

RACE, RACISM, AND RACE RELATIONS:  
LINKAGE WITH URBAN AND REGIONAL  
PLANNING LITERATURE

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## RACE, RACISM, AND RACE RELATIONS: LINKAGE WITH URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING LITERATURE

The field of urban and regional planning is multidisciplinary with a decided bent toward applied professional practice and research rather than basic research. Several of the key scholarly works for urban planners that relate to race, racism, and race relations come from social scientists in more traditional fields such as economics, geography, sociology, political science, and anthropology. Although this response may therefore overlap with responses from other areas, it highlights several issues of particular importance to urban planning, which is one of the many practical applications of social science.

### KEY RESEARCH AREAS

Several key research areas explore the relationship between race and urban planning. The following broad topic areas are not exhaustive but indicate several important topics of concern:

- Urban Planning in General
  1. General Studies
  2. Equity Planning
- Housing and Neighborhoods
  1. Land Use and Zoning
  2. Redlining: Mortgage Lending and Race
  3. Segregation, Housing Discrimination, etc.
  4. Community Development
- Transportation
- Environment

### URBAN PLANNING IN GENERAL

A number of issues have arisen that concern the distinctive relationship between urban planning and other local policy issues and racial oppression or discrimination. Other works address the general role of racism and racial inequality in the problems facing the modern metropolis, and the response of planning to those conditions.

#### 1. General Studies

Some of the general works that examine the relationship between local planning policy and racism have been written by historians, others by urban planners who are social scientists but use historical or case study analysis. Some of the most recent city-based works by urban planning scholars or historians sensitive to planning issues include the following:

Baylor, Ronald. Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Catlin, Robert. Racial Politics and Urban Planning: Gary, Indiana 1980-1989. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1993.

Gillette, Howard, Between Justice and Beauty: Race, Planning, and the Failure of Urban Policy in Washington, D. C. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Thomas, June Manning. Redevelopment and Race: Planning a Finer City in Postwar Detroit. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.

Several chapters in Thomas, June M. and Marsha Ritzdorf, ed. Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997.

The important findings in these works are that poor race relations have strongly influenced local development and planning policy as well as federal policy. In Thomas's Redevelopment and Race, for example, she traces the deleterious effects of racial conflict upon local efforts to improve the city during a period extending from World War II until the mid-1990s. In recent years, she determines, racial conflict has effectively barred attempts to bridge the gap to city-suburban cooperation in the Detroit metropolitan area, and has stymied efforts to reconstruct residential neighborhoods. Catlin's book is a sharp critique of a series of local policy decisions related to planning in the 1980s. He demonstrates that racial prejudice negatively affected such key decisions in Gary as whether the metropolitan area should compete for a Chicago-area airport, support metropolitan governance, or even revitalize Gary's decrepit central business district.

A related book that is of critical importance is David Rusk, Cities without Suburbs, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Washington, D. C.: Woodrow Wilson Press, 1995). Rusk indicates that racial segregation and isolation of the poor is a critical factor in poor bond ratings, inadequate regional wealth, and fiscal crisis in U. S. metropolitan areas.

Other important general works of fairly recent vintage, which focus particularly on the economic development of historically minority communities, include:

Goldsmith, William W. and Edward J. Blakely. Separate Societies: Poverty and Inequality in U. S. Cities. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.

Squires, Gregory, D., ed. Unequal Partnerships: The Political Economy of Urban Redevelopment in Postwar America. New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1989.

David Rusk is an essential participant in any dialogue about racial disunity in the contemporary metropolis. Other planning participants could include Robert Catlin, June Thomas, Ed Blakely, William Goldsmith, and Howard Gillette.

## 2. Equity Planning

Urban planners consider the equity planning movement to be one of their most important responses to the racial crisis in America's cities. [This is the modern version of what was once the most important social equity movement in the field, advocacy planning. Other related strains of thought are post-modernism and social mobilization. We focus here on equity planning.] Here are a few important books, and an excellent bibliography:

Clavel, Pierre and Wim Wiewel, ed. Harold Washington and the Neighborhoods. New Brunswick: Rutgers, 1991.

Krumholz, Norman and Pierre Clavel. Reinventing Cities: Equity Planners Tell their Stories. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994.

Krumholz, Norman and John Forester. Making Equity Planning Work: Leadership in the Public Sector. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

Metzger, John. "The Theory and Practice of Equity Planning: An Annotated Bibliography." Journal of Planning Literature, vol. 11, #1 (1996): 112-126.

Mier, Robert. Social Justice and Local Development Policy. New York: Sage, 1993.

The key finding of these books is that equity planning offers a reasoned and practical response to the crisis of local policy caused by continued racial segregation and poverty in America's cities. That is, urban planners (and by implication other urban professionals) are not bound by the confines of their municipal jobs to an endless cycle of repression or inattention toward the disadvantaged. Instead, as Krumholz and Clavel illustrate in their book, urban planners can and have arisen above the limitations of government bureaucracy, and pursued redevelopment and other local policies that channeled direct benefits to low-income people. These authors explicitly address the important role of race in helping to create the conditions to which equity planners must respond.

Although Mier is deceased, Krumholz and Clavel would contribute to a debate about the responsibilities of policy-makers in the context of the central cities' underprivileged.

## HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

In this broad area we place literature which focus on racially discriminatory practices related to land use and zoning. Also important are discrimination in the lending and insurance industries, residential segregation, and other issues related to the concentration of inadequate housing and neighborhoods within racial ghettos. Another category of concern is community development. We will divide this section into four components.

### 1. Land Use and Zoning

Relevant research in this area documents the fact that decision-making in cities, towns, and especially suburban areas routinely excludes people on the basis of socio-economic status or race. While in decades past this exclusion specifically kept out people according to their race, more modern and subtle versions keep people out through informal means, or through the control of land use. An example would be zoning ordinances which exclude low-income or multi-family housing from well-to-do suburbs. The general term for such discriminatory action is exclusionary zoning.

At least one scholar, Yale Rabin, notes a phenomenon called expulsive zoning. This refers to the practice of using minority neighborhoods (no matter how stable) as dumping grounds for Locally Unwanted Land Use (known in planning by the acronym LULU or to most citizens as NIMBYS "not in my backyard"). Examples of such uses are landfills, transfer stations, and inappropriately large concentrations of group homes for people with chemical dependencies. Localities often accomplish such exclusion by granting inappropriate variances, conditional use permits, or spot zonings in residentially zoned low income minority neighborhoods. These actions effectively "expel" residential use and residents from an area and lower the property values of the remaining residences.

In many cities, residential minority neighborhoods (often stable living environments for most of their history) are also externally controlled by the fact that they were zoned commercial or industrial years ago. When they attempt to seek residential "downzoning" in order to maintain stability they are rebuffed. Zoning also controls aspects of the accessibility and availability of child care, elder care, and other services needed to maintain neighborhood livability.

This is not a popular topic for research, and scholars in this field find few financial benefactors. Housing proponents often act as if zoning will simply "get out of the way" if sufficient dollars appear for low and moderate income housing. Another damper: the United States Supreme Court, in a long series of cases, has made it clear that exclusion through zoning will not be challenged substantively from the bench.

At least one bibliography and a few articles would help the majority American public understand that their seemingly innocuous opposition to subsidized or low- or moderate-income housing in their towns or suburban communities may indeed have enormous racial implications. Ritzdorf, in "Locked Out of Paradise," has found that the failure to grant standing to several low-income plaintiffs who wished to press for approval of affordable housing in suburban communities has effectively shut off an important route to access of inner city minorities to suburban housing. In previous research, she found through an extensive survey of zoning ordinances that many local communities discriminate against "non-traditional" families, such as single female-headed households, through seemingly innocuous means such as zoning definitions of family and limitations on home-based occupations. Yale Rabin has testified in dozens of court cases that the effects of local zoning practices on racial integration are pernicious.

Huls, Mary E. Exclusionary and Inclusionary Zoning: A Bibliography. Monticello: Vance Bibliographies, 1985.

Rabin, Yale. "Expulsive Zoning: The Inequitable Legacy of Euclid," in Charles Harr and Jerold Kayden, ed. Zoning and the American Dream: Promises Still to Keep. Washington, D. C.: American Planning Association Press, 1989.

Ritzdorf, Marsha. "Family Values, Municipal Zoning, and African American Family Life." In June M. Thomas and Marsha Ritzdorf, ed. Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997.

Ritzdorf, Marsha. "Locked out of Paradise: Contemporary Exclusionary Zoning, the Supreme Court, and African Americans, 1970 to the Present." In June M. Thomas and Marsha Ritzdorf, ed. Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997.

A contemporary dialogue about such issues should involve Marsha Ritzdorf and Yale Rabin.

## 2. Redlining: Mortgage Lending and Race

Research in this area focuses on the ongoing dilemma of insufficient capital available through financial lending institutions in areas populated by high numbers of minority people. The term redlining applies to the historic tendency of financial institutions to refuse to grant mortgage loans to certain residential areas because of racial change, high concentrations of minority populations, or other spurious reasons. Another related problem has been financial institutions' refusal to grant loans to mortgage-seekers because of their race or ethnicity, rather than because they pose a true credit risk. "Pink lining," which refers to discriminatory rates by insurance companies, is a problem as well.

Although newspaper investigative reporters, community groups, and government agencies have played important roles in analyzing and documenting discriminatory distribution of mortgage loans, several scholars' work is important:

Bates, Timothy. Banking on Black Enterprise: The Potential of Emerging Firms for Revitalizing Urban Economies. Washington, D. C.: Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, 1993.

Caskey, John. Fringe Banking: Check-Cashing Outlets, Pawnshops, and the Poor. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1994.

Goering, John and Ron Wienk, ed. Mortgage Lending, Racial Discrimination, and Federal Policy. Washington, D. C.: Urban Institute Press, 1996.

Hudson, Michael, Ed. Merchants of Misery: How Corporate America Profits from Poverty. Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1996.

Oliver, Melvin and Thomas Shapiro. Black Wealth/ White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Squires, Gregory D. Capital and Communities in Black and White: The Intersections of Race, Class, and Uneven Development. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.

Squires, Gregory D., ed. From Redlining to Reinvestment: Community Responses to Urban Disinvestment. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992. This contains case study chapters by planners (John Metzger, Dennis Keating).

Squires, Gregory D., ed. Insurance Redlining: Disinvestment, Reinvestment, and the Evolving Role of Financial Institutions. Washington, D. C.: Urban Institute Press, 1997.

Yinger, John. Closed Doors, Opportunities Lost: The Continuing Costs of Housing Discrimination. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1995.

The Goering and Wienk book has somewhat of a “neutral” perspective in terms of whether discrimination in the mortgage lending market actually exists. Yinger indicates that it certainly does, although proving this is complex, because of inconsistencies in data and techniques of analysis. A recent review of his book (Journal of American Planning Association, Vol. 63, No. 3) praises Yinger’s skillful summary of the existing research on discrimination in mortgage lending, and also the results from his massive 1989 study of housing discrimination (referred to in section below).

Yinger, however, does not deal extensively with discrimination in real estate appraisal, which is a major theme of the Oliver and Shapiro book, and is the subject of a special chapter in the Goering and Wienk book (written by fair housing legal expert Robert Schwemm). Oliver and Shapiro estimate that home ownership bias (lending and appraisal discrimination) will cost the current generation of Black households \$82 billion in lost wealth. Of this amount, they estimate that \$58 billion, or 71 per cent of the total, is due to lower appreciation in home values.

Any dialogue on this topic should certainly include Gregory Squires and John Yinger.

### 3. Segregation, Housing Discrimination, etc.

A third general area under housing and neighborhoods is the extensive literature related to residential segregation, housing discrimination, inadequate access to housing for the poor, etc. We will assume that several of these topics will be covered under submissions by the geographers and sociologists, particularly studies of such issues as segregation via indices

of dissimilarity. It is important to mention two sociologists whose scholarship is of major influence in our field:

Massey, Douglas and Nancy Denton. American Apartheid. Harvard University Press, 1994.

Wilson, William Julius. When Work Disappears. New York: Knopf, 1996.

Planning scholars have written in this area as well. Some have explored specific attributes and dimensions of segregation, while others have focused on attempts at remedial action. Just a few additional works particularly important to planning scholarship include the following:

Bullard, Robert D., J. Eugene Grigsby III, Charles Lee, ed. Residential Apartheid: The American Legacy. Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies, 1994.

Dear, Michael, and Jennifer Wolch. Landscapes of Despair: From De-Institutionalization to Homelessness. Princeton, N. J. : Princeton University Press, 1992.

Galster, George C. "Racial Discrimination in Housing Markets during the 1980s: A Review of the Audit Evidence." Journal of Planning Education and Research, vol. 9, No. 3 (1990): 165-75.

Galster, George C. and Edward W. Hill, ed. The Metropolis in Black and White: Place, Power, and Polarization. New Brunswick, N. J. : Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University, 1992.

Keating, W. Dennis. The Suburban Racial Dilemma: Housing and Neighborhoods Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994.

Leigh, Wilhelmina A. and James B. Steward, ed. The Housing Status of Black Americans. New Brunswick, N. J. : Transaction Publishers, 1992. [several case study chapters by urban planners]

Yinger, in Closed Doors, which is listed in the "redlining" section above, provides the best recent overview of research in housing discrimination. Based on a 1989 study funded by HUD, Yinger's research analyzed data from housing audits in 25 metropolitan areas. Matched pairs of white and minority investigators separately sought housing information concerning rental or sales units. Overall, the minority auditors received information on 25 percent fewer units, and housing agents withheld all information about available units from minority home-seekers in 5 to 10 percent of the cases. For another social scientist with a holistic perspective of the role of racial segregation in the housing market, we recommend George Galster, an economist and planning scholar with a long and distinguished career analyzing the effects of racial discrimination in housing markets, including racial steering by real estate agents. His 1990 article, listed above, is now outdated by Yinger's

publication, but it was one of the first to analyze information about treatment of paired auditors.

Keating's work is important in that it examines efforts to integrate America's neighborhoods via fair housing initiatives. He determines that the private housing market will resist race-conscious policies unless these are supported by home buyers, renters, politicians, realtors, financial institutions, and insurers. In the Cleveland, Ohio metropolitan area, he found that pro-integrative policies have resulted in some examples of long-term racial diversity. This connects with the work of those sociologists who have examined this issue in some detail, such as Juliet Saltman.

Key participants in a dialogue about this topic should include Yinger and Galster, and perhaps Keating.

#### 4. Community Development

We should also mention research on community development. One key recent book actually focuses on economic development, but looks at business development strategies in the context of responses by several scholars interested in community issues. One of its findings is that distressed inner city communities have competitive advantages that allow them to attract businesses, but that business development should be done in cooperation with community-based efforts:

Boston, Thomas D. and Catherine Ross. The Inner City: Urban Poverty and Economic Development in the Next Century. New Brunswick, N. J. : Transaction Publishers, 1997. [Several chapters by planners and economists.]

Another area analyzes the ability of poor communities to overcome the handicaps of race and class in order to create viable living spaces. Here are some key works:

Leavitt, Jackie and Susan Saegert. From Abandonment to Hope: Community Households in Harlem. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.

McDougall, Harold. Black Baltimore: A New Theory of Community. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993.

Medoff, Peter and Holly Sklar. Streets of Hope: The Rise and Fall of an Urban Neighborhood. Boston: South End Press, 1994.

Nyden, Phillip W. et al. Building a Community: Social Science in Action. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 1997.

Medoff and Sklar is a case study of the community-led redevelopment effort of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative. The DSNI is the only Community Development Corporation in the country to have the right to use and control eminent domain

proceedings in their own neighborhood. The neighborhood is a majority Black (both African American and Cape Verdean) neighborhood but is multiethnic as well. An excellent one hour video about Dudley Street is available from New Day Films.

Nyden is a book containing 27 case studies of university/community collaborative partnerships from cities all around the country. Many of the chapters are written by planners and/or are about planning initiatives. This book won the 1997 Paul Davidoff Award of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning for the best book of the last two years on issues of social justice.

The main finding in books such as those by Leavitt and Saegert, McDougall, and Medoff and Sklar is that majority African American communities have, in some cases, been able to overcome the oppressive conditions created by “concentration effects” referred to by William Julius Wilson in order to create important initiatives of empowerment and community development. Nyden documents the fact that some of these initiatives are assisted by universities.

Most of the authors listed above would contribute greatly to a dialogue.

## TRANSPORTATION

Concerns under this area include both the negative effects of highway construction policies upon the viability of minority neighborhoods, and the issue of lack of accessibility to means of transportation by racial minorities.

Some works that look at the effects of highways upon Black neighborhoods, the role of transportation in residential segregation, or the nature of discrimination in transit facilities are in fact historical case studies, such as:

Barnes, Catherine A. Journey from Jim Crow: The Desegregation of Southern Transit. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.

Bayor, Ronald H. “Planning the City for Racial Segregation: The Highway Street Pattern in Atlanta.” Journal of Urban History Vol. 15 (1988): 3-21.

Mohl, Raymond A. “Race and Space in the Modern City: Interstate-95 and the Black Community in Miami.” In Arnold Hirsch and Raymond Mohl, ed., Urban Policy in Twentieth-Century America. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1993.

A recent study of the inadequacy of transportation facilities for high-minority communities:

Bullard and Glen Johnson, ed. Just Transportation: Dismantling Race and Class Barriers to Mobility (Branford, CT: New Society Press, 1997).

## ENVIRONMENT

A major race-related environmental issue of concern to planners is the disproportionately negative impact that environmental pollutants have upon racial minorities. Examples of such problem areas include the siting of regular and hazardous waste landfills in minority neighborhoods, the prevalence of lead poisoning in minority housing, and the consumption of fish and wildlife contaminated by harmful substances (for Native American communities). Social scientists have helped to document the extent of the problem, and have joined with civil rights and other groups to examine the racial implications of such cases. Path-breaking works include a study commissioned by D. C. Delegate Walter Fauntroy, U. S. General Accounting Office, Siting of Hazardous Waste Landfills and Their Correlation with Racial and Economic Status of Surrounding Communities (1983), and a study organized by Ben Chavis, Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States: A National Report on the Racial and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Communities with Hazardous Waste Sites (New York: United Churches of Christ, 1987). The EPA has also conducted several important studies.

Social scientists Robert Bullard, Paul Mohai, and Bunyan Bryant have contributed important works:

Bryant, Bunyan and Paul Mohai, ed. Race and the Incidence of Environmental Hazards. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992.

Bullard, Robert D., Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class and Environmental Quality. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990.

Bullard, Robert D., ed. Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994.

Bullard, Robert D., ed. Confronting Environmental Racism: Voices from the Grassroots. Boston: South End Press, 1993.

An overview of the issues involved is available in Robert W. Collin and Robin M. Collin, "Urban Environmentalism and Race," in June M. Thomas and Marsha Ritzdorf, ed., Urban Planning and the African American Community (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997).

According to this review article, one of the key issues that the American public must understand is that environmental pollution mostly affects people of color, and negatively impacts their health and well-being. Another key concern is that the mainstream environmental movement has largely ignored these racial issues, although recent environmental justice initiatives have forced that movement to become more inclusive. Environmental racism is an important phenomenon for urban planners because of their role in helping to determine land uses.

A contemporary dialogue about such issues should involve Bullard, Mohai, and Bryant.

## KEY INDICATORS

The ASA has asked for measurable indicators of racial inequality. A few which are of particular interest to the topics covered above:

### Urban Planning: General

1. Urban distress as a function of racial concentration
2. Relationship between segregation index and metropolitan cooperation

### Land Use and Zoning

3. Spatial analysis of availability of affordable housing
4. Spatial analysis of exclusionary zoning

### Redlining

5. Analysis of incidents of mortgage refusal, by race (Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data)
6. Analysis of lending patterns compared with racial characteristics (HMDA)
7. Analysis of variations in insurance rates with racial characteristics
8. Costs of home ownership bias

### Housing Discrimination, Segregation

9. Index of dissimilarity and similar measures
10. Social survey measures of individual discriminatory attitudes
11. Geographic spread of effective non-profit community based organizations
12. Spatial analysis of access to municipal services

### Environment

13. Location analysis of environmentally toxic sites, lead poisoning, contaminated food sources by racial impact