

# Research paper on watts riots

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



The Watts Riot occurred in the Watts neighborhood of South Central Los Angeles. It started on Wednesday, 11 August 1965 and continued for the next six days. It resulted in at least 34 deaths and properties worth more than forty million dollars were damaged (Campbell 328). After the Harlem riots of 1964, this was both the biggest and costliest urban uprising of the Human Rights era as 1, 000 more people were injured and more than 4, 000 arrested in the 46. 5-square-mile zone (Horne 3). The riot started from an incident where Lee W. Minikus, a white California Highway Patrol officer pulled over and arrested Marquette Frye, a youthful African American on suspicion of drunken driving (Campbell 328).

The underlying causes of this rebellion were much deeper and could be traced back to World War II. During that time, the black community in Los Angeles faced years of disillusionment due to racial oppression and discrimination. Racial discrimination hampered their chances of being employed; buying housing and even being demoted almost entirely to low paying and often degrading service occupations. This was the ultimate reason for the riots, not the arrest of Marquette Frye (328). The black community was opposed to the isolation and police bias on them, and this incident gave them the perfect chance to mount protests. Around 14, 000 California National Guard soldiers were marshaled in South Los Angeles in the course of the six-day riot to stop the violence. Thereafter, a curfew covering over forty-five miles was imposed in a bid to reinstate public order (Mjagkij 215). After the violence ended, California Governor, Edmund G. Brown instituted a commission that conducted its meetings and interviews with Watts' residents and professionals and after three months, the

commission's report was tabled (Mjagkij 215). This episode changed the entire perception of blacks in the Watts community as employment discrimination was abolished, and there were improved educational opportunities for blacks. Over time, the memories of the Watts rebellion have shaped the representation of ideas and recent events.

## **Works cited**

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