

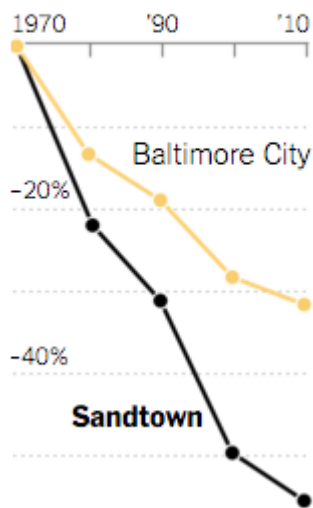
Freddie Gray grew up in Sandtown-Winchester, a Baltimore neighborhood that has been depressed for decades. It takes a long memory to recall when the neighborhood was a different place, but in the 1950s and '60s, Billie Holiday and Diana Ross performed in venues on nearby Pennsylvania Avenue, and some referred to the area as "Baltimore's Harlem."



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A Portrait of the Sandtown Neighborhood in Baltimore

Percent change in Population from 1970



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By JEREMY ASHKENAS, LARRY BUCHANAN, ALICIA DESANTIS, HAEYOUN PARK, and DEREK WATKINS

After riots in 1968, many residents fled, looted businesses did not reopen, and drug use and violent crime became commonplace. Since 1970, the Sandtown population has declined much more rapidly than the rest of the city; despite efforts to rebuild the neighborhood beginning in the late 1980s, disrepair has persisted. Now, more than a third of its houses are abandoned, more than a fifth of working-age residents are unemployed, and nearly a third of its families live below the poverty line.

With 3 percent of the community's population incarcerated, Sandtown has more people in prison than any other Baltimore neighborhood. Sandtown residents face these challenges, as well as a police presence that many residents describe as harassing. They are still finding a way to survive, even if, for some, it means living in the only occupied building on their block.

The New York Times