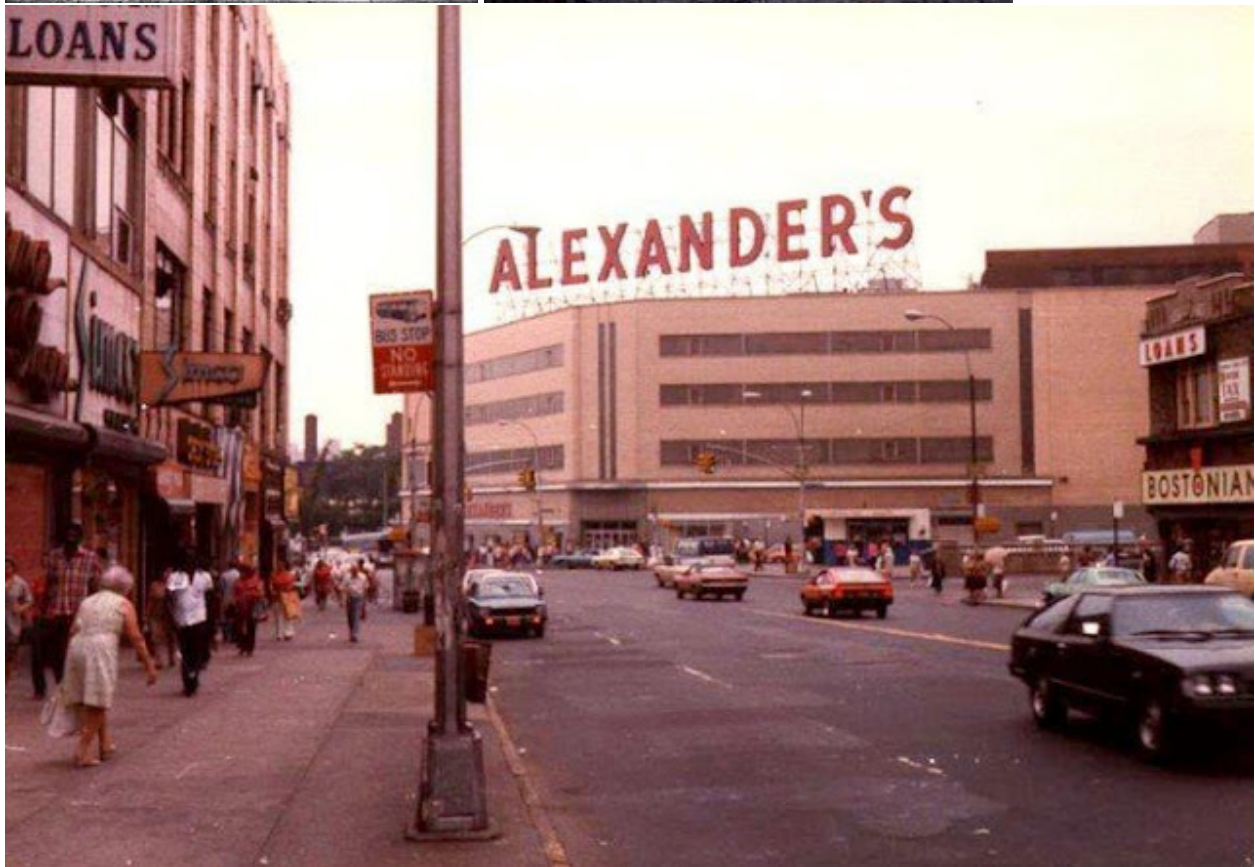






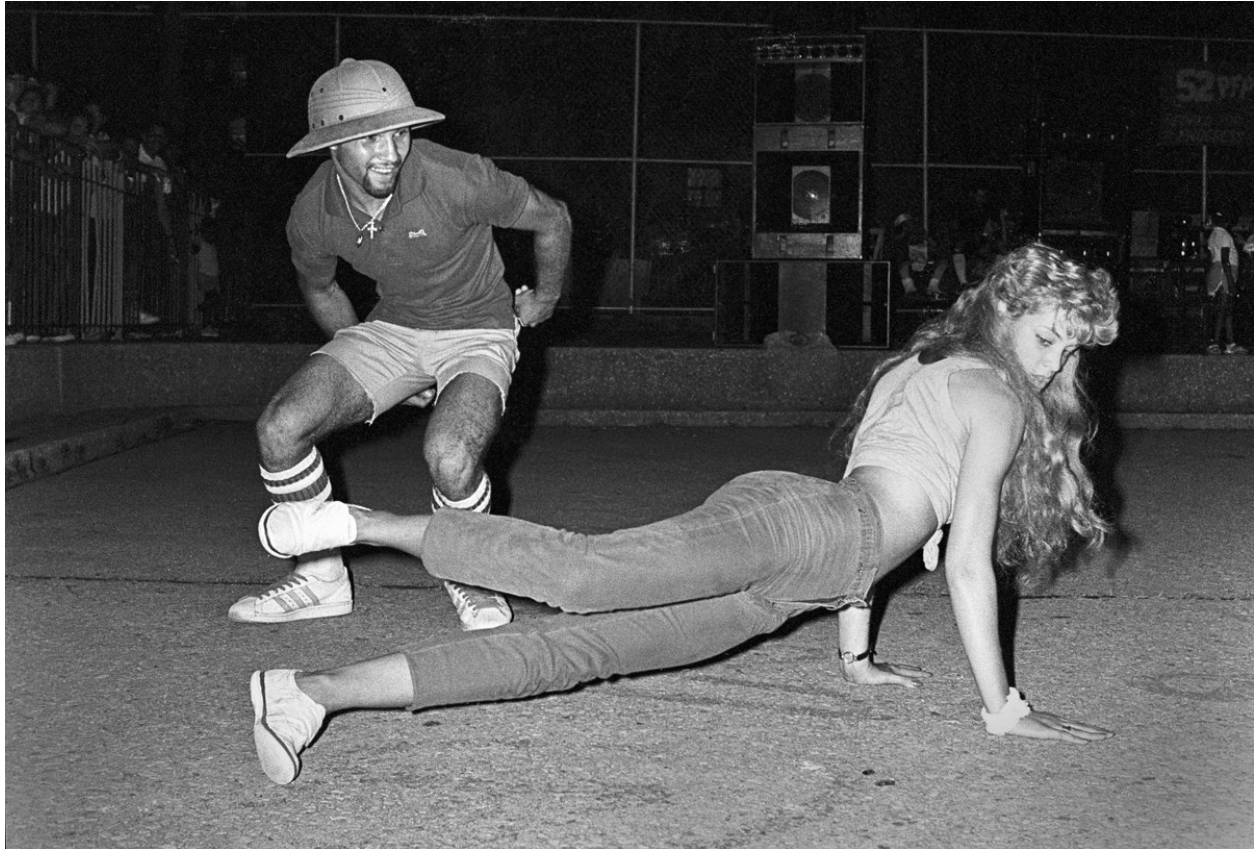
























Christmas Eve, 1981—the street outside Supreme Court in the South Bronx. The body of a teenage girl falls through a blistering snowfall onto the hood of an NYC police car.

In the most impoverished borough with the highest crime rate in the country, a young, talented law school graduate, a rookie from Long Island has made his mark as a criminal defense attorney with the New York City Legal Aid Society—seven trials and not a single conviction. His name is Nick Mannino. it is his fault this girl is dead.

Nick is no anti-hero. He has no drinking or drug problem. He is not suffering from any cognitive or physical disability. If he is addicted to anything it is the success and prestige of proving those accused of often violent and unthinkable crimes, innocent. His commitment and devotion to his vocation means he is a good lawyer both in and out of the courtroom. His struggles are his inner turmoil rooted in his past. A Child of the 1950s, his upbringing included only remnants of the American life depicted in Coca Cola ads and Norman Rockwell paintings. His memories include a father who abandoned him at three years old and would rather fight in the Korean War than pay child support. At four years old the “seed donor” as he overheard him called, was replaced with a towering Sicilian disciplinarian, riddled with tuberculosis since returning home from World War II. Though his mother’s new husband was an upgrade in the fact that he was present, he was a far cry from what Nick imagined a father could be. Instead of accepting and nurturing Nick’s confidence and admiring his unwavering

crisis of consciousness where his past affects his present