



DEFORCE

AMERICA'S PAST. AMERICA'S FUTURE.
DETROIT'S PRESENT.



"An essential study... The ceaseless trials of Motown are brought to light as never before." – Ken Burns




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America's past. America's future. One City's present.

Detroit 1944



Detroit 2009

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SYNOPSIS

There are many divided cities in these United States of America.

Divided by geography, divided by economics, and divided by a political history that most are afraid to acknowledge.

It is not easy to explain to children why the US government once subsidized housing on the basis of race. It is not easy to explain why this country locks up so many people. Or why sentences for non-violent drug offenders would ever exceed those of violent criminals.

More difficult than explaining these issues to our children - or ourselves - is confronting the ugly fact that our country has never resolved these problems.

DEFORCE is a chronicle of one city's long struggle with political oppression.

Once the engine of America, Detroit remains a proud city - rich with local triumphs and individual achievements, but known best for its overwhelming quality of life challenges.

This film reveals that these present challenges are indeed forged of the past. If nothing changes in our cities, they will shape this country's future in ways that benefit no one.

SELECTED SPEAKERS – BIOS

“In Detroit, our history is so much of what we have. It’s the raw material out of which our senses of community can so importantly be developed.”
- **Dr. Luke Bergmann**



Dr. Bergmann is Director of Recovery Systems at New York’s **Department of Health**. He was formerly Research Director at the **Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion** and a faculty associate of the **University of Michigan**.

He is the author of Getting Ghost: Two Young Lives and the Struggle for the Soul of an American City, which he wrote and researched in Detroit, while a postdoctoral fellow with the **UC Berkeley School of Public Health**.

“We have no margin for error- there’s no extra. And so when people are taking off the top it leaves nothing for the rest of us. And that’s really, to me, what makes the victimization of Detroit the worst I’ve seen in America.” - **M.L. Elrick**

M.L. Elrick is a long-time Investigative Reporter for the **Detroit Free Press**.

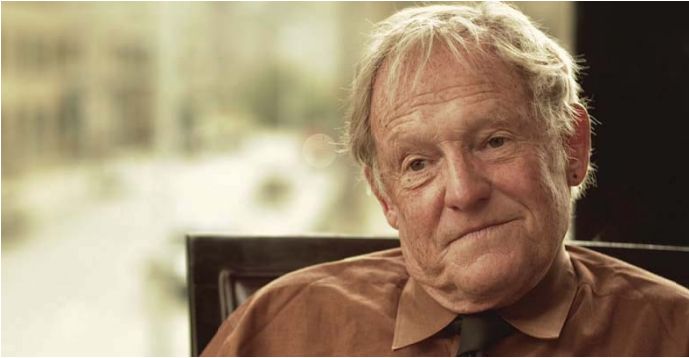
In a long career in print and television journalism, Elrick has been recognized with numerous awards including the 2009 Pulitzer Prize, which he and partner Jim Schaefer earned for exposing Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick's perjury. Elrick and Schaefer recently published a book about the former-mayor entitled, The Kwame Sutra: Musings on lust, life and leadership, from Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick.



Son of a Detroit police officer, M.L., started working in Detroit when he was 14 and has lived in the city's East English Village neighborhood since 1999.

SELECTED SPEAKERS – BIOS

“It’s the most important city in the 20th century.” – Dr. Reynolds Farley



Dr. Farley is Research Professor Emeritus, with **University of Michigan’s Population Studies Center** and Professor Emeritus of Sociology. His research interests concern population trends in the United States, focusing on racial differences, ethnicity, and urban structure.

He is Author, Co-Author, and editor of over half a dozen books, including Detroit Divided (2000), Blacks and Whites: Narrowing the Gap? (1999) The New American Reality: Who We Are, How We Got Here, Where We Are Going (1998) amongst numerous research studies.

“You talk to young people right now, they go in schools- they don’t feel safe in schools. Can you imagine going someplace every day and not feeling safe and then you’re supposed to learn?” - Judith Jackson

Judith D. Jackson is the President & CEO of **YouthVille Detroit** which she helped establish with the late Dr. Gerald K. Smith.

Active in civic and community affairs, she is the Vice President of **Plymouth Educational Charter School**, member of the Community Impact Council of **United Way of Southeastern Michigan**, **University of Michigan Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning** national board member, and Executive Board member of the **Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative**.



SELECTED SPEAKERS – BIOS

*“Most of the movements in the Black struggle for social justice, for social and economic transformation came out of Detroit.”- **Bankole Thompson***



Bankole Thompson is the Senior Editor of the **Michigan Chronicle**, Detroit-based weekly and a Senior News Analyst for **WDET-101.9FM** (Detroit NPR Affiliate).

A correspondent for Inter Press Service (IPS), Thompson has been featured on **CNN Newsroom**, **WXYZ**, **WDIV**, **Black Enterprise Magazine** and is a visiting lecturer at **U of M Dearborn**.

Bankole is the author of several books including [Ignoring The Underprivileged: A Journalist's Indictment of Mainstream Media](#) (published in 2005).

*“Both within and outside the city we are going to have to embrace the idea that Southeast Michigan is its own vessel and we are going to sail or sink together.” -**Reverend Kevin Turman***

Dr. Turman, has been Pastor at **Second Baptist Church of Detroit** since 1988. His involvement in civic, professional and community activities both within and outside Detroit is too extensive to do justice herein.

In addition, Dr. Turman is a Chaplain in the **United States Naval Reserve** with a rank of Captain.



Look closely. There's something wrong with this picture.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - FAQs

What does the word “Deforce” mean?

To take away or to hold property from its rightful owner by force.

Why should people that don’t live in Detroit care about the City’s history?

Because the extremes of its experience make the challenges America faces today far more clear.

Following World War II, Detroit’s was America’s most industrialized, modernized city- a truly global leader in the new age of military-industrial economics. Popular media tends to focus on the national and global benefits of the era that followed, but viewers of Deforce will better grasp the underreported local costs.

The Film features many remarkable statistics, which struck you the most upon encountering?

Learning that Detroit had 5x the number of murders as people that died in Northern Ireland’s well publicized Civil War over that the same period was a real eye-opener.

Are you concerned that this film will be negative publicity for a city that’s trying to change its image?

You can’t fight a problem until you understand its roots. Over the past four-decades, there has been no shortage of money and effort spent on improving the city’s image. Detroit has many problems, but all are exacerbated by a lack of trust and understanding and the only cure for that is honesty.

What inspired you to make this film?

Growing up in the area, we had long been aware of just how disengaged most metro-Detroiters were from City issues. While Detroit’s problems grab a lot of headlines, we saw no effort from the media to educate the wider population as to their historical origins, so we decided to make an effort.

SELECTED REVIEWS

An essential study of an iconic industrial aftermath. The ceaseless trials of Motown are brought to light as never before.

-Ken Burns

Uses Detroit's history to accurately illuminate the present state of the city.

-Thomas Costello

Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion

An unflinching look at the politics of the American inner-city... From New Deal housing policy to the modern Drug War the film focuses on the tools that divided the city economically and socially. Themes that are common in most cities, but the extremes shown make it uniquely Detroit.

-Gary Wein

The New Jersey Stage

Artfully combines statistics, old city footage and many other sources over the testimonials of its interviewees...Deforce is anything but rushed or dry. Instead it's a perspective meant to provoke thought and debate.

-Ryan Wilson

360 Main Street

The Film's most striking feature is its visuals. From high, expansive shots of the city to detailed visualizations of the internal decay of so many structures is enchanting and heartbreaking whilst being poetic and hauntingly beautiful.

-Mike McKenney

Destroy Apathy

SELECTED PRODUCTION TEAM – BIOS



Director, Producer and Co-Writer – Daniel Falconer

Born in Detroit, raised in Oakland County's working class, Daniel Falconer studied film at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. Having crewed and served as Contributing Writer on several independent films, Daniel made his directorial debut with the short, *On My Own* (2009) which he also wrote, edited, and co-produced.

In addition to producing & directing DEFORCE, Daniel oversaw the production's research and script development.

Executive Producer and Co-Writer – Andrew Rodney

Born and raised in Oakland Country, Andrew Rodney attended Groves High School and Hillsdale College where he trained in accounting and political history. A long-time tutor and mentor, he works in financial research and administration with Detroit Forming, Inc.

Director of Photography – TJ Hellmuth

TJ Hellmuth is a Cinematographer based in Columbus, Ohio. He works in long and short form narrative, documentary, commercial, music video, and dance film. Beginning his career in NYC in 2002, TJ had the opportunity to work in camera and lighting departments on projects such as *Man on Wire*, *Law and Order*, *The Visitor*, *Great World of Sound*, *Sesame Street*, and *Seemore's Playhouse*, as well as countless music videos for artists such as Chris Cornell, Lil Kim, and 50 Cent.



Editor and Motion Graphics Designer – Matt Barth

Born in Flint, Matt Barth's passion for editing began when he was 15- cutting together he and his friends skateboarding videos - which eventually carried him to Los Angeles. There he assisted editing documentary films including *Pansy Division*, *Castellers: Human Castles in the Sky*, *Correfoc: Fire Run*. He has also edited commercial videos for Nike, Puma and SCION and music videos for acts including Against Me, Chromeo and Justice.



Narrated by
Nelson Jones

Associate Producer
Joel Walkowski

Featuring Music by
Elovium

Graphics by
Adam Barth
Matt Barth

Titles & Title Graphics by
J. F. Stalin



Director of Photography
TJ Hellmuth

Editor
Matt Barth

Written & Produced by
Daniel Falconer
Andrew Rodney

Directed by
Daniel Falconer



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TRT: approx. 86min.