Residential Racial Segregation and the Education of African-American Youth
Winter 2012
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. – 12:50 p.m.
TBD

Instructor: Mr. Richard Rothstein
E-mail: riroth@epi.org
Office hours: by appointment

Teaching Assistant: Ethan Hutt
Office: 25A Cubberley
E-mail: ehutt@stanford.edu
Office hours: by appointment

Course Description

This course concerns the ongoing residential racial segregation of metropolitan areas in the United States, how such segregation is the product of federal, state, and local policy, rather than only unintended demographic and economic trends and personal choices, and how this segregation contributes to lower academic achievement, increased crime, public health crises, and employment inequality for African-Americans. We will consider the enduring effects of explicit public policies at the federal, state, and local levels that have created systematic residential barriers that support ongoing inequality for African-Americans in the nation’s social, cultural, and economic life. Over the course of the semester, we will consider evidence from a wide range of public policies to segregate neighborhoods, many of which continue to have an impact on housing patterns, including exclusionary zoning, discriminatory mortgage (including sub-prime) lending, racial zoning and “Section 8” voucher policies, bank lending, public housing siting, police practices, discriminatory provision of services, practices of the state-regulated real estate industry, and others. We will consider legal, demographic, and sociological literature to judge whether public policies promoting residential segregation that are no longer actively pursued can still be deemed responsible for ongoing racial isolation.

We begin by exploring the black-white achievement gap and briefly summarizing an ongoing debate in which Mr. Rothstein has been involved regarding the extent to which the gap can be attributed to shortcomings of schools, to socioeconomic differences (or both). We could devote an entire semester to this debate, but instead will review it briefly before embarking on an investigation of the unusual isolation of many African-American families in relatively homogenous racial enclaves ("ghettos") in metropolitan areas, and how this concentration affects the prospects of youth who are educated in these enclaves. (Because we will give short shrift to this debate only as background for the main topic of the course, there is a longer list than usual of optional readings for students who want to pursue this topic further.)

We will then turn to the main topic of this course, the causes of residential racial segregation, and whether its contemporary forms are "de facto" (the result of demographic and economic trends and of personal choices and private prejudices) or "de jure" (the result of racially discriminatory federal, state and local policy). The course will conclude by exploring possible remedies to ongoing racial segregation.
Most Americans, even the best-educated, have now forgotten the explicit public policies and practices that segregated our metropolitan areas by race. If successful, this course will help uncover this forgotten history. This course's success will also be measured by whether you help expand what we know about this history, by the independent research investigations that you will undertake as part of this course.

Eligibility

This class is open to doctoral students, master's students, and undergraduates, by consent of the instructor. Admission to the course is by permission of the instructor; strong preference for limited spaces will be given to students who take the course for a letter grade. You can enroll in the class for 3, 4, or 5 units – whatever works best for your needs. Requirements are the same for all students, regardless of the number of units they are earning in the class.

Course Requirements

The grade for this course depends primarily on the quality of each student’s work on the written assignments that are defined below. Each student will be expected to engage in a research project, the aspiration of which is to advance our knowledge of this field. Although the shorter written assignments will be graded, 70% of the course grade will be based on this research project.

More reading has been assigned as "required" for this course than most students can reasonably do in one term. Some students will want to skim some of the required reading or skip some of it entirely. The expectation is that each student will complete approximately 70% of the assigned reading for each week. There will also be two short quizzes, one on Tuesday, January 31st and one on Tuesday February 21st, for the sole purpose of determining whether you have kept up on the reading and paid attention to the lectures. Each of these quizzes will comprise 5% of the course grade. There will be enough choice on these quizzes to enable students who have completed 70% of the required reading to achieve perfect scores.

Class Structure

The class is scheduled for two two-hour blocks, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. We will generally use only three of the available four hours for class time. One day (sometimes Tuesday, sometimes Thursday) per week will generally be a lecture/presentation by Mr. Rothstein, and the other a discussion section with either Mr. Rothstein, Mr. Hutt, or both.

Critical Reaction Papers (10% each): Write two short reaction papers dealing with the assigned readings for a particular week. (However, you must pick weeks that cover topics that are different from the one you will expand upon in your research paper.) One reaction paper, based on topics covered in weeks 1 to 5. The other reaction paper, based on topics covered in weeks 6 to 10. In each of these papers you should provide a brief critical response to some significant issue encountered in the book or other assigned readings, or the lecture, for a particular week. You don't need to respond to a whole book or the whole array of readings for a particular week – you can select an issue that particularly interests you. A focused discussion of one issue works better in a short paper like this than an effort to cover a number of different issues. Feel free to make connections with other things you know, but be sure that you draw on the readings or lecture from that week for part of your evidence or ideas or examples. You will be evaluated on the basis of the thoughtfulness, depth of
understanding, and analytical insight that is reflected in your paper. A paper that simply recapitulates ideas that were presented in the readings or lecture/discussion will not be satisfactory, nor will a paper that is completely unrelated to the readings or lecture/discussion. These papers should be approximately 1000 words in length. They can run longer, if you wish, but this is not necessary or even necessarily desirable. Papers for the topic of a given week should normally be submitted before you begin your readings for the following week, but if you need more time, extensions may be arranged with Mr. Hutt. He will grant such extensions by considering his and Mr. Rothstein's work loads, as well as yours. All papers in this class must be submitted by e-mail attachment, with copies to Mr. Rothstein and to Mr. Hutt. Save your paper as an MS Word document; if you use a Mac, please save your document in a MS Word version that is no more recent than Word 2007. We will be using Word’s “tracking changes” function to make comments in your text. We will send papers back to you as e-mail attachments as well.

Research Paper (70%): In the broad field of residential racial segregation, there are many topics that we will not have time to explore in the lectures or reading for this course, and many topics that we will cover in the lectures and reading, but not nearly deeply enough. And much remains unknown to contemporary scholars in this field. Each student in the class will select one of these topics for a research paper. A list of possible topics, not exclusive, from which you may choose will be provided, although you may propose your own topic, not on the suggested list. Mr. Hutt or Mr. Rothstein will consult with you regarding your choice.

There is nothing wrong with picking a topic that you may later expand upon for an honor’s thesis, master’s thesis, qualifying paper, or doctoral dissertation. Indeed, this is commendable. Should you decide to approach it in this way, please consult with Mr. Hutt or Mr. Rothstein to make sure that the portion you undertake for this course is appropriate.

A description of your proposed research paper of no more than 250 words should be submitted by Thursday, February 2nd.

Your research paper would normally run about 5,000 words, but it will be evaluated on quality, not length. Excellent papers could be longer or shorter than 5,000 words. The research papers will be due on March 20, but students are strongly encouraged to share partial drafts with Mr. Hutt or Mr. Rothstein far enough in advance of the due date to be able to take advantage of suggestions.

Readings

Books: The following books are required or recommended reading, in whole or in substantial part, for the course; all are available through the Stanford Book Store. One copy of each is on reserve at Green Library:

Required Books:


Polikoff, Alexander. 2006. Waiting for Gautreaux. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press,


**Course Outline**

Below are the topics we will cover, week by week, with the readings for each week. The readings should be completed before the specified class date. The required readings for each week are listed in suggested order. Required readings may be revised in small way prior to the beginning of the semester; however, students wanting to get a head start can be assured that required readings for the first two weeks of the semester will not be removed.

* = Readings available on Blackboard.
# = Books for purchase or available on reserve at Green Library
& = Readings available online

**Week 1 – Complete readings by January 10, Tuesday**

**Introduction to Course and Review of Debate on Causes of the Black-White "Achievement Gap"**

Required Reading:


Optional Reading:


Week 2 - Complete readings by January 17, Tuesday

Racial Isolation, Concentrated Disadvantage, and Their Effects

Required Reading:

[Note: much of the balance of this book will be assigned reading for Week 10 of the course. If you have time, you may get more out of the book if you read it straight through for Week 2, rather than waiting to complete it at the end of the course].


[Note: Other sections of this book will be assigned reading for Weeks 4 and 10 of the course. If you have time, you may get more out of the book if you read it straight through for Week 2, rather than waiting to complete it at the end of the course].


**Optional Reading:**


**Week 3 - Complete readings by January 24, Tuesday**

**Creating Segregation: Federal Policy in the 20th Century**

**Required Reading:**


Optional Reading:


**Week 4 - Complete readings by January 31, Tuesday**

**The Legal History of Racial Isolation and Segregation**

Required Reading (Unless otherwise indicated read the Court opinion as well as concurring and dissenting opinions):


(Pay special attention to the opinion – concurring in part and dissenting in part – of Justice Powell)

http://laws.findlaw.com/us/418/717.html (Pay special attention to the concurring opinion of Justice Stewart)

Arlington Heights v. Metropolitan Housing Corp. 429 U.S. 252. U.S. Supreme Court, January 11, 1977..

Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1, et al. No. 05-908 and 05-915. U.S. Supreme Court, June 28, 2007..
http://laws.findlaw.com/us/000/05-908.html

http://www.prrac.org/pdf/HousingScholarsBrief.pdf

Optional Reading:


http://laws.findlaw.com/us/245/60.html

Corrigan v. Buckley. 271 U.S. 323. U.S. Supreme Court, May 24, 1926,


Week 5 - Complete readings by February 7, Tuesday

Federal, State, and Local Policy in the 20th Century

Required Reading:

If your surname starts with the letters A-M


If your surname starts with the letters N-Z:


(If you have a particular interest in one rather than the other of these two books, you can trade assignments with another student. My only goal is to ensure that half the class reads each book.)


Optional Reading:


**Week 6 - Complete readings by February 14, Tuesday**

Public Housing and Subsidized Developers

Required Reading:


**Week 7 - Complete readings by February 21, Tuesday**

Racial Zoning, Exclusionary Zoning, Urban Renewal, and Municipal Boundaries, and Discriminatory Provision of Services

Required Reading:


Optional Reading:


**Week 8 - Complete readings by February 28, Tuesday**

**Contemporary Issues: Mortgage Lending, Real Estate Practices, and Continued Racial Isolation**

Required Reading:


**Week 9 - Complete readings by March 6, Tuesday**

**Federal Labor Market and Income Policy and Race**

**Required Reading:**


**Optional:**


**Week 10 - Complete readings by March 13, Tuesday**

**Policy Recommendations and Conclusions**

**Required Reading:**


Optional Reading:
