

Police brutality	57
Overcrowded living conditions	55
Poor housing	54
Lack of jobs	45
Poverty	44
Dirty neighborhoods	44
Anger with local business people	43
Too much drinking	40
Broken political promises	39
Failure of parents to control children	39

THESE NUMBERS tell the percentage of Negroes interviewed who thought the possible riot causes listed had a great deal to do with the disturbance.

Which Grievances Contributed?

What caused the riot?

Discontent, obviously. But the question of what specific complaints would enrage a group of people enough to make them want to throw rocks, break windows, loot, and set fires is not so easy. The survey provides some clues.

The 437 Negroes in the sample were read a list of 23 grievances and asked by the Negro interviewers to tell which problems had a great deal, something, or nothing at all to do with the riot.

BASED ON the items which

got the most response of "a great deal," the main riot causes as perceived by the Negro community are police brutality, overcrowded living conditions, poor housing, lack of jobs, poverty, and anger with business people—in that order.

Rioters, singled out for special analysis, chose the same top six causes, though not in the same order. Overcrowded living conditions, not police brutality, led their list.

And the rioters were angrier. Each of their main complaints were made more frequently by 17 to 23 percentage points than in the group as a whole.

One of the problems which has been discussed as a partial cause of Negro problems poor public transportation which makes it hard for them to get to work—ranked next to last.

In the total sample, only seven percent listed poor transportation as having a great deal to do with the riot. Among the rioters, the number with this complaint was even smaller: Six percent.

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THERE WAS agreement among rioters and the group as a whole on the lowest item on the list: Anger with firemen. Only two percent said

this had a great deal to do with the riot—an indication that the week of lighting fires, false alarms, and sniping at firemen did not reflect any animosity toward the firemen themselves.

On only a few items were rioters less likely to have complaints than the total group. One was "teen-agers," probably a reflection of the fact that so many of the rioters were teen-agers themselves. "The failure of parents to control their children," also drew a significantly lower response from the rioting group.

Rioters were less likely than others to view black nationalism as a riot cause—though a majority of the group as a whole believes that black nationalists had at least something to do with it.

Rioters were also significantly less ready to accept the theory that too much drinking had a lot to do with the riot. While forty percent of the group scored this factor as important, only 34 percent of the rioters did so.

The conventional liberal idea that rioting is caused by a lack of adequate welfare services was not given very much weight by the majority of Negroes in the survey. Even the riot group ranked this complaint near the bottom of the list with only 28 percent crediting it "a great deal" as a riot cause. The response suggests that the ghetto is crying out for new and imaginative solutions to its problems.

	UNFAIR	FAIR
Grocery stores	54	39
Loan offices	48	17
Real estate	47	16
Home improvement	47	14
Furniture stores	40	29
Insurance	39	35
Car dealers	36	20
Automobile repair	36	23

MOST NEGROES who gave opinions believe that most local businessmen treat them fairly. But there are a few exceptions. This table shows targets of the most complaints, giving the percentage of the number surveyed who considered each business fair or unfair.

Mental Attitude of Police Is Called Part of Brutality

Police brutality, considered by most Negroes the main cause of rioting, is more—and less—than arbitrary rousting and frisking and beatings in the night.

It is an attitude — a state of mind found in police individually and collectively. Viewed through Negro eyes, the policeman who gives a white man a friendly wave and ignores a Negro is expressing a hostile racial attitude.

The Negro also notices that law enforcement in his neighborhood is different from that in the white areas. Prostitution and other nuisances are allowed to flourish where he lives. Crimes by Negroes against other Negroes are treated as less important than

crimes involving whites.

"Police are rude and mean," said a 20-year-old lower West Side resident, "and they don't show up when they're needed."

This broad interpretation of the much-used term, "police brutality," may explain a glaring discrepancy in the survey responses: Fifty-seven percent of the Negroes in the riot areas think police brutality had a great deal to do with the riot and another 25 percent think it had something to do with it.

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THAT'S 82 percent who believe in police brutality. And yet, when read a list of specific police malpractices, no more than 35 percent of those interviewed agree that any

one of them was commonly used.

Even fewer said that they themselves had been the victims of police malpractice.

The question asked was, "Please tell me whether any of the following kinds of bad treatment are commonly used by police against Negroes in this area." And the percentages giving positive answers were:

Three practices drew affirmative replies from more than 40 percent of those questioned: insults or lack of respect; stopping and searching cars unnecessarily; and unnecessary personal frisking and searching.

Sixteen percent said they had themselves been the victim of insulting, disrespectful police behavior.

On the surface, this looks bad for the police. Compared to data in the UCLA study of the Watts riot, it looks relatively good.

In that study, twice as many Negroes — 79 percent of the men and 64 percent of the women — accused police of insulting, disrespectful behavior. Thirty-four percent of the men and 13 percent of the women said it had happened to them.

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NEVERTHELESS, the Detroit Negroes who believe that police misbehavior caused this city's riot have some strong evidence behind them. The data show that Negroes who believed that police were insulting and disrespectful to Negroes in general were nearly twice as likely to be rioters. And those who felt that this disrespect had happened to them were almost four times as likely to riot.

Significantly, the relationship between police insults and rioting was stronger than that between any of the other malpractices and rioting. It is the little things that irritate.

Some of the association between police behavior and rioting can be explained by the youth of the rioters. Young people are more likely to be on the streets at night and are more likely to get into trouble. Nearly three-fourths of the people who said they themselves had been mistreated were 35 and under.

The fact that a majority of Negroes in the survey did not respond affirmatively to any of the specific complaints suggests that it was mainly coincidence that caused the riot to be sparked by a police incident — a chance coming together of combustible ingredients.

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SUCH A possibility was suggested more than two years ago by Rep. John Conyers, whose 1st District includes the riot area. Speaking at a winter meeting on race relations at Wayne State University, he said:

"The fact that we passed through the long, hot summer without incident isn't a measure of our success. That just means that the wrong citizen and the wrong policeman didn't happen to get together."

Last July 23, they did.

