

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### **Aim: Did New York City police participate in anti-Black Riots in 1900?**

3. What evidence supports your position?
4. Why do you reject alternative explanations? **Do Now:** Read the statement by John Hains and answer the following questions.
  1. What happened to John Hains on the evening of August 15, 1900?
  2. According to his account, how was Mr. Hains treated by the police?
  3. In your opinion, why would Mr. Hains swear to his testimony before a “Notary Public”?

Sworn before me this 28th day of August, 1900. GEORGE HAMMOND JR., Notary Public  
John Hains, being duly sworn, desposes and says: I reside at No. 341 West 36th Street. I am a laborer, and am at present employed as a longshoreman at Pier 16, North River. On the evening of August 15, 1900, I went to bed as usual at 9:30 o'clock. About two o'clock in the morning I was awakened by somebody beating me on the back with a club. When I awoke, I found six policemen in the room; they had broken in the door. They asked me for the revolver with which they said I had been shooting out of the window. I told them I did not have a revolver. One of the officers said that he had seen me shoot out of the window. Three officers then began to club me, while the other three were searching the house. . . . They dragged me out of the house, and proceeded to take me to the station house. I was only in my undershirt, being asleep at the time they broke into the house, and begged them to allow me to put on my trousers and my shoes. They only sneered at this, and one of the officers said, “You’ll be d - - d lucky if you get their alive.” Here another of the officers pulled out a revolver and said, “Let’s shoot the d - - d nigger,” to which a third officer replied, “We can take the black son of a b--- to the station house as he is.” When I got to the station house, I was bleeding from my head and other parts of my body, as a result of these clubbings.

#### **Acting as an historian:**

1. Summarize the events described in the newspaper articles that follow.
2. Do you believe New York City participated in anti-Black riots in 1900
5. What other evidence would you want to examine to better understand what took place?

#### **A. *The New York Times*, “Race Riot On West Side,” August 16, 1900**

For four hours last night Eighth Avenue, from Thirtieth to Forty-second Street, was a scene of the wildest disorder that this city has witnessed in years. The hard feeling between the white people and the Negroes in that district, which has been smoldering for many years and which received fresh fuel by the death of Policeman Thorpe, who was shot last Sunday by a Negro, burst forth last night into a race riot which was not subdued until the reserve force of four police precincts, numbering in all over 100 men, headed by Chief Devery himself, were called to the scene and succeeded in clearing the streets by a liberal use of their night sticks.

#### **B. *The New York Times*, “Police In Control In Riotous District”, August 17, 1900**

The race trouble which was first encountered by the New York police force Wednesday night is now practically at an end. The burial of Policeman Thorpe and the arrest of the Negro Harris, who, it is alleged, killed him, both had much to do with quieting the feeling in the neighborhood of Ninth Avenue and Thirty-seventh Street, where the rioting started. . . . That policemen were not too active in stopping the attacks on the Negroes, and even went so far as to use their clubs on colored men who had been arrested, was fully developed at the West Thirty-seventh Street Station yesterday. The policemen, according to their own statements, are feeling vindictive against the colored people generally.

C. *New York Times* editorial, "A Disgrace To The Police," August 17, 1900

The record of the police in the riotous attacks on the Negroes in their quarter on Wednesday night may briefly be summed up. They stood idly by for the most part while the Negroes were being beaten except when they joined savagely in the sport, until the rioting threatened to extend dangerously; then they gradually dispersed the crowds, arresting almost no whites and many blacks, most of the latter being clubbed most unmercifully. This record is fully established by the testimony of many eye-witnesses, and there is nothing in the official reports so far published to contradict it.

D. *The New York Times*, "Negro Aliens Complain," August 18, 1900

Dr. M. S. N. Pierre of 318 West Forty-first Street, a Negro from British Guiana, and 200 of his fellow-British subjects have prepared a petition to Percy Sanderson, British Consul, asking him to take the necessary steps for their protection. The petition alleges that the signers were brutally attacked by the mob in the recent riots, and that the police, instead of giving them protection, actually urged and incited the mob to greater fury.

E. *The New York Times*, "Race Riot Investigation," September 20, 1900

The investigation conducted by President York of the Police Board into the charges of brutality made against the police during the late race riots on the west side was continued yesterday afternoon in the courtroom at Police Headquarters. . . . President York said: "I am going to examine these witnesses, and don't care whose cases they insure."

F. *The New York Times*, "Police Are Exonerated," December 9, 1900

Bernard J. York, President of the Board of Police Commissioners, who conducted the investigation made by the Police Board into the charges made against policemen in connection with the Negro troubles on the west side last August, made public yesterday a report on his investigation. The report fails to fix the blame for the clubbings on any policeman. It goes into details in several cases, and states in substance that the police did no more than their duty during the days of the race riots.

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1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Group Assignment/ Team Members** \_\_\_\_\_

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1. **Acting as historians:** Summarize the events described in the newspaper articles that follow.
2. Answer questions 1-4 at the end of the package.

A. *The New York Times*, "Race Riot On West Side," August 16, 1900

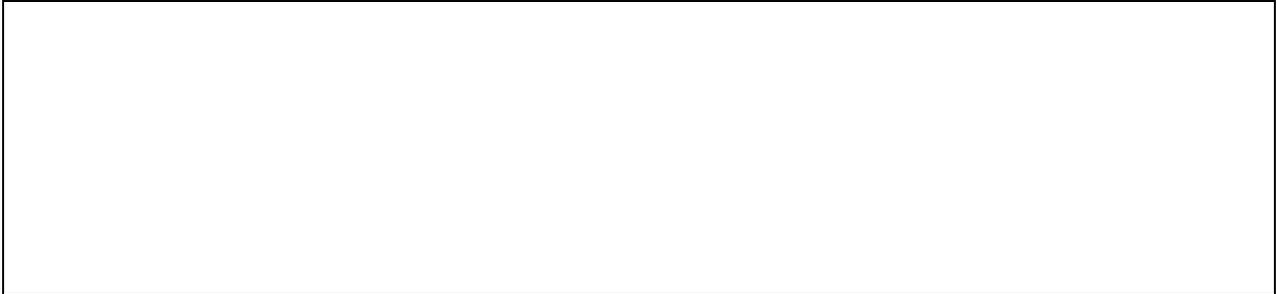
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