



Structural Racism and it's Causes in the SF Bay Area

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AUTHORIAL SUPPORT
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Racial Inequality

- Recent events have revealed racial disparities in both policing and the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - In Louisiana, for example, by the end of April, 2020, about 70% of the people who died from Covid-19 were Black, though only a third of that state's population is. Similarly, 40% of deaths in Michigan were Black although just 14% of the population.

Police kill a disproportionate number of black people

Category	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE
US population	13%	17%	63%
All people killed by police	31%	12%	52%
People killed by policing while not attacking	39%	12%	46%

Data from the FBI's 2012 Supplementary Homicide Report



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Racial Disparities

- Racial disparities (inequality) is visible along virtually any dimension of well-being: education, employment, health, income, wealth, incarceration, etc.
- Examples:
 - Life Expectancy as of 2014 for Black Men = 73 years, for White Men 77 years.
 - Infant Mortality: As of 2012, for Black children 11.3 per 1,000 vs. 5.1 per 1,000 for white children.
 - GED or High School diploma: Black rate 92% v. white rate 96%
 - College graduation: 22.8% for Black people v. 42.1% for whites.
 - Unemployment (as of June, 2020): 15.4% for Black people v. 10.2% for whites.
 - Poverty rates: 34.7% for Black families v. 8.8% for white families (2016).
 - Rate of Incarceration: 1,730 per 100,000 for Black people v. 270 for whites.



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Racial Inequality

The question is what explains disparities or inequality. Broadly speaking, there are basically three theories to explain persistent racial disparities:

1. Differences between racial groups (cultural, biological, genetic, etc.)
2. Discrimination (public and/or private, past and/or present)
3. Systems & Structures



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Which of these explanations fit the disparate impact of the pandemic?

- Are the death rates for Black Americans explained by discrimination (by refusal or worse treatment) or by other factors?
- There is plenty of evidence that Black Americans have disproportionate co-morbidities (e.g. Diabetes, hypertension, obesity, etc.)
- But there is also plenty of evidence that they:
 - Disproportionately worked in “essential” jobs
 - Jobs that can’t be performed remotely (this was key to infection)
 - Lived in more crowded (not denser) neighborhoods
 - Faced more economic pressure to go to work
- Also, health outcomes were a byproduct of many of the same structural forces (food deserts, etc.)



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Models of Racism

- Individual/interpersonal Racism model
 - Model has a bad actor, a victim, an act, and a invidious intent. This is the primary model of our legal system.
- Institutional Racism Model
 - “neutral” rules that produce racial disparities.
- Structural/Systems Model
 - Interaction among system elements generates racial disparities, and a disparity in one domain carries over to others



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Structural Racism Defined



- ▶ Structural racism is a claim that opportunity structures, which shape life chances and well-being, are *racialized*, meaning that they *produce* and *reinforce* racial advantages and disadvantages.
- ▶ These structures operate without respect to individual choices or discriminatory intent.
- ▶ I will explain this model, and how it operates.

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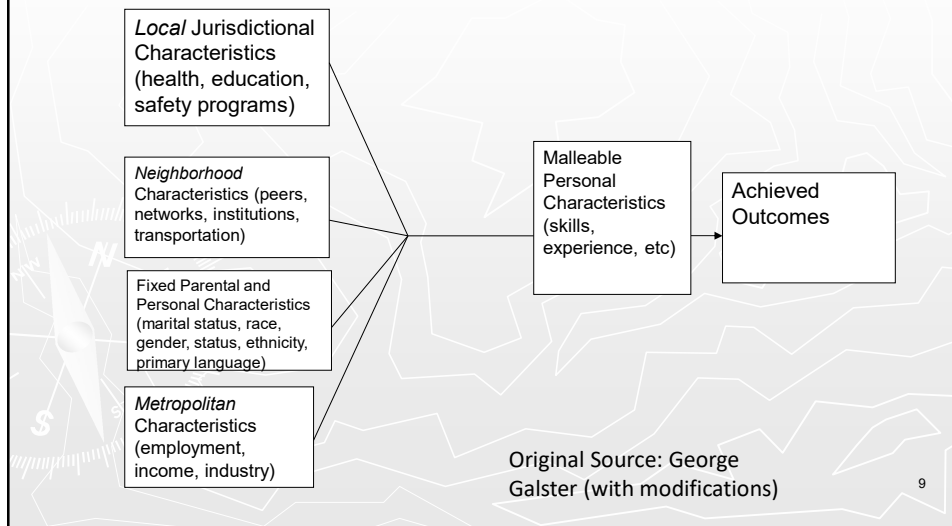
Opportunity Structures

- ▶ Opportunity structures are the web of influences beyond our control that enhance and constrain our ability to succeed and excel.
- ▶ Life chances are shaped by *opportunity structures*, and those structures are often just as important, if not more so, than the choices that individuals make.



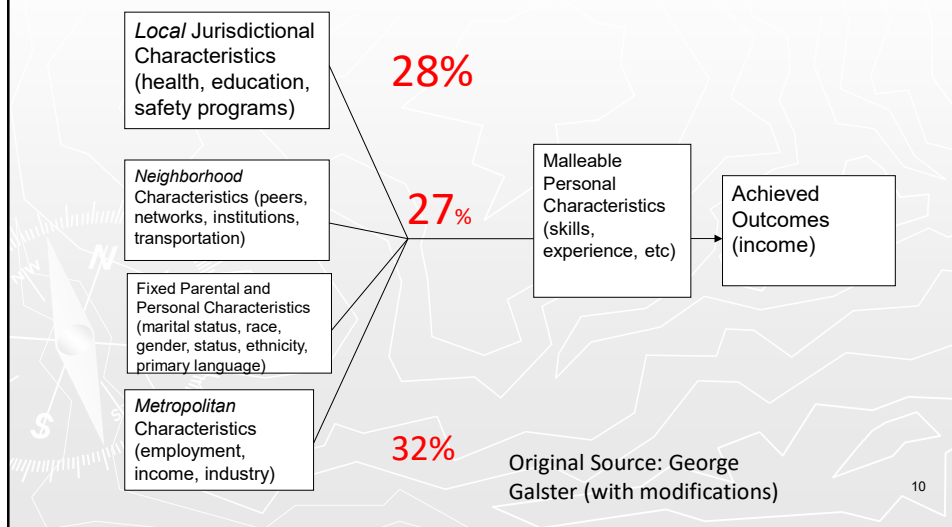
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The *opportunity structure* includes the geographically varying set of institutions, systems, and markets of the area in which a person is born.



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The relative significance of nested parts of the opportunity structure (% variation in upward mobility explained by):



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The highly uneven Geography of Opportunity...



...Some people ride the
“Up” escalator to reach
opportunity

...Others have to run up
the “Down” escalator to
get there

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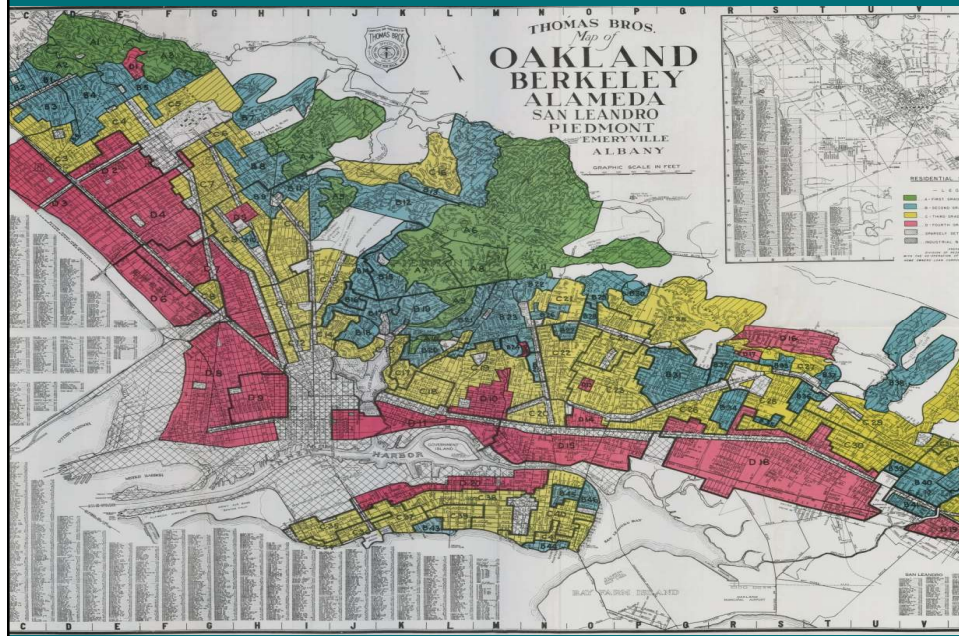
Place Matters

- ▶ Place (geography) is the key to the opportunity structure. It is location that chiefly shapes differential access to resources within it by race.
- ▶ Racial residential segregation is the primary force that sorts people based on race into different positions or places within the opportunity structure.

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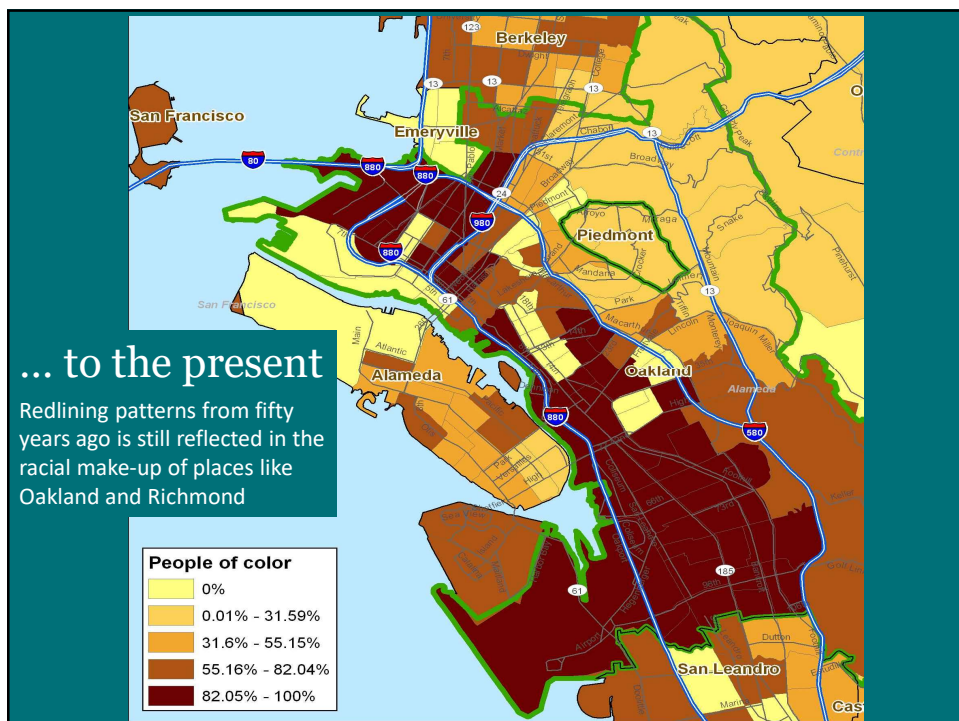
Redlining: from the past...



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... to the present

Redlining patterns from fifty years ago is still reflected in the racial make-up of places like Oakland and Richmond



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The Fair Housing Act of 1968



The last major legislative victory of the civil rights movement, the Fair Housing Act amended the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (known as Title VIII).

The bill languished in Congress for years. When MLK was assassinated, the bill was rushed through Congress, and was law a week later.

It is the policy of the United States to provide, within constitutional limitations, for fair housing throughout the United States.



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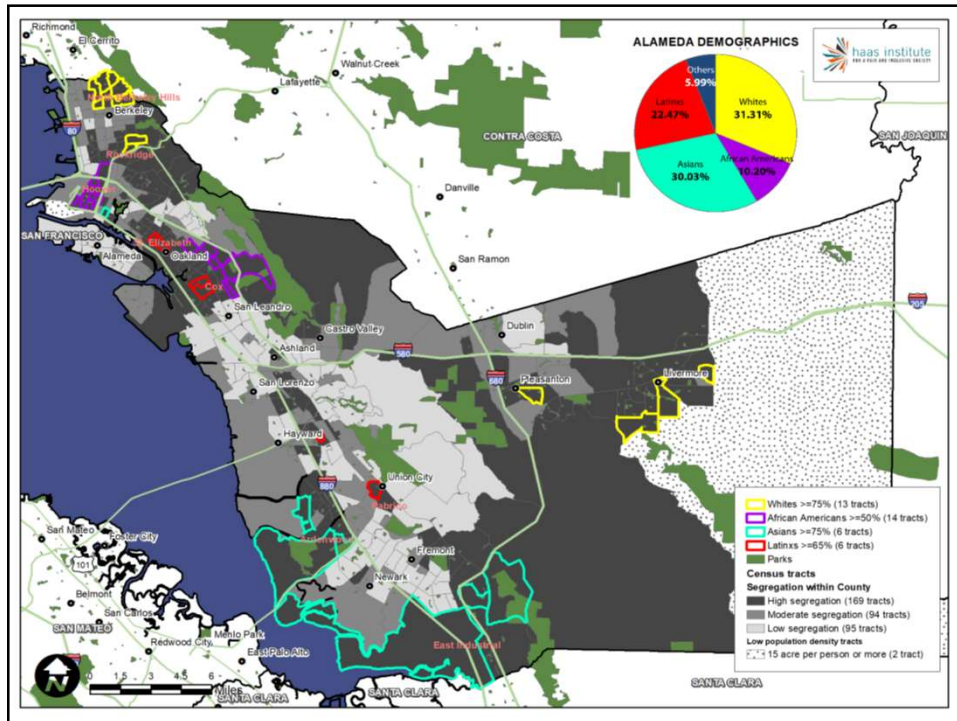
Structural Racism in Time



- Structural racism is not just a residue of past discriminatory practices. In some respects, Structural Racism becomes more pronounced as we move forward in time, not less.
- For example, the most racially segregated cities in the country are in the Northeast and Midwest, places like Detroit, Chicago and Milwaukee, not in the South, as may be supposed, if structural racism was merely vestigial.
- Many of its crucial features are contemporary developments, such as reverse redlining and mass incarceration.

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Divergence Index Trends



- Key finding: the Bay Area is significantly **more** segregated in 2010 than it was in 1970.
 - 7 of 9 Bay Area Counties have higher Divergence Index scores in 2010 than in 1970, and most are much higher.
 - Only two counties have lower Divergence Index scores (Alameda and SF), and only modestly so.
 - Marin has had a threefold increase in the level of segregation, even if the initial level was fairly low. The level of segregation in Sonoma has more than quintupled.

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Divergence Index in the Bay Area

