

Tulsa's Viola Fletcher and Her Fight for Reparations



As of 2023 at 109 years of age, Viola Fletcher is the oldest known living survivor of the Tulsa massacre of 1921, in which hundreds of White residents terrorized and ravaged the Oklahoma neighborhood known as “Black Wall Street.”

Using false accusations that a Black man had assaulted a White woman, and the [inflammatory coverage](#) of the alleged incident in the Tulsa Tribune, mobs of White terrorists rioted, bombed and destroyed the prosperous neighborhood in which seven-year old Viola Fletcher and her family lived. Hundreds were left dead, and thousands were displaced from the racial violence.

“The neighborhood I fell asleep in that night was rich — not just in terms of wealth, but in culture, community, heritage, and my family had a beautiful home,” Fletcher testified to Congress in 2021. “Within a few hours, all that was gone.”

Viola Fletcher is still fighting for justice and restitution. In 2020, she became a plaintiff in a civil suit demanding financial redress from the city, county, and other municipal entities that participated in the destruction. Although Tulsa County sided with the defendants in 2022, the Oklahoma Supreme Court has agreed to hear the appeal.

Despite threats of violence, Fletcher testified before Congress, demanding reparations for the massacre. Her memoir, “Don’t Let Them Bury My Story,” is a call to action for readers to pursue truth, justice and reconciliation no matter how long it takes.

Source: [Washington Post](#), “Viola Fletcher waited 102 years for reparations. She’s still waiting.”

