What barriers do current housing trends present to pursuing social justice?

Nancy A. Denton
University at Albany, SUNY

October 12, 2007
Center for Civil Rights—UNC School of Law
SEGREGATION

...prevents minorities and lower economic classes from deriving the benefits upper income classes derive from housing.
A house is more than just a home...

*Housing in segregated neighborhoods:*

- Limits the acquisition of human capital
  - education
  - jobs
- Limits asset appreciation
  - housing
  - businesses
- Limits inheritance
Evenness

- Most often used measure of segregation
- Would be 0 if every neighborhood had the same racial composition as the city as a whole
- Would be 100 if groups lived completely apart
- Interpreted as the proportion of EITHER group that would have to move to be evenly distributed
- Formal name is Index of Dissimilarity
Overall Segregation in 2000

Source: Lewis Mumford Center
Trends in Segregation in Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC

![Bar chart showing trends in segregation for Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians from 1980 to 2000.](chart_image)
Trends in Segregation of African Americans

- Chicago
- Los Angeles
- Miami
- New York
- San Francisco

Trends in Segregation of Hispanics

- Chicago
- Los Angeles
- Miami
- New York

Years:
- 1970
- 1980
- 1990
- 2000

Graph showing segregation levels in different cities across different years.
Trends in Segregation of Asians
Exposure

• If I go outside in my neighborhood, who am I likely to see…

• Known as the P-star series of indices
Diversity Experienced in Each Group's Typical Neighborhood -- National Metropolitan Average

Source: Lewis Mumford Center
Segregation 1980-2000

• Blacks most segregated, though their segregation declined slightly in all metro areas
• Hispanics next most segregated, followed by Asians, for both groups their segregation increased
• Segregation declines largest in smallest metro areas, those with small black populations
Segregation in a Multi-ethnic World

• New research able to measure segregation of all four groups (whites, blacks, Hispanics, Asians) at same time
• Sees same patterns as just described
• When income is added, it appears to account for a larger part of the segregation in 2000 than in 1990, but is overshadowed by race in importance
• Race not class is driving segregation
Have these changes in segregation translated into changes in poor neighborhoods?

- Work done in collaboration with Bridget Anderson for The Opportunity Agenda
- Looked at poor neighborhoods in metropolitan areas 1960-2000 and examined who lived in them
- Thanks to PRRAC and Phil Tegeler
What about the people living in these neighborhoods?

• Charts are complex:
  – Purple bars refer to poor of each group, blue bars to total population
  – From left to right, poverty decreases
  – For each poverty level, data for 1960-2000 shown

• First chart looks at race: blacks, Hispanics, then whites

• Followed by charts for female headed families and foreign born
Total and Poor Hispanic Families by Neighborhood Poverty Concentration, 1960-2000

- Moderately High Poverty Neighborhoods (20+%)
- High Poverty Neighborhoods (30+%)
- Concentrated Poverty Neighborhoods (40+%)
Total and Poor White Families by Neighborhood Poverty Concentration, 1960-2000
Total and Poor Female Headed Families and Neighborhood Poverty Concentration, 1970-2000

- Total Female Headed Families
- Poor Female Headed Families

- Moderately High Poverty Neighborhoods (20+%)
- High Poverty Neighborhoods (30+%)
- Concentrated Poverty Neighborhoods (40+%)
Living in Poverty Neighborhoods

• For all groups and for all poverty levels, likelihood decreased over time
  – Blacks and Hispanics, followed by Female-headed families most likely to live in poverty neighborhoods

• Whites very seldom live in poverty neighborhoods

• Foreign born are more likely to live there than whites but far less likely than anyone else
Segregation works in the ways just described because

• resources mentioned have spatially determined values:
  – school quality varies spatially
  – housing appreciation varies spatially
  – business value varies spatially

• resources are linked to neighborhood of residence

• accumulation is structured by where you live
“Fair housing ought to provide a point of departure for furthering equality and justice broadly throughout our society and culture. It ought to provide a platform from which all people can stand tall, assert their humanity, and live their dreams. It ought to undergird the values of acceptance, openness, and common but unassimilated ground. It ought to enable us to embrace a viable multicultural future.”

John O. Calmore

..........thank you.