out of their homes and into the streets, only to be fired at by white mobs while their homes were looted (Johnson, *Black* 47). According to a 1922 article in the *Chicago Defender*, "Helpless women and babies were roaming the woodlands round about Tulsa for thirty six hours. Surrounding towns had reared a barrier of armed guards to keep them out" (Smitherman, "Will Tulsa Riot"). The deadly riot finally died down when martial law was declared at 11:49 AM the next day (Hirsch 107). Black Tulsans made up the overwhelming majority of the estimated one hundred to three hundred deaths (Sulzberger). The number is still uncertain since many of the bodies were buried in unmarked mass graves (Madigan, Personal Interview). In the end, all charges against Rowland were dropped and he was covertly transferred out of the city of Tulsa and did not return for the rest of his life (*Greenwood Cultural Center*).

In the months following the riot, the arrests of those involved led to the trials of a number of civilians and city officials for not attempting to settle the conflict. A total of seventy nine black men were arrested for participation in the riot, while only nineteen white men were arrested for looting. The white men faced a small fine, while the African American men faced jail time or a heavy bond (Smitherman, "Will Tulsa Riot"). As reported in a 1921 article in the *Philadelphia Tribune*, "Chief of Police, John A. Gustafson, of this city [of Tulsa] has been

formally accused by the race riot Grand Jury of alleged dereliction of duty and contributing negligence in connection with the recent race riot in this city.” Gustafson was found guilty for not protecting people’s lives, but was never imprisoned (*Greenwood Cultural Center*). The trial of the police chief proves that the police involvement in perpetuating the violence was, in fact, legally recognized.

The Tulsa Riot also influenced the views of many Americans. William [Wilford] B. Smith, a white Southerner shared his perspective in a 1921 article:

In some parts of the country the white element may ‘mess along’ with the Negro, but finally the negro becomes so intolerable that the white man balks, and there is a tragedy like the Tulsa affair. How infinitely better it would be if the white man, everywhere, would deal with the Negro as the white man deals with him in the south - with kindness, but with absolutely no toleration of any species of impudence. (Smith)

This explains how some people viewed the riot not as an act of violence upon the African Americans of Tulsa, but as a lack of proper oppression by white people.

In the years following the riot, many victims fought to maintain ownership of their property and rebuild (“Expose Plot”). In the wake of the riot, many Americans donated money for relief (Smitherman “Call Tulsa Riot”). However, a large portion of that money went to attorney’s fees, rather than rebuilding Greenwood (“Police Officials of Tulsa”). In his book *Black Wall Street*, Author Hannibal Johnson explains the struggle of Tulsans to obtain money from insurance companies. “Few of the affected property owners had insurance. Those who did were notified that unless they could prove that either the city or state was negligent in the protection of their property, the insurance policy would be void.” Loyal members of the Zion

Baptist Church spent years raising money to rebuild, bringing life back into the Greenwood District. This started an era of revitalization in Tulsa (Johnson, *Black* 87). Residents of the Greenwood District received some donations from individuals as well as organizations such as the NAACP (Johnson, Personal Interview). According to the Greenwood Cultural Center, “Without a single penny from the city, the county, the state, or the federal governments, and with every single insurance claim categorically denied, the District came back stronger than ever. In fact, less than a decade after the destruction, there [were]... over 100 MORE active businesses...”

In 2001, eighty years after the Tulsa Riot, both the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and the Tulsa Reparations Coalition have called “for reparations to descendants of the victims and survivors of the riot, the establishment of a scholarship fund for students, the establishment of an economic development zone in the historic African-American Greenwood district of Tulsa, and for the reburial of any human remains found in the search or unmarked graves of riot victims.” The UUA has donated \$20,000 in reparations as of 2007 (Association). The UUA’s director of information, John Hurley expressed that, “...it's got to be admitted that during the course of our history we were complicit in racism, and that's a history we need to face alongside the good things that we want to face” (Carrillo).

The Tulsa Riot was rarely discussed in the decades that followed, thus depriving the city of an opportunity to improve race relations. In a personal interview, Author Tim Madigan explained some of the ways the riot affected the citizens of Tulsa: “I think that everyone was just so traumatized that ... with some exceptions, they almost seemed to be incapable of outrage, and all that outrage and feelings kind of went inward and were spoken in hushed whispers on front porches. And this left this horrific spiritual stain on Tulsa that in my mind exists here today.” In a

personal interview, Author Hannibal B. Johnson commented on the result of the riot: “What I talk about as the legacy of the 1921 race riot is a gulf of distrust, which still exists. I think when you have a major social fissure like the riot, and you don’t make efforts to talk about it, or make reparations for decades it causes great distrust for the leadership which historically has been white male leadership.” A 2011 *New York Times* article written by A. G. Sulzberger explained how Tulsans turned a blind eye to the riot and many in today’s generation are oblivious of the violence that occurred. “The Tulsa race riot of 1921 was rarely mentioned in history books, classrooms or even in private. Blacks and whites alike grew into middle age unaware of what had taken place” (Sulzberger). As a result of the silence, racial discrimination continued throughout the 1930s (Hirsch 170). Sulzberger’s article also mentions that, “The riot will be taught for the first time in Tulsa public schools next year [2012] but remains absent in many history textbooks across the United States” (Sulzberger).

The Tulsa riot of 1921 ravaged the African American neighborhood of Tulsa, Oklahoma, leaving hundreds dead and others homeless. The ideology of white supremacist groups such as the KKK clashed with the flourishing African American Greenwood District community, which resulted in a racially charged environment in which a false assault accusation quickly escalated into a riot, largely due to the rumors created by the local newspaper. After the riot, city officials were charged with neglecting to protect citizens and property. At the same time, Greenwood residents fought to restore their neighborhoods in the face of a discriminatory insurance system. Over the next ten years, the Greenwood District was rebuilt, with the number of businesses exceeding what was there before the riot, demonstrating the strength and determination of Tulsa’s African American community.

## Annotated Bibliography

## Primary Sources

- “Ex-Policeman Claims City Officials Planned Riot” *The Philadelphia Tribune*, 22 Oct. 1921, pp. 9. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*. Accessed Oct. 4, 2017.  
I accessed this article at the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, an archive located at Temple University. This is a newspaper article that was published by the *Philadelphia Tribune*, an African American newspaper. The purpose of this article was to provide information from Van. B. Hurley, an ex-police officer who claimed that the riot was planned by officials. I used the example of what Hurley claims were the orders by officials to kill every black person if they dared to cause trouble, to demonstrate how officials were instigators of violence and did not seek compromise.
- “Expose Plot of Reality Men in Tulsa Riot.” *The Chicago Defender*, 3 Sept. 1921, pp. 3. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*. Accessed Oct. 4, 2017.  
I accessed this article at the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, an archive located at Temple University. This is a newspaper article that was published by the *Chicago Defender*, an African American newspaper. The purpose of this article was to give readers a sense of what the riot survivors are faced with after the destruction of their neighborhoods. I used the example of how the victims of the riot were faced with the battle to save their property from white buyers, in order to show one of the struggles that came with the rebuilding of Tulsa.
- “Klan Head Asks Tulsa to Rally” *The Chicago Defender*, 20 Aug. 1921, pp. 1. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*. Accessed Oct. 4, 2017.  
I accessed this article at the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, an archive located at Temple University. This is a newspaper article that was published by the *Chicago Defender*, an African American newspaper. The purpose of this article was to report what was being said by Dr. Saleb A. Ridley, a white preacher. I used the example of how Ridley said that the white man’s job is to maintain black inferiority, to demonstrate the ideas of white supremacists in Tulsa.
- “Police Officials of Tulsa Indicted by Grand Jury.” *The Chicago Defender*, 16 July 1921, pp. 10. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*. Accessed Oct. 4, 2017.  
I accessed this article at the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, an archive located at Temple University. This is a newspaper article that was published by the *Chicago Defender*, an African American newspaper. The purpose of this article was to show what the attorney general was saying about the recent Tulsa riot. I used the example of how the police chief was being indicated, to show that it was known that the police had not done their job in settling the riot.
- Smith, William B. “Tulsa’s Race Riot.” *The Chicago Defender*, 9 July 1921, pp. 16. *ProQuest*

*Historical Newspapers*. Accessed Oct. 4, 2017.

I accessed this article at the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, an archive located at Temple University. This is an article published in the *Chicago Defender* that was written by a man who was the editor of *The Pitchfork*, a magazine based in Dallas, Texas. Smith's purpose for writing this article was to give his personal perspective, as a white southern man, on the Tulsa riot. I used his thoughts on how white people were not oppressing black people enough, to show the influence of the riot on the beliefs of some white people throughout the US.

Smitherman, A.J. "Call Tulsa Riot Cases for Probe." *The Chicago Defender*, 1 Oct. 1921, pp. 1. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*. Accessed Oct. 4, 2017.

I accessed this article at the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, an archive located at Temple University. This is a newspaper article that was published by the *Chicago Defender*, an African American newspaper. The purpose of this article was to explain what was occurring in Tulsa in the months following the riot. I used the example of how although Americans donated money to Tulsa, not all of it went to the rebuilding of the destroyed neighborhoods, in order to demonstrate one of the reasons it took so long to rebuild the Greenwood District.

Smitherman, A.J. "Will Tulsa Riot Horrors Awaken America's Indifferent Attitude." *The Chicago Defender*, 22 July 1922, pp. 14. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*. Accessed Oct. 4, 2017.

I accessed this article at the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, an archive located at Temple University. This is a newspaper article that was published by the *Chicago Defender*, an African American newspaper. The purpose of this article was to explain the aftermath of the Tulsa riot. I used the example of women and children roaming the forests to show one of the immediate effects of the riot. I used the example of the number of people of each race arrested and their punishments to demonstrate how African Americans were arrested without necessarily having committed and faced more extreme punishments than the white people did.

United States Census Bureau. 1923 Oklahoma Census, Table 2. Color, Nativity and Sex, For the State, Urban and Rural: 1930, 1920, and 1910. 1930.

<https://www.census.gov/prod/www/decennial.html>

This is the United States census report for the state of Oklahoma from 1910 to 1930 which shows population statistics that are collected every ten years. The purpose of this document was to accurately collect data on the U.S. population and economics. I used this data to better understand the population of the state.

"White Man Says Police Burned Homes in Tulsa." *The Chicago Defender*, 11 June 1921, pp. 1. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*. Accessed Oct. 4, 2017.

I accessed this article at the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, an archive located at Temple University. This is a newspaper article that was published by the *Chicago Defender*, an African American newspaper. The purpose of this interview with Thomas Higgins was to provide an account of what happened from a white person's point

of view. I used the example of how white people were shooting black people even when they had their hands up to highlight how the police not only failed to attempt compromise, but also were perpetrators of this violence.

## Secondary Sources

Association, Unitarian Universalist. "Survivors of 1921 Tulsa Race Riot Receive Reparation Payments." *UUA Press Release*, 2007, [web.archive.org/web/20080906205748/http://www.uua.org/news/2002/020410tulsapr.html](http://www.uua.org/news/2002/020410tulsapr.html).

This is a press release from the Unitarian Universalist Association. It details the 20,000 dollar reparations made by the organization. I used this example to show how decades after the riot, reparations have begun to repay the survivors for all that they lost.

"Black Men and the Military in World War I." *Prentice Hall African-American History*, by Darlene Clark. Hine et al., Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2006, pp. 562–565.

This is a section from a textbook covering African American history. The section I used covers the involvement of black men in military efforts within the country as well as their efforts in Europe during World War I. I used the examples of black military success in World War I and the negligence of the United States government in recognizing the achievements of these men, to show another form of racial strife that set the stage for the events of the Tulsa Riot in 1921.

Carrillo, Karen Juanita. "Religious Group Affirms Call for Reparations in Tulsa." *The New York Amsterdam News*, 18 July 2001.

This is an article that discusses reparations for the Tulsa Riot. The article focuses on the reparations made by the Unitarian Universalist Association. I used the example of the UUA reparations to show that years after the riot, survivors are receiving reparations for the devastation that the riot caused.

Gibson, Robert A. "The Negro Holocaust: Lynching and Race Riots in the United States, 1880-1950." *Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute*, Yale University, 2016, [teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculum/units/1979/2/79.02.04.x.html](http://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculum/units/1979/2/79.02.04.x.html).

This is a high school curriculum designed by a member of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute that contains information and analyses on the causes and effects of various lynchings and race riots in American History. The purpose of this work is to provide historical information to teachers so they can explain these historical events to their students. I used the information on the dates, locations and commonalities of the various riots surrounding the Tulsa Riot of 1921 to show that the events in Tulsa were quite common and that similar instances were occurring around the United States between 1898 and 1943.

*Greenwood Cultural Center*, [www.greenwoodculturalcenter.com/about](http://www.greenwoodculturalcenter.com/about).

This is the website for a center in today's Greenwood District with exhibits that commemorate the success of the Greenwood District. I used the example of how the businesses came back in greater number than there were before, to show the rebirth

Tulsa. This also gives a glimpse into how Tulsa looks today. I also used information from this website to explain what happened to Rowland after the riot.

Hirsch, James S. *Riot and Remembrance: America's Worst Race Riot and Its Legacy*. Houghton Mifflin, 2002.

This book was written by James S. Hirsch, a former reporter for the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times. It describes the city of Tulsa before, during and after the 1921 riot. I used the information on the events of May 30, 1921 to explain the small conflict that sparked the race riot. I used the declaration of martial law to show how the riot eventually ended. I also used the example of discrimination after the riot to show that the lack of education about the riot resulted in a lack of opportunity to improve interracial relations.

Johnson, Hannibal B. *Black Wall Street: from Riot to Renaissance in Tulsa's Historic Greenwood District*. Eakin Press, 2007, pp. 36-48, 87, 98.

This book by Hannibal B Johnson, an expert in law and the history of Oklahoma, describes the Greenwood District and the events of the Tulsa Race Riot as well as the rebuilding of the city. The purpose of the book is to demonstrate how Tulsa, Oklahoma bounced back from the destruction of the 1921 riot despite a discriminatory insurance system. I used the information on the events of May 30, 1921 to explain the small conflict that sparked the race riot.

Johnson, Hannibal B. Personal Interview. 19 Jan. 2018.

Over the phone, I interviewed Hannibal Johnson, author of *Black Wall Street: from Riot to Renaissance in Tulsa's Historic Greenwood District*, as well as *Tulsa's Historic Greenwood District*. I used his example of how Tulsans received money from organizations such as the NAACP, to show that there were donations from non-government organizations to help rebuild Greenwood. I quoted him on the “gulf of distrust” in Tulsa to show the residual impact the riot has had on today’s citizens.

Johnson, Hannibal B. *Tulsa's Historic Greenwood District*. Arcadia Publishing, 2014, pp. 7.

This book by Hannibal B Johnson, an expert in law and the history of Oklahoma, contains a number of captioned photos of the Greenwood District before, during, and after the riot of 1921. The purpose of this book is to give readers a visual on the destruction and tragedy of the riot. I used the explanation of the success of the Greenwood District and the resulting tension with the white community to prove that the jealousy of the white community created a tension that helped initiate the riot.

Keating, Frank, et al. “Tulsa Race Riot: A Report by the Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921.” *Oklahoma Historical Society*, 28 Feb. 2001, [www.okhistory.org/research/forms/freport.pdf](http://www.okhistory.org/research/forms/freport.pdf).

This is an official report that analyzes what exactly occurred during the Tulsa Riots. The document references various accounts and uses facts to support or disprove them. I used their research on the airplanes involved in the riot to show that they were flown by civilians at the request of the Tulsa police.

“Ku Klux Klan.” *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, Oklahoma Historical Society, 2009, [www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=KU001](http://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=KU001).

This article discusses the presence of the Ku Klux Klan in general as well as specifically in Oklahoma and it references the effects of the Tulsa Riot on the membership of the KKK in Oklahoma. The purpose of this article is to inform readers about the growth of the KKK, specifically in Oklahoma. I used the example of how the Klan membership grew right after the Tulsa riot to demonstrate one of the effects on the beliefs of the white citizens of Tulsa.

Madigan, Tim. Personal Interview. 19 Jan. 2018.

Over the phone, I interviewed Tim Madigan, author of *The Burning: Massacre, Destruction, and the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921*. I used his information on mass graves to show one of the reasons why the exact number of casualties is still unknown. I quoted him on how the trauma of the riot led to the silence on the topic that has lasted for years.

Madigan, Tim. *The Burning: Massacre, Destruction, and the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921*. St. Martin's Press, 2016, pp. 69-70.

This book is a retelling of the events of the Tulsa riot in 1921. The book goes into detail and is told in sequential order. The purpose of this book is to give readers a better understanding of exactly what happened during the Tulsa riot and to show what a number of the influences were. I used the example of the newspaper headlines to prove that the conflict would have died down if the press had not started the rumor that a lynching was going to occur that night.

Mintz, Steven. “Overview of the 1920s .” *Digital History*, University of Houston, 2016, [www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/era.cfm?eraID=13&smtID=1](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/era.cfm?eraID=13&smtID=1).

This article discusses the various topics the 1920s were known for. The purpose of this article is to summarize the main advancements and political issues relevant during the 1920s that shaped American History. I used the examples of foreign immigration, evolution, the Ku Klux Klan, prohibition, women's roles, and race to highlight issues that set the mood for the 1920s and to show where some of the political and racial tensions existed that influenced the events of the Tulsa Riot.

Rothman, Joshua. “When Bigotry Paraded Through the Streets.” *The Atlantic*, Atlantic Media Company, 4 Dec. 2016, [www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/12/second-klan/509468/](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/12/second-klan/509468/).

This article from The Atlantic magazine describes the history of the Ku Klux Klan and their rise to power. The purpose of this article is to bring light to a group that played a major role in American history especially during the 1920s and the Civil Rights Movement. I used the information on the growth rate, demographic, and rebirth of the KKK to show where a large part of the the ideology of racism came from that impacted Tulsa.

Sulzberger, A. G. “As Survivors Dwindle, Tulsa Confronts Past.” *The New York Times*, The New

York Times, 19 June 2011, [www.nytimes.com/2011/06/20/us/20tulsa.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/20/us/20tulsa.html).

This is an article from the New York Times written long after the Tulsa Riot. The purpose of this article is to bring to point out how the general public, specifically in Tulsa has little knowledge of the riot. I used this source to prove that only recently, the citizens of Tulsa have began to be taught about the riot of 1921.

“The Great Migration, 1910 to 1970.” *U.S. Census*, United States Census Bureau, 1 Mar. 1994, [www.census.gov/dataviz/visualizations/020/](http://www.census.gov/dataviz/visualizations/020/).

This is an article published by the United States Census Bureau. This source provides basic information on national issues and trends that led to the Great Migration. The information is supported by data collected over the years from census surveys.

Verhovek, Sam Howe. “75 Years Later, Tulsa Confronts Its Race Riot.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 31 May 1996, [www.nytimes.com/1996/05/31/us/75-years-later-tulsa-confronts-its-race-riot.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1996/05/31/us/75-years-later-tulsa-confronts-its-race-riot.html).

This is an article from the New York Times that takes a look at the Tulsa Riot on the seventy fifth anniversary of the deadly event. The article analyzes the tragic events of 1921 as well as various ceremonies and memorials that have been made to honor the victims. I used the survivor account of George Douglass Monroe to show the pure terror that the black citizens of Tulsa experienced that night, as well as to show that not even children were spared from the trauma.

Zeitz, Joshua. “The Roaring Twenties.” *The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History*, 5 Mar. 2012, [www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/roaring-twenties/essays/roaring-twenties](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/roaring-twenties/essays/roaring-twenties).

This article was published on the website of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, a nationally recognized organization and archive. It was written by Joshua Zeitz, who has taught American history at Harvard University and Cambridge University. This article was written with the purpose of educating the public about a number of major events and themes that helped to define the 1920s. I used the examples of urbanization the KKK flourishing, and the Prohibition to provide historical context for the Tulsa Riot.