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REVIEWING
SOCIO-SPATIAL
SEGREGATION IN
THE UNITED
STATES:

HISTORY,
POLICIES, AND
THE WAY AHEAD

A LITERATURE
SYNTHESIS

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REVIEWING SOCIO- SPATIAL SEGREGATION IN THE UNITED STATES

HISTORY, POLICY, AND THE WAY AHEAD



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A network diagram with various sized grey nodes connected by thin grey lines, set against a white background. The nodes are scattered across the top half of the page.

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Executive Summary

This executive summary outlines the significant ideas elaborated in the literature synthesis commissioned by the GMF Chicago-Torino lab project on addressing the costs of segregation through peer learning and exchange. Work commenced in January 2022 by a team at the Institute for Racial Justice (IRJ) at Loyola University Chicago who read and then branched off their research of seminal works, notably “The Cost of Segregation” published by the Urban Institute (Acs et al., 2017). This IRJ team worked throughout the 2022 Spring and Summer semester cultivating a library of relevant literature.

This summary overviews the same seven-section structure of the literature synthesis that follows. It explains how segregation originates, how it manifests, and how it perpetuates while offering solutions for eradicating it. In an abbreviated fashion, this executive summary shows the widespread and detrimental effects of segregation of yesterday and today while outlining and necessitating the path forward from equality to equity.

Origins of Segregation

Segregation is the division of people based on their race, ethnicity, nationality, class, or other identity markers. This literature report focuses on spatial segregation which is the distribution of groups of people, infrastructure, or any other element in space (Rasse, Spatial Segregation, 2019, p. 1). While all these groups can be affected by segregation, an interaction of race and class is most often the factor determining spatial segregation (Massey, Rothwell, & Domina, 2009). Racism that undergirds segregation is much more than just individual prejudices against people of color. It manifests on micro and macro scales and in the form of a system of domination of those in power to stay in power, such as White supremacy (Dijk T. V., 2015, p. 289; Fanon, 1967; Grosfoguel R., 2016). It manifests globally by enforcing a system of domination on the Global South, majority countries with Black and Brown residents, for the benefit of mostly White European and North American countries since the 1500s (Grosfoguel R., 2016, p. 10).

In the United States, many groups of people experience segregation but none of them to the extent of Black and Indigenous peoples. This widespread segregation did not happen by accident; it was imposed on Black and Indigenous people by White people through a series of self-conscious actions and purposeful institutional arrangements to economically and politically dominate Black and Indigenous peoples (Massey & Denton, 1993, p. 2). Indigenous peoples were primarily segregated to desolate and rural reservation lands, appointed by the US government. Black people were segregated into impoverished, dangerous neighborhoods and left with little to no economic or political power. This allowed White people in the United States to maintain economic and political dominance and enforce White supremacy (Massey & Denton, 1993, p. 3).

The purpose of this literature synthesis is to inform delegations in the urban cities of Torino and Chicago. As such, we focus on urban spatial segregation. We speak little of spatial segregation of Indigenous peoples in the northern American continent.

How Segregation is Manifested

Inequality of **political influence** and educational and occupational opportunities all associate with unequal levels of wealth and therefore fail to accumulate through generations

(Keister L., 2000, p. 478). **Employment** is often highly segregated, both in the sense of where people of different races and ethnicities work and the inequality of earnings and income that people receive for similar jobs. The extreme inequality of **wealth** stems in part from the prohibition from equal (or any) pay, suppression from accumulating capital, and the inability to inherit between generations due to these restrictions.

Housing is one of the most critical ways through which segregation manifests as housing impacts every aspect of life including access to transportation, education, jobs, and services (Coates, 2014). Housing also segregates the **availability of food**, particularly healthy food, which creates “food deserts” in many urban Black neighborhoods. The resource deprivation of **infrastructures** such as public transportation, natural disaster and extreme weather infrastructure, and water lines also segregate populations.

All levels of **education** are highly segregated. Despite contemporary laws, children in the US attend primary and secondary schools with other children of the same race or ethnicity, in part due to intergenerational and segregated residential housing (Groeger, Waldman, & Eads, 2018). Moreover, higher education is simply inaccessible for many Black Americans since accumulated wealth is largely absent to offset the cost. The significance of this disparity in attaining higher levels of education impacts median lifetime earnings (Carnevale, Rose, & Cheah, 2011).

The United States **justice system** is the most violent way that segregation manifests. Every year, law enforcement officers in the United States shoot several hundreds of Black people to death while on duty (Statistica, 2022). The United States justice system also incarcerates Black people at tens of times greater rates than White people. The consequences from imprisonment follow people beyond the life of their sentence and stifle access to institutions and society (Alexander, 2010).

How Segregation is Perpetuated

Segregation perpetuates through a myriad of mechanisms and new practices even as some overt racist structures are now illegal. Many current racist structures are covert, operating through the mechanism of classism. The use of classism today perpetuates structural racism since historic oppression disenfranchised generations of Black and Brown families. Some of these racist structures that exist today include zoning practices that exclude affordable housing or mixed-use housing from White neighborhoods (Shertzer, Twinam, & Walsh, 2016, p. 7) and mass incarceration of a disproportionate amount of Black people leads to further isolation and segregation (Smith, 2012, p. 480).

Structural reproduction mechanisms perpetuate segregation. Notably of these structural reproduction mechanisms is the **cyclical nature of poverty** where poverty repeats through multiple generations due to continued segregation (Bowles, Durlauf, & Hoff, 2006). As White people actively **self-segregate** (Raja, Ma, & Yadav, 2008) by avoiding neighborhoods with Black residents, (Farley R. , Schuman, Bianchi, Colsanto, & Hatchett, 1978; Lichter, Parisi, & Taquino, 2015), **intergroup avoidance** contributes to larger intergroup anxiety which then reproduces to create more intergroup avoidance (Anicich, Jachimowicz, Osborne, & Phillips, 2021). Other structural reproduction methods include relationships between **economic inequality** and **political participation** where economic inequality lowers political participation and ultimately widens inequality (Bartels, 2008).

Beyond these historical mechanisms that perpetuate segregation, new forms of segregation operate today. Property management companies use **screening algorithms**

that evaluate credit scores that causally relate to inequalities endured by marginalized populations and unfairly deem individuals ineligible for an ownership (Rosen, Garboden, & Cossyleon, 2021). **Gentrification** displaces working-class Black and Brown residents when high income residents move in and push-out long term residents (Betancur J. , 2011; Hotchstenbach, 2016).

How Segregation is Eradicated

Eradicating segregation requires action from a series of actors including the government, social movements, and formal organizations. The **municipal government** can begin acting toward racial equity by normalizing racial equity as a common goal, organizing a plan for equity, engaging with communities of color, and operationalizing a plan. Allies in communities and organizations as part of social movements can assist in influencing politics (Living Cities, 2019). While government led reforms are a necessary part of working toward racial equity, an **anti-racist social movement** is necessary to make impactful changes to the current state of segregation (Treuhaft, 2011).

In working to eradicate racial equity, **the manifestations of segregation through policies** targeted at housing equity, education inequality, and economic disparities, among others, must be addressed. Recommendations from Habitat for Humanity (2020) recommends five policies that include increasing opportunities for Black homeownership, investing in racially segregated neighborhoods, targeting perpetuating factors of segregation, investing in affordable rental housing, and minimizing the disproportionate effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on Black and Brown residents. To combat **education inequality**, policy recommendations include restructuring the funding for schools (Kahlenburg, Potter, & Quick, 2019). To target racial **economic disparities**, the Othering and Belonging Institute recommends six policies: increasing the federal minimum wage, expanding the earned income tax credit, ending residential segregation, investing in education, making the tax code more progressive, and building assets for working families. Eradicating segregation also builds sustainable development and economic growth for communities and governments and decreases crime and health-related spending (Acs, et al., 2017; Turner, 2017).

Conclusion

While many different groups can experience segregation, the intersection of race and class most often intersects to determine spatial segregation (Massey, Rothwell, & Domina, 2009). Spatial segregation manifests to maintain the privilege of the group with economic advantage. Groups are marginalized from the privileged population by means of substandard housing, employment, infrastructure, schooling, and the like. Private markets and local and federal level government entities perpetuate segregation through structural reproduction mechanisms, governmental policies, laws, and social institutions. Eradicating spatial segregation is necessary for the world to move toward racial equity and a more inclusive society in general.

The full literature synthesis presented next provides a starting point for local governments to embark on a path to equity through government led reforms, as well as for social movements and communities to push towards racial equity.

Introduction

This literature synthesis summarizes research on segregation, focusing primarily on the US context. Taking inspiration from the seminal piece Living Cities (2019) report “Getting Ready for Racial Equity Work”, this synthesis begins by normalizing understandings of segregation and ends with operationalizing potential ways to un-design segregated spaces. With this, the synthesis first defines segregation and its origins. It then investigates eight unique but interconnected ways through which segregation is manifested. Next, it looks further into contemporary society by identifying how segregation is perpetuated, and it ends by summarizing potential solutions to eradicating it. The synthesis attempts to view segregation holistically through an *intersectional*¹ lens, but it excludes certain works that were not specifically related to the subject at hand. Being a joint initiative between labs in the cities of Chicago, United States, and Torino, Italy, the synthesis pays more attention to works that have connections or connotations to these cities. Within this, due to proximity and a wealth of research, we heavily focus on research on the city of Chicago compared to other US cities. We excluded literature from the review when article titles focused on anecdotal cases of segregation where findings contradicted all other literature, appeared to be politically motivated, not applicable, or featured too small of a sample size. Other literature that was severely outdated or included xenophobic, racist, or prejudiced language were also not reviewed for this synthesis.

The works included in this synthesis contribute to a critical understanding to show the magnitude and depth of the problem of segregation. The synthesis anchors with the widespread segregation in the mid-20th century United States and its lasting and evolving devastating effects today. In reviewing this evolution, the synthesis helps to build on our understanding of the costs of segregation while outlining a path forward to equity.

Discussing segregation can elicit various emotions among readers from: “white guilt” acknowledging how the system encodes preferences for white people to advance through social systems with fewer constraints than people of color, anger in learning how individual work ethic is far from any reason to explain inequality, apprehension in using terms like “Black” or “White” to describe peoples and communities, and/or feelings of despair that any efforts to eradicate spatial segregation only depletes individuals from a focus on their own health and families. As we report extensively on segregation, we ask readers to engage their emotions and press-on in reading so that our efforts to eradicate spatial segregation do not repeat mistakes of the past, plan for common unintended consequences of “good intentions”, and work together to unite in the creation of a more equitable future free from segregation that advantages some peoples at the expense of oppressing others

¹ Intersectionality is an analytical framework for understanding how several aspects (layers) of a person’s identities – such as gender, caste, sex, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, religion, language, and others – intersect to produce different modes of discrimination and privilege. In 1989, Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality in her essay “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Anti-discrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics.”

Origins of Segregation and Racial Oppression

Segregation and racial oppression conflate into one issue in many American contexts while the two issues stand quite far apart in other contexts. No matter the context, both issues tell histories that attempt to explain the issues as historical artifacts, but contemporary society shows these issues perpetuate and directly maintain divisive power dynamics in societies.

Defining Segregation

Segregation is the division of people based on their race, ethnicity, nationality, class, or other identity markers. While all groups of people can be affected by segregation, an **interaction of race and class** is most often the factor determining spatial segregation (Massey, 2009). Segregation can apply to various individual-level social situations such as going to a restaurant, attending school, or going to church and can apply at the structural-level such as access to employment, transportation, and housing.

The segregation discussed in this report regards today's segregation that has deep historical roots in European colonialism. As early as the 17th century, the British East India Company had walled sections of Madras, India that were labeled "White Town" and "Black Town". European colonial powers laid out separate European and "native" districts throughout cities in Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas. Soon after this in the early 20th century, racist zoning laws that enforced residential segregation were implemented in the United States that drew on these examples from European colonialism (Gershon, 2018).

This literature synthesis focuses on *spatial segregation* which is the distribution of groups of people, infrastructure, or any other element in space, that is how access to different parts of the land segregate groups of people based on their ascriptive characteristics. In this literature review, we analyze spatial segregation as the degree of separation across different socioeconomic, ethnic, and racial groups in a city or metropolitan area (Rasse, 2019).

Racial Oppression

Racism includes individual racial bias as well as the system of domination that utilizes many different forms of oppression to enforce the domination of White people over others. In the United States, this systemic racism has its deepest roots in oppressing Black and Indigenous peoples. Globally, racism as a system of domination enforces the domination of countries like the United States and the United Kingdom over countries with majority populations of people of color, especially those in the Global South with ties to early colonialism (began in the 1500s). *Racial oppression* is the system of domination where predominantly White countries to exploit the resources and labor of the countries in the Global South while justifying it by deeming people who are not White as sub-human or non-human and thus not deserving of their own resources (Grosfoguel, 2016).

Since the United States began as a settler-colonial project, its colonialism was inextricably tied to the racism that considered Indigenous peoples sub-human or non-human and thus deserving of the violence and theft that the colonizers committed against them. The same justification was used for the theft and enslavement of Africans (Fanon, 1967). Using racism as a system of domination allowed the colonizers in the United States to become extremely wealthy using the land and resources stolen from Indigenous people and the

enslaved labor of Black people. This history established racism as an effective system of domination for enriching White people and maintaining their social and political domination over people of color. Because of this history of benefit to White people, racism as a system continues (van Dijk, 2015).

Segregation in the United States occurs on the basis of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and other identity markers. The current state of American segregation historically roots itself in a period in the first half of the 20th century when a mass migration of Black people left the American South, known as the Great Migration (Wilkerson, 2010). Between 1916 and 1930 an estimated one million Black people migrated from the rural South to the industrializing North in search of work away from the sharecropper fields (Martin, 1993). There were two main reasons for this migration: the manufacturing jobs in the North paid more than the fields and the laws of the northern states offered protection from the rampant, violent racism in the South. During the entirety of the Great Migration, Black people in the South were subject to all-encompassing Jim Crow² segregation, frequent lynching, police brutality, and dire poverty (Fanon, 1967).

The segregation of the new influx of Black migrants did not happen by accident; it was imposed on them by the ruling-class through a series of self-conscious actions and purposeful institutional arrangements as a way of maintaining White economic and political domination. These self-conscious actions were justified through dominant racial stereotypes that served to dehumanize Black people in the eyes of the White population. The neighborhoods into which Black people were segregated confined these populations with no economic power to perpetuate their powerlessness. The Third Reich used similar confinement policies with Jewish populations in cities. The ghettoization of neighborhoods and the tight confinement of peoples created a context of scarcity and greed of the capitalist, White population. These actions and arrangements led these neighborhoods to become internal colonies that socially, politically, and economically benefited the White population of the United States, especially the capitalist class (Massey, 1993).

Rebellions against these exclusionary laws and policies arose throughout the 1960s in a myriad of different ways. Through the non-violent civil rights movement, armed political organizations promoted self-defense, riots, and many other methods. As a political strategy to stifle the rebellions, many rebellions became politically framed as communist-related acts (McAdam, 1996). Yet, the rebellions persisted and changes occurred.

As a result of these movements in 1968, the Fair Housing Act was passed. The Fair Housing Act was supposed to outlaw individual acts of housing discrimination and foster integration (Adams, 2018). After this, political rhetoric purported that housing discrimination was an issue of the past and many began pointing fingers at other possible (individual-level) causes of segregation and poverty (Massey, 1993). One of the most common explanations blamed the “culture of poverty” for the continuation of segregation and poverty after the civil rights acts (Massey, 1993). The “culture of poverty” referred to a set of group norms that some felt promoted patterns of behavior inconsistent with socio-economic, capitalist advancement, from deficits in work ethic to unplanned family needs. As the next sections outline, these notions of “culture of poverty” are severely misguided and racially driven by White supremacist ideals.

² Jim Crow Laws were a set of laws implemented from the 1890s that stayed in effect until the 1960s. The laws were a formal, codified system of racial apartheid that affected almost all aspects of daily life. They mandated segregation of schools, parks, libraries, drinking fountains, buses, trains, and restaurants in the south of the United States.

How Segregation is Manifested

Spatial segregation manifests as a product of historical persistence from past laws and prohibitions purportedly directed to keep separate different races and ethnicities of communities. Whether in housing, income and employment, wealth, education, infrastructure, justice system, or food access, we see the historical separateness replicated in today's practices and social norms.

Housing

Housing is one of the most critical ways through which segregation is manifested, as Ta Niesha Coates (2014) writes, since it affects every aspect of life including access to transportation, education, jobs, and services. Segregation through housing was fueled by many actors in the housing market ranging from the various levels of government to local private actors.

Of these local actors, *Real Estate Agents* (REAs) play a powerful role in promoting segregation as they are involved in over 80% of all residential sales, with research suggesting that they play a critical role in individual-level housing decisions (Rutherford & Yavas, 2012; Massey, 2005). REAs do not just respond to the housing market, but also directly shape it. Evidence suggests that REAs can benefit themselves by concentrating their transactions in small geographic service areas as they are more likely to complete a transaction, do so more quickly, and do so at a higher price (Brastow et al., 2011). With this, REAs tend to concentrate in areas with higher home prices as well as areas with other positive economic, geographic, socio-demographic, and housing market factors. This strategy leads to lower concentration of REAs in poorer and oftentimes communities with concentrations of minoritized peoples. REAs promote segregation by upselling and steering to benefit their own professional economic gains. For example, "blockbusting" practices were used during the Great Migration to scare White homeowners to sell their homes under fear that the increasing sales of homes to Black residents would decrease existing home value (Orser, 2014). REAs use steering to direct their clients to their racialized neighborhood preference or they assume racialized neighborhood preference, either of which inflates demand for White neighborhoods and thus increases the price for those neighborhoods (Flippen, 2004). With these practices, demand for housing in minority communities decreases and thus decreases the price, ultimately undermining wealth accumulation for families in those neighborhoods. Upselling is the process in which REAs induce buyers to purchase out of their original price range which creates more demand for more expensive homes in more expensive neighborhoods. By creating more demand in the areas that they concentrate on, REAs sell more at higher prices (Besbris & Faber, 2017).

Local governments promoted housing segregation as they created and upheld racially restrictive covenants that declared which racial groups could own houses in which neighborhoods. Per a US Supreme Court ruling in 1917, the practice could not be done explicitly with racial zones like those found in South Africa during the Apartheid, but it could be done with a legally binding document between private parties that restricted terms of sale per another Supreme Court ruling in 1926. With these rulings, the use of *racially restrictive covenants* became standardized with covenant templates and lead it to intensify across the country. The scale of racially restrictive covenants across the United States is unknown because the records are hard to access and are time consuming to study. However,

research in St. Louis found 30,000 properties have the covenants in their current records, which equates to a fourth of the city's housing in the 1950s. The Supreme Court decision in 1948 ended the practice, ruling that the state could no longer enforce the racial covenants, yet to this day the covenants exist unenforced in many contracts as many local governments do not allow covenants to be removed from the public record (Thompson et al., 2021).

Beyond upholding these racially restrictive covenants, local governments further promoted segregation by creating discriminatory *zoning*. In Chicago, neighborhoods with larger populations of Black residents were more likely to be zoned for high density buildings, which suggests volume restrictions as a form of exclusionary zoning and practices that lead to ghettoization (Shertzer et al., 2016). Neighborhoods with large populations of Black or immigrant residents were excluded from low density zoning. This practice economically hurt the neighborhoods as they could not experience the increase in property values that is associated with low density zoning of single-family homes. In addition, these Chicago neighborhoods were disproportionately zoned for manufacturing. Research shows residential exposure to manufacturing has negative effects on residents' health and economic wellbeing.

In the 20th century, the *federal government* segregated housing through the creation of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in the 1934 National Housing Act. The FHA insured private mortgages which decreased interest rates and the down payment required to buy a home, and it created and promoted segregation by discriminately insuring mortgages. A set of maps rated neighborhoods on a scale of A to D based on their perceived stability. Neighborhoods rated "A" were mapped in green and described as in-demand, while "D" neighborhoods were mapped in red. The designation of these ratings and maps was largely based on the concentration of Black people living within the area. This practice became known as *redlining*. Its effect was that residents living in neighborhoods with large populations of Black residents became ineligible for FHA-backed mortgage insurance in their "D" neighborhoods (Coates, 2014). The effects of this FHA policy intersected with the local government housing covenants and REA practices whereby Black people became largely confined to central-city communities where they were cut off from new investment as their homes and communities lost value compared to communities the FHA deemed valuable (Oliver & Shapiro, 1995).

With no legitimate government backed credit system, many prospective Black homebuyers in Chicago and across the country turned to private lenders. Coates (2014) describes that between the 1940s-1960s, Chicago lenders would offer home sale contracts with an illusion of a mortgage. Between the 1950s and 1960s, 75% to 95% of homes sold to Black families were bought on contract. Compared to government-backed mortgages, home contracts required large down payments and monthly payments at high interest rates towards inflated purchase prices plus the buyers gain no equity until the contract was paid in full. Moreover, the home price was much more volatile in this private marketplace. The average home price markup for homes sold on contract was found to be 84%, taking what was once a \$12,000 house sold to a speculator to a \$22,000 house for a Black individual in only a matter of weeks. The contract seller was able to obtain all the benefits from holding the deed as they were able to evict buyers even for minor missed payments and could burden the title with liens that were unrelated to the buyer's possession (Immergluck, 2018). If the buyer wished to sell their home before the contract was paid off and if they missed as little as one payment, they could lose their entire investment. This predatory and discriminatory practice drastically hampered Black wealth (McCloskey & Orenstein, 2019). Estimates

suggest that three to four billion dollars was deprived from the Black community in Chicago alone (TPBWC, 2019). In sum, the exclusion of Black families from a fair housing market put them at greater risk of losing all their wealth to the will of the contractor and depleted means to acquire wealth via equity gains.

Income and Employment

Many attributes create *workplace segregation*, ranging from business locations to occupational segregation.

Business location attracts employees from the surrounding area. Historically, the large-employer manufacturing industries resided in urban areas where the factories could use public utilities such as water and sewer to fuel the processing needs related to mass production (Zunz, 1982). Employees for the factories resided nearby and typically walked or took mass transit to work. Given the nature of the factory work, little education and little communication were needed to perform the rote tasks. These qualifications especially attracted Black and Brown Americans who were restricted from schooling and immigrants who did not communicate using English (Zunz, 1982). However, as nearby towns and villages developed their public utility infrastructures and as personal transportation became more commonplace, factories were drawn out of the city and into these towns and villages due to the lower costs of operation, primarily related to the lower (or absence of) property taxes on the land needed to build and operate their factories (Reinemann, 1960). This flight of factories out of the cities disenfranchised working class employees who could not afford to move homes or purchase personal automobiles, but it wholly excluded Black and Brown workers, no matter their socioeconomic class, from working in these positions since they were either banned from owning homes in these towns and villages or were subject to sunset laws that forbid their presence in these spaces even if it contradicted the factory shift hours. Today, American villages and towns continue to attract factories with special tax-exclusion incentives to build and operate (Anderson & Wassmer, 2000). The continued racial discrimination in these overwhelming White places make for unwelcoming and often unsafe environments for 21st century Black and Brown people to come to work.

In addition to location, *occupational segregation* occurs when groups of people are concentrated in jobs with less opportunity for advancement and less stability (Parcel & Mueller 1983; Smith 2002). Research on wage and income disparities finds significant racial disparities caused by occupational discrimination. For example, Bendick et al. (1994) found that new White employees averaged a 15-cent/hour higher starting wage than Black employees in the same positions. While setting controls for parental background, education, work experience, tenure, and training, Cancio et al. (1996) found White men earned around 15% more than Black men in comparable positions and White women earned 6% more compared to their counterpart Black women. Recent analyses show that even among occupations with the same starting pay, the growth in earnings is slower for all women than men and much slower for Black workers than White workers (Clarkwest et al., 2021). Over the course of ten years, controlling for employment interruptions, Black women earn \$6.33 less per hour after starting at the same pay as White men in the same occupation and Black men earn \$4.11 less per hour (Clarkwest et al., 2021).

Union-organized jobs can help ensure equal pay for job positions. Black American workers historically and currently work union jobs at higher rates than other workers because the organized conditions set objective skill, experience, and educational

benchmarks for pay that reduces the subjectivity of pay rates (BLS, 2022). However, admission into some unions encapsulates ethnocentric histories that specifically excluded some people from joining the occupation while favoring others (Foner & Lewis, 1989; Ravetti et al., 2019).

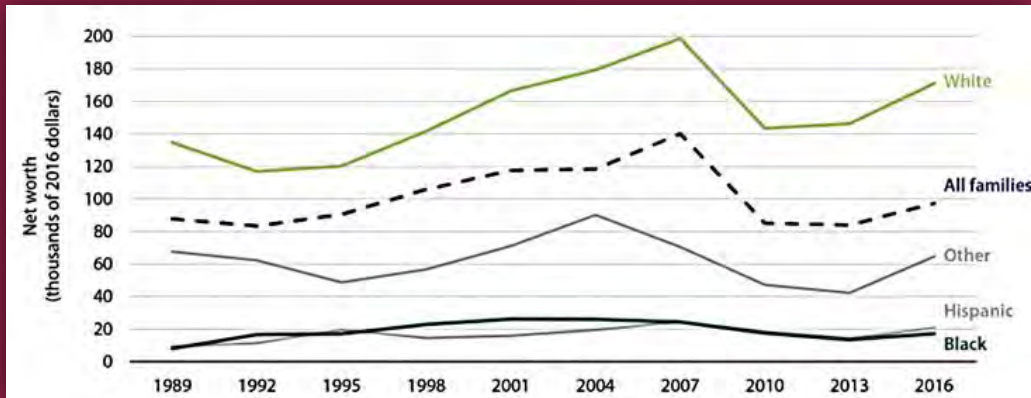
Together, this income and employment segregation leads to large gaps in lifetime earnings. The median lifetime earnings of Black Americans are 34% less than White Americans, and Latinx Americans' median lifetime earnings average 23% less than White people. These disparities in lifetime earnings compound race with gender. Whereas the gap between women with the same educational attainment is nearly 25% less than their male counterparts over their lifetime (Carnevale et al., 2011).

Wealth

An individual or group's economic well-being is not dependent on income, as income and net worth are not highly correlated (Lerman & Mikesell, 1988, p. 779). In capitalist economies, the *control of wealth* is a key determinant of advantage, as truly rich individuals keep high levels of wealth that are not always correlated with high levels of income (Winnick, 1989). Wealthy individuals can support themselves based on income derived from their assets alone. In these societies, it is people with preexisting assets who build wealth as the difference between total assets and total debts which can work in a wealth-generating feedback loop. This feedback loop works as wealth appreciates and can be used as collateral that helps to secure new investments which build even more wealth. Beyond this, economic discrimination in the United States economy and political system leads to wealth being used to gain other advantages that include "political influence, social prestige, and improved educational and occupational advantages for oneself and one's children" (Keister, 2000, p. 478).

In the United States, the gap between Black and White wealth is significant. The net worth of an average White household is 10 times greater than that of a Black household. The scale of this disparity is even more apparent when considering that the White-to-Black ratio for median weekly earnings is 1.7 to 1 while it is 19 to 1 for median net worth (McIntosh et al., 2020; Walt et al., 2008). This trend has been persistent, as the White to Black median net worth ratio has not gone below 7 to 1 since 1984 (Taylor et al. 2011). This persistent gap can be accredited to the most significant contributor to wealth disparity: generation to generation inheritances. Figure 1 below illustrates the persistence of racial wealth disparity in the United States. It shows the median net worth of White Americans as significantly higher than all other racial groups over the period from 1989 to 2016 (McIntosh et al., 2020). This wealth disparity is primarily the result of a capitalist economic system based on economic inequality that oppressed people of color. The multi-generational oppression of Black Americans through racial discrimination throughout the history of the United States from "slavery, Jim Crow laws, housing segregation and redlining, and discrimination in educational systems, labor markets, and financial institutions" all accumulate to wealth disparities that compound over generations of families (Nam, 2021; see also Nam et al., 2008; Shapiro, 2004; Spielman, 2000).

Figure 1. Median Net Worth by Race/Ethnicity, 1989-2016



Note. The figure is adapted from a blogpost which examines the Black-White wealth gap (McIntosh et al., 2020).

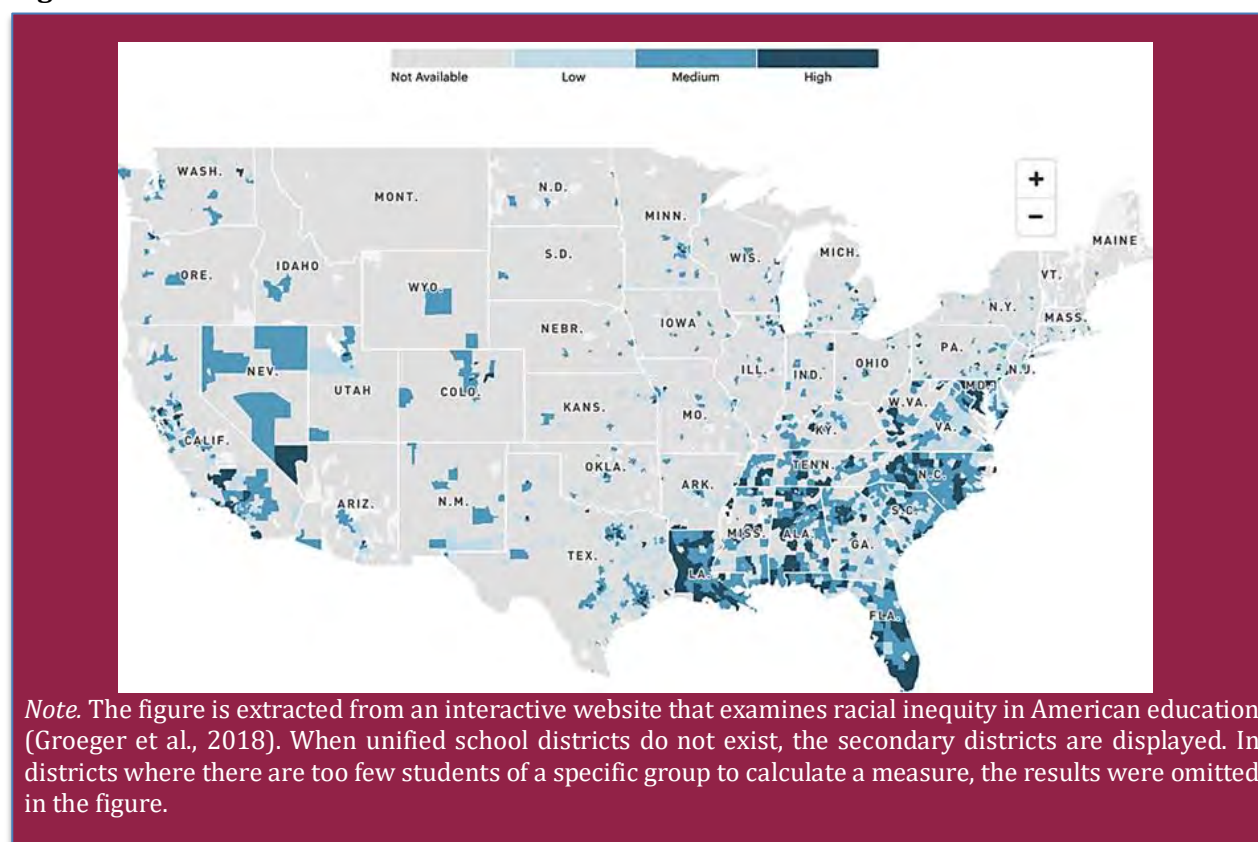
It reflects data as per the 2016 Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF) by Federal Reserve (2016).

Education

The United States education system was formally desegregated with the decision on *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* (1954). The closing of the door of this *de jure* education segregation opened the door to *de facto* educational segregation. Today, schools racially segregate due to neighborhood demographics from historical and current spatial segregation. The map below (see Figure 2) illustrates this *de facto* segregation by highlighting Black-White student distribution in public school districts [Groeger et al., 2018; data extracted from Civil Rights Data Collection (2016)]. The map clearly shows the concentration of uneven distribution in the Southern United States and across the nation in cities. The city trends are in part a function of the concentration of Black Americans in cities and real estate segregation excluding Black Americans from villages and towns. The Southern concentrations are partially a function of the large size of Southern districts, as they were mandated to consolidate at the county-level in response to *Brown v. Board of Education*.

This perpetual segregation of schools is grounded in localism where local officials and funding through local property taxes can exclude families without wealth. This education system based on geographic location creates school districts with uneven distributions of wealth and exacerbates geographic racial divides that exist in the United States. The funding divide between primarily White school districts and primarily Black and Brown school districts is significant. It creates a considerable resource advantage favoring White School districts. Data shows that in primarily White school districts, average revenues per students are nearly \$14,000 per student, considerably larger than the \$11,682 average revenue per student in Black and Brown school districts (EdBuild, 2019). This divide is even larger when considering the needs of the schools in communities of color and higher poverty areas, leaving them often under-funded in relation to their needs (Beach & Sernhede, 2011; Ohrn, 2012, p. 46).

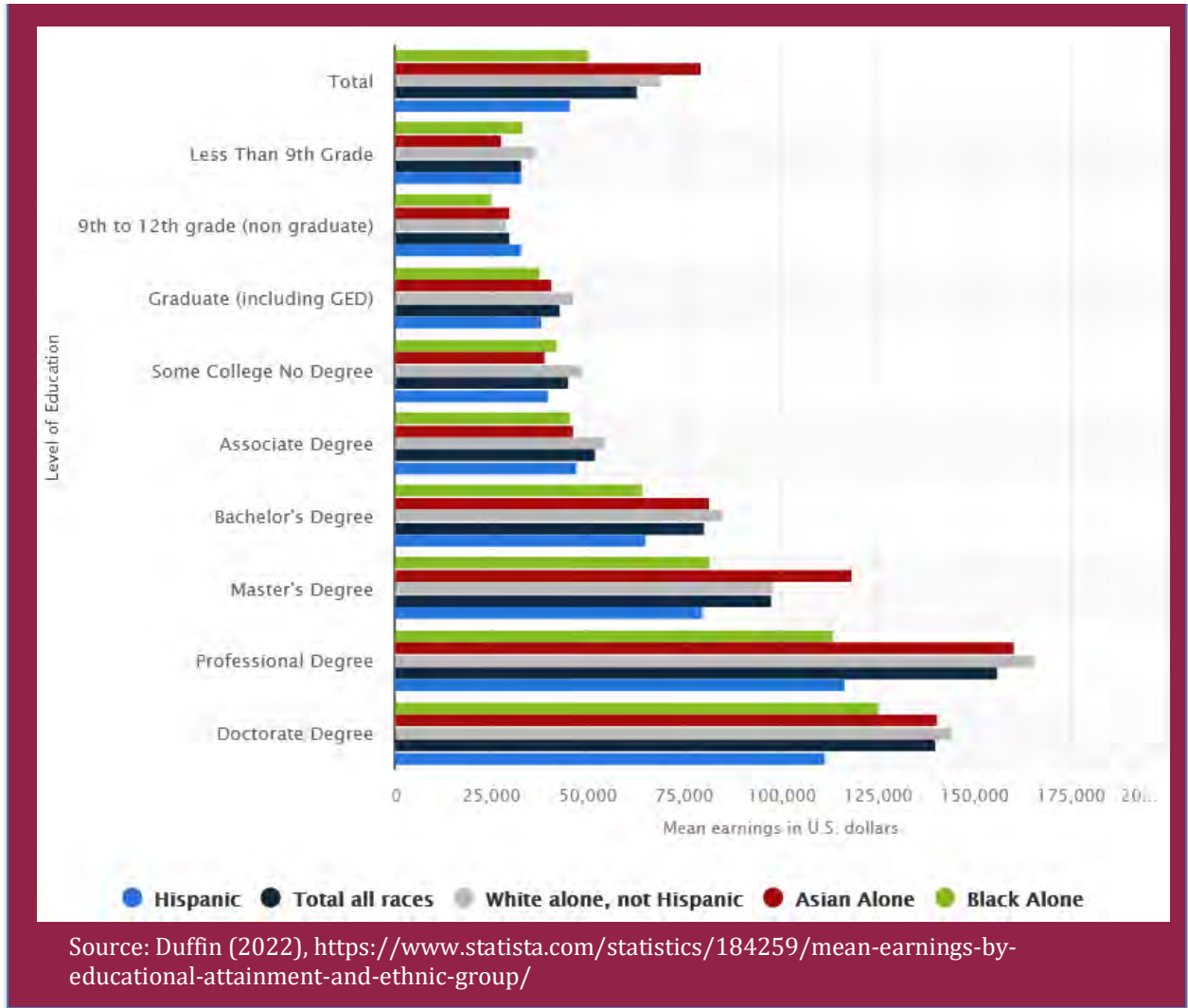
Figure 2. School districts where there is an uneven distribution of Black and White students



Educational segregation continues into tertiary education. Historical wealth inequalities mean that Black students, on average, receive a significantly lower rate of parental financial assistance than the average White students (Elliot & Friedline, 2013; Taylor & Meschedale, 2018). This parental financial assistance has long-term impacts on their children's economic achievement (Swartz et al., 2017). Without parental financial support, Black students are at higher risk of not attending higher education or incurring debt while attending, which can lead them to prematurely accept suboptimal jobs that are readily available (Dwyer, 2018). Research estimates that if Black students had the same chance of receiving parental assistance as their White counterparts, then racial disparities in obtaining a bachelor's degree as well as a graduate or professional degree would be reduced by a third (Nam, 2020).

Lifetime earning differences related to each level of educational attainment is apparent in Figure 3 which shows median lifetime earnings by racial groups increasing at every level of educational attainment (Duffin et al., 2022). While disparities exist by race in the amount of uptick in earnings, a clear advantage occurs within group at each additional level of educational attainment.

Figure 3. Median Lifetime Earnings by Highest Educational Attainment in 2021, by race



Infrastructure

Spatial segregation manifests through grey and green infrastructure, yet it is rarely acknowledged or addressed by local governments. Significantly, the *interstate highway system* in the United States was built in such a way that enforced segregation. It prioritized White people’s needs and displaced and largely ignored the needs of impoverished urban people and Black and Brown communities (Karas, 2015). Under the guise of economic and transportation development, the interstate highways ran through areas served to formalize the Jim Crow-era patterns of discrimination and created a physical concrete barrier that reinforced racial boundaries.

In Chicago, for example, White city officials revised the original plans for the Dan Ryan expressway in the final stages of approval to include two sharp curves in a short space. While these curves were less direct, this change turned the route into a miles-long massive 14-lane concrete barrier between the predominantly White and Black south sides of Chicago (Cohen, 2000). This change also preserved more White homes from demolition in favor of more

Black homes demolished under eminent domain laws (Ye, 2013). Across the United States, this destruction of Black homes for the creation of the interstate system took place throughout the interstate highway system's installation in the 1950s and 1960s, supporting White supremacy through wielding local decision-making power and devastating Black and Brown homeownership communities (Karas, 2015).

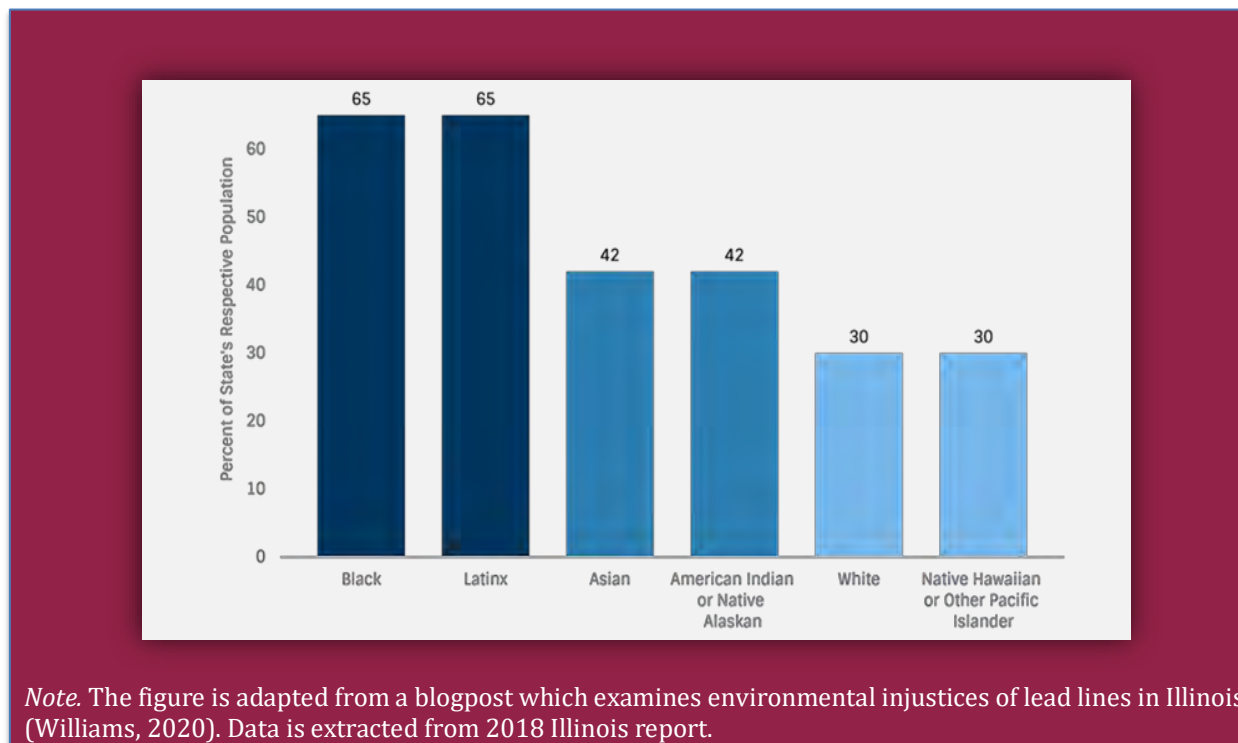
The building of *public transportation* infrastructure also ignored the needs of Black and Brown communities while prioritizing White communities. For example, in Chicago, the overwhelmingly White north and mostly White west suburbs of the city each have two Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) rapid transit lines that run from those suburbs into the city and the downtown business district, while the overwhelmingly Black south suburbs have zero CTA train stops. To be clear on the link of race shaping infrastructure decisions, we use the example that during the 1950's when the south suburbs were mostly White, there were plans to extend Chicago's red line rapid transit route to reach 130th street. During the planning and construction years, the south suburbs transitioned into largely Black neighborhoods. In 1969, the decision was made to end the red line construction at 95th street (Joravsky, 2006). This decision distinctly excluded the Black townships in the south suburbs from the city of Chicago public transportation system (Farmer, 2011).

Infrastructure that protects people from natural disasters and extreme weather is also highly segregated. The *quality of infrastructure* is one of the problems that cause Black and Brown communities to be hit harder by natural disasters and extreme weather. For example, after Hurricane Harvey devastated Southeast Texas, billions of federal dollars were allocated to mitigate future storm risks. These funds were disproportionately allocated in Houston, with nearly all funds sent to improve infrastructure in White communities while leaving Black and Brown communities with little to no improvement plans for common storm drainage infrastructure (Jan, 2022). Relatedly, the recent cold snap in Texas caused major outages on the electrical grid due to downed trees and lines breaking under the ice. In response, the repairs to the electrical grid prioritized White communities before others (Mays, 2021).

Water lines are also a part of spatial segregation. Lead lines and other water contaminants are found much more in Black and Brown communities than in White communities (Williams, 2020). Two notable examples are in Illinois and Flint, Michigan. Flint is a small majority Black city that suffers high levels of poverty. In 2014, an unelected emergency manager changed Flint's water source to the highly polluted Flint River to save money (Heck, 2021). This change in water source contaminated Flint's water supply with extremely high levels of lead and bacteria that cause Legionnaires' disease killing at least 12 people in Flint and sickening at least 87 more (Hersher, 2018). High levels of lead, a neurotoxin that can cause lifelong health issues including damage to the brain, were identified in Flint's children (Karoub, 2017).

This issue is likely to rise again in other places. Illinois has the most lead lines out of any state in the U.S., and Chicago has the most out of any city. Chicago allowed lead lines through 1986, even though in the 1970s the health dangers of lead were well known. Despite knowing this, the city of Chicago continued installing lead lines mostly in Black and Brown communities. While rich and White areas in Chicago and Illinois have nearly no risk of lead exposure, Black and Latinx people in Chicago's south side, Aurora, and Joliet, are at high risk (LaTrace, 2016; Caine, 2021). Black and Latinx people are over twice as likely as White people in Illinois and Chicago to live in the communities where most of the state's lead lines are located (Williams, 2020) (see Figure 4 below).

Figure 4. Representation of racial and ethnic groups in Illinois' municipalities with the most lead service lines



Justice System

Spatial segregation manifests in some of the most violent ways through the justice system and law enforcement. The disparity between the number of Black people and White people fatally *shot by police* as a form of law enforcement is widely acknowledged. Two times as many Black people are fatally shot than the proportion of the Black American population. Less widely acknowledged is the role of spatial segregation in U.S. cities in this disparity. Siegel (2019) found that the level of racial residential segregation in a city strongly predicts the magnitude of difference between fatal police shooting rates of Black victims compared to White victims. This means that as residential segregation in a city increases so too does the racial disparity of fatal police shootings. Complementing this finding, the rate of Black victims from fatal police shootings lowers in racially mixed neighborhoods even though police officers are still more likely to use lethal force in neighborhoods with majority populations of people of color. This association between American residential segregation and fatal police shootings occurs at both the state and city levels (Siegel, 2019).

Widespread spatial segregation also correlates with widespread wrongful convictions and law enforcement discrimination (Gordon, 2022). Police concentrate patrol and law enforcement efforts in urban neighborhoods with majority populations of people of color (Gordon, 2022). Less enforcement occurs in predominantly White neighborhoods. As such, more arrests occur in neighborhoods where there is a greater police presence and fewer arrests occur where there is nearly no police presence. The prevalence of unprovoked “pat-downs” of local residents also occur regularly in neighborhoods of color despite its

questionable legality (Gordon, 2022). The lack of police presence in predominantly White neighborhoods has created the unintended consequence of increased vigilantism in these areas where people of color are threatened with violent force (Jacobs, 2021) or worse, as in the case of Ahmaud Arbery who was shot dead by vigilantes while jogging in a suburban neighborhood outside of Brunswick, Georgia.

Latinx and Black people in segregated neighborhoods are especially vulnerable to the *war on drugs* and the incarceration that follows. While police could easily find drug offenses on college campuses or in White neighborhoods, efforts are concentrated in Latinx and Black neighborhoods. Alexander (2010) describes how this mass incarceration operates as a tightly networked system of laws, policies, customs, and institutions that maintains the subordinate status of a group defined largely by race. Once a person is labeled a felon, they are subject to all legal forms of discrimination, serving much the same purpose as former Jim Crow laws. As Alexander (2010) describes this “New Jim Crow” from discriminatory arrest and conviction practices legalizes employment discrimination, housing discrimination, denial of the right to vote, denial of education, denial of public benefits, and exclusion from jury service.

In the United States, *law enforcement professions* (lawyers, judges, police, and lawmakers) are all disproportionately White (Leatherby, 2020). Many people in the U.S. are aware that a disproportionately White police force is one of the factors that leads to racism in our justice system. Less known is the disproportionality among attorneys. According to the American Bar Association 2020 data, 86% of lawyers in the country are White and only 5% are Black (Lawyers by Race & Ethnicity, 2020) compared to the 64% and 12%, respectively, represented in the adult population (Jones et al., 2021). It is prosecutors who decide the charges for any given case and they alone decide whether a case deserves to go to trial or not. A mere 7% of state trial judges, who also share a lot of this decision-making power and who handle most criminal cases, are Black. This allows White prosecutors and judges to make decisions that are influenced greatly by racist stereotypes and prejudice without any oversight (Young, 2015), not least of which is the discriminatory practice of concentrated patrols in segregated neighborhoods.

The United States has the highest rate of incarceration in the world, dwarfing all the developed countries and surpassing regimes that its government accuses of being repressive and authoritarian like China, Russia, and Iran. The U.S., while constituting 5% of the world’s population overall, makes up 25% of the world’s prison population (Lee, 2015). The racial disparity in incarceration is staggering, as the United States incarcerates a higher percentage of the country’s Black population than South Africa did at the height of Apartheid (Lawrence, 2011). In major U.S. cities, as many as 80% of young Black men have criminal records and due to this record, legal discrimination can occur for the rest of their lives. In Washington D.C. three out of every four Black men can expect to serve time in prison at some point. In the city’s poorest neighborhoods that figure is closer to 100% (Alexander, 2010).

Food Access

Spatial segregation also exists outside of public policies and programs, often working as an exclusionary force factoring into private market decisions. Such decisions by private actors are not based on local needs but rather sales-per-square-foot (Wylie, 2015). These private market forces affect the daily lives of people in communities of color including what they eat, with many poor minority residents living in ‘*food deserts*’. Food deserts are low-income areas

where healthy foods are “expensive, of poor quality, or inaccessible, thus contributing to rising rates of obesity and diet related chronic disease” (Shannon, 2013, p. 248). They exist disproportionately in urban communities of color, where there is a significant disparity in the number of supermarkets when compared to White communities (Raja et al., 2008). It is reported that in the United States half of all Black neighborhoods are without full-service grocery stores and supermarkets (National Black Environmental Justice Network, n.d.). Replacing these supermarkets are small independent stores that are more likely to be located in low-income areas in the inner city. The food sold in these stores is of lower quality and carries produce that is damaged or spoiled. It has also been found to be more expensive and uncompetitive with prices offered by supermarkets (Chung & Myers, 1999; Johnson et al., 1996).

Beyond the concept of food deserts is the concept of ‘*food swamps*’. These are areas with a high density of unhealthy foods in relation to healthy foods (Rose et al. 2009). Food swamps include clusters of food retailers that offer unhealthy options, such as convenience stores and fast-food restaurants. Like food deserts, food swamps are disproportionately located in urban areas in low-income and/or communities of color (Goodman et al., 2020). Whether a food desert or swamp, the result is an abundance of unhealthy foods with few healthy options, leading to an “obesogenic environment” (Shannon, 2013) with negative connotations for the health of people in these communities.

How Segregation is Perpetuated

Segregation perpetuates in the 21st century despite laws to prohibit it. This section focuses on different policies and practices in housing as well as structural mechanisms that reproduce and reinforce spatial segregation.

Housing Segregation

With some overt forms of segregation now illegal in the United States, contemporary forms of structural discrimination have taken their place to perpetuate segregation in the housing market. From renting to home ownership, new approaches to this sector are doing little to alleviate spatial segregation.

Landlords act as gatekeepers (DeLuca et al., 2013). Small-scale landlords promote segregation through their own (biased) *screening processes*. Screening applicant processes usually consist of first impressions, informal visits of the rental property, and intuitive, “gut” feelings. Through these individualized screenings, the distinction between a potential trustworthy or “risky” tenant is often seated in racialized social bias and reinforced if the prospective tenant’s behavior aligns “with racist and gendered cultural narratives”. Rosen & Garboden (2020) interviewed small scale landlords and found that they screened-out prospective tenants using “culture of poverty” narratives, the idea that the poor are responsible for their condition. They found that this “culture of poverty” framing was used both by White and Black landlords at the same frequency. Beyond this, they found no significant differences between the way Black, White, Asian, and Latinx landlords screen and evaluate their tenants. Ultimately, this shows how the power of social structures and economies that prioritize profitability, in addition to individually discriminatory landlords, leads to housing exclusion that reinforce and perpetuate segregation (Rosen et al., 2021).

These biases are not reduced when non-humans estimate risk or trustworthiness.

Recent research finds significant discrimination by large scale professional landlords who use *screening algorithms* that give prospective tenants a score based on “credit report, criminal history, residential history, and voucher status” (Rosen et al., 2021, p. 814). While designed to be objective, these screening algorithms reinforce historical discrimination because they use trend statistics at the population-level to predict an individual “risk” score. Since population-level statistics culminate the structural discrimination embedded in the various institutions of American economics, housing, criminal justice, etc., the algorithms project historical segregation patterns into the predicted scores. These algorithms also rely on a categorical exclusion of applicants with “past evictions, credit scores below a threshold, and criminal backgrounds” (Rosen et al., 2021, p. 814). These algorithms are unable to consider mitigating circumstances. Thus, even though the algorithms are specifically designed to exclude the human error associated with implicit bias of a tenant’s race or physical traits, the attributes fed into the algorithm causally associate with racial inequalities suffered over generations. Thus, while these screening algorithms are promoted as objective, legal, and less prone to bias than humans, they reinforce segregation since they use the statistics from generations of human bias to feed the models’ estimates.

Other forms of contemporary discrimination include an expansion of *predatory lending* to potential buyers in low-income and communities of color (Been et al. 2009; McCloskey & Orenstein, 2019; Squires et al. 2009; Rugh & Massey, 2010). Segregation, historic inequality, and business decisions contingent on profit led to the under- or disinvestment in contemporary neighborhoods of color. This creates a vicious cycle where these same neighborhoods are then left underserved by mainstream financial institutions (Renuart, 2004; Ross and Yinger, 2002). This leaves an opportunity gap that predatory financial organizations fill, such as “pawn shops, payday lenders, and check cashing services that charge high fees and usurious rates of interest” (Immergluck & Wiles, 1999). The overwhelming prevalence of predatory lending services in communities of color accustoms community residents to exploitative lending, leaving them unaware that better services exist elsewhere. This predatory lending concentrated in communities of color fueled a racialized foreclosure crisis in the U.S. where the Great Recession disproportionately foreclosed on homes of Black borrowers (Hernandez, 2009; Oliver & Shapiro, 2006; Wyly et al., 2006, 2009). The foreclosure crisis of the Great Recession peaked in subprime lending and coincided with a decline in the stability of Black homeownership and exit rates, suggesting that the unequal lending weakened Black residential stability as well as eroded wealth among Black Americans (Shapiro et al., 2010).

On the other side of the housing market is *gentrification*. It has proved to be one of the dominant methods of perpetuating segregation in 21st century American cities. Gentrification occurs when working-class and Black and Brown people in a neighborhood or city are displaced by an influx of high-income middle- and upper-class White people who move in and then profit from the low cost of living in the community (Betancur, 2011). Short tenures of new homeowners provide a low-cost, high-payout market for gentrifiers to buy, upgrade, and resell homes. This churn in the market quickly rises property values and ‘prices out’ the established local homeowners when their property taxes rise at a faster pace than their incomes can support (Betancur, 2011). Alternatively, some gentrifiers see the low-cost market as an opportunity to buy rental properties, wait until property values increase, and then increase rents on the long-time tenants. In the United States and Europe, the prevalence of neoliberal market-oriented housing restructuring together with government housing policies has resulted in high levels of gentrification (Hochstenbach, 2016).

Government policies often amplify existing gentrification processes by deregulating the housing stock and zoning laws as well as prioritizing homeownership over rental housing. The gentrification that results destabilize generations-old neighbors from each other (Betancur, 2011). For example, some progressive communities misappropriate racial justice arguments to re-zone Black and Brown single family areas to multifamily. These communities often fought through generations to preserve single family zoning in their neighborhoods as means to preserving the fabric of their communities as well as preserving costs of single-family homes as compared to the financial investment to purchase a multi-family home to stay in the neighborhood (Chandra, 2022). This displacement is especially detrimental to the many Black and Brown families who depend on place-based platforms and community social fabrics to survive and advance within a larger racist structure. For the U.S.'s low-income Latinx communities, many are additionally in a situation where language and residential permits can be risks in less culturally dense neighborhoods. In Chicago, the Uptown, Lake View, Lincoln Park, West Town, Loop, and Pilsen neighborhoods of Chicago were known for their large, supportive Latinx communities who were systematically disintegrated and displaced by gentrifiers. The residents of these neighborhoods experienced prosecution of community organizations, police harassment, and abusive White landlords (Padilla, 1987; Taylor, 1932; Año Nuevo Kerr, 1976).

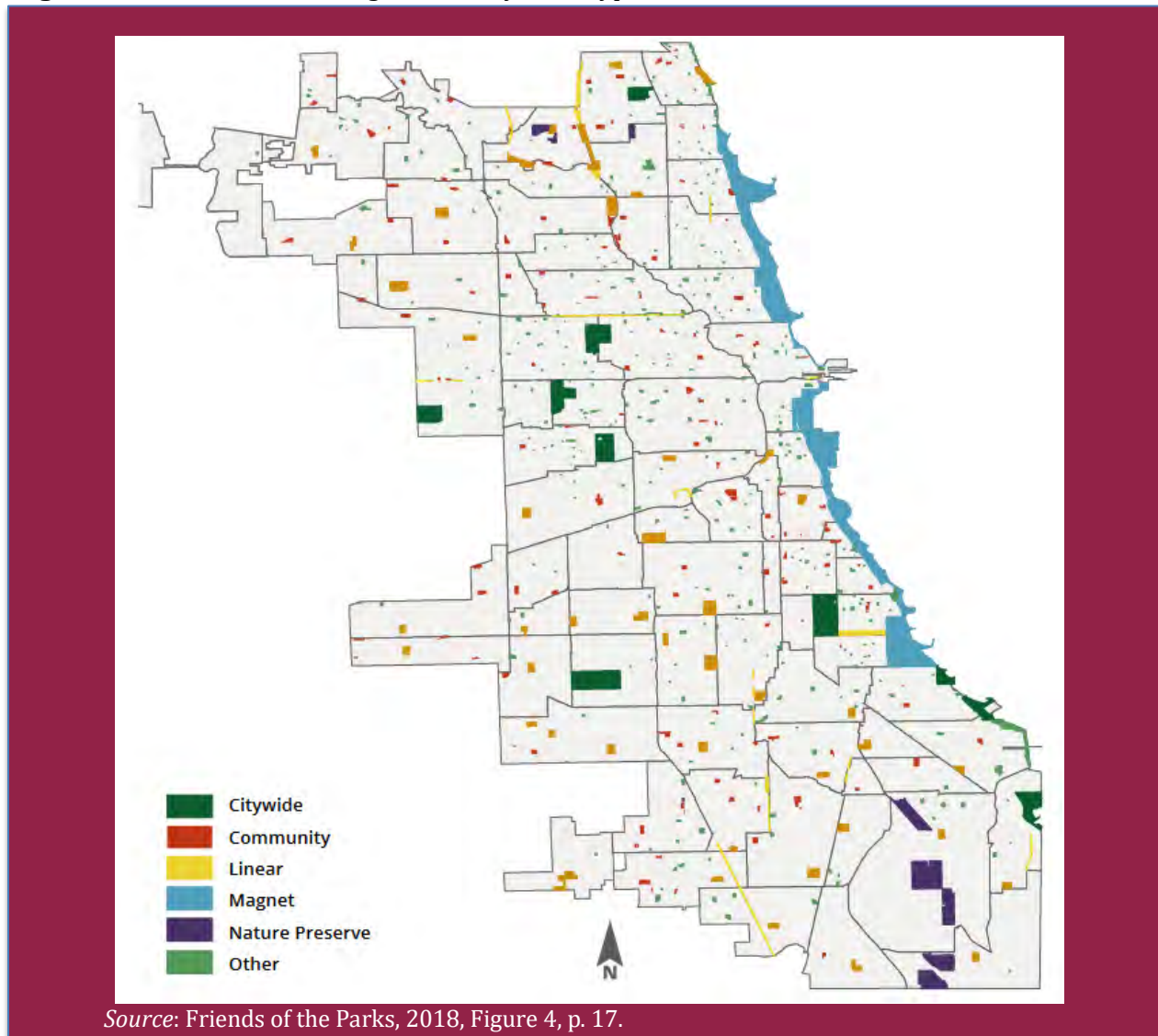
Zoning also perpetuates racial segregation. During the early 20th century, many areas introduced explicitly racist ordinances to segregate Black and White households. In the years following the prohibition of such overtly racist policies, many municipalities in the United States instead implemented “comprehensive” zoning ordinances to limit land use and residential building density. In most of the United States today, it is still legal to exclude people from neighborhoods based on income. Countless suburbs and other White communities block the construction of multi-family units and affordable housing (Winkler, 2017). While not overtly racist, comprehensive zoning ordinances perpetuate segregation through racially and ethnically discriminatory building practices (Shertzer, 2021; Rothstein, 2017; Trounstine, 2018).

The historical zoning restrictions that confined many Black and Brown communities to urban manufacturing areas directly impacts health today. Black and Brown communities average higher risk rates for heart diseases, stroke, cancer, and asthma (Carratala & Maxwell, 2020) that are tied to air and water pollutants. Furthermore, lower life expectancies tied to these risks as well as lack of access to health care multiply the effects of health disparities. The higher rates of mortality among people of color from COVID-19 exemplifies the impact of these confounding factors.

Access to *green infrastructure* in public health provides cleaner air and shade that reduces the “urban heat island” effect. During heat waves, people in predominantly Black communities die from heat stress at higher rates than people in predominantly White communities (Hamstead et al., 2018), with the density of trees playing a central role in preventing these deaths. For instance, in Baltimore, increasing the area of current tree cover by 10% per census block group reduced annual mortality by 25%, from 330 to 247 deaths (Paramita Sinha et al., 2021). Chicago is one of the most segregated cities in the United States in terms of access to green spaces (Rohde, 2020). Figure 5 shows that residents in the predominately White north side of Chicago have more and nearer access to parks. Further, audits of the park commission show fewer than half the requests for park improvements are approved in Black communities (Friends of the Parks, 2018). Further, green infrastructure promotes functional municipal stormwater infrastructure, reducing flooding by absorbing

rainfall and taking the pressure off overworked drainage systems to preserve the sanitation from contamination and mold of streets, housing structures, and drinking water that all otherwise cause health emergencies and illness.

Figure 5. Distribution of Chicago's Parks by Park Type



Source: Friends of the Parks, 2018, Figure 4, p. 17.

Ultimately, the lack of access to housing markets in the American capitalist market economy directly translates into socioeconomic inequality which persistently oppresses people of color in contemporary society (Massey, 2007).

Structural Segregation

A multitude of structural reproduction mechanisms perpetuate segregation even as overt structural inequality phases-out. Structural reproduction mechanisms cause a feedback loop where a practice becomes more likely to reoccur and possibly even strengthens as it reoccurs.

The *poverty trap* is one notable example of a structural reproduction mechanism.

Poverty traps elicit the imagery of the cyclical nature of poverty. When an individual or family experiences an impoverishing event, then the poverty and disadvantage is more likely to continue and repeat itself. Since the individuals and households lack enough wealth to cover an expense, it drives them further into debt when they need to borrow to cover the expense (Bowles et al., 2006). The poverty trap also can cycle between generations. Low levels of socioeconomic resources in childhood can restrict children's socioeconomic advancement in adulthood since the parents have limited ability to invest in their children's future and children therefore take on loan debt at an earlier starting point in their lives (Killiewald et al., 2017; Shapiro, 2004). The cyclical nature of these poverty traps makes it difficult to break the cycle unless there is an institutional or systemic intervention to change the socioeconomic system (Sampson & Sharkey 2008, 27).

Structural reproduction mechanisms also occur among the group holding power. An example of this is *self-segregation*, a process where a group structures their own environments to reduce and minimize intergroup contact in their residential spaces, workplaces, religious spaces, and recreational spaces. Self-segregation creates less diverse communities based on their "intergroup anxiety" (Anicich et al., 2021, p. 1). Historically, White people in the United States did this explicitly under laws of segregation. In contemporary society, this occurs by residential home choices. White preferences of self-segregation include preferences to living in all White neighborhoods, gated communities, and "unincorporated housing developments at the exurban fringe" (Lichter et al., 2015, pg. 846). Studies repeatedly show the intolerance of White residents for neighbors of color breaks around the 40% mark. That is, Whites tend to exit communities in droves when the proportion of residents of color in the neighborhood reaches 2-in-5 (Farley et al., 1978; Krysan, 2002; Lewis, Emerson, & Klineberg, 2011; Massey & Denton, 1993). This exit effect recently reproduced in a German simulation study (Shlueter et al., 2018). By self-selecting, the likelihood of incidental intergroup contact reduces. Without intergroup contact, racial biases reinforce and increase. These increasing biases create a self-fulfilling prophecy effect that leads to more self-segregation and creates a loop of intergroup avoidance that contributes to perpetuate racialized spatial segregation.

Other structural reproduction mechanisms include processes and relationships related to *political participation*. For example, economic inequality leads to lower political participation; lower political participation tilts the power to those with more economic means and thus the cycle self-reinforces to produce greater inequality (Bartels, 2008). Furthermore, individuals less trustful of government participate less in it (Boeckmann & Tyler, 2002; Uslaner & Brown, 2005). Social exclusion from political participation pushes-down groups who already are on the low-end of the inequality distribution and reduces mobilizing for change (Leighley, 1990; Huckfeldt et al., 2004). Political power tilted toward those with more economic means also leads to regulations favoring their neighborhoods. As a result, many 'unsightly' or outright dangerous environmental hazards get zoned in places nearer the Black and Brown neighborhoods.

Incarceration and the criminal justice system, in general, create and maintain economic inequality, including the maintenance of segregation. The hyper-disproportionate number of Black prisoners compared to the rest of the population is well-established and related to the discriminatory policing discussed earlier in this report. Less discussed is the economic oppression entrenched in the prison system (Alexander, 2010). Every year, prison labor produces at least \$11 billion in goods and services while being paid only a few pennies an hour (Anguiano, 2022). The lack of ability to earn real wages while incarcerated creates a

cycle where prisoners only have pennies to their name when they are released after their sentence expires (Smith, 2012). Moreover, incarceration drastically reduces chances of employment after release. Many states legally prohibit people with criminal records from employment in certain sectors. These barriers increase if someone holds a record of a felony against the federal government (Alexander, 2010). Similarly, housing options can also be restricted by property managers via legal criminal background checks.

The social stigma associated with imprisonment extends beyond the individual and stigmatizes whole communities. People looking for employment who list their address from neighborhoods with high rates of incarceration face biased employers (Smith, 2012).

Structural mechanisms work to perpetuate spatial segregation and fuel its expansion (Theodossiou & Zangelidis, 2018). Without concerted effort to thwart these mechanisms, the groups on the low-end of the distribution will endure more suffering while those on the high-end will advance more rapidly, thus widening inequality and segregation.

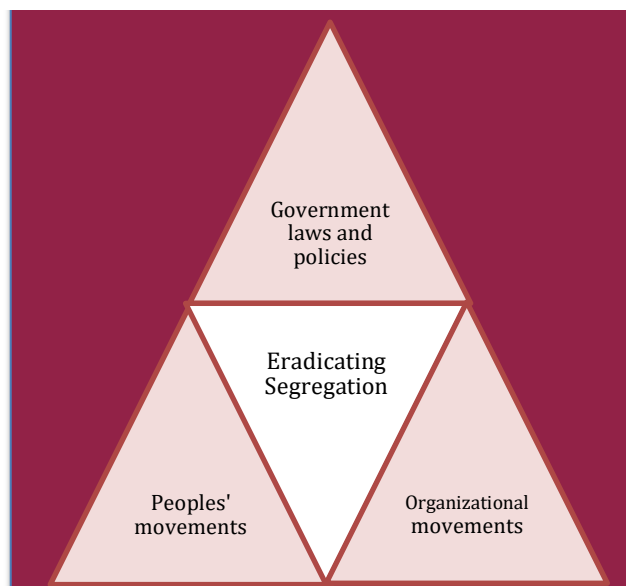
Eradicating Segregation

We conclude this report with thoughts on how to eradicate racial segregation. We review the crucial process of social change needed to enact equity solutions. With an eye to imagining the future, we discuss the likely economic benefits related to eradicating segregation.

Process for Social Change

Social change occurs from the top, the middle, and from the bottom of the social hierarchy,

Figure 6. Pyramid for Social Change



as Figure 6 shows. Government and their laws and policies sit at the top. Organizations sit in the middle. Oppressed peoples sit at the bottom. Separately, each can work to lessen segregation. Together, they can eradicate racial segregation.

Living Cities (2019) identifies four steps for a municipal government to begin working toward racial equity.

Step 1. They promote first beginning with *normalizing racial equity as a common goal*. For this to happen, the people in municipal governments need time to reflect on (a) racial equity as a concept and (b) the role that their government plays in advancing racial equity. Without this first step of normalization, the next two steps become

ineffective at best and impossible at worst.

Step 2. After normalizing, the next step for the municipal government is *organizing* to develop a plan for racial equity. The team developing this plan must bring together (a) high-level leaders and (b) lower-level staff, and it must be sufficient in relation to the size of the city government. Crucially, city governments cannot enact this change alone. They need allies from communities, organizations, and social movements who can assist in influencing

policies. (c) Engagement with communities of color is critical to holding the city accountable during the process of developing a plan to advance racial equity.

Step 3. The final step is to develop the plan and *operationalize* racial equity to ensure a permanent influence of the policies on the municipal government operations. To ensure this plan will result in racial equity in the long term, (a) The racial and ethnic disparities they strive to impact must be identified, (b) racial equity outcomes determined, and (c) the link between the performance measures and racial equity outcomes clearly articulated.

Step 4. Put the plan for racial equity into *action*. During this enactment, the link between the performance measures and racial equity outcomes must be clearly tracked over time. While what the outcomes look like may differ across municipal departments, the overarching goal strives for every municipal employee to apply racial equity to their everyday work for the city.

While government led reforms are a necessary part of working towards ending segregation and broad racial equity, grassroots changes from the people are needed in the political, social, cultural, and economic landscapes. Grassroots changes can occur organically or strategically and operate more informally or more formally.

A *social movement* is a semi-organized effort by a large mass of people, often with loosely associated organizations working together, to achieve an objective. Masses of people, particularly those of oppressed classes or groups, can fuel the engine of social change. Historically, a social movement of peasants and workers with political, economic, and social demands destroyed the oppressive feudal society (West, 2022). Like the feudal society, Jim Crow segregation was destroyed when a social movement of oppressed masses rose up to fight for civil rights in the 1960s in the U.S.. Significant social changes in society occur when the oppressed masses fight their oppressors through a social movement. A social movement cannot be devoid of politics and economics; a powerful social movement is political (Cornforth, 1954; Treuhaft, 2011).

Social movements, made up of those who are oppressed, are the most important process toward social change in eradicating segregation (Cornforth, 1954; Treuhaft, 2011). Since 2012 and most prominently in 2020, a global coalition of different organizations and individuals from various races and classes came together to demand racial justice for people of color through the Black Lives Matter movement (Fisher, 2020). Importantly, its leadership and amplified voices are the very people that the movement fights for: Black people, working-class people, and other oppressed groups and classes (Ransby, 2015). United demands of the Black Lives Matter groups, such as *defunding the police*, were largely ignored by the government and deemed too radical. However, protestors pressured city governments enough in 2020 that many cities cut portions of their funding from their police departments. This win for the movement reversed the ubiquitous, consistent rise in annual police budgets across almost all large cities in the United States. However, when protestors waned in 2021, most city governments replenished their slashed police budget and added more money (Adams, 2021). The ones that could not reverse course from 2020 were those whose cities held referenda to reallocate portions of police budgets to social and mental health services. These changes proved less volatile since the social movement activists worked to *codify* the changes into statute.

Unions also play important roles creating more equitable social change to the system and structures. Unions strategically and formally organize workers at the organizational level to enact change within a whole sector or specific organization. Organizing workers changes the power dynamic over the employer and the government. This power allows

workers to fight for changes in their own compensation and safety standards and it can also push those in power to align with grassroots social movements. Historically, unions created alliances to change government structures, such as ending apartheid, a system of institutionalized racism and segregation, in South Africa (World Bank, 1995) or advancing the Montgomery Bus Boycott in the US (MLK Institute, 2022). Today, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) lead a shipping port shutdown on Juneteenth³ in 2020 in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement. Across the entire West Coast, the work stoppage in the ports crippled shipping for that day. Combined with large protests across the country, the voices of the people were loudly heard. The ability of unions to withhold labor is a critical asset to speak the language of economic impact to policymakers (Clark, 2020).

As the unions show, a critical understanding of capitalism and racism is crucial for working toward changing modern-day segregation (Gaines, 2020). As Dr. King (1967) said in a report:

We have been in a reform movement... But after Selma and the voting rights bill, we moved into a new era, which must be the era of revolution. We must recognize that we can't solve our problem now until there is a radical redistribution of economic and political power... this means a revolution of values and other things. We must see now that the evils of racism, economic exploitation, and militarism are all tied together... you can't really get rid of one without getting rid of the others... the whole structure of American life must be changed.

Many Black political leaders and social movement activists, including those involved in the Black Lives Matter movement, acknowledge that racial equity cannot be achieved under the current construction of a capitalist economic system (Ransby, 2015).

Equity Recommendations

To solve historical and present segregation, the solution needs to focus on creating *equity*, instead of *equality*. Equality treats every person with the same approach while equity recognizes that certain people or groups need different supports to reach the same outcome. In effect, equality is sameness of the 'input' while equity focuses on the sameness of 'output'. If there were no racial biases embedded in our structures, we could operate from an approach of equality. As we documented in this report, this is not the reality. Historical and current day practices, policies, and laws induce unequal outcomes differently for peoples, depending on their racial and ethnic affiliations. This section summarizes recommendations about how to advance equity through supports in housing, education, and income and wealth acquisition.

Equity solutions that work to un-design spatial segregation often focus on *housing*. The non-profit, Christian organization Habitat for Humanity (2020) recently published a set of five policy recommendations to help achieve racial equity in housing. The first policy recommendation increases opportunities for Black homeownership. To achieve this, the non-profit organization recommends creating down payments assistance (DPA) programs, increasing access to credit for Black homebuyers, investing in making home ownership more affordable, and restructuring the mortgage interest deduction (MID) to make it more equitable. The second policy recommendation seeks direct investment in distressed, racially

³ A holiday commemorating the emancipation of the last enslaved peoples in the U.S., residing in Texas.

segregated communities. They stipulate that public investment and private tax incentives need to be carefully structured to ensure they benefit existing residents and businesses and not displace them through gentrification. The third policy recommendation targets the factors perpetuating segregation and increase the opportunity for Black people to rent or purchase homes in communities of their choosing. Key strategies needed to achieve this include reforming zoning laws to promote mixed-income communities, building and preserving affordable housing in all communities, and increasing the mobility of families through expanding housing choice vouchers. Another policy recommended by Habitat for Humanity (2020) suggests investing in affordable rental housing. By investing in affordable rental housing, the high-cost burdens and housing instability experienced by Black households weaken and thus allow more opportunity to save for home ownership. Finally, they point to minimizing the damage and effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on Black and Brown residents. Policies that include key recovery tools, such as foreclosure prevention assistance, will be critical in stabilizing low-income minority households after facing disproportionate effects from the pandemic. These housing recommendations largely focus on supports for Black and Brown residents since historical efforts to reduce White flight responses prove stubbornly difficult to change with policy. Those changes will likely only come as a result of social norms that change through social movements.

Infrastructure remedies can be found in the Justice 40 Initiative. This reparation justice initiative is a result of Executive Order 14008 (titled *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*) necessitates 40 percent of the overall benefits from certain federal investments to marginalized communities. This Initiative proposed *The Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool* to identify eight categories of disadvantage: climate change, clean energy and energy efficiency, clean and accessible transit, affordable and sustainable housing, legacy pollution reduction, clean water infrastructure, health burden reduction, and workforce development. Linking equity recommendations to this Initiative may pave the way to reducing impacts from structural discrimination and improve well-being for communities of color.

Education policy suggests solutions to support equity through revising the structure of education to advance equity. To address the structure of educational segregation requires equitable policies around local government control and financing. The Century Foundation, an independent think tank that focuses on educational equity, recommends several policies. One recommendation suggests increasing federal funding for school integration programs which would help to reduce inequality from community wealth differentials as well as creating a federal economic housing act to integrate neighborhood schools. A decade-old but successful policy regards increasing funding for magnet schools to attract students from higher income families into lower income neighborhood to schools with specialized foci (Kahlenberg et al., 2019). They also suggest adding regulations to restrict districts from isolating themselves or seceding into parcels. Policies including affordable housing programs also holds promise, as exemplified in Montgomery County, Maryland (Schwartz, 2011).

To combat *income inequality and wealth segregation* Powell (2014), recommends six policies. The first increases the federal minimum wage, suggesting that 4.6 million people in the United States would be raised out of poverty if federal minimum wage rose to \$10.10. Secondly, expand and improve the earned income tax credit, which provides tax breaks for moderate to low-income workers and families. In his next two policy recommendations, Powell (2014) points out the need to end residential segregation and invest in education.

Beyond this, he recommends making the tax code more progressive by changing capital gains taxes to income tax rates. Finally, he also recommends implementing supports so that lower income families can more easily build wealth. While Powell (2014) keeps his idea for building wealth brief, a prominent idea to promote equity to build wealth includes *reparations*.

Reparations are historically unpopular in the U.S., in part with reluctance and refusal to acknowledge historic wrongdoings (Coates, 2014), but their consideration is gaining momentum through social movement demands. The U.S. distributed reparations in the past, with the most prominent example coming from The Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act of 1948 where direct payments of \$20,000 were distributed to Japanese Americans who were placed in internment camps during World War II (Hassan & Healy, 2019). The municipal government of Evanston, a city on the northern border of Chicago, recently approved reparation plans to distribute \$10 million to its Black residents. The reparations acknowledge and address the historical harm done to the city's Black residents through its discriminatory housing policies, with descendants of Black residents who lived in the city between 1919 and 1969 being prioritized. The \$10 million plan, funded by donations and taxes on recreational marijuana, works not as direct payments but a distribution of housing grants. The first phase involved \$25,000 payments to select residents for home repairs or property costs. Some scholars argue against this form of reparations through housing policy in lieu of direct payments since it does not address displacement of those who lost their homes as part of structural discrimination and segregation (Adams, 2021). The State of California recently established the Council on Truth & Healing which centers the violent harm inflicted on indigenous and Black peoples in its efforts to establish reparations. In its early efforts, it engaged an indigenous and Black-led organization, The Decolonizing Wealth Project, to distribute \$500,000 in grant funds to indigenous communities and nonprofit organizations (Kalish, 2022). More directly, Yale Law Professor, Boris Bittker. Bittker (1972; see also Coates, 2014) proposes a 1-2 generation reparations program that calculates a yearly direct pay determined by multiplying the total population count of Black people by the difference in White and Black per capita income.

Some of these suggestions show promise in piloted areas. Others are laudable ideas where the unintended consequences may not yet have time to surface. While this section outlined some possible solutions, none act as a silver bullet and all need to consider nuances of individual municipality context and history.

Economic Benefits

Economic benefits for all communities come with achieving racial equity. The Congressional Budget office's long-term U.S growth projection of 2% to 2.5% with racial equity (Turner, 2018). The U.S. economy stands to gain eight trillion dollars by 2050, a sum greater than the sum-total GDP of every country in the world, except that of the United States and China. If racial equity achieved parity.

Turner (2018) estimates a 2.7 trillion dollar increase in economic output with racial equity. These increases in the GDP would be expected due to a several key economic factors that would change. For one, racial equity reduces the skill gap due to segregation. Economically, reducing the skill gap raises the bottom line of business operations through reducing talent gluts in hiring, lowering unskilled worker unemployment, and producing goods or services more efficiently. Other research finds less turnover, more customers, and

higher revenues and profits in businesses with more diverse workforces (Hunt et al., 2015). Federal tax revenues would increase by \$450 billion as well as state and local tax revenues increasing by \$100 billion annually.

Without aiming to capitalize on and dehumanize lost human lives through desensitized references, we report the economic and social benefits from racial equity in the United States and globally (UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2019). Racial equity correlates directly and indirectly with lower costs associated with crime, saving lives, and economic stability. As an example, if Chicago's Black/White segregation dropped even just to the national median—not even to equity—estimates show the homicide rate would drop by 30%. In 2016, this drop would have saved 229 lives; in 2010, it would have saved 167 lives. These lost lives missed adding \$170 million dollars of lifetime earnings to the economy, cost \$65 million dollars in policing as well as \$218 million in imprisonment and corrections costs, and reduced real estate values by more than six billion dollars (Acs, et al., 2017; Shapiro & Hasset, 2012).

Another factor with large economic benefits associated is increasing public health. By reducing health disparities related to spatial segregation, projections estimate a \$135 billion dollar annual gain (Turner, 2018). In the workforce economy, gains are realized through healthier workers having greater productivity, fewer sick days, and lower medical care costs. In addition for government economics, a healthier population saves costs related to health-related public spending and insurance premiums.

Green infrastructure can also play a critical role to reduce costs of segregation to person and economy in cities. Green infrastructure projects create jobs (to build and sustain the new green spaces), revitalizes communities, and restores health (Zhou et al., 2021).

All of these economic and social structure benefits occur while also improving the lives of people, which we center as the primary benefit of this work toward eradicating racial segregation (Novara, Loury, & Khare, 2017).

Conclusion

To conclude, segregation originates from a history of racism where individual prejudices shaped structural policies, laws, and practices that codified racism into the social fabric and institutions. This is a history of White peoples enforcing their dominant power position—White supremacy—over Black and Brown peoples. Across the world, segregation affects peoples of all social classes, races, ethnicities, and other marginalized identities. While all these groups can be affected by segregation, the interaction of race and class is most often the factor dominating spatial segregation (Massey, 2009). Eradicating segregation is necessary to move toward racial equity and more inclusive societies.

Segregation manifests in a myriad of ways. Governments and private actors historically and currently come together to ensure that certain groups of peoples and communities isolate into the most disadvantaged neighborhoods, with the lowest-quality housing and the worst financial arrangements. Redlining, racial covenants, real estate codes, exclusionary zoning legislation, private discrimination, and the threat or use of vigilante and state violence all exemplify the actions and arrangements used to segregate Black people and maintain segregation in the U.S. (Martin, 1993; Seitles, 1998). Income and employment suffer when oppressed peoples are residentially isolated from jobs. Spatial segregation fuels housing market values and this is one of the main factors related to wealth gaps, especially in North America and Europe. Institutions of justice, transportation, education, and private

markets all directly or indirectly embed discriminatory practices into their operations which reinforces spatial segregation. These aspects of segregation are interconnected and are often self-reinforcing.

For centuries, segregation persisted and then evolved over decades. Its long history feeds into structural reproduction mechanisms which continue segregation due to intergenerational cycles such as poverty, White self-segregation, and gaps in political participation due to lack of trust in government to work toward racial equity. Purposeful regulations, policies, and laws implemented at all levels of government feed these mechanisms. For housing in particular, widespread gentrification proves highly effective at perpetuating segregation. Predatory lending and discriminatory landlords also serve to perpetuate spatial segregation.

This literature synthesis provides a starting point for local governments to embark on a path to racial equity, avoid and combat the ways that segregation manifests and persists. Combining peoples' social movements with formal organizations and government policies can work to develop new ways to equitize social outcomes. Crucially, local governments need to embark on a path of "Normalizing, Organizing, and Operationalizing" (Acs, et al., 2017) racial equity across their internal offices and practices in order to bring about effective permanent changes through municipal government operations.

Many of the sources consulted for this synthesis focused on one cause or manifestation related to spatial segregation. Segregation is too complex to be caused by one factor. In this literature report, we attempted to synthesize all these sources and their valuable analysis into a more dialectical and comprehensive discussion of spatial segregation. This analysis considers the ways different factors affect segregation, the ways segregation affects different socio-economic factors, and the interconnectedness of all these factors. An intersectional perspective is thus crucial to understanding spatial segregation and inspiring policies of eradicating it. Policies and practices that aim to work toward eradicating spatial segregation and achieving equity must consider the dynamic politics of the interconnected factors, and for this an intersectional perspective is crucial.

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