



# Confronting the Legacy of “Separate but Equal”: Can the History of Race, Real Estate, and Discrimination Engage and Inform Contemporary Policy?

JASON REECE 

*Rarely do the public, community leaders, or policymakers engage the history of structural racialization. Despite this lack of public awareness, a large body of literature illustrates the importance of urban development history as a mechanism of upholding the philosophy of segregation upheld by Plessy v. Ferguson. The history of structural racialization in development is fundamental to understanding contemporary challenges such as segregation, concentrated poverty, and racial disparities. The following case study explores two Ohio community-based initiatives (in Cleveland and Columbus) that used historical analysis of racial discrimination in development practices as the focus of a community engagement process. Surveys, participant observations, and interviews document the outcomes, benefits, and impacts associated with engaging stakeholders using historical records of discrimination to inform contemporary policymaking. The study lends support to the importance of public engagement processes to uncover the various long-term ramifications of the “separate but equal” doctrine of Plessy.*

**Keywords:** redlining, planning history, health equity, segregation

Although the system of White supremacy in the United States predates *Plessy* by centuries, the “separate but equal” doctrine emerging from *Plessy v. Ferguson* would be another foundational step in the development of structural racialization through most aspects of twentieth-century society.<sup>1</sup> As Leland Ware (2021) illustrates in “*Plessy’s Legacy: The Government’s Role in the Development and Perpetuation of Segregated Neighborhoods*” earlier in this issue, urban development policies in the

twentieth century would be one of the primary domains deeply transformed by America’s embrace of segregation. Racial zoning, restrictive covenants, and exclusionary and expulsive zoning practices would be just the beginning of a complex policy and legal infrastructure to maintain separation in housing and neighborhoods. These policies would be particularly effective in segregating cities outside the traditional Jim Crow South.

Despite the significance of this history, deep

**Jason Reece** is assistant professor of city and regional planning at the Knowlton School, Ohio State University, United States.

© 2021 Russell Sage Foundation. Reece, Jason. 2021. “Confronting the Legacy of ‘Separate but Equal’: Can the History of Race, Real Estate, and Discrimination Engage and Inform Contemporary Policy?” *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 7(1): 110–33. DOI: 10.7758/RSF.2021.7.1.07. Direct correspondence to: Jason Reece at reece.35@osu.edu, Knowlton School of Architecture, The Ohio State University, 289 Knowlton Hall, 275 W. Woodruff Ave., Columbus, OH 43210, United States.

Open Access Policy: *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* is an open access journal. This article is published under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License.

1. *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896).

historical analysis of the African American experience is rarely reflected in policy and public discourse. For policymakers, urban development history is often viewed as a distant abstraction, interesting fodder for historic markers, but not a topic receiving deep reflection. The history of discriminatory U.S. policy and practices are a greater unknown outside traditional academic environments; even seminal court cases such as *Plessy* are vaguely understood (Luxenberg 2019). Understanding of the history of structural racialization is limited among the general public. As Tim Wise notes in his essay “Forget STEM, We Need MESH: The Importance of Media Literacy, Ethics, Sociology and History Education,” historical illiteracy of America’s racial history undermines democracy and fuels contemporary social conflict (2019). Author Robin DiAngelo ties America’s racial illiteracy to *white fragility*, the nonproductive and hostile response from White Americans when their understanding of race is challenged with historical or contemporary facts (2015).

Although our history of discriminatory development practices is well documented (Rothstein 2017), research in exploring the potential of using this historical record to engage contemporary policymakers and planning stakeholders is limited. Yet a deeper understanding of this historical context is critical to addressing contemporary racial, social, and geographic disparities. As June Manning-Thomas notes, a better understanding of the historical Black experience and the history that produced disparities between communities can help us understand how to support racial equity and address contemporary community-based disparities: “As planners wrestle with the problems facing today’s central cities, it is important to draw upon all the intellectual tools possible in order to understand how this situation came to be and how it affects planning efforts. Those who work in conditions of suburban prosperity rather than central city decline need to under-

stand why such stark contrasts linger. Planning history, a field that has flourished in recent years, is an important part of our intellectual arsenal” (1994, 1).

The scholar George Lipsitz believes that our lack of knowledge of who benefits from historical systems of structural racialization in land use fuels feelings of White entitlement, White fear, and the stigmatization and devaluation of communities of color. He describes this in *From Plessy to Ferguson*:

Residential segregation orders urban geography. It promotes opportunity hoarding and asset accumulation for whites while confining aggrieved communities of color to impoverished, underresourced, and criminogenic neighborhoods. This system subsidizes whites, offering them unfair gains and unjust enrichments while saddling communities of color with artificial, arbitrary, and irrational obstacles to asset accumulation. Yet whites view themselves as innocent and unaccountable for a system that is rigged in their behalf. They attribute the social skewing of opportunities and life chances along racial lines to the allegedly deficient character and behavior of blacks. Neighborhoods created by white flight become suffused with white fright, and that fear is used to justify the taking of black lives. (2015, 119)

Building on this scholarship, I argue that a deep historical analysis is needed to contextualize and understand this history, as well as to generate solutions and policymaker consensus to address contemporary patterns of segregation and opportunity isolation in the twenty-first-century city. To assess the benefits of engagement processes that document and educate on the processes of structural racialization in land use, a case study approach is used to understand whether greater historical awareness can be transformational in guiding policy change.<sup>2</sup>

2. Since the engagement processes in this study were completed, several new online resources have emerged to provide historical data and analysis pertaining to history of discrimination in housing policy. These resources can be tapped to support similar historical engagement processes. Several focus on histories of individual cities, such as the *Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project*, which documents restrictive covenants throughout the city (<http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/index.htm>). For multicity resources, the University of Richmond’s

This article presents a case study in two urban Ohio counties, Cuyahoga (home to the city of Cleveland) and Franklin (home to the city of Columbus), to explore the conceptualization, development, and long-term impact of the infrastructure of residential segregation. Specifically, the cases seek to document the historical development and intersection of each city’s infrastructure of segregation, better understand the long-term impacts of discriminatory policies on contemporary racial disparities in wealth and health, and assess the utility of a historically informed engagement process with policymakers to build modern solutions to support racial equity.

### SEGREGATION AND LAND USE: THE LEGACY OF PLESSY IN SEGREGATING URBAN SPACE

Twenty-first-century cities in the United States remain highly segregated along the dimensions of race and class. Rates of residential segregation, though, have consistently declined in recent decades (Frey 2018). Despite these improvements, residential segregation remains extremely high in many areas of the country, most notably the Northeast and industrial Midwest (Brown University 2017). Segregation is not racial separation alone but also separation into areas of intense poverty and separation from opportunity structures (powell 2003). Segregation and isolation into poverty also equates with separation from strong schools, safe or healthy environments, and economic opportunity (Acevedo-Garcia et al. 2014).

Today’s patterns of segregation and opportunity isolation are not a natural phenomenon or free market urban development. Many layers of pro-segregation policies and practices saturated the development of the twentieth-century American metropolis (Rothstein 2017). As the historian Carl Nightingale describes in *Segregation: A World History of Divided Cities*, great effort and intentionality enforced the value of segregation on U.S. cities: “Segregation never comes about because it ‘just is,’ as the term ‘de facto’ might also suggest. The bottom line is

this: segregation has always involved some form of institutionally organized human intentionality, just as those institutions have always depended on more broadly held beliefs, ideas, and customs to sustain their power” (2012, 7).

Nightingale documents not only both the policies and practices enforcing the norm of segregation, but also the intellectual, economic, and cultural forces, which were the building blocks of the philosophical foundation of segregated neighborhoods (2012). Traditional urban planning history has often neglected the role of planning in enforcing racial segregation or, more specifically, the “relationship between residential controls and racial oppression” (Manning-Thomas 1994, 1).

### CONCEPTUALIZING THE IMPACT OF HISTORY: THEORETICAL GROUNDING

A growing body of literature has identified the role of historical discriminatory housing and development practices in contributing directly to contemporary racial justice challenges. Critical race theory (CRT) emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, led by scholars who were frustrated by the lack of progress in promoting racial equality in the aftermath of the civil rights era (Bell 1980; Delgado and Stefancic 2000). CRT perceives race as a purely social construction and therefore racial inequalities as social constructions supported by policy, law, and institutions. Today’s societal institutions and structures are deeply influenced by historically racist policies and thus will continue to perpetuate racial inequalities in American society. For example, although legally sanctioned segregation has been abandoned in America, legal and institutional structures still support de facto segregation. Additionally, the exclusion of the history of marginalized communities presents a false view of the dominance of meritocracy and equality in opportunity. Ignoring our nation’s discriminatory past presents a false narrative, challenging how we view contemporary racial disparity.

Theories of structural racism have also focused on the long-term consequences of his-

---

*American Panorama: An Atlas of United States History* is the most comprehensive (<http://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/#maps>). The site provides detailed data on redlining, urban renewal, and forced migrations in the United States.

torical discrimination. Structural racism presented several new conceptual theories of racial inequity. First conceptualized by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (1997), structural racism examines “racialized social systems” as a way of understanding racialized outcomes, focusing on the interactions of social systems, institutions, and other structural connections in perpetuating racial inequities.

More important, this system can perpetuate even in the absence of traditionally “racist” actors (Bonilla-Silva 1997). Theories of structural racism speak directly to the impact of our discriminatory history. Structural racism views contemporary inequities as grounded in historical norms, behaviors, or policies, or as Andrew Grant-Thomas and John Powell describe it, racialized outcomes are grounded on the “sediment of history” (Bonilla-Silva 1997; Grant-Thomas and Powell 2006).

The direct impact of systemic historical discrimination in housing and development practices manifests in two direct consequences today. First, the continued segregation and isolation from neighborhoods of opportunity for communities of color can be attributed to policies supporting residential segregation and the institutionalized disinvestment produced by redlining practices, urban renewal programs, and highway construction (Cashin 2004).

Second, the financial consequences of historical discrimination and more recent subprime lending practices manifest in the racial wealth gap, the largest racial disparity in our society. Much of individual wealth in America, primarily for the middle class, is tied to home equity. Barred from access to homeownership in neighborhoods experiencing property appreciation, people of color were denied access to the primary wealth-building tool for America’s middle class (Conley 1999; Shapiro 2003).

Not only have pathways to wealth building been blocked for generations of African American homeowners, policies have also actively suppressed and extracted wealth from African American neighborhoods. African American wealth suppression and extraction have occurred as a direct result of expulsive zoning practices (which concentrated noxious land uses into communities of color), redlining,

blockbusting, and most recently from the subprime lending crisis.

The 2008 housing crisis would further exacerbate the wealth gap, particularly in racially segregated cities and neighborhoods. Jacob Rugh and Douglas Massey found Black residential segregation (measured via the dissimilarity index) and racial isolation to be predictors of metropolitan foreclosure rates (2010). Research has also linked historic redlining practices to contemporary vulnerability to predatory mortgage lending (Hernandez 2009). Prior to the 2008 housing crisis, a disproportionate number of subprime loans (and corresponding foreclosures) were concentrated in previously redlined neighborhoods. The fallout from the housing crisis would further destabilize these neighborhoods and contribute to widening the existing racial wealth gap.

Because of this history, the median White household has 900 percent more wealth than African American or Latino households. In 2016, the median figure for White household wealth was \$171,000 versus \$17,600 for African American and \$20,700 for Latino households respectively (Dettling et al. 2017). Ta-Nehisi Coates documents the long-term financial impacts of housing discrimination to the African American community in *The Case for Reparations*. He concludes that the institutionalized housing discrimination of the twentieth century was a continuation of America’s historical extortion of African American wealth (Coates 2014).

Residential segregation into unstable neighborhood environments also contributes to lower levels of income and reduced social mobility. When ranking social mobility at the metropolitan scale both Cleveland (fortieth worst) and Columbus (forty-fourth) rank near the bottom of social mobility rankings for the fifty largest metropolitan areas (Chetty et al. 2014). More recent analysis of the Move to Opportunity experimental housing mobility program from the 1990s indicates that children who relocated from a “low opportunity” to “high opportunity” neighborhood had increased lifetime earnings of 31 percent (Chetty, Hendren, and Katz 2015).

The impacts of historical discrimination extend beyond economics and wealth. Scholar-

ship in public health further strengthens understanding of the relevance of history to current community health challenges. The life course model has identified the role of the accumulation of life course stress on contemporary health challenges. Discrimination is a primary stressor and directly degrades health outcomes. According to the life course model, historical discrimination, even if experienced decades earlier, has a long-term effect on health outcomes (Lu and Halfon 2003; Lu and Chen 2004).

Historical forms of racism or discrimination are a significant “psychosocial” stressor that has had long-term impacts on health in communities of color (Vick and Burris 2017; Sullivan 2013). Additionally, discrimination in housing, which often forced non-White communities into more heavily polluted neighborhood environments, is a physical health risk factor that increases intergenerational health risk.

Public health literature is now beginning to explore the link between historical discrimination in development and contemporary health outcomes. In *The Color of Health*, Andrew Beck and colleagues identify the influence of historical discrimination and segregation as contributing to today’s racial disparities in preterm birth, and in undermining advances in perinatal and neonatal care (2019).<sup>3</sup> Studies explicitly focusing on redlining practices by the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC) have identified a connection between historic redlining, community health, and violence (McClure et al. 2019; Jacoby et al. 2018).

### CASE INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

The case studies that follow document two participatory community-planning processes. Between 2013 and 2016, in collaboration with students from the City and Regional Planning program at The Ohio State University, the participatory research project History Matters engaged stakeholders in Cuyahoga County and Franklin County. Both projects focused on the urban county within each region, including stakeholders from the central city and various

suburban jurisdictions. Working directly with leaders in the nonprofit, public, and philanthropic sectors, the initiatives used a historical analysis of discriminatory development practices to document historical patterns of discrimination. Each project also sought to better understand the history of neighborhoods currently struggling with concentrated poverty, segregation, blight, and poor health outcomes.

The persistence of racial- and class-based residential segregation and opportunity isolation are prevalent in both regions (Logan and Stults 2011). Analysis by William Frey indicates that, among the nation’s fifty-one largest metropolitan areas, the Cleveland region ranks fifth and the Columbus region twenty-first in regard to Black-White residential segregation (Frey 2018). Among the largest hundred metropolitan areas, analysis by the Urban Institute has ranked Cleveland the eleventh and Columbus the thirteenth most economically segregated regions (Acs et al. 2017). More than one in two poor residents in the Columbus region and two in three poor residents in the Cleveland region live in a high-poverty neighborhood (Kneebone and Holmes 2016).

Longitudinal analysis produced by Brown University tracks residential, school, and economic segregation for the past three decades (table 1). In both cities, Black-White residential segregation has decreased but remains relatively high; Black-White school segregation and economic segregation have increased in both regions since 1980 (Brown University 2017). Relative rankings of economic segregation show a substantial increase in economic segregation for the Columbus region (table 1). For example, according to the neighborhood sorting index for families with children, Columbus has moved from the thirty-sixth most economically segregated region in 1980 to the eighth in the 2012 to 2016 period.

In addition to these patterns of segregation, neighborhood-based disparities in education, employment, and health correlate with each city’s most segregated and impoverished areas (Acevedo-Garcia et al. 2020). For example, when

3. Contemporary racism facing African American women is also a contributing factor to maternal health disparities. Studies have demonstrated that higher-income African American women living in majority White neighborhoods have disproportionately high infant mortality rates (Kothari 2016).

**Table 1.** Measures of Racial and Economic Segregation

	Black-White Residential Dissimilarity		Black-White School Dissimilarity	
	1980 (rank)	2010 (rank)	1980 (rank)	2010 (rank)
Cleveland MSA	85.8 (3rd)	72.6 (9th)	Cleveland MSA	77.7 (12th)
Columbus MSA	72.9 (38th)	59.9 (33rd)	Columbus MSA	66.5 (47th)
	Economic Segregation (All Households)		Economic Segregation (Families with Children)	
	1980 (rank)	2012/2016 (rank)	1980 (rank)	2012/2016 (rank)
Cleveland MSA	0.168 (14th)	0.179 (23rd)	Cleveland MSA	0.206 (12th)
Columbus MSA	0.139 (47th)	0.190 (16th)	Columbus MSA	0.173 (36th)
	Economic Segregation (Poverty)		Economic Segregation (Affluence)	
	1980 (rank)	2012/2016 (rank)	1980 (rank)	2012/2016 (rank)
Cleveland MSA	0.207 (2nd)	0.212 (1st)	Cleveland MSA	0.131 (48th)
Columbus MSA	0.151 (19th)	0.184 (7th)	Columbus MSA	0.144 (34th)

Source: Author's tabulations based on Diversity and Disparities Database, Brown University (Brown University 2017).

Note: Rank among the hundred largest metro areas (dissimilarity indices) and ninety-five largest metro areas (economic segregation measures). MSA = metro-political statistical area.

comparing neighborhoods by their relative opportunity index ranking, substantial health disparities can be seen between high opportunity areas (the top 20 percent of neighborhoods on the opportunity index) and low opportunity areas (the bottom 20 percent). Both regions have some of the largest life expectancy gaps between neighborhoods in the nation, with Columbus at fifth (9.6 years) and Cleveland at eighth (9.3 years) (Acevedo-Garcia et al. 2020).

The two cities differ in their long-term population trends. Cleveland has followed the typical trajectory of a midwestern industrial region, rapidly losing population to its suburbs and exurbs; Cleveland's current population (381,000) is 41 percent of its peak of 914,000 in 1950. The trend in Columbus is the opposite, the population increasing from 375,000 residents in 1950 to 898,000 in 2019. The Columbus figures can be misleading because the city has pursued an aggressive annexation policy since 1954, growing from 40 square miles to more than 200 between 1950 and 2000. A highly elastic city, Columbus has not experienced the same strain on its municipal finances as Cleveland (Rusk 1993).

Despite this population growth, Columbus also experienced population decline in many of its core urban neighborhoods, continued segregation, and population decline in the city school district (Jacobs 1998). The city's annexation policy was also highly racialized. Following the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954, the Ohio state legislature allowed municipal annexation without extension of municipal school district boundaries.<sup>4</sup> Columbus political leadership took advantage of this change to expand annexation. The city could offer city ser-

vices to newly annexed areas while assuring predominantly White suburban jurisdictions that they would not be forced to join the city's racially diverse urban school district (Jacobs 1998). Although Ohio's historical use of annexation without school district representation is unique to the state, more generally, research has found policies to further splinter and segment school district boundaries were often designed as a direct challenge to desegregation efforts (Frankenberg 2009).

Both projects began with several fundamental research questions. How did the contemporary geography of opportunity (and more specifically in Cleveland, health inequity) emerge in each community? How did discriminatory development practices influence each community's most marginalized neighborhoods? Finally, are any insights to be derived from our history that can be informative for policymakers and other stakeholders seeking to support community development and racial equity in the future?

To answer these questions, we conducted an in-depth historical analysis and a contemporary GIS analysis using historical redlining maps.<sup>5</sup> Research documented the history of restrictive covenants, redlining practices, urban renewal, postwar suburban growth, and school segregation-desegregation efforts in each community. The history of discrimination in development practices is multifaceted, interconnected, and reinforcing. The research documented the relationship between restrictive covenants and HOLC (redlining) assessments.<sup>6</sup> The research also explored how redlined areas were often targeted for the location of highway construction and urban renewal projects. His-

4. *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

5. Redlining maps were produced by the HOLC, an agency created in 1933 as a New Deal response to help homeowners defaulting on mortgages. In 1935, the agency was asked to create standardized real estate risk assessments of 239 cities. These assessments color coded neighborhoods on a four-tier risk scale, with the lowest-rated (D) neighborhoods presented in red on the maps.

6. HOLC neighborhood designations were made by local assessors often representing the real estate industry. Assessors graded neighborhoods based on physical characteristics (environmental quality, housing quality, infrastructure, and proximity to employment or services) and social factors (socioeconomic demographics, infiltration of "undesirables," and the presence of racial, socially, ethnically, or religiously mixed community). An analysis of HOLC assessments for all Ohio cities finds that although some environmental conditions were identified in downgraded (C, D) neighborhoods, the majority of content in assessments focused on the social characteristics of neighborhoods (Reece 2019).

toric HOLC maps were digitized to analyze the correlation between redlining practices and contemporary community indicators of health, blight, and racial and economic segregation (Reece et al. 2015).

We also held a series of stakeholder and community engagements to disseminate the findings of this work and engage leaders to reflect on how the community's history can provide insight or be informative in addressing contemporary community challenges. Stakeholders participating in each process were selected by the lead collaborative organizations. Stakeholder selection in each community was slightly different: the Columbus process focused on forging new relationships across particular sectors (nonprofit, business, government); the Cleveland effort integrated into the already formed multisector and multijurisdictional Place Matters initiative. The degree of existing relationships and trust among many of the stakeholders before the engagements was influential in producing a more productive engagement process. Several multimedia tools (ESRI storymaps) were developed and media engagements were conducted (radio, web, and print media) to further engage the public (Stephens 2014). The outcomes documented here are based on data collected through participant observation, research analysis, and informal semi-structured interviews and surveys with participants.

### **History Matters: Cuyahoga County (Cleveland)**

The History Matters Cuyahoga County initiative began with an inquiry from the Place Matters team for Cuyahoga County and Cuyahoga County Public Health. Place Matters Cuyahoga County was a multiyear planning process documenting the relationship between “place” or community conditions and health. The process

engaged stakeholders from the city of Cleveland (public health and city planning) and the county (public health). Additional stakeholders included philanthropic entities, community-based organizations, and nonprofit organizations focused on racial equity, community development, and health.

In addition to engagement with Place Matters, Cuyahoga County Public Health had also recently adopted “eliminating structural racism” as a goal of their community health plan.<sup>7</sup> In addition to these core organizations, additional stakeholders from public, nonprofit, and community-based organizations took part in the project. The History Matters project was designed to assist stakeholders to better understand the legacy of racially discriminatory policy in contributing to structural racism in the community. Specifically, the project was to assist in documenting the role of historical policy practices in shaping conditions in neighborhoods with the worst health disparities.

### **History Matters: Franklin County (Columbus)**

The Franklin County (Columbus) initiative is embedded within a collective impact effort, Franklin County Thrive. Thrive was a community planning effort begun to understand and address the growth of poverty in Franklin County and the City of Columbus. Despite tremendous economic growth in the city and the Columbus region, poverty had grown substantially in the community. Between 2000 and 2015, the number of residents living at or under 200 percent of the poverty rate increased from one in four in 2000 to more than one in three in 2015. Poverty rates had not declined as unemployment decreased, and Columbus became recognized as the secondmost economically segregated city in the United States. These growing challenges had created an urgency for community leaders across sectors to discuss

7. Cuyahoga County Board of Health's declaration to address structural racism motivated their participation in the History Matters initiative. The agency's definition of structural racism focused on the intersection of access to opportunity, unhealthy environments, and health outcomes. The county had identified three actions to address structural racism: helping organizations learn how to recognize and address structural racism; encouraging organizations to work closely with community members; and developing policies to create social and economic opportunities for all people in Cuyahoga County. The History Matters initiative was identified as essential in supporting the county's goal of educating organizations on recognizing and addressing structural racism (for more, see <https://hipcuyahoga.org/eliminating-structural-racism>).

solutions to address the community's widening inequality.

The collective impact planning effort included approximately two dozen community leaders from various sectors. Primary leadership organizations for the effort included the United Way of Central Ohio and Mid-Ohio Foodbank. Additional participants included philanthropy, public-sector representatives, and business and nonprofit organizations from the community development, health, education, social service, and affordable housing sectors. The History Matters initiative was the first research effort undertaken by Thrive, and was focused on understanding how the community had reached this point.

### History Matters: Engagement Process

Each engagement process began with an overview of the community's current racial and spatial disparities, including an analysis of disparities in socioeconomics and health. Participants were then led through an exercise that documented the processes of discrimination in housing and development policy throughout the twentieth century. A conceptual model was presented that outlined the evolution and interconnection of policies and practices foundational to segregating the city.

Following the conceptual model, participants reviewed historical documents and local examples of discriminatory practices. Language from restrictive covenants, HOLC redlining maps and written neighborhood assessments for HOLC, and historical photography were part of the local document review.<sup>8</sup> The Columbus project benefited from a recently digitized archive of historical neighborhood photos from the 1920s, allowing participants to visualize conditions in neighborhoods prior to redlining.<sup>9</sup>

After document review, the project included an analysis in which formerly redlined areas were juxtaposed against current community

data. In Cleveland, redlined areas were digitized and current census, housing, and health data were assessed within the geography of redlining in 1940. The Columbus project overlaid contemporary concentrations of poverty, health disparities, subprime lending, foreclosure, and food insecurity with the 1934 HOLC map.

After capacity building with the primary stakeholders in each project, a series of public engagement activities were held in each community. In Cleveland, training activities were led by the primary project stakeholders with peer or partner organizations. A report was completed and a public unveiling was the focus of an event at the prestigious City Club of Cleveland. Media interviews followed the engagement and Cuyahoga County developed an interactive video to disseminate the work. The research would eventually be integrated into the recently developed Health Improvement Plan for Cuyahoga County.

Columbus engagement included a more formal stakeholder-driven process. A half-day retreat, at which the research was presented, was held with more than forty community leaders, including incoming Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther. Following this direct engagement, presentations of the research were given to the boards of directors for philanthropic and public agencies, including the Board of The Columbus Foundation, the United Way of Central Ohio, Mid-Ohio Foodbank, Community Shelter Board, and the cabinet of Mayor Ginther. Additional engagement included media outreach and a video presentation of the materials available on social media by the United Way of Central Ohio, which generated more than thirty-five thousand viewings.

### Evaluation of Impact: Analysis of Post-process Stakeholder Perspectives

To better understand the utility of the History Matters engagement in each community, ten

8. Many policy reforms emerging in the aftermath of the civil rights era and the Johnson administration's war on poverty were referenced in the historical engagement process but were not the focus of the engagement process. These included the 1968 Fair Housing Act, the 1978 Community Reinvestment Act, the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act, and the introduction of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program in 1986.

9. Photography capturing neighborhood conditions prior to the Depression for the Columbus area was gathered from the historical resource site "Engaging Columbus: Historical and Contemporary Maps of Columbus for Engaged Learning" produced by Ohio Wesleyan University (see <https://engagingcolumbus.owu.edu>).

**Table 2.** Semi-structured Interview Questions and Interviewed Stakeholders

Open-Ended Questions	Interviewees
1. Why were you interested in documenting the history of discrimination in the community's development?	Columbus Initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Todd Dieffenderfer, formerly with the United Way of Central Ohio, currently with the City of Columbus</li> </ul>
2. What did you or other stakeholders take away from the work, what was learned or documented which helped community planning efforts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kim Dorniden, Mid-Ohio Foodbank</li> <li>• Matt Habash, Mid-Ohio Foodbank</li> <li>• Michelle Heritage, Community Shelter Board</li> <li>• Kermit Whitfield, United Way of Central Ohio</li> </ul>
3. Did viewing the real historical documents (redlining maps and text, covenant language) impact you or the process?	Cleveland Initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gregory Brown, PolicyBridge Inc.</li> </ul>
4. Were there any direct outcomes informed by the process? (For example, enhanced community dialogue, greater awareness, concepts which informed planning efforts or goals).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandra Chapelle, Strategic Solutions Partners, LLC</li> <li>• Freddy Collier, City of Cleveland Department of Planning</li> <li>• Martha Halko, Cuyahoga County Board of Health</li> <li>• Richard Stacklin, Cuyahoga County Board of Health</li> </ul>

Source: Author's tabulation.

project stakeholders (five in each site) were surveyed to understand their experience with the process. Although each process involved more than five stakeholders, interviewees were lead stakeholders for the participatory processes, that is, those most engaged in the process and its aftermath. Stakeholders represented public and nonprofit organizations. Participants were asked four open-ended questions that focused on their motivation for taking part in the process, the knowledge generated by the process, the impact of working with real historical documents, and what direct outcomes in the community were informed by the process.

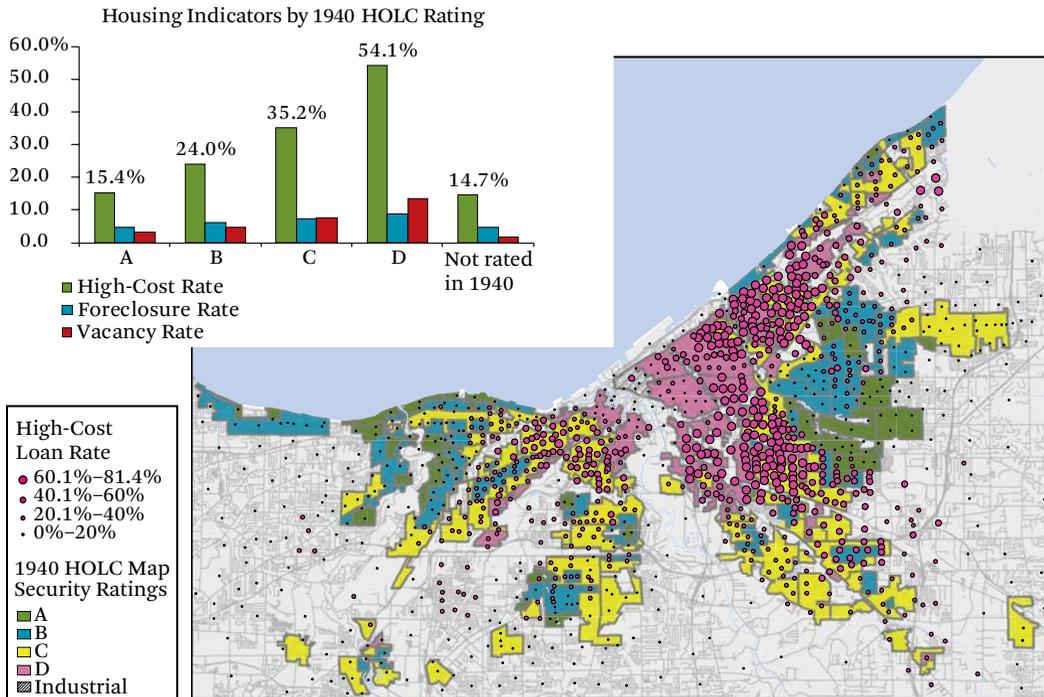
Analysis was also conducted to assess primary themes in responses from participants. This involved standard methodological techniques of coding qualitative data and developing themes through six phases of analysis. These phases include familiarization with data, development of codes, theme identification with codes, review of themes, definition of themes, and thematic report production (see table 2).

**ANALYSIS: DOES EXPLORATION OF PLANNING HISTORY MATTER?**

Analysis in both Cleveland and Columbus demonstrated a clear connection between formerly redlined areas and current community challenges. The disinvestment resulting from redlining caused a chain reaction in the decades that followed. Being starved of capital, the C- and D-rated neighborhoods (those identified as yellow and red on maps) slid further into disrepair, blight, and eventually high rates of vacancy. Urban renewal projects and the construction of the interstate highway system would compound these challenges in some hard-hit neighborhoods. Meanwhile, growing suburbs in each community remained highly inaccessible to communities of color.<sup>10</sup> The exodus of jobs in the 1970s and 1980s (due in part to de-industrialization) and the subprime lending and foreclosure crisis of the 1990s and 2000s have exacerbated the challenges faced by formerly redlined communities.

In Cleveland, formerly redlined areas were still highly segregated; two in three African Americans in Cuyahoga County lived in these

10. African American suburbanization has occurred in both case study sites, though these migration patterns have primarily occurred in older suburban jurisdictions in the counties. Most notably, the Shaker Heights suburb in Cuyahoga County was a national model for supporting suburban racial integration in the late twentieth century.

**Figure 1.** HOLC (Redlining Map) of Cleveland 1940 and High-Cost Loans in 2008

*Source:* Created by author from 1940 HOLC map and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Neighborhood Stabilization Program data (adapted from analysis in Reece et al. 2015).

*Note:* Areas in light gray were unrated in 1940. The optimal way to view figures 1–5 is in color. We refer readers of the print edition of this article to <https://www.rsfjournal.org/content/7/1/110> to view the color versions.

communities versus only one in four Whites. The segregative effects of the HOLC assessment have also had implications for housing and health outcomes. One of the more startling findings was that foreclosures and subprime lending activities were heavily concentrated in neighborhoods that were redlined in the 1940 HOLC map. In fact, between 2004 and 2007, the high-cost loan rate was 54.1 percent in formerly redlined areas versus only 15.4 percent in A-rated areas. Similar disparities existed in rates of vacant property found (figure 1).

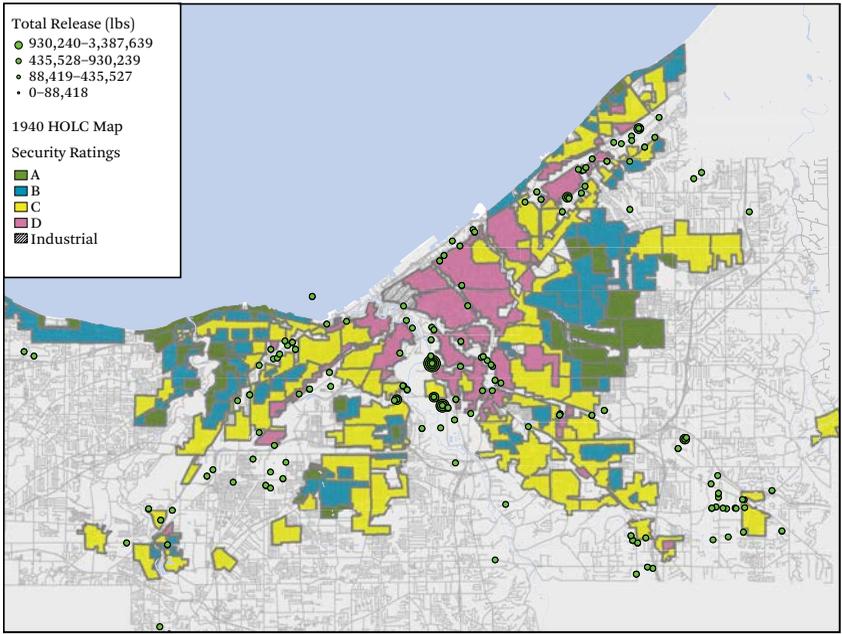
Critical environmental and public health concerns, such as the distribution of toxic release sites, rates of infant mortality, and occurrences of diabetes reflect the historic imprint left by redlining (see figure 2). Infant mortality

rates were 800 percent higher in redlined areas than in nonredlined communities (see figure 3). Additionally, the highest incidents of lead paint exposure occur in traditionally redlined areas, which is consistent with theories that suggest lack of capital can inhibit housing renovations critical to reducing exposure to lead paint (see figure 4). Life expectancy differences also reflects the same general patterns of these other critical health measures. Analysis found a thirteen- to fifteen-year gap between life expectancy in former green (A-rated) neighborhoods and those that were redlined (see figure 5).

An analysis of contemporary conditions in neighborhoods within Columbus, relative to the 1934 HOLC map, found similar patterns.<sup>11</sup>

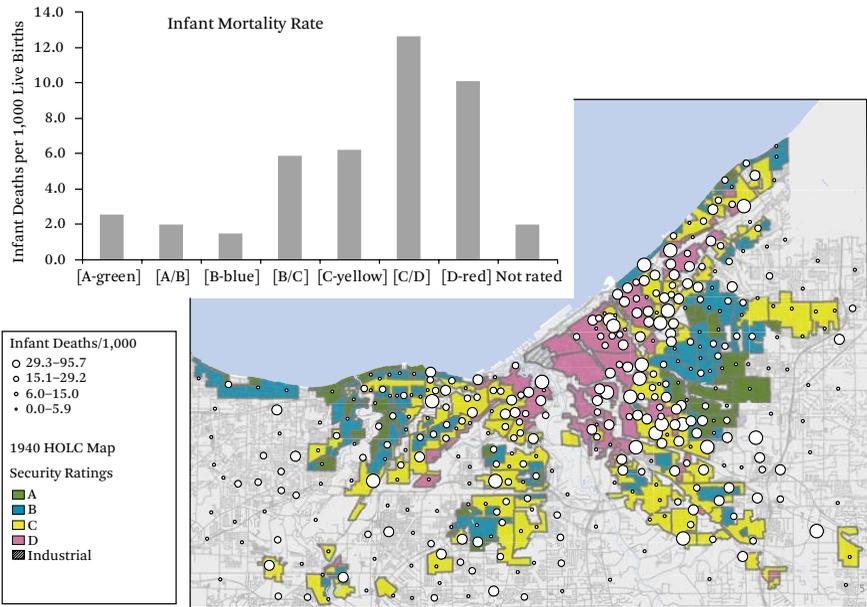
11. The comparable maps for Columbus are not included in this article. Visual materials from this project are hosted by the United Way of Central Ohio (see "Understanding Poverty in Franklin County," December 30, 2016, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=10154936716140337>).

**Figure 2.** HOLC (Redlining Map) of Cleveland 1940 and Current Location of Toxic Waste Release Sites



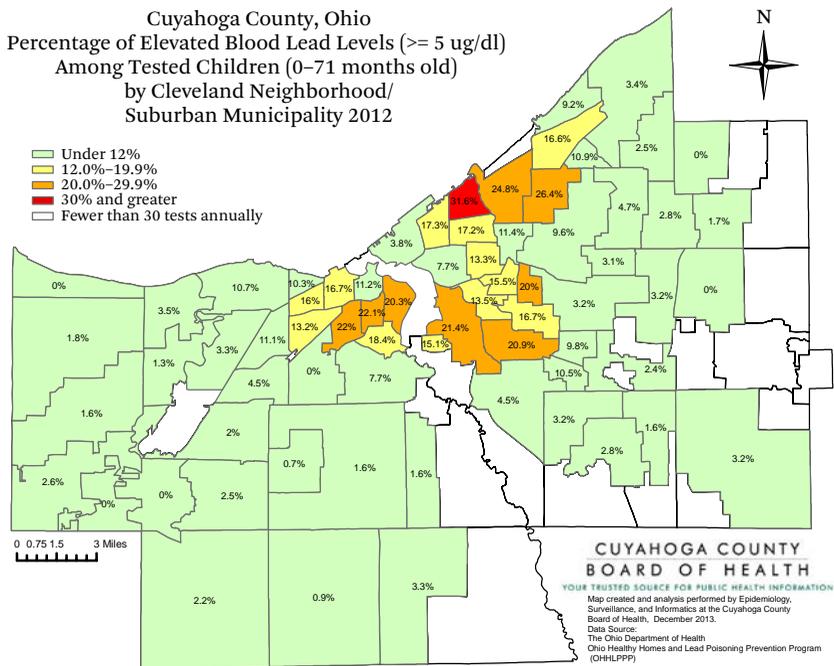
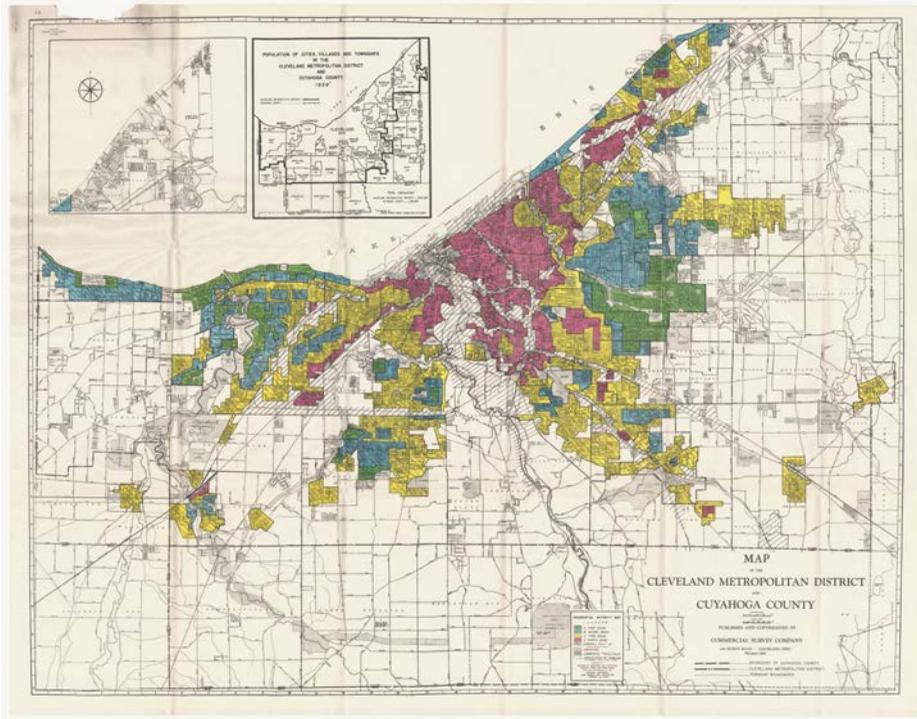
Source: Created by author from 1940 HOLC map and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Toxic Waste Release Inventory data (adapted from analysis in Reece et al. 2015).  
 Note: Areas in light gray were unrated in 1940.

**Figure 3.** HOLC (Redlining Map) of Cleveland 1940 and Current Infant Mortality Rates



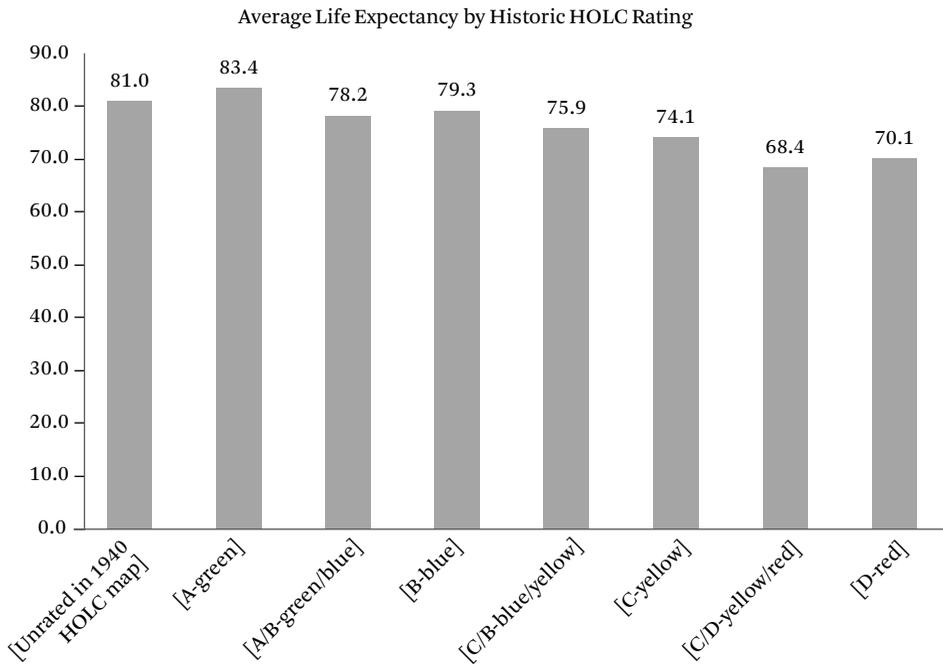
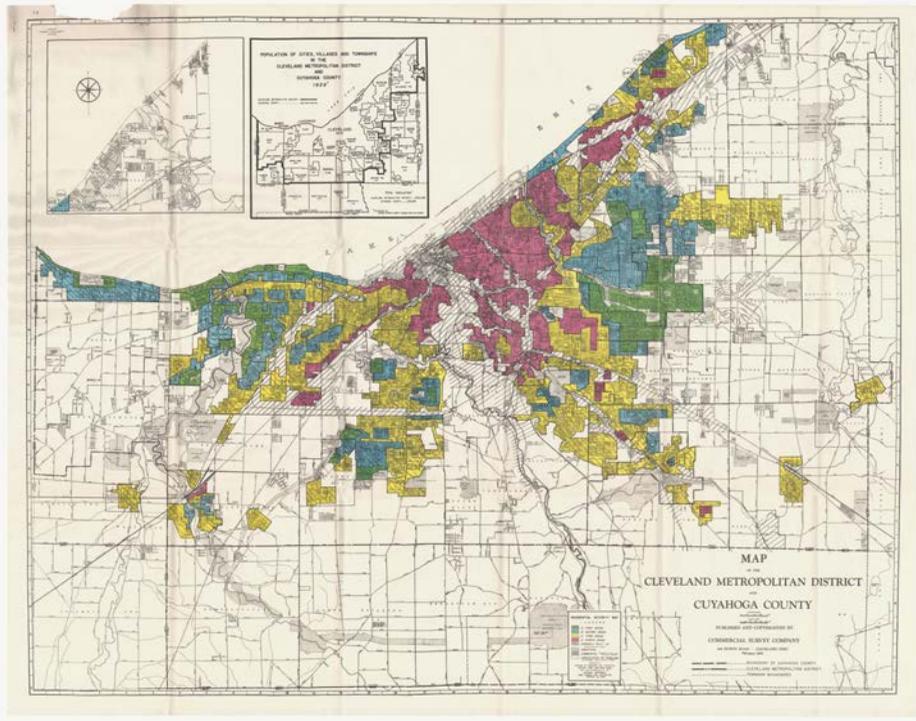
Source: Created by author from 1940 HOLC map and 2010 Infant Mortality data from the Ohio Department of Health (adapted from analysis in Reece et al. 2015).  
 Note: Areas in light gray were unrated in 1940.

**Figure 4.** HOLC (Redlining Map) of Cleveland 1940 and 2012 Child Lead Poisoning



Source: Created by author from 1940 HOLC map and 2012 lead test results from Cuyahoga County Board of Health (adapted from analysis in Reece et al. 2015).

**Figure 5.** HOLC (Redlining Map) of Cleveland 1940 and 2008–2010 Life Expectancy



Source: Created by author from 1940 HOLC map and Cuyahoga County Board of Public Health 2008/2010 life expectancy data (adapted from analysis in Reece et al. 2015).

Formerly redlined areas included five of the region's eight highest infant mortality zones, neighborhoods whose infant mortality rates were on par with developing nations. Redlined areas included the majority of the county's highest poverty areas and the densest concentrations of food insecurity. Formerly redlined communities also correlated with the county's highest rates of subprime lending and foreclosure. Additionally, analysis of contemporary financial institutions found an absence of mainstream financial institutions (banks) and the densest concentration of predatory creditors (such as payday lenders) in formerly redlined areas (Reece et al. 2015).

### **Evaluation of Impact: Stakeholder Perspectives**

Stakeholders identified both institutional or organizational and personal motivations for taking part in the process. Stakeholders identified their interest in deepening knowledge of efforts to address racial equity, health equity, and poverty in their communities. Participants from both regions sought to better understand how historical discrimination has influenced current challenges in the community, as described by participants. A Cleveland stakeholder, for example, put it this way: "to understand how Greater Cleveland's history of discrimination shaped our current differences in opportunities to be healthy." Another, in Columbus, explained that "A new group called Thrive was being formed to look at the issue of poverty in our community. To center all of the members of Thrive and provide a solid foundation for the development of a communitywide poverty reduction plan, we realized the need to understand our history and how it contributed to today's challenges."

Stakeholders also noted the process's importance in legitimizing efforts to support racial equity within their organization and in supporting capacity-building for other organizations in the community. A Cleveland participant said that the process "help[ed] me build the case for equity and racial inclusion in my current work within the health department, as part of the past Place Matters Team. . . to have the tools and resources to build the capacity of others (partners, decision makers, etc.) on how

historical policies and practices shape current inequities and the role values play in decision making." As a stakeholder in Columbus explained, "At United Way of Central Ohio one of the key principles that guides our work is a commitment to addressing racial disparities. In order to do that we need to have good data on where disparities exist in our community. History Matters was an invaluable resource for UWCO when we conducted a thoughtful and comprehensive review of our investment strategies. It helped us identify priority neighborhoods that have long histories of disparities and helped us decide where we would concentrate funding."

Pursuing the historical analysis (and providing evidence) was described as critical to providing tangible examples of abstract concepts such as structural or institutional racism to decision makers. "It's really important," another Columbus stakeholder said; "in order for us to solve the problems of today, it's essential that we understand how we got here. If you don't understand how we got it, it becomes difficult, bordering on impossible to solve the problem. These ideas that we talk about, institutional racism, structural racism, most people don't understand what that means. We throw these terms around, we don't understand how that started, what exactly does it mean, this leads to people not being willing to look at them."

Stakeholders also identified personal motivations for being part of the project, specifically their firsthand experience living through the historical events reflected in the project. One Cleveland stakeholder identified their experience living through the peak of the civil rights movement as fundamental to why they were motivated to take part in this process. The stakeholder believed documenting and educating the public about historical discrimination was critical to address contemporary racial disparities in the community:

As an African American male who was born in the early 1950s and who came of age in the 1960s and 1970s, [the civil rights movement] which occurred in my youth shaped my life. . . . The civil rights movement had a significant influence on me and my family because we experienced racial discrimination

and segregation . . . the treatment of African Americans in American society have had a direct impact on my development as a person and a professional. I decided to work to eliminate the legal and social barriers that impeded opportunities for African Americans. One way I have engaged in the pursuit of increasing opportunities for African Americans is through the study of historical policies in housing, education and health care that need to be addressed to increase African American opportunities in this country.

Stakeholders described several ways the knowledge generated by the project informed their (or their organization's) thinking. Stakeholders from both cities found the historical analysis important in helping them contextualize the long-term nature of challenges the city's most impoverished communities faced, changing their perspective on how to best intervene to address community challenges. As one Columbus participant said, "The research was very useful because it made clear that the issues facing high poverty neighborhoods did not emerge overnight and sustained investment would be needed to make a difference." Another offered this angle: "We destroyed these neighborhoods over decades, so what does that mean, we are not fixing things in five years, and it was multiple policies, we have to be patient, we need that long-term perspective."

Based on the History Matters report, [a Cleveland stakeholder explained,] we were also able to change our strategies for solving the challenges confronting African Americans living in communities that were the targets for historical racial discrimination and segregation. No longer did we believe that grassroots individual interventions alone would be sufficient to address historical community ills. Instead, we adjusted our focus to systems, structures and institutions that perpetuate racism, discrimination and segregation. Focusing on systems, structures and institutions changes the ownership for the conditions that exist from the individual to the society and makes the identification of effective solutions the responsibility of our society not just the individuals impacted by

the existing conditions. We also now understand that solving conditions that are steeped in a racially-tinged historical context means that multi- and cross-sector strategies, collective action and collective impact will be required.

Stakeholders noted that the research expanded their perspective on the "unnatural" nature of neighborhood segregation or community disinvestment. The project clearly documented how discriminatory values or norms shaped housing and development policies, evident in these remarks from a Cleveland and a Columbus participant respectively: "From this work, the concept that values shape decisions became clearer as policies like redlining were not policy decisions made based on data"; "I also found it useful to highlight for some audiences that current conditions are not a result of free market forces but intentional enforcement of policies that limited investment."

Stakeholders discussed the process's ability to identify the role of policy in shaping inequity as critical to pushing back against the narrative of blaming the victim. "If policies got us here, then policies can get us out of this," a Columbus participant remarked. "Complicated concepts, and complexity, are very hard for people to wrap their minds around, so what we do is then blame the person, because it's complicated and the average person doesn't understand it."

Viewing historical documents, for example, language from HOLC assessments, deed restrictions, and redlining maps, provided tangible evidence of how racism shaped the region. Stakeholders found these historical documents to be compelling in making the region's history more concrete (less abstract) and documentation clearly emphasized the obvious discriminatory values embedded in policy. One in Cleveland explained: "Viewing the real historical documents impacted me significantly, because they highlighted and validated the discriminatory nature of these past policies and practices." A counterpart in Columbus spoke similarly: "Yes, it was very powerful to see original documents that made clear discriminatory practices did exist in Columbus (this was not just an issue found in southern states)."

Redlining maps were particularly effective in documenting the geography of historical discrimination. Additionally, maps enabled stakeholders to visually align (or analyze) the correlation between communities of historic discrimination and contemporary challenges, such as patterns of poverty or community-based disparities. A Cleveland participant focused on the technical angle: “The maps draw a clear connection between our history and our current landscape of inequities as we are able to overlay redlining with a host of other maps of determinants of health and health outcomes.” A Columbus stakeholder emphasized the emotional takeaway: “Seeing the actual historical maps and how the areas of redlining continue to be areas of high poverty today is very impactful and made a strong impression on our team and our volunteer leadership.”

Stakeholders in both cities identified direct capacity-building, enhanced community awareness, and policy impacts from the History Matters effort. Project participants in both cities identified how the process sparked new community conversations, engaging multiple stakeholders across each community: from Cleveland, “I can say that the documents and text in the report was used to stimulate community conversations and the intersection of racial discrimination, equity and health. The report has also increased awareness of the connections between historical policies and practices and the conditions that exists in many Cuyahoga County communities today”; and from Columbus, “community dialogue—the portion of Mayor Ginther’s most recent state of the city speech that focused on poverty [which discussed redlining in high poverty areas] certainly made clear how the research initially created for Thrive was spurring conversation across the community on what can be done.”

Stakeholders also identified the importance of utilizing the research to foster better cross-cultural understanding in their respective communities: “There has been subsequent conversation, where my African American board members have said, we have known this all along, this is our lived experience, and that has helped with my White board members, who have said ‘wow’ I had no idea, this started a conversation, and strengthened relationships

on the board. For my African American board members, it’s almost like hashtag #me too [used by women who were documenting sexual harassment via social media]. When we bring the issues to light and show the data, it dispels a lot of myth.”

In respect to policy impacts, both Columbus and Cleveland stakeholders emphasized how the project informed efforts to enhance place-based investment:

This research was very helpful as United Way’s Community Impact team finalized the new community investment model. It provided a way to focus the issue for the Board of Trustees prior to their vote on the investment framework. It was useful in the development of the approach for the two neighborhoods that were selected and helped to set expectations for how long the work would take. The research made clear the importance of investing in public policy and efforts to ensure systems work effectively for everyone. The knowledge gained also helped to make sure we invested in those programs that helped those who were most vulnerable.

The Mayor’s Neighborhood Transformation Initiative was in part based on the historical data that was provided through the history Matters Report. . . . it also influenced the recently released race relations report issued by our community relations department. The City Planning Department has developed a community-driven strategy that focuses on inherently disadvantaged communities. We are investing fiscal, human and other resources in targeted geographies as well as generating partnerships to connect our collective resources into these targeted locations. Our approach is intentional and, if successful, can create a model for how to transform urban core communities. It is not a report but instead a strategy that helps guide decision making.

In Cuyahoga County, History Matters directly informed the county’s health improvement plan, and shifted organizational narratives in how issues of inequity are discussed in the region: “Facts, data, information and maps

from the History Matters report were integrated into the community health improvement planning process as a means of building the knowledge and capacity of partners. The goal is to have our partners achieve perspective transformation—that is, understand, think and value differently, and in turn take action differently to address equity and racial inclusion. This information is now part of HIP-Cuyahoga’s new narrative. We highlight the history of discrimination in the final community health improvement plan and continue to communicate this narrative through our messaging and communications.”

In Franklin County, many of the participants in the History Matters initiative would later guide the development of a countywide poverty reduction plan that referenced the importance of structural racism in historical housing and development policy in contributing to contemporary racial disparities. The plan acknowledged the importance of historical factors in its policy goal to “disrupt the institutional racism and unconscious biases that continue to permeate the community” (Franklin County 2019, 3).

### DISCUSSION AND POLICY RAMIFICATIONS

Historical analysis of Cleveland and Columbus clearly document the cumulative discriminatory structures that shaped each city, thus molding today’s geography of opportunity and segregation. The longevity of these discriminatory structures and their reinforcing characteristics created apartheid-like conditions in most communities of color. The robust nature of these multiple barriers to opportunity created a legacy of discrimination that various civil rights acts and inclusionary housing tools have yet to fully overcome.

Although the case studies represent the experience of two cities, the analysis and process create policy implications for other places and

communities. Policy solutions generated during both planning processes emphasized several primary themes.<sup>12</sup> First, stakeholders identified the importance of centering racial equity as a value in policymaking (in contrast to more general technocratic policy development). Centering racial equity seeks to ensure that racial equity is a driving value at the forefront of policy design and that all policies are evaluated through a racial equity lens.

Second, the long history of discriminatory policy in both cities speaks to policy solutions which are sustained over the long term. As one stakeholder in the Franklin County engagement process noted, “conditions which emerged over a half century or more require more than a one- or two-year plan or grant to fix.”

Third, the intersection of space, place, and racial equity are profoundly important for designing policy solutions. This includes racial equity-centered efforts to guide reinvestment into historically disadvantaged community, and policies that dismantle spatial barriers to opportunity (such as exclusionary housing policies or inadequate transportation infrastructure). Finally, both planning efforts emphasized using the multisector and multistakeholder collective impact model to address historical impacts of structural racism. The collective impact model differs from traditional collaborative planning processes in that it overtly focuses on equity while developing a backbone organization to support long-term collaboration among multiple stakeholders (Reece and Gough 2019).

These themes are illustrated in policy statements and plans emerging from Cuyahoga County stakeholders that were informed directly by the historical participatory process. These statements speak to the importance of a historically grounded racial equity lens for all of our policies. “[First] Values influence policy. Value-infused policies shape systems, which either help to produce prosperity for all or create

12. Neither planning process emphasized federal policy solutions, deferring to local initiatives and policy solutions in their identification of policy actions (including no discussion of the emerging federal Opportunity Zone program). I conclude that the overwhelming influence of neoliberal policy and philosophy of recent decades created a barrier to thinking beyond local policy solutions. Earlier in the process several stakeholders noted that earlier federal efforts to address racial equity and poverty (such as the Johnson administration’s War on Poverty) were a failure. The influence of neoliberal narratives on local policymakers in their understanding of history and contemporary policymaking requires further exploration.

barriers to opportunity for some. [Second] Historical policies have long-term, residual impacts that need to be taken into account when designing solutions for today. [Third] There is nothing 'natural' about today's challenges, nor are they unsolvable. Significant change can begin through coordinated efforts focused on principles of equity and inclusion" (Reece et al. 2015, 4).

The policy recommendations emerging directly from the History Matters planning process to remedy structural racism were integrated into the Cuyahoga County's Health Improvement Plan. These recommendations include the following strategies.

Developing a community-level understanding of the historical forces involved in creating current inequities; using health equity data to illuminate how race-based policies and practices created opportunities for some and restricted possibilities for others; supporting organizational, institutional, and community leaders to work closely with community members to create an awareness of how and why assumptions about racial and ethnic populations can impact their thinking, feeling, and actions; and using an equity-focused approach to develop policies that increase social and economic opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities, change individual and organizational behaviours, and significantly improve conditions for all people living in Cuyahoga County. (Health Improvement Partnership Cuyahoga 2015, 28)

*Plessy*, and by extension policies motivated by the *Plessy* doctrine, have a multigenerational historic impact. We see this deeply in land use and development policy, where impacts of historical discrimination reach across generations and domains such as economics, wealth, and health. The case studies demonstrate the necessity and value of participatory efforts that document the legacy of *Plessy* and other structural forms of discrimination. Stakeholders identify several direct advantages of engaging contemporary planning challenges through the lens of historical research. Learning about our often "hidden" history of discrimination and

development can provide deep insights into how to approach contemporary racial equity challenges.

As we look back on historical policies like those codified through the Home Owners' Loan Corporation maps, it is easy to denigrate the social mores of Depression-era thinking around the themes of race, ethnicity, and class. Terms such as *infiltration* and *low-grade population* that referred to immigrants and African Americans in the HOLC assessor notes suggested that individuals from these communities represented a risk to public health as if they themselves were a disease. Today we can fall into the trap of acknowledging how archaic these views appear in twenty-first-century America, as if no contemporary societal values will be looked on similarly by future generations.

It is important to recognize that many of the beliefs about race and class that gave birth to racial zoning and redlining are alive today, even though they may now manifest themselves in both unsubtle and subtle ways. Many urban areas are experiencing another era of demographic transition, and racial tensions and anti-immigrant sentiments are vividly present in political and public debates.

These concerns are not limited to just the racism of the Alt-Right. It is important to consider how current language, messaging, and values may contain aspects of explicit and implicit racism. Racism or bias may seep into well-intended initiatives such as urban redevelopment, affordable housing policy, smart growth, sustainability, and local food production in subtle ways. All of these initiatives carry a host of implications for low-income communities and people of color, especially in an age when genuine civic engagement and democracy are under duress in many marginalized communities.

For example, gentrification pressures in formerly redlined and segregated communities present another potential form of wealth extraction. The artificially suppressed property values in these neighborhoods creates the potential for investors and developers to create tremendous profit as population moves back into many urban neighborhoods. These profits from rapidly redeveloping spaces are built on

the legacy of segregation and are direct by-products of structural racism. As plans to revitalize urban neighborhoods arise and evolve, the deep-rooted values on which they are based should always be considered for how they will affect the families and children of today and tomorrow.

The lessons of history are of little consequence if we fail to learn from them. One of the important themes of this research is that although plans and policies can be more harmful to some neighborhoods than others, they can also be used to acknowledge harm and bring about a sense of restorative justice by helping to rebuild and revive communities. The events of history cannot be changed, but many of its lingering effects can be mitigated or even reversed through the decisions made today.

Stakeholder input from the case studies presented here illustrates the utility of an engagement process which emphasizes historical understanding as a primary outcome. History matters, particularly when we attempt to understand our complex contemporary challenges, our inequities, and the conditions of our built environment. Understanding our history is essential to cultivating contemporary community change, particularly in long-marginalized communities, where we battle disengagement, distrust, and popular narratives about neighborhoods, none of which acknowledge the legacy of discriminatory policy.

The history articulated through this historical engagement process speaks to the need for a robust policy framework to produce racially just cities and a racially just society. Cities built on a foundation of racial discrimination should embrace a racial equity in all policies lens moving forward. A racial equity lens to transform neighborhoods and cities should not only bring restorative investment and opportunity to formerly marginalized spaces, but also affirmatively connect marginalized communities to opportunity.

If we are to move forward, we need to deeply engage the legacy of our discriminatory past in multifaceted ways, including engaging decision makers and embedding it in education and in societal conversations. Understanding

our history is necessary to informing decision makers, many of whom have little to no historical context for why the city looks the way it does today. As our cities and demographics continue to change, we need to be deliberate in acknowledging our discriminatory past while affirmatively seeking restorative investment and community empowerment in those neighborhoods devastated by our legacy of twentieth-century philosophies of “separate but equal.”

Remedying the racial wealth gap, reducing disparities across various domains (housing, education, employment, and others) require a direct challenge to our continued system of racialized spatial planning. Although the civil rights movement and fair housing efforts dismantled some elements of this system, discrimination in development policies continues, particularly through de facto forms of segregation, such as class-based exclusionary zoning. Exclusionary zoning barriers continue to provide barriers to areas of opportunity, but market-driven reinvestment back into urban communities can displace marginalized communities while excluding them from the wealth generated in the twenty-first-century movement back to the city.

In *Whiteness and Urban Planning*, Edward Goetz, Rashad Williams, and Anthony Damiano argue that twenty-first-century planning practice and scholarship must acknowledge, challenge, and decenter Whiteness as a dominant paradigm in development policy (2020). The authors call for a race-conscious analysis of development policies that brings heightened awareness of the benefits accrued to White space from our development system. Addressing racial inequity in planning practice fixates on problematizing communities of color but does not examine the unearned benefits accrued to White spaces from development practices. Decentering Whiteness also requires challenging the norm of exclusion in land use policy, valuing community power building and supporting innovative ways of fostering wealth building for communities of color. Goetz, Williams, and Damiano also call for questioning integration strategies that are centered on supporting the ideal of Whiteness as represented

as "areas of opportunity" in the suburban landscape.

Assuming that movement back to the city is a permanent trend, massive wealth will be generated from redevelopment in these areas. These real estate profits are artificially created by structures that historically devaluated non-White space. If we are going to address issues such as the wealth gap or foster reparations, we need to work to ensure that communities of color benefit from the reinvestment occurring today. Current market-based efforts to expand urban reinvestment, such as the recently introduced Opportunity Zone initiatives, may stimulate investment but not connect it to existing communities. They may also hasten the displacement of marginalized communities of color from areas of revitalization. Policies such as community benefit agreements and community land trusts can help ensure that marginalized communities benefit from reinvestment. For these measures to be effective at any scale, however, affordable housing programs are needed in areas of redevelopment to stem the displacement produced by market-driven redevelopment.

At the same time, the distinct geography of opportunity created by our legacy of racist spatial policy is entrenched in local land use policy. De facto segregation is upheld through a combination of policies related to local land use control, exclusionary zoning, and market forces. Efforts to address this exclusion through regional housing mobility programs have rarely been attempted on a large scale, relegated instead to a handful of court-ordered remedies or limited to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Move to Opportunity program in the 1990s.

Despite the limited scope of these programs, the evidence of their effectiveness in improving outcomes for youth is compelling and should motivate further implementation. Communities also need to work to dismantle exclusionary land use restrictions. These efforts may be in their infancy as interest grows in restricting the dominance of single-family residential zoning (Manville, Monkkonen, and Lens 2020; Wegman 2020). Although the efforts are fledgling, they are a starting point to dismantling discriminatory land use policies.

Housing policy debates to remedy the legacy of "separate but equal" have been broken into a false dichotomy of either mobility or revitalization, but a broader transformation of our development system is needed. This transformation should uphold agency and choice for marginalized communities of color. Policies that open access to opportunity are needed, as are policies that ensure that redevelopment in existing communities benefits marginalized communities while building true community wealth. The transformation also requires an intensive examination and dismantling of policy centered on maintaining the benefits, durability, and invisibility of Whiteness (Goetz, Williams, and Damiano 2020).

## REFERENCES

- Acevedo-Garcia, Dolores, Nancy McArdle, Erin F. Hardy, Unda Ioana Crisan, Bethany Romano, David Norris, Mikyung Baek, and Jason Reece. 2014. "The Child Opportunity Index: Improving Collaboration between Community Development and Public Health." *Health Affairs (Project Hope)* 33(11)(November): 1948–957. DOI: 10.1377/hlthaff.2014.0679.
- Acevedo-Garcia, Dolores, Clemens Noelke, Nancy McArdle, Nomi Sofer, Nick Huntington, Erin Hardy, Rebecca Huber, Mikyung Baek, and Jason Reece. 2020. "The Geography of Child Opportunity: Why Neighborhoods Matter for Equity." Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University, The Heller School for Social Policy and Management.
- Acs, Gregory, Rolf Pendall, Mark Treskon, and Amy Khare. 2017. "The Cost of Segregation: National Trends and a Case Study of Chicago, 1990–2010." Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
- Beck, Andrew F., Erika M. Edwards, Jeffrey D. Horbar, Elizabeth A. Howell, Marie C. McCormick, and DeWayne M. Pursley. 2019. "The Color of Health: How Racism, Segregation, and Inequality Affect the Health and Well-Being of Preterm Infants and Their Families." *Pediatric Research*, July 29. DOI: 1038/s41390-019-0513-6.
- Bell, Derrick A., Jr. 1980. "Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest-Convergence Dilemma." *Harvard Law Review* 93(3): 518–33. Accessed September 19, 2020. [https://harvardlawreview.org/wp-content/uploads/1980/01/518-533\\_Online.pdf](https://harvardlawreview.org/wp-content/uploads/1980/01/518-533_Online.pdf).
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 1997. "Rethinking Racism:

- Toward a Structural Interpretation." *American Sociological Review* 62(3): 465–80. DOI: 10.2307/2657316.
- Brown University. 2017. "Diversity and Disparities: Racial Segregation Dissimilarity Rankings." American Communities Project, Spatial Structures in Social Sciences. Accessed September 21, 2020. <https://s4.ad.brown.edu/projects/diversity/Data/data.htm>.
- Cashin, Sheryll. 2004. *The Failures of Integration: How Race and Class Are Undermining the American Dream*. New York: PublicAffairs.
- Chetty, Raj, Nathaniel Hendren, and Lawrence F. Katz. 2015. "Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment." *American Economic Review* 106(4): 855–902.
- Chetty, Raj, Nathaniel Hendren, Patrick Kline, and Emmanuel Saez. 2014. "Where Is the Land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129(4): 1553–623.
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi. 2014. "The Case for Reparations." *The Atlantic* 313(5): 54–71.
- Conley, Dalton. 1999. *Being Black, Living in the Red: Race, Wealth, and Social Policy in America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Delgado, Richard, and Jean Stefancic. 2000. *Critical Race Theory: The Cutting Edge*. Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press.
- Dettling, Lisa J., Joanne W. Hsu, Lindsay Jacobs, Kevin B. Moore, and Jeffrey P. Thompson. 2017. "Recent Trends in Wealth-Holding by Race and Ethnicity: Evidence from the Survey of Consumer Finances." FEDS Notes, September 27. Washington, D.C.: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. DOI: 10.17016/2380-7172.2083.
- DiAngelo, Robin. 2015. "White Fragility: Why It's So Hard to Talk to White People About Racism." The Good Men Project, January 15. Accessed September 21, 2020. <https://medium.com/@GoodMenProject/white-fragility-and-the-rules-of-engagement-d1ec0f95ef22>.
- Frankenberg, Erica. 2009. "Splintering School Districts: Understanding the Link between Segregation and Fragmentation." *Law & Social Inquiry* 34(4): 869–909.
- Franklin County. 2019. "Rise Together: A Blueprint for Reducing Poverty in Franklin County." Franklin County Board of Commissioners. Accessed October 12, 2020. [https://commissioners.franklincountyohio.gov/COMM-website/media/Documents/FRANK-Report-1-10-Web-Ready-\(Large\)\\_1.pdf](https://commissioners.franklincountyohio.gov/COMM-website/media/Documents/FRANK-Report-1-10-Web-Ready-(Large)_1.pdf).
- Frey, William H. 2018. "Black-White Segregation Edges Downward Since 2000, Census Shows." *The Avenue* (Brookings Institution blog), December 18. Accessed September 21, 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2018/12/17/black-white-segregation-edges-downward-since-2000-census-shows>.
- Goetz, Edward G., Rashad A. Williams, and Anthony Damiano. 2020. "Whiteness and Urban Planning." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 86(2): 142–56. DOI: 10.1080/01944363.2019.1693907.
- Grant-Thomas, Andrew, and John A. Powell. 2006. "Toward a Structural Racism Framework." *Poverty & Race* 15(6)(November-December): 3–6.
- Health Improvement Partnership Cuyahoga. 2015. "Cuyahoga County Health Improvement Plan." Cleveland, Ohio: Cuyahoga County Board of Public Health.
- Hernandez, Jesus. 2009. "Redlining Revisited: Mortgage Lending Patterns in Sacramento 1930–2004." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 32(2): 291–313.
- Huggins, John C. 2017. "A Cartographic Perspective on the Correlation Between Redlining and Public Health in Austin, Texas—1951." *Cityscape* 19(2): 267–80.
- Jacobs, Gregory S. 1998. *Getting Around Brown: Desegregation, Development, and the Columbus Public Schools*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.
- Jacoby, Sara F., Beidi Dong, Jessica H. Beard, Douglas J. Wiebe, and Christopher N. Morrison. 2018. "The Enduring Impact of Historical and Structural Racism on Urban Violence in Philadelphia." *Social Science & Medicine* 199 (February): 87–95. DOI: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.05.038.
- Kneebone, Elizabeth, and Natalie Holmes. 2016. "U.S. Concentrated Poverty in the Wake of the Great Recession." Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution. Accessed September 21, 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/us-concentrated-poverty-in-the-wake-of-the-great-recession>.
- Lipsitz, George. 2015. "From Plessy to Ferguson." *Cultural Critique* 90 (Spring): 119–39.
- Logan, John R., and Brian J. Stults. 2011. "The Per-

- sistence of Segregation in the Metropolis: New Findings from the 2010 Census." *Project US2010*, March 24. Accessed September 21, 2020. <https://s4.ad.brown.edu/Projects/Diversity/Data/Report/report2.pdf>.
- Lu, Michael C., and Belinda Chen. 2004. "Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Preterm Birth: The Role of Stressful Life Events." *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 191(3): 691-99.
- Lu, Michael C., and Neal Halfon. 2003. "Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Birth Outcomes: A Life-Course Perspective." *Maternal & Child Health Journal* 7(1)(March): 13-30.
- Luxenberg, Steve. 2019. *Separate: The Story of Plessy V. Ferguson and America's Journey from Slavery to Segregation*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Kothari, Catherine L., Rajib Paul, Ben Dormitorio, Fernando Ospina, Arthur James, Deb Lenz, Kathleen M. Baker, Amy B. Curtis, and James Allen Wiley. 2016. "The Interplay of Race, Socioeconomic Status and Neighborhood Residence Upon Birth Outcomes in a High Black Infant Mortality Community." *SSM Population Health*. 2016 (October); 2: 859-67. DOI: 10.1016/j.ssmph.2016.09.011.
- Manning-Thomas, June. 1994. "Planning History and the Black Urban Experience: Linkages and Contemporary Implications." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 14(1): 1-11.
- Manville, Michael, Paavo Monkkonen, and Michael Lens. 2020. "It's Time to End Single-Family Zoning." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 86(1): 106-12. DOI: 10.1080/01944363.2019.1651216.
- McClure, Elizabeth, Lydia Feinstein, Evette Cordoba, Christian Douglas, Michael Emch, Whitney Robinson, Sandro Galea, and Allison E. Aiello. 2019. "The Legacy of Redlining in the Effect of Foreclosures on Detroit Residents' Self-Rated Health." *Health & Place* 55 (January): 9-19. DOI: 10.1016/j.healthplace.2018.10.004.
- Nightingale, Carl H. 2012. *Segregation: A Global History of Divided Cities*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- powell, john a. 2003. "Opportunity-Based Housing." *Journal of Affordable Housing & Community Development Law* 12(2): 188-228.
- Reece, Jason. 2019. "Defining Space, Defining the Other, Constructing Structural Racism: Content Analysis of HOLC Assessor Documents in 12 Ohio Cities." Presentation to the 2019 Society of City & Regional Planning History Conference "Planning for In/Equality". Arlington, Va. (November 2, 2019).
- Reece, Jason, and Meghan Z. Gough. 2019. "Planning for Regional Sustainability and Justice: The Role of Collective Impact." *Community Development* 50(3): 368-86.
- Reece, Jason, Matt Martin, Joshua Bates, Amanda Golden, Kelsey Mailman, and Ronni Nimps. 2015. "History Matters: Understanding the Role of Policy, Race and Real Estate in Today's Geography of Health Equity and Opportunity in Cuyahoga County." Cleveland, Ohio: Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity. Accessed September 21, 2020. <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/The-History-of-Race-Real-Estate-Cuyahoga-County-Final-Report-February-2015.pdf>.
- Rothstein, Richard. 2017. *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. New York: Liveright Publishing.
- Rugh, Jacob S., and Douglas S. Massey. 2010. "Racial Segregation and the American Foreclosure Crisis." *American Sociological Review* 75(5): 629-51. Accessed June 6, 2020. DOI: 10.2307/20799483.
- Rusk, David. 1993. *Cities Without Suburbs*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.
- Shapiro, Thomas M. 2003. *The Hidden Cost of Being African American: How Wealth Perpetuates Inequality*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Stephens, Alexis. 2014. "Online Story Map Connects History and Cleveland's Health." Next City, November 7. Accessed September 21, 2020. <https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/health-policy-cleveland-redlining-history>.
- Sullivan, Shannon. 2013. "Inheriting Racist Disparities in Health: Epigenetics and the Transgenerational Effects of White Racism." *Critical Philosophy of Race* 1(2): 190-218.
- Thomas, J. M. 1994. "Planning History and the Black Urban Experience: Linkages and Contemporary Implications." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 14(1): 1-11. DOI: 10.1177/0739456X9401400101.
- Vick, Alexis D., and Heather H. Burris. 2017. "Epigenetics and Health Disparities." *Current Epidemiology Reports* 4(1)(March): 31-37. DOI: 10.1007/s40471-017-0096-x.

- Ware, Leland. 2021. "Plessy's Legacy: The Government's Role in the Development and Perpetuation of Segregated Neighborhoods." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 7(1): 92-109. DOI: 10.7758/RSF.2021.7.1.06.
- Wegmann, Jake. 2020. "Death to Single-Family Zoning . . . and New Life to the Missing Middle." *Journal of the American Planning Association* 86(1): 113-19. DOI: 10.1080/01944363.2019.1651217.
- Wise, Tim. 2019. "Forget STEM, We Need MESH: The Importance of Media Literacy, Ethics, Sociology and History Education." *Medium*, September 19, 2019. Accessed September 21, 2020. <https://medium.com/our-human-family/forget-stem-we-need-mesh-43ab6f6273cd>.