

Riot

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lems were found not with the neighbors but with Rochester industry, insensitive police (and their cruelly employed dogs), housing restrictions and a general aura of community smugness.

"Rochester factories weren't open to minorities," Mitchell says.

Gantt adds, "Most (black) people got into Kodak in those days behind a broom."

Dr. Walter Cooper, a scientist and retired New York State Regent, applied to buy 69 different homes outside the proscribed black neighborhoods "only to be denied for all of them."

"Everybody in the community — black and white — knew something was drastically wrong," Florence says. "There was a quiet rage."

On July 24, it became noisy, destructive and dangerous. Before it was over, nearly 1,000 people were arrested, Police Chief William Lombard was nearly killed by a rock-throwing mob that turned over his car, four people died, 350 were injured and businesses were destroyed.

"It was a crude wake-up call for America," says Mitchell.

Thanks to thoughtful organization, skillful editing and an impressive range of interview subjects, *July '64* is an important document — a must-see for anyone interested in Rochester's past or the sad, volatile history of race in America. □

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