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Race, Real Estate, and Uneven Development

An Introduction

This book is about the role of the real estate industry and federal housing policy in the development of racial residential segregation and uneven development, focusing on a case study of metropolitan Kansas City from the turn of the twentieth century to the present. Beyond any doubt, the mass suburbanization of whites and the ghettoization of blacks has been one of the most profound population shifts in the twentieth century. Indeed, what distinguishes the United States from European nations is the massive spatial dispersal of people and industry and their organization into metropolitan regions sprawling hundreds of miles and in all areas of the country. Uneven development refers to unequal patterns of metropolitan growth that reproduce racial and class inequalities and segregation, inner city disinvestment, and suburban sprawl.

As reflected in the diverse scholarship of Mark Gottdiener, John Logan, Harvey Molotch, Gregory Squires, Neil Smith, David Harvey, and others, uneven development is a multifaceted process of socio-spatial transformation involving a relentless effort by private and public actors, organizations, and agencies to transform particular regions and places into spaces of profitmaking and economic growth. As a spatial manifestation of profit-oriented growth, uneven development is a basic geographical medium through which inter-city competition, environmental degradation, and class struggle unfold. In addition, uneven development draws our attention to the harmful consequences of inequitable growth patterns, racial and class disparities, and segregated settlement spaces that constitute and organize metropolitan areas in the United States. As the

antithesis of sustainable development, uneven development is destructive and unsustainable because it threatens the basic social systems and resources that are needed for human life and growth.

A major task of this book to understand the process of uneven development as a racialized process, and to illustrate the interconnectedness of the real estate sector and federal housing programs in concentrating poor minorities in the inner city and encouraging white flight to outlying areas. Few scholars had devoted much theoretical and empirical attention to these issues and concerns until the 1987 publication of William Julius Wilson's book, *The Truly Disadvantaged*. Wilson catalyzed a new interest in urban poverty and segregation by drawing attention to the linkages between deindustrialization, growing urban poverty, and declines in overt and legal discrimination. Wilson (1996; 1987) noted that by the 1980s, the world of the "new urban poor" was a world of spatial isolation and chronic joblessness in urban neighborhoods that once featured a sizable portion of working families. While not denying the importance of "historic discrimination," Wilson argued that spatial and educational "mismatches" had undercut employment opportunities for poor minorities while an out-migration of working- and middle-class families from inner city neighborhoods had removed an important "social buffer" that once deflected the full impact of prolonged high levels of joblessness stemming from periodic recessions. These demographic changes, as well as the continuing deindustrialization, had forced up rates of minority joblessness (unemployment and nonparticipation in the labor market) and caused an increase in the concentration of poverty.

Over the last several decades, a new form of concentrated minority poverty largely restricted to deteriorating center cities has replaced the episodic and spatially diffuse poverty of earlier periods of U.S. history. Prior to World War II, poverty was largely transitory, geographically scattered, and marked by periods of migration and movement. By the 1980s, however, minority poverty had become geographically concentrated, chronic, and extreme—a situation "without precedent in America's cities"—as historian Michael Katz argued (1993, 449). Subsequent work by Loic Wacquant (2007) found that inner city neighborhoods had become spatially split from the working- and middle-class suburbs surrounding them, and were now confronted with accelerating physical deterioration, economic exclusion, and increasing social misery. Thus, social marginalization and exclusion increasingly confronted the poorest members of American society at a time when political institutions were

publicly declaring their commitment to ending racial discrimination and addressing the causes of inequality.

Since the 1990s, a variety of researchers have revealed a powerful interaction between high segregation and high poverty rates in restricting opportunities for upward mobility and geographically concentrating social problems such as neighborhood disinvestment, chronic unemployment, violent crime, and poor schools. In their award winning book, *American Apartheid*, Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton (1993) showed how high levels of racial segregation—i.e., hypersegregation—interacted with high levels of black poverty to concentrate poverty within deteriorating central cities by restricting blacks to a small set of geographically isolated, tightly clustered, racially homogenous neighborhoods.¹ Through the 1990s and continuing into the 2000s a host of scholars have pointed to the persistence of racial segregation as the focal point of a host of metropolitan problems such as urban disinvestment (redlining), employment discrimination, and the persistence of prejudiced attitudes among whites.² More recently, scholars have drawn attention to the importance of situating the subprime mortgage crisis and global real estate crisis in the context of longstanding patterns of segregation and racial discrimination in housing markets.³ Scholars recognize that racial residential segregation remains the dominant organizing principle of housing and settlement patterns and the “structural linchpin” of American race relations, urban poverty, and metropolitan development.⁴

Despite the plethora of scholarly research on racial residential segregation, much disagreement remains on the salience of contemporary and “historical” forms of racial discrimination (Wilson 1987; 1996), how race and class operate as interlocking dimensions to reinforce segregation, the historical role of government policy and programs in concentrating racial minorities in central cities, and the policy implications of the various competing accounts. In my book, I situate the origin, development, and consequences of racial residential segregation within broader processes of uneven development, the changing dynamics of real estate activities and investment, and federal housing programs and policies. I investigate the origin of racially segregated living spaces, the role of real estate industry in constructing and shaping images about white and black settlement spaces, and the critical linkages between racial discrimination and residential segregation. My goal is to document the role of private interests and government policy in the development of racial residential segregation while at the same time highlighting the connections between race, uneven development, and the real estate industry.

The argument I develop in this book differs from other interpretations of uneven development and racial residential segregation in three major ways. First, in much of the scholarly literature there is a tendency to view uneven development and residential segregation as two separate and analytically distinct processes. By “uneven development” I mean the fact that inner cities lose population, wealth, and jobs while suburban areas experience economic development and population growth. In my book, I view uneven development and residential segregation as analogous, reciprocally related, and mutually constitutive of each other. One advantage of examining uneven development and racial residential as a single process is that it offers a powerful theoretical framework for understanding the connections between race and other metropolitan problems such as urban poverty, disinvestment (redlining), school segregation, and the persistence of prejudiced attitudes among whites. Another advantage of focusing on the close relationship between uneven development and racial residential segregation is that it draws attention to the importance of analyzing the production, distribution, and consumption of housing as a system of social stratification and inequality. Indeed, in the case of housing and real estate is important to understand just how the production, distribution, and consumption of housing reinforces and exacerbates uneven metropolitan development, residential segregation, and the polarization of races and classes in the larger society.

Second, I explore the interlocking dimensions of race and class in the development of segregated metropolitan areas. In his famous book, *Social Justice and the City*, David Harvey (1973) discussed the issue of class and class struggle but failed to incorporate race and racial conflict in his explanation of uneven development. According to sociologists Joe Feagin (1998, 14) and Talmadge Wright (1997) race is distinguished by its absence in political economy explanations about uneven development in the United States. When scholars mention racially segregated living patterns, they typically explain them as epiphenomena, a consequence of the logic of capital accumulation or focus on individual choices and decisions as drivers of metropolitan change. There are exceptions to this tendency, especially the work of Joe Feagin and Robert Parker (1990), Gregory Squires and Charis Kubrin (2006), and others who have written in diverse ways about the racially segregative effects of real estate investment, spatial segregation as an indicator of institutional discrimination, and interplay of racism and poverty. While the insights developed by these scholars have taken us beyond the limitations of existing explana-

tions, current research has yet to integrate race and racial discrimination into theories of uneven development.

Third, I situate meanings of race, manifestations of racial housing discrimination, and changing notions of racial ideology within the political economy of real estate and the development of federal housing policy. Several leading scholars contend that the creation, development, and persistence of racial residential segregation has been a consequence of “racism,” that is, overt and covert racially discriminatory acts committed by whites against blacks and other racial minorities over a period of many decades.⁵ While racial discrimination is a central component of racial exclusion and segregation, there is much debate about how to theorize race as a social phenomenon, the connection between discrimination and segregation, and the constructed nature of racial identities and racial experience. Moreover, while racial prejudice, discrimination, and institutional racism are central to understanding the origin and development of cities and metropolitan areas, none are the same as they were in the 1960s and before. Indeed, meanings of racial prejudice, the formation of racial identities, and actual manifestations of racial discrimination have changed dramatically throughout the twentieth century. Rather than viewing racial discrimination as the “cause” of housing segregation, I emphasize the socially “constructed” nature of race and racism, and the importance of contextualizing specific racisms, racial identities, and other racial phenomena within broader historical and political processes.

HOUSING AS A SYSTEM OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

According to a longstanding tradition in American urban theory and conservative social policy, Americans migrated to suburban areas and continue to live there because they prefer to reside in single-family, low-density housing outside the central city. This “preferences perspective” emphasizes the role of free choice, consumer demand, individual housing preferences, and market dynamics as the motors of metropolitan development and the subsequent segregation of classes, races, ethnic groups, and land-uses. A pamphlet from the *Center for the Study of American Business* at Washington University in St. Louis, argues that “suburban residents who have moved out of the city clearly have decided that they are willing to endure more time spent in an automobile in exchange for a larger house with more open space” and thus “[d]evelopers who build houses

and towns and shopping centers for them do so because that is what people want” (DiLorenzo 1999, 6). Gregg Easterbrook (1999, 541) of the *New Republic* has argued that “sprawl is efficient and reflects consumer preference” while Michael S. Carliner (1999, 549) of the National Association of Home Builders maintains that “not only do most suburbanites prefer to live in housing built at limited densities, but they want their neighbors to do so as well.”

Academic research also emphasizes consumer choice and preferences as underlying components of metropolitan development, although this is usually not explicitly acknowledged. In *The Changing Shape of Metropolitan America*, Berry and Gillard (1977) stressed the role of popular preference for small towns and lower urban population density as a cause of urban deconcentration in the postwar era. In his widely cited book, *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier*, journalist Joel Garreau (1991) argues that metropolitan development in the United States has been the result of a continuing effort by consumers and utopian-minded planners to create a vibrant culture on the fringes of urban areas. Garreau emphasizes that the new “edge cities”—outer suburbs with their own cultural amenities, corporate offices, shopping centers, and entertainment venues—are the latest spatial incarnation of Americans’ desire for open spaces, new housing, a high quality of life, and escape from the problems of the central city.

Historian Robert Fishman (1987) maintains in *Bourgeois Utopias* that the desire for social class segregation among the middle class has been the catalyst for the century long flight from the central city. Unlike the rich and upper classes who could segregate themselves into protected enclaves, the middle- and working-class neighborhoods of the late nineteenth century were much more vulnerable to the influx of immigrants and the “dangerous” classes. As cities swelled with the entry of immigrants, segregated middle-class enclaves emerged on the periphery of the urban core—a creation that reflected the desire of the American middle class for predictability and security. Today, the development of suburbs, while not directed by a single vision, reflects the overriding desire of the middle and working classes to segregate themselves from the poor and lower-classes and create a culturally homogeneous and protected living space.

In short, the preferences perspective emphasizes metropolitan development as an outcome of market laws of supply and demand with aggregate consumer desires as a central explanatory variable. However, there are two problems with this explanation. First, proponents of the

preferences perspective fail to identify where this so-called “American” or middle-class “desire” for segregated communities came from; and, second, why racial minorities, especially blacks, did not move to suburban areas while millions of whites did during the twentieth century, especially after the Second World War. Individual “preferences” or aggregate “choices” made by housing consumers, whether they are whites, blacks, or other racial minorities cannot explain metropolitan development and attendant segregation patterns. The preferences perspective emphasizes individual housing preferences as a causal factor in suburbanization and assumes that residential patterns are the natural result of people interacting competitively in a “free market” to satisfy their consumer demands. While home ownership and desire for a single-family home are important cultural symbols and markers of social status, not all individuals have equal choice within the housing market. Important, the preferences perspective ignores the centrality of class and racial conflict, and the impact of specific land-use decisions, and the actions of powerful capitalists and state agents in shaping the spatial organization of metropolitan areas.

In this book, I draw attention to the importance of analyzing the production, distribution, and consumption of housing as a system of social stratification and inequality. The institutional structure of housing and its relationships with broad economic and political forces is an under researched area of sociological inquiry. This is a significant omission since housing provides social status, access to jobs, education, and other resources. Housing is also an important factor in structuring market relations, public policy, and spatial patterns of investment and disinvestment. Housing is much more than a shelter and a place to live; it is a symbol of personal worth and identity. As a key source of investment for many American families, housing represents the most visible insignia of social rank and prestige that people present to the larger world. Moreover, housing is the physical entity that defines “families,” which are in turn the most basic unit of society. The selection of a home represents the selection of a neighborhood that, in turn, can influence the nature of one’s friends and styles of social interaction with them. In addition to lifestyle and social status, housing and neighborhood affect the types and kinds of jobs and cultural amenities one has access to, the quality of schools children attend, and the quality of other public services including fire and police protection, parks and recreation, and transportation.

A complex real estate infrastructure made up of homebuilders, lenders, insurers, appraisers, real estate agents and firms, and state activity

at all levels shapes the production and distribution of housing. These categories are not mutually exclusive and any individual can participate in several real estate markets at any given time to accumulate a profit through the buying and selling of housing. While some individuals are interested in rapid profit and turnover—speculators and builders—others can wait years before making a profit by investing in housing (e.g., homeowners). Moreover, financing the buying and selling of housing varies tremendously, from the sale of assets to buy housing to debt leveraging by investors that engage a variety of institutions such as banks, savings and loan associations, trusts, and development corporations. Furthermore, different kinds of housing actors—real estate agents, developers and builders, and owners and consumers can use the same house in a variety of ways depending upon the social context. The diverse actors within the real estate industry make conscious decisions that affect housing and neighborhood stability and profitability. Moreover, the decisions of one set of actors ultimately influence or affect those of other actors and interests and, more important, the effects of a decision or action have unknown or unforeseen consequences on other groups or consumers.

Table 1.1 lists the major phases of housing market transactions in the U.S. including the key actors and major influences of public and private housing activity. As Table 1.1 shows, during each phase of housing—preparation, production, distribution, and service—there is an interrelated set of participants and a host of major influences—e.g., tax laws, land-use regulations, and public policies—that affect real estate practices. In particular, local, state, and federal regulations and agencies shape all aspects of the real estate industry through planning and zoning, construction, and sale and financing. Zoning laws, building codes, and other local building ordinances shape and condition the actions of builders and developers. One or more state government or federal agencies regulate the actions of banks and other mortgage lending and insurance agencies. State governments license real estate brokers and agents, and various legal codes govern business transactions and contractual relations between home buyers and sellers. Finally, the courts enforce all contractual agreements and arrangements in the sale or leasing of housing and real estate.

As this table suggests, real estate is composed of both individual actors and a complex structure of financial conduits and public utilities that channel investment into land development and the creation of settlement space. The real estate industry is not the exclusive domain

TABLE 1.1

Major Phases, Key Actors, and Influences in the Housing Market

<i>Market Phase</i>	<i>Key Actors</i>	<i>Influences</i>
Preparation: land acquisition, planning, and zoning.	Developer Landowner Lawyers Real Estate Brokers Title Companies Architects and engineers Surveyor Planners and Consultants Zoning and planning officials	Real Estate law Recording regulations and fees Banking laws Zoning Subdivision regulations Private deed restrictions Public master plans
Production: site preparation, construction, and financing.	Developer Lending institutions FHA, VA, or private mortgage insurance company Contractors and Subcontractors Craft Unions Material manufacturers and distributors Building code officials Insurance companies Architects and Engineers	Banking laws Building codes Utility regulations Union rules Rules of trade and professional associations Insurance Laws Laws controlling transportation of material
Distribution: sale (and subsequent resale or financing).	Developer Real Estate brokers Lawyers Lending institutions Title companies FHA, VA, or private mortgage insurance companies	Recording regulations and fees Real estate law Transfer taxes Banking laws Rules of professional associations
Service: maintenance and management, repairs, and improvements and additions.	Owner Maintenance firms and employees Property management firms Insurance companies Tax assessors Repair and Craft unions Lending institutions Architects and Engineers Contractors and Subcontractors Material manufacturers and distributors Local zoning officials Local building officials	Property taxes Income taxes Housing and health codes Insurance laws Utility regulations Banking laws Rules of trade and professional associations Zoning Building and mechanical codes Laws controlling transportation of materials

of separate real estate agents, but consists of a structure of banks, other financial conduits, and diverse modes of agency, such as real estate agents (monopolistic and small firms), appraisers, public and private investors, and homeowners. Today, the real estate, lending, and construction industries are among the largest in the United States with hundreds of billions in revenue, the bulk of which comes from the financing and building of single-family in suburban areas.

As a number of scholars have asserted, a free-market or “privatist” vision of neo-classical economics has traditionally governed all phases of housing related activity (Feagin and Parker 1990; Hays 1985; Bratt, Stone, and Hartman 2006). As discussed by Barnekov, Boyle, and Rich (1989), Squires (1994), and other sociologists, privatism is the underlying commitment by government to helping the private sector grow and prosper. It is an entrenched and deep-rooted belief in the supremacy of the private sector in nurturing societal development, with the public sector adopting a “hands-off” (*laissez faire*) strategy whose principle obligation is to encourage private profit. R. Allen Hays (1985, 16–18) and Gregory Squires (1993) identify three major ideological assumptions of privatism that have dominated the production, distribution, and consumption of housing in the United States. First, because the desire for material well-being drives human productivity, the housing market must encourage and reward acquisitiveness and competitiveness. Second, “the free market is the most effective and least coercive mechanism for allocating goods and services since it harmonizes individual self-interest with society’s collective development” (Squires 1993, 136). Third, government’s role is to assist the market in regulating exchange to maximize individual freedom and choice.

In short, privatism views the private sector as the most effective mechanism for the delivery of public services, the creation of stable and growing “markets,” and the stimulation of profitable housing sales. As an ideology and political strategy, privatism has been the mechanism through which public policy and private actions have traditionally reinforced and perpetuated elite corporate interests and social inequalities. This book shows that the history of uneven development and racial residential segregation in the United States is a history of “privatist” housing policies, and real estate and land development activities that have overwhelming benefited entrepreneurs, private real estate interests, community builders, and the like, at the expense of poor residents and racial minorities.

RACE, RACISM, AND RACIALIZATION

It is the task of this book is to explain the links between racial discrimination and racial residential segregation, the role of the real estate industry in producing and reinforcing racialized images of settlement space, and why racial residential segregation remains a persistent and tenacious feature of metropolitan areas despite the passage of fair housing and numerous anti-discrimination statutes in the last three decades. Urban historians such as Marc Weiss (1987), Evan McKenzie (1994), and Kenneth Jackson (1985) have unearthed a wealth of data and insight that describe the role that racial discrimination has played in the suburbanization process. More recent research by Lassiter (2005), Kruse (2005), and Freund (2008) ascribe racism a causal role in the development of a white racial conservatism located in the suburbs. Scholars have been careful not to categorize white racism as a static, exogenous, or omnipotent variable. Nevertheless, many historical accounts merely assert the importance of race and racial discrimination without an appreciation of its historically contingent and changing meanings. In many accounts by urban historians, there is a tendency to assume everyone knows what “racism” means and to address it without distinguishing between racial prejudice (beliefs and attitudes), discrimination (overt actions that maintain racial inequalities), and “institutional” racism (covert, subtle, or past actions that reinforce racial inequalities in the present). Thus, any effective analysis of racism today (or in the past) has to confront how its specific meaning and manifestations are not only historically contingent, but are always changing as social conditions, state activity, and social movements confront it.

Many historians have investigated the role of racial prejudice and discrimination in the creation and persistence of racial residential segregation in U.S. cities, including classic works by David Katzman (1975), Oliver Zunz (1982), Joe Trotter (1985), Allan Spear (1967), Thomas Lee Philpott (1978), Gilbert Osofsky (1963), Arnold Hirsch (1983), and Thomas Sugrue (2005), among many others. Gunnar Myrdal’s (1944) pioneering work, in particular, called attention to the plight of blacks and the role of white prejudice and discrimination as the “cause” of racial segregation. Yet a number of scholars argue that the relationship between racism and residential segregation is far more complicated, especially considering the socially constructed nature of “race” and historically changing manifestations of racism. For example, Tomas Almaguer’s *Racial*

Fault Lines (1994) charts the historical origins of white supremacy in California during the nineteenth century showing how the success of European-Americans in securing a privileged social status occurred as a result of racialized struggles with Mexicans, Native Americans, and Asian immigrants over land ownership and labor market position. John McGreevy's *Parish Boundaries* (1996) traces changing twentieth century meanings of race, religion, and community in the United States, pointing out how cultural distinctions between various white religious congregations, diverse ethnic groups, and "working class" identities all worked in tandem to create and perpetuate racial divisions in northern cities. Gerald Gamm's (1999) award winning book documents how strong Catholic attachments to neighborhood and weak Jewish attachments explain why Jews left Boston while many Catholics stayed during the racially charged busing crisis that erupted in the city during the 1970s.

Certainly, there is no simple and direct connection between racial discrimination and racial residential segregation. The work of Almaguer, McGreevy, and Gamm, among others, view "race" and "racism" as situationally and historically specific concepts that are mediated by changing social conditions and other factors such as social class, religion, region/location, and culture. Even in historical eras where the concepts of race and racism seem to be clearly established and recognized, these meanings can be quite different depending on the local context and the different social classes and elite groups applying these concepts. Thus, the relationship between racism and residential segregation cannot be assumed *a priori* but must be situated in the context of specific historical circumstances.

I argue that we can understand the tenacity and persistence of racial residential segregation only through a historical examination that locates various manifestations of racism in both time and space, in a contested history of racially based social structures and language. Such a focus helps to recognize that there are no timeless and absolute standards for what constitutes "race" and "racism" because social structures and racial meanings are always changing. For example, during the nineteenth century, racially segregated neighborhoods were the exception rather than the rule in U.S. cities, despite the omnipresence of white prejudice and hostility toward blacks, a phenomenon noted by Henri Louis Taylor (1993) and colleagues in a case study of Cincinnati. In addition, racial residential segregation and inequality have not lessened in any substantial way in the last few decades, despite the passage of numerous anti-discrimination statutes, fair housing, and civil rights legislation.

In the following chapters, I use the concept *racialization* as a heuristic device for analyzing and understanding the role of real estate interests and federal action in the origin, development, and consequences of racial residential segregation. Racialization refers to the way in which racial categories sort people, society distributes resources along racial lines, and state policy shapes and is shaped by the racial contours of society (Winant 2004; Omi and Winant 1994; Bonilla-Silva 2010). Central to the concept of racialization is the idea that race has an emergent and variable quality rather than a fixed or immutable group characteristic. Racial groups are socially and politically constructed and exist as the outcome of diverse historical practices (e.g., programmatic organization of social policy, modes of political participation, etc.) that are continually subject to challenge over definition and meaning (Omi and Winant 1994). At the social structural level, race shapes dimensions of social stratification and distribution, institutional arrangements, political systems, laws, and so on. At the level of signification, race can be meaningful as a descriptor of group or individual identity, a basis of solidarity and political mobilization, and a mode of experience. In any given historical context, racial signification is inextricably linked with racial structuration to the extent that representations, interpretations, and significations of race reflect and express racial structures, hierarchies, and conflictual race relations.

In this book, I am interested in understanding how urban and suburban spaces became “racialized” whereby a set of socio-spatial relations, segregationist ideology, and institutional real estate practices based on racial meanings and distinctions emerged and over time developed a life of its own. More specifically, I want to explain how race became an organizing principle of housing markets, and how racial discrimination became institutionalized within the modern real estate industry. My intent is to show the usefulness of racialization as a theoretical basis for explaining the origin and development of residential segregation and its connection to uneven development. Kansas City is typical of many northern and mid-western cities with concentrated minority poverty, urban disinvestment, and persistent and high levels of racial residential segregation. In the 1990s, scholars identified Kansas City as one of the nation’s *hypersegregated* metropolitan areas due to the high degree of housing segregation on a range of indices (Denton 1994; Massey and Denton 1993, 75–77). Since the 1960s, suburbs and newer “edge cities” in the metropolitan area have become the locus of job growth, promising low tax rates and quality school systems to attract business and industry.

As suburbs prospered, Kansas City's inner core deteriorated both economically and socially, and abandoned buildings and vacant dwellings punctuated the urban landscape. Variations on what has happened in Kansas City during the past century have occurred in many U.S. cities, including Detroit, St. Louis, Cleveland, and Philadelphia, among others. My goal is to show how the consequences of racial residential segregation extend far beyond segregated housing to shape many other aspects of life, including access to quality education, employment opportunities, and other tangible resources.

METROPOLITAN KANSAS CITY: AN OVERVIEW

The Kansas City metropolitan statistical area (MSA) is a bi-state, 15-county area, containing more than 500 municipalities. Counties in the MSA include Franklin County, Johnson County, Leavenworth County, Linn County, Miami County, Wyandotte County, Bates County, Caldwell County, Cass County, Clay County, Clinton County, Jackson County, Lafayette County, Platte County, and Ray County. Map 1.1 shows the five contiguous counties in the metropolitan areas that have traditionally comprised the urban and suburban regions. Table 1.2 shows total population and ethnic and racial population for the MSA from 1980 to 2010.

According to table 1.2, total metropolitan population for 2010 was approximately two million with 1.5 million whites (74.4%) and 272,49 blacks (13.4%). Since 1990, the percentage of whites living in the MSA has declined while the percentage of racial and ethnic minorities has increased. The percentage of Hispanics living in the MSA increased from 2.8% in 1990 to 5.1% in 2000 and 8.2% in 2010. In addition, the percentage Asians increased from one percent in 1990 to almost three percent by 2010.

Kansas City, Missouri is the largest city in the MSA with a population of 459,787 in 2010. Table 1.3 shows total and black population of Kansas City, Missouri from 1860 to 2000.

As table 1.3 shows, the population of Kansas City, Missouri peaked in 1970 with 507,330 people and declined during the 1970s and 1980s. Since 1990, the population has increased going from 435,146 residents in 1990 to 441,545 residents in 2000, and to 459,787 in 2010, a 4.3 percent increase from 2000 to 2010. As this table shows, the black population increased dramatically during the two decades after the Second World War, from 41,574 in 1940 to 55,682 in 1950 (a 34 percent increase), to

TABLE 1.2
Total and Racial Population in the Kansas City Metropolitan
Statistical Area (MSA) in 1990, 2000, and 2010

	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>White Population</i>	<i>Black Population</i>	<i>Hispanic Population</i>	<i>Asian Population</i>
1980	1,381,895	1,153,798 83.5%	177,563 12.8%	33,133 2.4%	8,491 0.6%
1990	1,636,528	1,365,421 83.4%	199,671 12.2%	46,003 2.8%	16,942 1%
2000	1,836,038	1,448,859 78.9%	235,877 12.8%	93,893 5.1%	35,893 2%
2010	2,035,334	1,514,888 74.4%	272,469 13.4%	166,683 8.2%	59,240 2.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. *Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000, 2010.* Data supplied by the *US2010: Discover America in a New Century* (<http://www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/index.htm> (accessed November 1, 2012)).

TABLE 1.3
Total and Black Population, Kansas City, Missouri, 1860–2000

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent Increase</i>	<i>Black Population</i>	<i>Percent Increase</i>	<i>Percent Black of Total</i>
1860	4,418		190		4.3
1870	32,260	630.2	3,764	1884.2	11.7
1880	55,785	72.9	8,143	116.8	14.6
1890	132,716	137.9	13,700	67.6	10.3
1900	163,752	23.4	17,567	28.2	10.7
1910	248,381	51.7	23,566	34.1	9.5
1920	324,410	30.6	30,719	30.4	9.5
1930	399,746	23.2	38,574	25.6	9.7
1940	399,178	-0.1	41,574	7.8	10.4
1950	456,622	14.4	55,682	34.0	12.2
1960	475,539	4.1	83,130	49.3	17.5
1970	507,330	9.3	112,120	74.1	22.1
1980	448,159	-11.7	122,699	9.1	27.4
1990	435,146	-2.9	128,768	4.7	29.4
2000	441,545	1.5	137,879	6.6	31.2
2010	459,787	4.3	142,748	3.5	31.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. *Census of Population, 1860–2000.*

TABLE 1.4
Square Mileage and Annexations, Kansas City, Missouri, 1947–1963

<i>Year</i>	<i>Annexations (square miles)</i>	<i>Total (square miles)</i>
1947	2.38	62.02
1950	19.70	81.72
1957	16.19	97.91
1958	13.80	111.71
1959	18.12	129.83
1961	38.00	167.83
1962	122.00	289.83
1963	26.50	316.33

Source: City Planning and Development Department 1992. *Background Information—Development Patterns*. KCMO Strategic and Comprehensive Plan Work Program. Kansas City, Missouri: City Planning and Development Department.

As table 1.4 shows, annexations in the 1950s and 1960s increased Kansas City's geographical size from 62.02 square miles in 1947 to 316.33 square miles by 1963. As a result, the city's geographical size increased more than 500 percent in less than twenty years from 1947 to 1963, making Kansas City geographically one of the largest cities in the nation (Jackson 1985, 139–41). Many older cities such as New York City, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and others could no longer annex outlying areas after 1900 as incorporated suburbs ringed them (Gordon 1984, 44; Jackson 1985, 138–56). However, Kansas City was one of a handful of cities, including Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Houston, and Dallas, that expanded to capture outlying territory for future economic growth and development.

Over the past half century, the metropolitan area has experienced unprecedented socio-spatial change and development, including massive deconcentration of people and industry, racial segregation, and the persistence of stubbornly high rates of poverty and black-white inequality (Mid-America Regional Council [MARC] 1993). In 2010, the poverty rate for blacks living in Kansas City, Missouri was 28.8, almost three times the rate of white poverty, which was 9.8 percent. These rates have remained unchanged through the decades. In 1999, the rate of black poverty was 24.6 for Kansas City, Missouri while the rate of white poverty was 8.4 percent.⁶ U.S. Census Bureau data also reveal striking racial differences in levels of income. According to 2010 Census Bureau data, the median

household income of a black householder in Kansas City, Missouri was \$28,096 while the median household income of a white householder was \$53,262, almost double the rate of the black householder.⁷

These racial disparities are not peculiar to Kansas City, Missouri but also manifest at the metropolitan level. According to the 2005–2009 American Community Survey (ACS) from the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty rate for blacks living in the metropolitan area was 20.2, more than double the poverty rate for whites, which stood at 8.8.⁸ Table 5 shows the median income for all groups, whites, and blacks from 1990 to 2005–2009 in 2009 constant, inflation-adjusted dollars. As the table shows, median income levels in the metropolitan area vary dramatically by race as the income level for whites is above the group average and almost double that of blacks, a ratio that has not changed since 1990. Median income for Hispanics and Asians is higher than median income for blacks and, in recent years, the median income for Asians has surpassed that of whites. In addition, the table shows declines in income across all groups including whites and blacks from 2000 to 2005–2009, a decline that reflects the deterioration of the national economy in the years after 2006.

Table 1.6 shows racial segregation indices for the Kansas City metropolitan area and Kansas City, Missouri in 1990, 2000, and 2010 based on an analysis of Census Bureau data by the US2010 Project at Brown University. The table shows the index of dissimilarity, the isolation index, and the exposure index. The index of dissimilarity index measures the proportion of a racial group that would have to move in order to live

TABLE 1.5
Median Income in the Kansas City MSA, 1990, 2000,
and 2005–2009 in constant dollars

<i>Year</i>	<i>All groups</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Asian</i>
1990	\$50,523	\$53,071	\$30,957	\$45,947	\$46,559
2000	\$57,133	\$61,218	\$36,705	\$46,001	\$59,590
2005–09 ACS	\$55,535	\$60,335	\$32,267	\$40,309	\$65,006

Note: ACS stands for American Community Survey.

Source: US2010: Discover America in a New Century. <http://www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/su2/SuMsaIncD.aspx?metro=28140> (accessed November 1, 2012).

TABLE 1.6
Racial Segregation Indices for the Kansas City Metropolitan
Statistical Area and Kansas City, Missouri, 1990, 2000, and 2010

		<i>Index of Dissimilarity (White with Black)</i>	<i>Isolation Index (White with White)</i>	<i>Exposure Index (White with Black)</i>
MSA	1980	77.7	92	4.5
	1990	72.9	90.6	5.3
	2000	69.4	86.5	6.3
	2010	58.6	81.7	7.9
Kansas City, Missouri	1980	80	87	8.4
	1990	70.4	82.9	11.5
	2000	66.7	75.4	14.4
	2010	62.2	70.5	16.7

Source: US2010 Discovery America in a New Century. <http://www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/segregation2010/msa.aspx?metroid=28140> (accessed November 1, 2012).

in a racially mixed neighborhood. A value of 60 or above is considered very high and implies extreme segregation. A value of 40 or 50 suggests moderate segregation and a value of 30 or below means that only a minority of residents need to move to a different tract in order for racial groups to be evenly distributed. Overall, the dissimilarity index identifies which groups are more or less segregated from each other and whether the level of segregation is changing over time. The isolation index refers to the exposure of a racial group to itself while the exposure index refers to exposure of the racial group to other groups. The isolation index measures the percentage of the population in a census tract where the average person of racial/ethnic group lives. A value of 0 refers to a dispersed population while a value of 100 means that group members are entirely isolated from other groups. The exposure index addresses lack of contact with other racial groups. A large value means that a racial group member lives in a neighborhood with a high percentage of persons from the other racial group.

As table 1.6 shows, there have been noticeable declines in black/white residential segregation in Kansas City since the 1980s as measured by the various indices. Inspecting the values for the Dissimilarity Index reveals that black-white segregation in the city and metropolitan

area was high in 1980 and has declined over time. Values above 60 are considered very high and the national average for metropolitan areas is in the range of 60–65. The U.S. national average has been declining slowly but steadily, about 10 points in two decades, so it is not unusual to see declines in segregation in Kansas City. The index of dissimilarity for the metropolitan area declined from 77.7 in 1980 to 58.6 in 2010. When examining the Isolation Index we see that in 1980, the average white person living in the metropolitan area resided in a census tract that was 92 percent white. By 2010, the average white lived in a tract that was 81.7 percent white. Similar trends can be seen by examining the Exposure Index which shows that in 1980 the average white person lived in a tract with only 4.5 percent black neighbors. By 2010, the average white person lived in a tract with only 7.9 percent black neighbors. The pattern of change implies that while blacks have been able to move to more neighborhoods and possibly more suburban neighborhoods since the 1990s, the number of them who were able to do so has been small relative to their total population. While modest declines in segregation are positive, the 2010 Census shows that the average black person still lives in a neighborhood that is over 40 percent black. To understand long-term trends in segregation, we have to be aware of both the progress and resistance to change.

Racial residential segregation has not always been characteristic of Kansas City. Indeed, as the next chapter points out, during the 19th century blacks and whites lived in fairly integrated neighborhoods. While high levels of black in-migration, discriminatory hiring, and prejudicial behavior of whites affected black life, these factors did not automatically translate into segregated housing patterns. As table 1.3 shows, the percentage of black population in Kansas City, Missouri remained fairly stable until 1940. Interestingly, black residents occupied a greater percentage of the total population in 1870 and 1880 than in any decade during the first forty years of the twentieth century. However, since 1950, blacks have become increasingly concentrated in the central city and restricted to older, deteriorating, and dilapidated housing while whites have become increasingly suburbanized. These racial population trends have occurred during an era when legally sanctioned racial discrimination in employment, schools, and housing has gradually disappeared. Places of public accommodation have opened to blacks and employers in Kansas City have stopped the explicit practice of discrimination on the basis of race. Despite the demise of state-enforced discrimination, and the passage