

# **Integrating Neighborhoods, Segregating Power**

By

Jenny Wenjie Chen

BA in Economics  
University of Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia, PA (2014)

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master in City Planning

at the

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

May 2020

© 2020 Jenny Wenjie Chen. All Rights Reserved

The author hereby grants to MIT the permission to reproduce and to distribute publicly paper and electronic copies of the thesis document in whole or in part in any medium now known or hereafter created.

Author \_\_\_\_\_  
Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
May 13, 2020

Certified by \_\_\_\_\_  
Devin Michelle Bunten  
Assistant Professor of Urban Economics and Housing  
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by \_\_\_\_\_  
Ceasar McDowell  
Professor of the Practice  
Chair, MCP Committee  
Department of Urban Studies and Planning



# **Integrating Neighborhoods, Segregating Power**

By

Jenny Wenjie Chen

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
On May 13, 2020 in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in City  
Planning

## **ABSTRACT**

Since the 1990's, tenant-based vouchers have exceeded the number of conventional public housing units in the United States. Policies to expand housing choice with mobile vouchers have grown in popularity despite program evaluations that have demonstrated modest financial and educational gains for young children and adverse experiences of social isolation and racial hostility for Black families. While existing research has focused on material and social outcomes for households who move from high-poverty to low-poverty "opportunity" neighborhoods, I investigate the effects on the political power of Black families who utilize vouchers to move from predominantly-Black neighborhoods in Boston to predominantly-white suburban towns. I draw on critical race theory and theories of collective efficacy to argue that current housing integration policies reproduce racial power dynamics despite operating on seemingly race-neutral terms. In conversations with local public housing stakeholders, I find that racial hostility and a lack of resources can cause tenants to socially isolate and withdraw from political processes in their new communities. These dynamics diminish the ability of Black households with vouchers to organize for collective priorities. Addressing this will require race-conscious approaches to political representation, resource provision, and community development.

Thesis Supervisor: Devin Michelle Bunten  
Title: Assistant Professor of Urban Economics and Housing

Thesis Reader: Lawrence Vale  
Title: Professor of Urban Design and Planning  
Associate Dean

## Acknowledgments

This project would not have been possible without the patience, trust, and encouragement of my advisor, Devin Bunten. She is one of the only economists I trust and I was incredibly lucky to have her insights and color-coded edits as a part of my research and writing process.

I also want to thank my interviewees in the Greater Boston Area for their openness, time, and resources. The honest conversations we had together helped me understand the deep complexities of an already-nuanced topic.

To my DUSP family, my gratitude is hard to describe. Countless coffee breaks, happy hours, Whatsapp group chats, meals, and walks on the river fueled, taught, and inspired me. I was so sorry to have to abruptly say goodbye in early March with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, and I look forward to many, many future reunions.

Finally, thanks to my family for their support and encouragement during my time at MIT. I am especially grateful to my husband, Brian, who weathered our two years in two different cities with much more patience and grace than I did! It's good to be home.

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	6
Literature Review.....	10
Theoretical Lenses.....	14
The Boston Housing Policy Context.....	18
Methods.....	24
Findings and Discussion.....	25
Addressing Integration Ideology.....	34
Conclusion.....	36
Works Cited.....	37

## Section 1: Introduction

Since the 1990's, the impetus of public housing policy in the United States has been the creation of mixed-income communities, either on the scale of a development (as in HOPE VI<sup>1</sup>) or on the scale of a neighborhood (as in Moving to Opportunity<sup>2</sup>). Framed as efforts to combat concentrated poverty, such policies have operated by replacing public housing projects with mixed-income developments or by providing residents with housing vouchers to utilize in the private housing market (Joseph et al., 2007). The popularity of these programs has grown among federal policymakers and local implementers in recent decades, with tenant-based vouchers now exceeding the number of conventional public housing units in most large U.S. cities (Vale & Freemark, 2012). A recent reform in the housing choice voucher program known as Small Area Fair Market Rent (SAFMR) has attempted to make housing in higher-income neighborhoods more accessible by providing higher compensation to landlords in more expensive places.

These shifts have occurred despite policy evaluations that have demonstrated modest gains in financial and educational outcomes for young children who grow up in low-poverty “opportunity” neighborhoods (Chetty et al., 2016). Additionally, Black families have reported adverse experiences of racial hostility and isolation after moving to predominantly-white communities (Keene & Padilla, 2010). Even in the face of such results, researchers and policymakers remain dedicated to the promises that come with moving to wealthier, usually whiter neighborhoods, at times lamenting the small percentage (12.9%) of families with children who actually use vouchers to do so (Sard & Rice, 2016). Given these contradictions, the commitment to this form of racial integration demands an interrogation.

In this paper, I argue that U.S. housing integration policies uphold white supremacy<sup>3</sup> and reproduce racial power dynamics despite operating on seemingly race-neutral terms. I focus on

---

<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere program – better known as HOPE VI - aimed to redevelop public housing projects as mixed-income and mixed-tenure communities. Between 1993 and 2011, 260 HOPE VI grants were awarded. Critics of the program have cited HOPE VI for displacing extremely low-income residents and reducing the overall number of units (Vale et al., 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Moving to Opportunity (MTO) was a HUD research effort to examine the effects of moving very low-income families with children living in public housing to low-poverty “opportunity neighborhoods”. The demonstration involved more than 4,600 families and ran in 5 cities (Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York City) between 1994 and 1998 (HUD, n.d.).

<sup>3</sup> A political, socio-economic, and ideological system in which white people enjoy structural advantages and rights that other racial and ethnic groups do not, both at a collective and an individual level (dRworks, 2020).

the experiences of Black households who utilize housing vouchers in the Boston metropolitan area where the SAFMR policy was implemented in 2019. The Boston Housing Authority's use of SAFMR sought to encourage tenants to move to wealthier suburban towns where populations tend to be whiter. In these predominantly-white neighborhoods, I aim to understand how the political power and collective efficacy of low-income Black people might change. Combating the potential marginalization of low-income households of color in high-income places will require the active participation and transformation of both institutions and individuals. My understanding of "politics" extends beyond its common definition as the activities of government or formal interest-group organizations to also consider the aspects of social, cultural, and institutional life that are subject to collective decision-making. Drawing from the power analyses offered by critical race theory as well as the insights provided in interviews with local housing policy stakeholders, I illustrate the racial ideology that has produced the mobile voucher program in its current form as well as its implications for residents' political power. My study offers an explanation for the ways that Black households' social experiences in majority-white suburban communities could inhibit their participation in collective decision-making and advocacy.

The existing literature on the effects of housing integration efforts in the United States has been limited by its treatment of households as individual actors with primarily material interests. Traditionally, the focus of such studies is on individual outcomes like economic status, health, and educational attainment. This kind of research framework omits the important role of Black neighborhoods as places of political organizing, identity formation, community-building, cultural production, and resistance (Crenshaw, 1988; Lipman, 2018; Walton, 2016). Additionally, Black neighborhoods are treated as places to escape rather than as outcomes of historical and ongoing processes of racial oppression that continue to shape the lives of Black households regardless of where they live. The failure to incorporate theories of collective efficacy and consider the importance of resident political power in different neighborhood contexts leaves a significant gap in the literature that I aim to identify and address.

My research begins with a critical examination of the integrationist ideology that has fueled recent public housing efforts. With this lens, I then assess the effects of mobile voucher programs on the political power of Black households who move to predominantly-white neighborhoods. I find that residents are likely to face racial hostility in the housing search

process and upon moving. This leads to experiences of social isolation and withdrawal, which can diminish the ability of voucher holders to organize and voice collective priorities and needs.

The following section reviews the literature on urban poverty and the effects of mixed-income housing programs on residents and communities. In Section Three, I offer a critique of integrationist ideology and then draw from critical race theory to propose alternative lenses to assess political power in integrated neighborhoods. Following this, I describe the Boston housing policy context and my research methodology. The next section discusses the social and political dynamics of predominantly-white neighborhoods and their impacts on Black political power. Finally, I identify broad policy proposals that aim to retain and ideally build the political power of racially marginalized people.

### *Positionality*

Positionality challenges the notion of values-free research, arguing instead that personal and social identities, values, and privileges influence how individuals understand the world (Matsuda, 1989). It requires researchers to answer explicitly: who am I and what is my impetus for pursuing this topic? Recognizing this important dynamic, I want to preface the remainder of my study with a brief reflection on my identity, positionality, and research lens.

I grew up as one of a handful of Asian-American families in the predominantly-white suburbs of Philadelphia. My childhood was filled with the treasure trove of public resources available in middle- and upper-class suburban communities: a high-quality education, a secure sense of public safety, and well-maintained libraries and open spaces. However, while I built friendships in school, my parents had rare interactions with our white neighbors and did not participate in local political processes, shying away from the school board and other public forums. As an adult, I made my home in the city, a place where tight-knit Asian-American immigrant communities in Chinatown and South Philadelphia have actively engaged in organizing struggles and local politics to defend public institutions, plan neighborhoods, and prioritize the needs of low-income residents.

These personal experiences have helped me begin to recognize what is at stake for people of color in the pursuit of the “American dream” and the proximity to whiteness. I do not purport to fully comprehend the unique and varied experiences of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other Asian people in the United States and I do not claim that communities of color have a shared



experience of white supremacy. My focus in this study on racial ideologies and the impacts of housing policy on Black communities comes from a recognition that anti-Black racism has been the driver of the most violent and repressive actions of both private and public actors. As planning and policy efforts attempt to address these injustices, it is necessary to elevate the experiences of the most impacted communities and consider the critiques of scholars who have challenged the dubious premises and consequences of existing integration efforts. Their voices have been on the margins of the housing integration debate, and this study is an effort to center them.

## Section 2: Literature Review

The racialization of urban poverty occurred following the migration of African Americans into Northern and Midwestern cities in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Given the historical and structural power of anti-Black racism, “the contemporary fusion of race and poverty remains the most resilient and vicious in American history” (Katz, 1993, p. 11). Because of this, public housing programs that operate on the basis of class are not race-neutral in their ideology or impact. Current housing strategies tend to respond to cultural and social organizational theories of poverty that minimize both the role of structural oppression in reproducing racially-segregated neighborhoods as well as the value of social relationships in low-income communities of color (Joseph et al., 2007). Specifically, the cultural explanation of poverty suggests that poverty persists as the result of the values and norms of low-income people (Lewis, 1966). Black neighborhoods with high poverty rates are characterized as socially isolating and disorganized (Wilson, 1987). Within these communities, social ties and cohesion are considered more localized and strained than they are for middle-income people, suggesting that the ability to utilize networks for positive job, health, school, and other outcomes is limited in low-income communities (Kadushin & Jones, 1992). However, empirical research has challenged the assumptions and implications of cultural explanations of poverty, demonstrating a high level of mutual support and problem-solving among residents in public housing communities (Walton, 2016).

Besides being empirically dubious, these theories also reduce the consequences of concentrated poverty and the role of social connections to individual material outcomes. Doing so frames the issue of poverty as solely one of concentrated neighborhoods in which individuals are unable to seek out employment and educational opportunities. In fact, policy decisions, which produced high-poverty places, continue to reproduce them by denying adequate investment to poor Black communities (Mitchell & Franco, 2018). The creation of destructive highways or the denial of public services to poor neighborhoods is actually facilitated by this concentration and such actions continue to be carried out in the interests of the white political elite (Jackson, 1987; Karas, 2015). Additionally, the treatment of social networks as a means to achieving material goals diminishes the importance of relationships in building community identity, maintaining safety, or sharing and preserving cultural practices. Social ties also form the

basis of collective power, which disinvested communities have built and enacted to challenge harmful infrastructure projects and advocate for funding (McAdam & Paulsen, 1993). Given their multi-faceted roles for both individuals and communities, social relationships must be carefully considered in assessing the impacts of public policy.

The identification of concentrated poverty and the lack of productive social ties as the core issues experienced by Black communities has had a profound impact on recent public housing policy. As Joseph et al. (2007) note, “mixed-income development responds explicitly to the social organizational and cultural explanations of poverty but does not address macrostructural efforts such as changes in the U.S. economy and structural discrimination” (p. 376). Similarly, the housing voucher program, which supports tenants who rent in the private housing market, is framed using the language of choice. This is a response to the perceived choicelessness of concentrated poverty experienced in public housing towers, where housing authorities believed residents were trapped by social and financial constraints (Vale & Freemark, 2012). Ultimately, these efforts aim to build social capital by simply placing lower-income residents in proximity with wealthier ones, but empirical research raises questions about the extent to which these processes actually play out in both mixed-income developments and in higher-income neighborhoods where low-income families are relocated.

Studies of housing integration efforts have demonstrated the limitations of physical proximity in fostering social relationships and have challenged assumptions about social cohesion, which sociologists have failed to attribute to low-income people, particularly public housing residents. Housing integration has taken on two primary forms in the last several decades, one of which is the redevelopment of public housing projects into low-density mixed-income developments, an aim of both the HOPE VI and Choice Neighborhoods programs. Integration in these developments supposedly occurs on two levels – the physical integration of the buildings into the fabric of the local neighborhood and the social integration of poor and wealthy families within the properties (L. Tach & Emory, 2017). Despite these goals of social mixing, Chaskin and Joseph (2010) identified difficulties promoting interaction across income groups in three Chicago HOPE VI developments even when governance structures and events were established to meet the interests of homeowners, market-rate renters, or relocated public housing residents. Gatherings and community leadership boards were organized for all residents, but they were considered to be *for* specific sub-populations. For example, most social events

sponsored by the development tended to attract substantially more relocated public housing residents because tenants of market-rate units associated these offerings with social services (Chaskin & Joseph, 2010). In another development-scale analysis, Tach (2009) introduces the concept of framing to explain the tendency of public housing residents to be more involved in community-building and social control than their new, wealthier neighbors in a Boston HOPE VI development. While former public housing residents returned with a positive frame focused on an improved neighborhood, newcomers arrived with negative preconceptions of the space and people associated with public housing.

The second broad strategy of housing integration has operated by dispersing low-income residents from high-poverty neighborhoods to low-poverty “opportunity” neighborhoods, a concept that arises from a mischaracterization of the dynamics that have produced spatial inequality. The notion of an opportunity neighborhood has a meritocratic basis, suggesting that people in these places are actively taking advantage of resources to generate material benefits rather than passively benefiting from privileges that have been cordoned off by decades of racialized housing and neighborhood restrictions (Goetz, 2019). This depiction also downplays the ongoing constraints of structural racism and interpersonal discrimination that impact life outcomes for Black households even when they live in opportunity neighborhoods. A recent study on race and economic opportunity in the United States attempted to identify a neighborhood where poor Black boys do as well as their white peers, finding no such neighborhood in the country (Chetty et al., 2019).

The historical and ongoing role of race in life outcomes may illuminate the evaluations of housing voucher programs, which have shown limited or mixed economic, education, and social benefits for low-income families who moved to opportunity neighborhoods. Suburban participants of the Gautreaux program<sup>4</sup> were more likely to be employed and their children were more likely to finish school and enter college compared to their urban counterparts (Duncan & Zuberi, 2006). Gautreaux’s success led to the implementation of Moving to Opportunity (MTO),

---

<sup>4</sup> In 1966, *Gautreaux et al. v. Chicago Housing Authority (CHA)* alleged that the CHA and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) deliberately segregated Black families through its tenant and site selection policies. A part of the settlement against HUD, reached in 1976, was to expand housing opportunities for public housing residents. Families who chose to participate in the Gautreaux Program received Section 8 rent certificates that enabled them to move out of high poverty areas of Chicago and to other parts of Chicago or to suburban neighborhoods where no more than 30% of residents were African-American. The Gautreaux Program ended in 1998 after moving 25,000 individuals. Half of them moved to affluent, white-majority suburbs (BPI Chicago, n.d.).

which produced economic gains for some children who moved from high-poverty areas to low-poverty areas when they were less than 13 years old. However, children who were older than 13 actually fell behind their peers who remained in high-poverty areas (Chetty et al., 2016). Few families who participated in MTO had ties with new neighbors despite hopes that relocation would mean better access to information about schools, jobs, and other opportunities (de Souza Briggs et al., 2010). In another study of teenagers who relocated to mostly-white areas of Yonkers, movers' neighborhood ties were limited to the immediate complex and movers had few white contacts outside of the public housing development (de Souza Briggs, 1998).

The disappointing results of housing integration efforts, particularly with respect to developing cross-racial social ties, could be attributed to the process of stigmatization, which “may work to reinforce the systems of social stratification that have given rise to urban ghettos in the first place and may even contribute to the reemergence of such marginalized spaces in their new communities” (Keene & Padilla, 2010, p. 3). Essentially, Black movers are associated with high poverty and crime rates in urban areas, and become targets of heightened policing and housing discrimination. In response, Keene and Padilla's Chicago interviewees described participating in “defensive othering”, a process used to deny membership in a discredited category, as well as selective association, which can lead to isolation from potential peers (2010). These forms of coping in a hostile and racist environment can actually diminish social support, cohesion, and collective efficacy. Researchers have typically focused on the linkages between these factors and people's health and job outcomes. I aim to extend this analysis to consider impacts on individual and collective political power.

### Section 3: Theoretical Lenses

The theories that have driven efforts of housing integration have framed high-poverty, inner-city neighborhoods as something to escape and eliminate. However, the empirical research explored above has called into question the mechanism of social capital that supposedly enhances low-income peoples' connections to employment and educational opportunities in either suburban communities or mixed-income developments. Despite these findings, local housing authorities and federal policymakers continue to champion and divert funding to efforts like the Section 8 voucher program. I argue that there is a particular integrationist ideology driving such decisions, which has implications for the political power of low-income Black residents in predominantly-white suburban neighborhoods. Utilizing theories of Black nationalism and social cohesion, I also aim to identify the policies and practices that will allow us to achieve integrated, just communities that value difference, power-building, and self-determination.

#### *Critical Race Theory: The Integration vs. Black Nationalism Debate*

Critical race theory emerged in the 1970's out of legal scholarship in response to the stalled progress of civil rights litigation and its limited ability to produce meaningful change (Taylor, 1998). At its core, critical race theory holds that racism is pervasive and not aberrational; the system of white supremacy serves material and psychological purposes for white people; and both knowledge and the concept of race are socially constructed, the products of relationships and unique historical experiences rather than essentialized features of individuals or groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). These tenets, which challenge popularly-held notions of liberalism in the United States, have been sorely lacking from the dominant discussion of housing integration. I examine a key debate within Black freedom struggles between integration and Black nationalism as examined by critical race theorists. While the discourse has typically focused on the practice of educational institutions (like affirmative action in admissions and hiring), I argue that it also provides a compelling theoretical framework for understanding today's housing integration efforts and their effects on Black political power.

The dominance of the integrationist ideology is evident in its non-controversy today. Liberal policymakers and scholars disagree about *how* to achieve integration in our institutions

and neighborhoods, not whether we should. Integration is a radical demand for social transformation, but it has been assimilated into dominant narratives of progress and enlightenment. Specifically, integrationists understand racism as a distortion of reason and an inability to understand that people are all the same at their core (Peller, 1990). Instead of operating on ignorance and the myths of stereotypes, integrationists argue that individuals and institutions must transcend racial consciousness and treat everyone equally based on seemingly neutral norms. This vision is attractive to proponents of current housing integration efforts, tapping into deeply-embedded American ideals of merit, individualism, and fairness.

However, as critical race theorist Gregory Peller (1990) observes: “deep-rooted assumptions of cultural universality and neutrality have removed from critical view the ways that American institutions reflect dominant racial and ethnic characteristics, with the consequence that race reform has proceeded on the basis of integration into ‘white’ cultural spaces – practices that many whites mistake as racially neutral” (p. 762). Placing a normative value on so-called “neutral” standards of merit and professionalism in schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods ignores their roots in white supremacy. For example, in segregated white neighborhoods, local political processes and behaviors were produced by a culture that considered it normal to exclude Black people (Jackson, 1987). Therefore, there is nothing universal, objective, or idealistic about white, middle-class standards of behavior or forms of political participation. Efforts of integration into white spaces thus demand an interrogation of how these dominant and pervasive community norms impact the social and political experiences of new residents.

Black nationalism and its analysis of integration and liberalism drive this point even further. Nationalism recognizes a positive and liberating role for race consciousness, recognizing Black people as a distinct community in the United States with a cohesive identity produced by shared social histories and struggles against enslavement, domestic terrorism, alienation, and racism (Robinson, 1983). This historicized view of social relations counters the integrationists’ universalist perspective that considers Black and white people as individuals who just happen to be black or white, rather than as members of a community with common experiences and aspirations. Black nationalism also departs significantly from the white supremacist position, of which it has been accused of sharing separatist goals, because it locates community identity in historical experiences shaped by racialized control. Nationalists call for a redistribution of power and material resources. On the other hand, white supremacists rely on assumptions of essential or

“natural” features of racial groups on which to justify dominance, oppression, and segregation (Peller, 1990).

In response to school integration efforts, nationalists raised two concerns that are also relevant for today’s housing integration processes. First, integration would decimate the existing organized institutions in the Black community, resulting in a loss of social power. Integrationist policies operate by moving individuals into white communities and institutions rather than shifting resources to supporting Black neighborhoods. Second, integration poses a threat of assimilation by adaptation to white norms (Peller, 1990). These risks have consequences for Black power, which nationalists believed needed to emerge from group solidarity. As Crenshaw (1988) put it: “History has shown that the most valuable political asset of the Black community has been its ability to assert a collective identity and to name its collective political reality” (p. 1336). When these processes of collectivizing are disrupted by the dispersal of individuals from neighborhoods of shared identity, then the capacity of Black people and the Black community to mobilize politically may also be diminished.

The broad strokes of these arguments help frame the tension points in the assumptions, implications, and effects of housing integration policy. They begin to reveal how integration, operating on the individual level, can both improve material outcomes for Black households and also impose losses in collective political power. The integrationist ideology prioritizes the former even as its own empirical proof demonstrates limited results. If the marginal improvements in life outcomes for the children of Black movers result from a change in access to resources (rather than a change in who movers are surrounded by), then community investment policies that return those resources to Black neighborhoods while protecting against gentrification-driven displacement are actually more compelling.

### *Collective Efficacy*

Theories of collective efficacy help illuminate the social mechanisms that play a role in constructing the community identity that Black nationalists assert. Typically used in the context of crime reduction and community policing, collective efficacy refers to the ways that trust and solidarity among residents can help achieve social and political outcomes (Kissane & Clampet-Lundquist, 2012; Sampson et al., 1999). It consists of two components, social cohesion and shared expectations for control. The former is defined as people’s willingness to cooperate with



each other in order to realize shared goals while the latter speaks to the shared inclination to intervene in situations that affect the social order of communities (Bowles et al., 2016; Stanley, 2003). With longer actual or perceived tenure in place, collective efficacy among neighbors is stronger (Walton, 2016).

In addition to community members' length of occupancy, collective efficacy is also impacted by levels of social, racial, and class diversity (Browning et al., 2016). *Ethnic heterogeneity* refers to a situation of competing interests and difficulties in governance that occur in high-diversity places. The associated structural characteristics include community fragmentation and diminished cohesion (Sampson, 1997). In contrast, the *immigrant revitalization hypothesis* argues that immigrant-concentrated communities will actually produce positive outcomes despite structural disadvantages like high poverty levels. This occurs because a concentration of like-minded and like-valued individuals will have trust with each other as well as shared expectations for mutual support and informal mechanisms of social control. In turn, these neighborhood-level features will produce beneficial results for individuals (Browning et al., 2016).

I aim to apply these theories to the experiences of low-income Black individuals who have moved from high-poverty places to predominantly white, high-income neighborhoods. The concentration theory suggests community cohesion and political efficacy for Black residents in Black neighborhoods. On the other hand, the heterogeneity theory predicts experiences of conflict and marginalization for low-income Black residents who utilize housing vouchers to move to higher-income, white neighborhoods. In these places “where social group differences exist and some groups are privileged while others are oppressed, social justice requires explicitly acknowledging and attending to those group differences in order to undermine oppression” (Young, 1990, p. 3). Doing so allows us to critically analyze how housing integration policies and practices impact the power of oppressed individuals and groups, particularly in their ability to enact specific needs in political processes that typically prioritize majority interests.

## Section 4: The Boston Housing Policy Context

The geographic focus of this study is the Greater Boston metropolitan area where recent public housing policy initiatives have proactively addressed the challenge of racial segregation and high poverty rates by expanding access to opportunity neighborhoods, in line with the integrationist approach. Boston certainly has a particular political, historical, and geographic context, but its housing policy trends align with recent evolutions on a national scale. As such, the city offers a useful environment in which to understand more broadly how resident political experiences may change in wealthier, whiter neighborhoods. Like other major cities in the United States, Boston has high levels of income inequality, a stark racial wealth gap, and increasing housing costs (Curley et al., 2019). The residential concentration of voucher households in the Boston area also reflects national trends. In 2017, approximately 86% of families with children receiving vouchers lived in high-poverty neighborhoods in the United States. Similarly, in 2016, 71% of Boston Housing Authority (BHA) voucher holders lived within city boundaries and nearly half (48%) lived in three Boston neighborhoods with some of the highest poverty rates in the city: Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan (Curley et al., 2019).

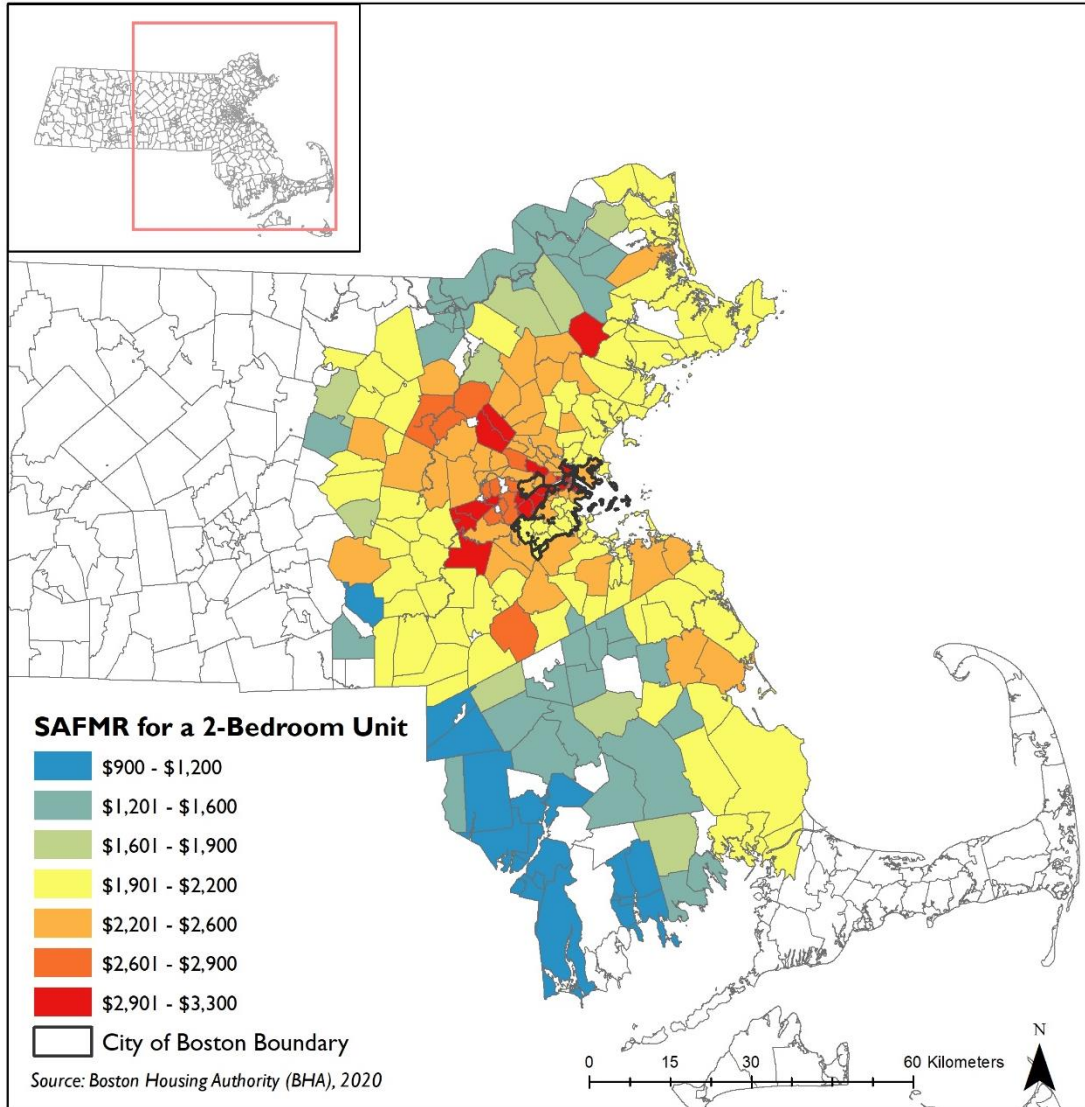
While the Section 8 housing choice voucher program is a federal initiative, its administration occurs wholly on the local level, carried out by local public housing agencies (PHA) like the Boston Housing Authority (BHA). Operationally, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sets a single payment standard, known as Fair Market Rent (FMR), for each metropolitan area. Households with vouchers pay approximately 30% of their income towards rent and utilities. The remainder up to the FMR is covered by federal subsidy, paid directly to private landlords from local housing agencies (HUD, 2020). The concentration of voucher holders in low-income areas has been attributed to the use of a single standard for an entire metropolitan area, effectively keeping housing in high-cost neighborhoods unaffordable and inaccessible.

According to BHA's Chief Officer of Leased Housing Programs, David Gleich, this tension between federal standard-setting and actual local need produced a moment of advocacy to expand access to higher-cost Boston area neighborhoods and towns. In 2018, the Boston Housing Authority conducted its own rent study, arguing that HUD's reliance on Census and American Community Survey data was not capturing rapid increases in the heated Boston rental

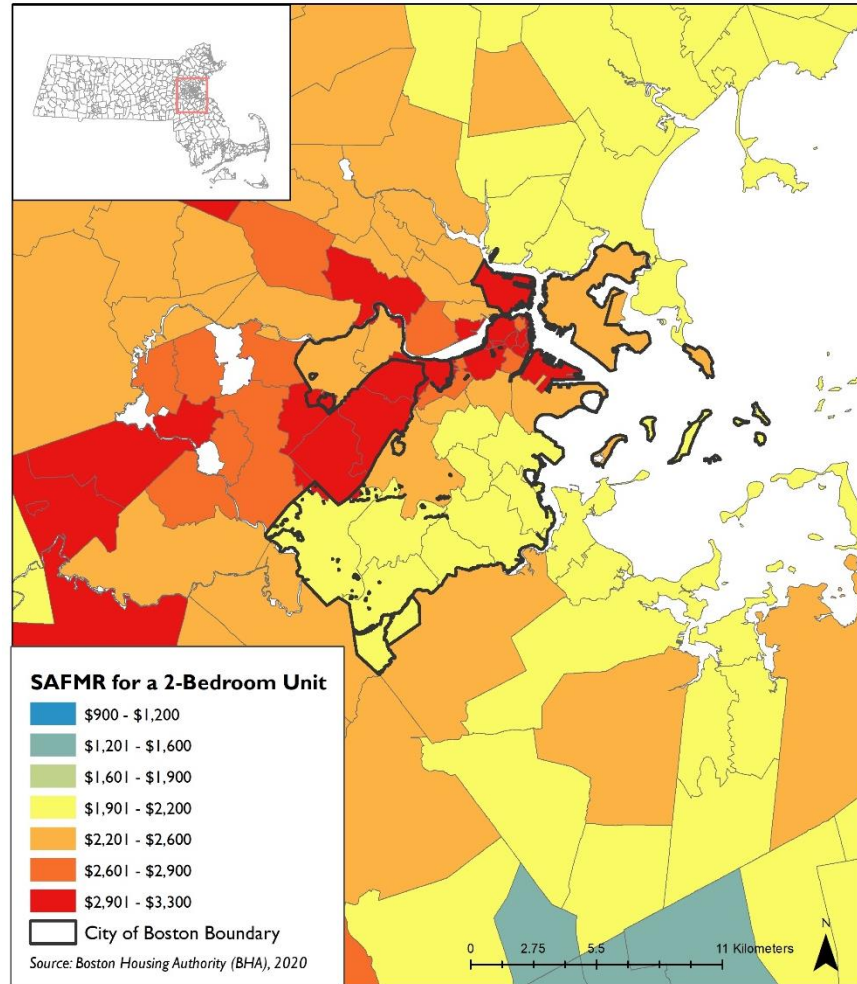
market (D. Gleich, personal communication, March 3, 2020). The BHA succeeded in securing about \$28 million in additional voucher funding and appealing for a higher payment standard. The adjusted FMR and additional funding allowed the BHA to implement a Small Area Fair Market Rent (SAFMR) policy on July 1, 2019, the first PHA (along with the Cambridge Housing Authority) to voluntarily adopt SAFMR standards in the United States (Boston Housing Authority, 2019). This move reflects a larger national trend of SAFMR usage, now a requirement for housing agencies in 24 metropolitan areas (Small Area Fair Market Rents - Final Rule, 2016).

Small Area FMR's set payment standards on the zip code level. While the previous FMR for a 2-bedroom apartment was \$1,914 for the entire metropolitan region, the new standards were determined for each of the 236 zip codes in the BHA's coverage area to reflect actual neighborhood rents. For example, SAFMR increased payment standards in Brookline to \$3,100 and in Newton to \$3,000 for a 2-bedroom unit. At the same time, the BHA was careful to avoid lowering the rent standard in Boston neighborhoods like Roxbury and inadvertently displacing residents whose landlords may not have accepted a lower monthly subsidy amount. Gleich affirmed that the BHA was "not trying to force people out of neighborhoods." Instead, the policy change was a matter of "access" (D. Gleich, personal communication, March 3, 2020). Figures 1A and 1B illustrate the range and distribution of these rent levels for the Greater Boston Area and for the City of Boston. Boston neighborhoods (bounded in black) do have rent levels in the mid- to upper-ranges with downtown zip codes at the highest end of the SAFMR spectrum. However, most of the zip codes with the highest SAFMR levels encircle the city, representing locations where households with vouchers may now be more financially incentivized to move.

Figures 2A and 2B map the distribution of BHA Section 8 vouchers less than a year after the SAFMR policy was implemented. While there is a clear concentration of households who continue to utilize vouchers in Boston, a slightly smaller proportion of families did so in 2020 (68%) compared to 2016 (71%). In contrast to the concentration of households within city boundaries, it is striking to note the dozens of suburban zip codes where ten or fewer low-income households are using mobile vouchers from the Boston Housing Authority. Their experiences in particular will illuminate the effects of housing dispersal on collective power and efficacy.



**Figure 1A:** BHA Small Area Fair Market Rents by Zip Code in the Greater Boston Area as of July 2019



**Figure 1B:** BHA Small Area Fair Market Rents by Zip Code in Boston as of July 2019

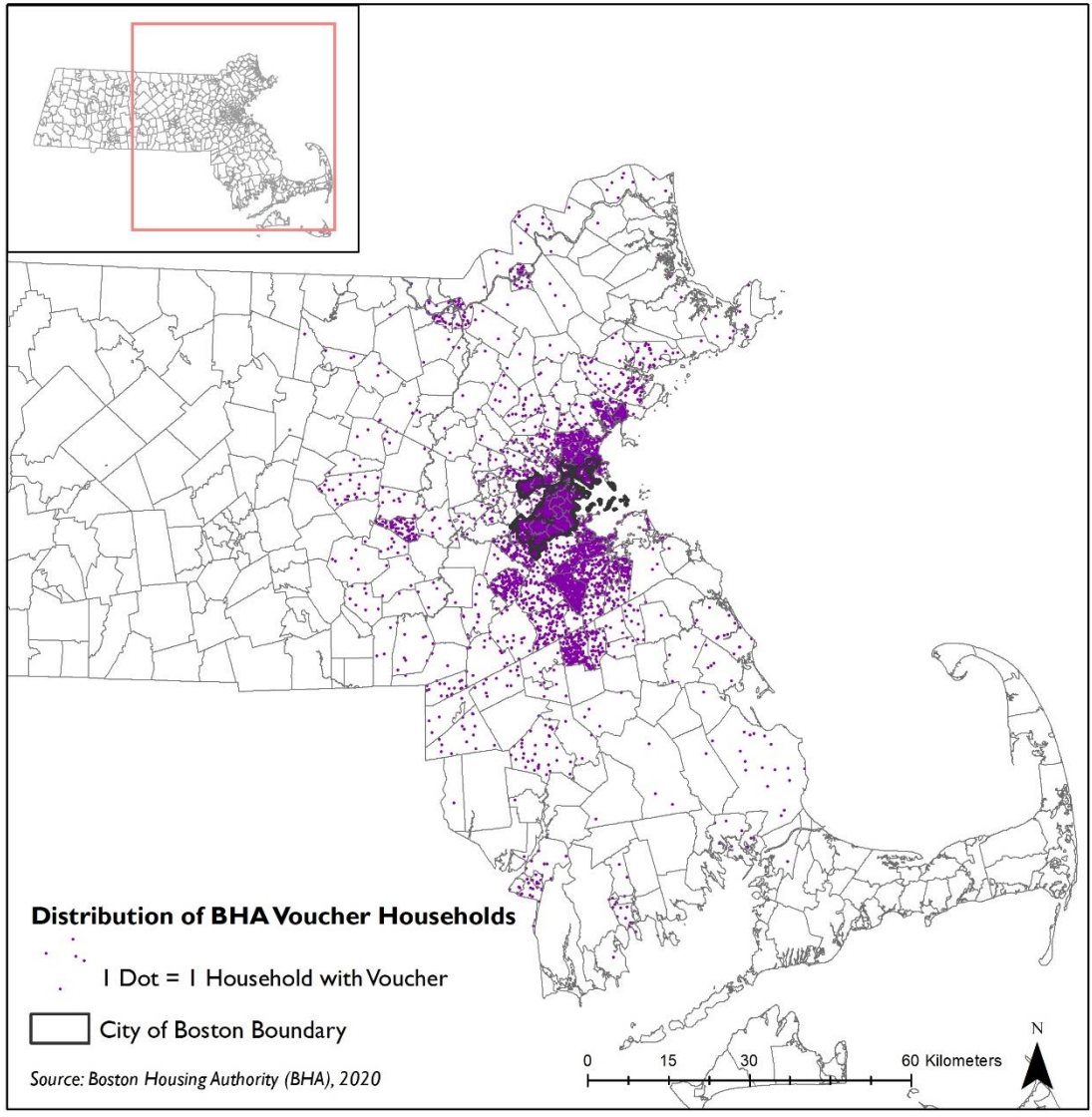


Figure 2A: Distribution of BHA Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers by Zip Code in the Greater Boston Area as of March 2020

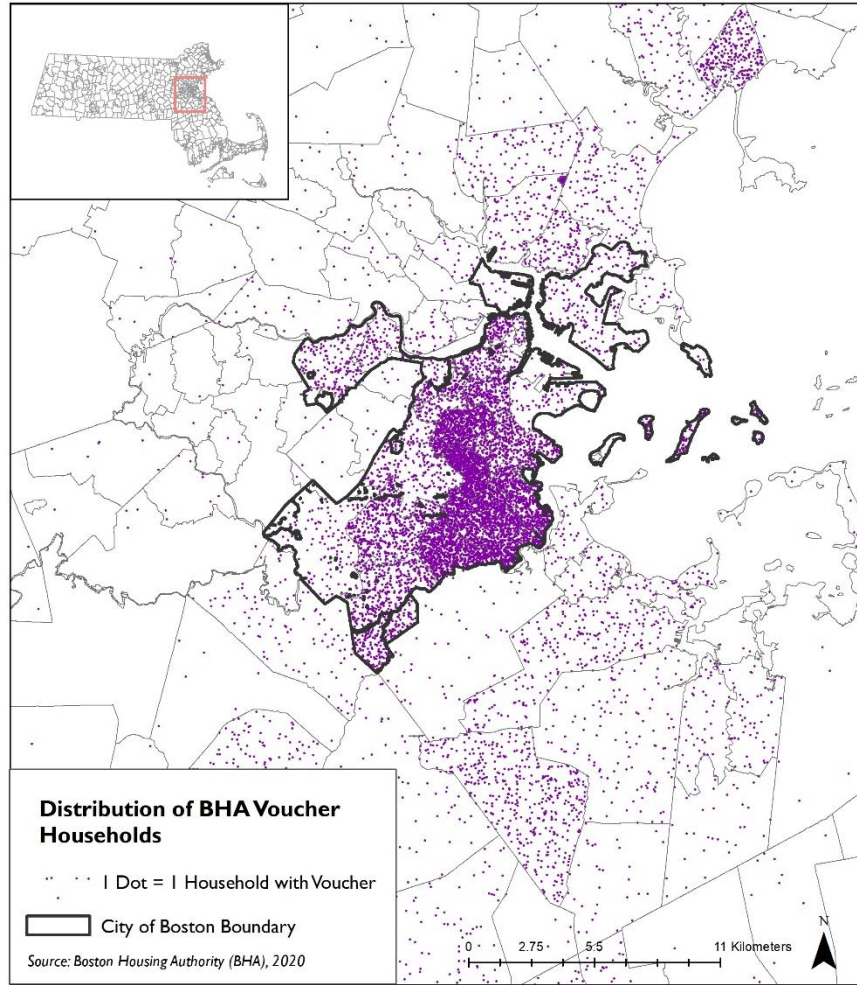


Figure 2B: Distribution of BHA Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers by Zip Code in Boston as of March 2020

## Chapter 5: Research Methods

My study aimed to understand the social and political experiences of Black households with housing vouchers who move from communities of color in Boston to predominantly-white suburban towns. Interviewing or surveying residents would have been the most direct approach to discerning the question of *how* political power changes in different neighborhood contexts. However, this was not a feasible option given my limited relationship with the Boston Housing Authority and the agency's lengthy research approval process. Instead, I identified BHA staff, community organizers, service providers, and housing lawyers as interviewees who could offer a range of perspectives, although indirect, on the experiences and neighborhood environments of families who use housing vouchers. After interviewing several initial contacts provided by MIT colleagues, I asked for referrals to additional stakeholders.

My outreach and interview process was cut short by another challenge that arose in March 2020 – the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Ultimately, I conducted three semi-structured interviews with four housing policy stakeholders in the Greater Boston area that lasted 45-60 minutes each. They were a community organizer from Lynn, the Chief Officer of Lead Housing Programs at the Boston Housing Authority, and two lawyers from Greater Boston Legal Services. Of the four interviewees, two were men, two were women, and all were white. I transcribed the interview recordings and analyzed our conversations for both unique observations and shared themes. I also submitted a Public Records Request to the Boston Housing Authority for administrative data about the mobile voucher program, specifically on household racial characteristics by zip code. This was compared to U.S. Census data on race to illustrate the neighborhood contexts that voucher households are navigating.



## Section 6: Findings and Discussion

The interviews and data offer a glimpse of the social mechanisms at play in suburban neighborhoods that have consequences for the political power of Black households who use vouchers. Of the 12,375 Section 8 vouchers provided by the Boston Housing Authority in 2020, 32% were used in zip codes outside of the city. Within the city, the majority of voucher holders are Black (53%) while in suburban towns, the majority of voucher holders are white (51% compared to 46% of voucher holders in the suburbs who are Black). This section investigates the causes and consequences of these numerical patterns – the racial hostility that greets Black households during their search process and upon moving as well as the dearth of critical services that are typically overlooked in opportunity neighborhoods. These dynamics have implications for the ability of Black households in majority-white towns to organize for collective priorities, whether in the form of building social connections or in the arena of electoral politics.

### *Individual Hostility and Neighborhood-Wide Exclusion*

A key barrier to political power raised repeatedly in interviews is the hostility households with vouchers face in suburban towns before they even attempt to move. This hostility takes on the form of private landlord exclusion as well as neighborhood-wide decisions to ban housing accessible for low-income households via municipal zoning codes. Given the prevalence of these practices and neighborhood norms, it is highly likely that movers face significant barriers to organize or advocate for their needs.

David Gleich of the BHA and Jessica Drew and Susan Hegel from Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) both cited patterns of landlord discrimination against Section 8 voucher holders. Even though the Boston Housing Authority has taken proactive measures to remove search barriers by creating a housing search tool<sup>5</sup>, both Gleich and the GBLS lawyers pointed out a need for more direct support. Housing lawyer Jessica Drew explained: “In Massachusetts ... if a landlord doesn’t want to take a voucher, that’s a form of discrimination. There’s protection

---

<sup>5</sup> The Expanding Choice in Housing Opportunities (ECHO) program was launched by the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) to provide technical assistance and information to BHA voucher-holders during the housing search process. ECHO is an online tool that allows users to search communities by school quality, commuting time to selected addresses, and public safety. Based on these preferences, ECHO identifies communities and links to housing listings on Zillow.

under Massachusetts law, but it's hard to assert rights. Plus, there's a time clock, and engaging in a court case is time-sensitive" (J. Drew, personal communication, March 11, 2020). Drew is pointing out the limitations of civil rights legislation that critical race theorists had responded to fifty years prior. While legal protections technically exist for households with vouchers, the structure of both the voucher program and the legal system offer limited recourse to combat this form of exclusion.

Gleich emphasized a need to focus on this part of the moving process as well: "There's so many barriers to families getting to communities – that's where the work needs to start" (D. Gleich, personal communication, March 3, 2020). While he did cite landlord reluctance as an issue, he focused primarily on the financial barriers to accessing housing in high-cost neighborhoods even after the payment standard increase in the recent SAFMR policy. The existence of economically exclusive neighborhoods is not a coincidence of geography, but rather the product of concerted political efforts over many decades to exclude poor households of color, particularly Black families (Rothstein, 2017). Explicitly race-based exclusionary tactics like redlining, deed restrictions, racial covenants, and physical violence in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century gave way to local land use regulations that restrict density, inflate housing prices, and exclude Black households whose class status has been systematically suppressed (Modestino et al., 2019; Rothstein, 2017).

Only 1% of land in Boston metropolitan area's 144 municipalities allows for multi-family development by-right, and 101 of these communities have absolutely no land zoned for this use (Fisher, 2007). Local news reports and public meeting transcripts in the Boston metropolitan area abound with racially-coded opposition to housing development proposals and zoning changes that would increase density. In their in-depth study of planning and zoning board meetings in 97 cities and towns in metropolitan Boston, Einstein et al. (2019) found that meeting participants overwhelmingly oppose new housing construction. They found that nearly 11% of commenters who cited "neighborhood character" were using racially coded language. As an example, a man in Beverly (which is 83% white) raised the concern that a proposed building would lead Beverly to "look like Chelsea" (which is 62% Latinx) (Einstein et al., 2019).

Despite the well-documented accounts of NIMBYism and anti-poor hostility in predominantly-white suburban neighborhoods, the literature on housing integration stops just short of examining the role that white individuals, institutions, and norms in "receiving"

communities play in creating environments that are politically and socially restrictive for mobile voucher holders. Geronimus and Thompson (2004) examine the ways that racialized ideologies have misinformed the academic understanding of health disparities between Black and white individuals. Arguably, these same dominant norms play a role in diminishing Black political power in majority-white communities.

Specifically, the American Creed is a hegemonic idea that asserts individual outcomes depend on personal responsibility as enacted in an imaginary “level playing field” (Geronimus & Thompson, 2004). This ideology eliminates any possibility of structural inequalities and cultural oppressions and instead maintains that the U.S. economic system is essentially fair. While a prevailing idea among white people, a majority of Black people hold an opposite view (Dawson, 1994). As a result, whites may dismiss as excessive the economic, political, and social changes that African-Americans rightfully demand (Hochschild, 1995). In the context of predominantly-white neighborhoods, local decision-making processes may then diminish the voices and priorities of Black households. This may be compounded for low-income Black households, particularly voucher holders.

### *Resource and Service Access*

The promise of “opportunity” offered in suburban neighborhoods tends to obscure the limited access to critical resources and services for households who use vouchers to move to these places. The issues raised by limited public transportation networks for low-income households has been well-studied (Pendall et al., 2014). In addition to transit access, it is critical to consider how other important resources, both institutional and community-based, are geographically distributed. If residents are unable to meet basic needs and services in suburban neighborhoods, their ability to participate in collective efforts that extend beyond their immediate household survival or to successfully advocate for additional resources may be extremely limited.

The changing geography of poverty, which refers to the recent increase of poverty in suburban and small metropolitan communities, demands changes to the social safety net. While the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) are federally-administered programs that are scaled to reach suburban and rural communities, other types of social services –

emergency assistance, employment support, behavioral-health resources – are predominantly provided by community-based organizations in limited geographic areas. Citing funding as the key barrier, Gleich of the Boston Housing Authority mentioned that the BHA simply does not provide supportive services outside of the city. In fact, not just the BHA’s but “all services are here in Boston, actually” (D. Gleich, personal communication, March 3, 2020). The existing landscape of support is not so stark, although Gleich’s impressions are not too far off. He cited a concentration of voucher holders in multi-family tax credit projects, where households may receive at least the minimum standard of case management required by affordable housing development funders. Additionally, Massachusetts’ supportive housing organizations offer families experiencing homelessness eighteen months of post-move services (D. Gleich, personal communication, March 3, 2020). However, these client-based supports are not BHA-wide and so could leave potentially hundreds of residents without the resources they need.

Other communities may, in fact, provide a robust set of services and relationship-building opportunities, but the geographic scale of these resources is limited. Jonathan Feinberg, Director of Organizing and Development at the New Lynn Coalition, talked about the linguistically- and culturally-appropriate services and events that Lynn-based groups like Neighbor to Neighbor host (J. Feinberg, personal communication, February 26, 2020). Lynn, a linguistically-diverse, working-class town with a population that is just 36% white, is home to 384 families with BHA vouchers (Boston Housing Authority, 2020). Like in Boston, the critical mass of residents with shared needs has produced a diversity of community-based services as well as enough political power to secure funding for such resources from the local government. This is not the case for suburban towns on the other end of the racial and class spectrum where local leaders make the trade-off between supporting the very few poor residents and maintaining the competitiveness of their neighborhoods by focusing funding on the latter (Allard, 2019). Specifically, local jurisdictions may choose to invest in education, infrastructure, and business corridors but not in the affordable housing or social services that would support the small number of residents with vouchers.

Even where resources are available, knowledge about them is dependent on local association and social networks, which may be limited for Black households dispersed in white neighborhoods (de Souza Briggs, 1998; Keene & Padilla, 2010). The GBLS lawyers both reflected that their new clients are mostly connected to legal representation by word-of-mouth or

referred by other Cambridge-based organizations like the Multi-Service Center or the Cambridge Health Alliance (J. Drew & S. Hegel, personal communication, March 11, 2020). This is likely the case for other critical services, indicating a widespread but hidden loss for households that use vouchers in communities lacking resources for low-income residents.

### *Social Marginalization*

The centering of whiteness in current attempts of housing integration can lead to significant social marginalization that, in extreme cases, is coupled with aggressive surveillance. In response, Black households with vouchers may tend to withdraw from their communities in attempts to be less noticeable and susceptible to harassment. This has clear political implications. When residents shrink themselves to avoid unwanted attention or conform to the norms of majority-white communities, their priorities and needs do not enter collective conversations, negotiations, advocacy efforts, or political arenas.

Despite these significant consequences, interviewees from the BHA and Greater Boston Legal Services took it as a given that households with vouchers would experience trepidation with moving as well as isolation in their new communities. Treating these experiences as inevitable (although unfortunate) costs to accessing opportunities and material benefits contradicts a key assumption underlying mixed-income housing programs, namely that associations with higher-income residents would open up connections to employment opportunities for low-income residents. Not only are these positive social contacts and connections an uncommon phenomenon, voucher recipients actually “experience significant social exclusion and aggressive oversight” (Kurwa, 2015, p.364). This is an unsurprising outcome given the racialized production and reproduction of majority-white communities, but it is not given explicit consideration in the design and implementation of housing dispersal strategies.

In a study of the social experiences of tenants who moved from low-income Los Angeles neighborhoods to the mixed-income suburb of Antelope Valley using Section 8 housing vouchers, Kurwa (2015) documented these processes of exclusion and surveillance. While residents cited better housing, better conditions for their children, and escape from their previous communities as reasons for moving, they also described experiences of discomfort in their new neighborhood and feeling unwelcome by their neighbors. This exclusionary behavior ranged

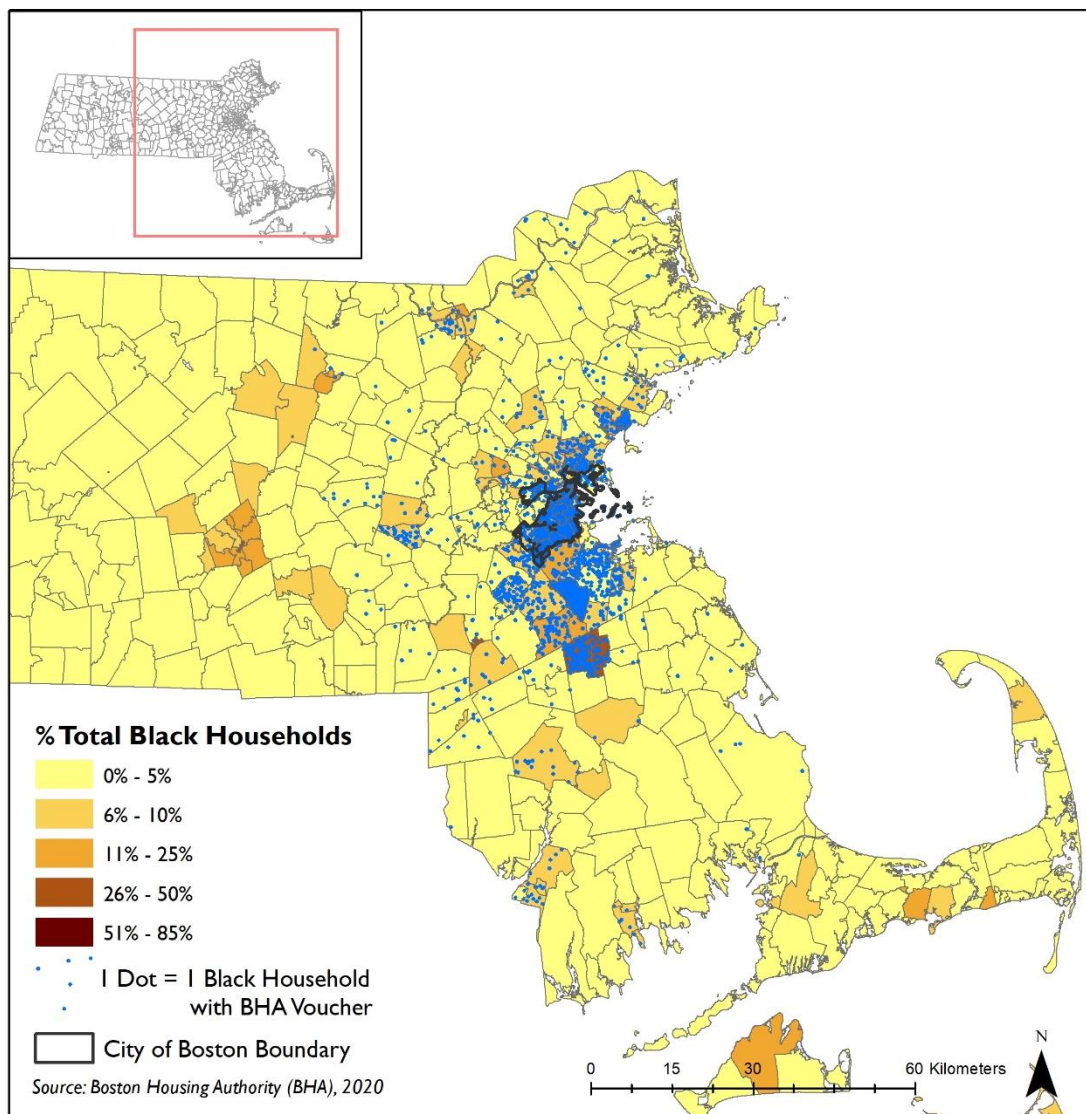
from unwarranted attention to race-based harassment and the deployment of police (Kurwa, 2015). Tenants react by limiting their social behavior to their home and avoiding contact with other residents. While Kurwa (2015) utilizes these observations to explain why voucher programs have not lived up to their promised material outcomes, I believe they offer strong evidence for reduced political power among tenants. These interactions show that households with vouchers are discouraged from building and participating in collective networks while long-time residents can assert dominance without significant repercussions. Integrationist ideology seeks racial mixing as a cure to discrimination. However, the lived experiences of residents show that unresolved power dynamics could further marginalize voucher tenants in suburbs where they have less recourse to respond collectively.

Even where the number of households with vouchers is relatively large in a neighborhood, the atomizing nature of the program poses challenges for residents to collectivize their individual experiences and build power. While the Boston Housing Authority has a Resident Advisory Board, it is made up primarily of public housing residents who live in the city and are able to identify each other by their shared residential locations. On the other hand, Gleich observes that it is “difficult to organize Section 8 tenants because they’re everywhere” (D. Gleich, personal communication, March 3, 2020). While the number of households with vouchers grows as program funding increases, both the physical distance between tenants as well as their integration into the private housing market makes identifying each other and connecting challenging. The latter factor operates by rendering the status of residents as public housing recipients invisible, even as Black households remain socially visible and so at risk of harassment.

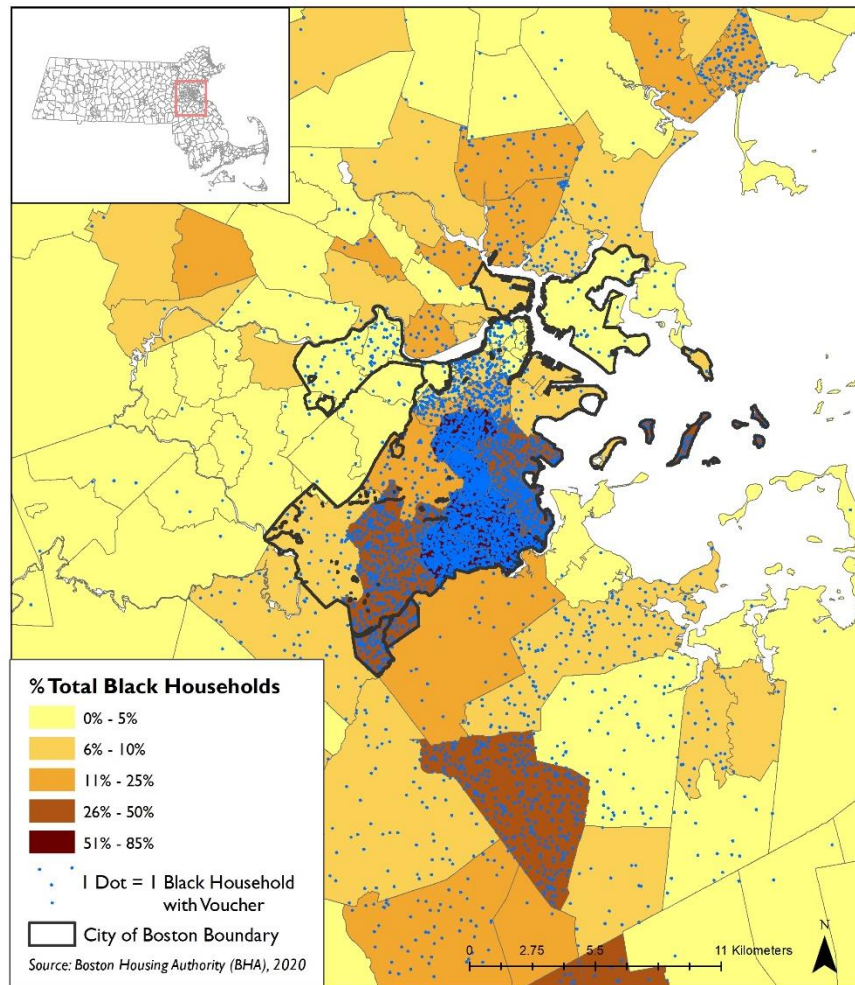
### *Political Representation*

While the previous sections considered the impacts of the housing voucher program on broad conceptions of political power and efficacy, it is also important to note the significant effects of dispersal strategies on Black power in traditional electoral politics. Just as the terrain for social services is fragmented, so too are the majority of policy-making and voting processes. As a result, place matters when we consider who has power and whose needs are being met by political processes, particularly on the local level. Massachusetts’ home rule tradition is often cited as the source of significant autonomy for cities and towns. Even when local officials

contend that they have limited authority in dealing with many of the problems their residents would like them to address, municipal leaders tend to resist shifts to regionalism and a potential loss of local control, especially over issues of land use and education (Barron et al., 2004). This fragmentation of government activity and the practice of majoritarianism may make it especially difficult for underrepresented political groups, including Black households with vouchers, to shape policy agendas.



**Figure 3A:** Comparison Between the Distribution of Black Voucher Households and the Percentage of Total Population Who Is African-American by Zip Code in the Greater Boston Area as of March 2020



**Figure 3B:** Comparison Between the Distribution of Black Voucher Households and the Percentage of Total Population Who Is African-American by Zip Code in Boston (as of March 2020)

When we compare the location of Black voucher households and the racial breakdown of zip codes that receive voucher households, the racial contrasts are particularly stark in the outlying suburbs of Boston (Figures 3A and 3B). Zip codes with the lowest proportion of Black households overall are also host to the fewest number of Black voucher households. As explained in previous sections, this distribution is likely to produce the most extreme cases of social marginalization and the lowest levels of collective efficacy for Black families. While there is no singular Black politics, I take a cue from the Black nationalists to assert that historical processes, the distribution of power, and shared social experiences do produce communities with



similar political priorities and goals. Therefore, when Black voucher households make up an incredibly small minority in a town, they are less likely to find elected or appointed officials with shared experiences or concerns. The statewide use of the town meeting form of government, which offers public forums for local government decision-making may offer promising opportunities for broad participation and engagement of marginalized residents. However, these venues tend to be dominated by older residents who are more likely to be white, male, and own a home (Einstein et al., 2019). These tendencies in local political processes require correcting in order to ensure that residents with vouchers who locate to these places have a genuine voice in decision-making.

## Section 7: Addressing Integration Ideology

The challenge of residential segregation has been inadequately addressed by the integrationist ideology that has dominated public policy since the 1980's. Power imbalances are reproduced when Black households are encouraged to utilize vouchers to move from cities to opportunity neighborhoods in the suburbs that tend to be wealthier and whiter. As described above, this occurs because racial hostility and a lack of resources can cause tenants to socially isolate and withdraw from political processes. Even though program administrators may recognize this loss of power as a cost of moving, they still point to the promise of class advancement (however limited) to emphasize the need for the mobile voucher program. Individualizing these decisions and outcomes ignores the critical role of social group identity and collective efficacy for both supporting individuals to meet their needs and for asserting power to enact broad-scale changes. In considering approaches to addressing the limitations of current housing mobility approaches, I offer broad policy proposals that shift away from integrationist ideals of neutrality and individualism to race-conscious analyses of power and community.

### *Affinity Groups as an Explicit Part of Local Political Processes*

Our current form of housing integration policy has offered limited physical inclusion of Black households in suburban communities where majoritarian political processes are likely to overshadow the needs of low-income families of color. While efforts to correct for racial injustice are laudable and necessary, this form of integration is based on an ideal of universal humanity that aims to ignore group differences even as they persist. This has resulted in the diminishment of minority voices in predominantly-white communities. An early response to this was the emergence of the Black Power movement, which embodied the Black nationalist ideology described above. As Young (1990) describes: "...they [saw] self-organization and the assertion of a positive group cultural identity as a better strategy for achieving power and participation in dominant institutions" (p. 159). This requires a political structure that ensures the specific representation of oppressed groups in decision-making processes as well as a shift from hyper-local policymaking to more regional efforts. More specifically, self-organized interest groups that represent Black tenants should be formed and supported by local housing authorities so that they have pathways to building collective power.

### *Social Safety Net Provision*

Rather than just focusing on co-location, broader public benefit strategies must also be considered to ensure that households who utilize vouchers do not have to sacrifice access to essential services and resources in exchange for others. There is a role for both local housing agencies in the near-term and for national policymakers in the long-term. As residents utilize mobile vouchers, housing authorities can build on existing housing counselor resources to ensure tenants' moves are meeting their full range of needs. A component of this could also involve proactively establishing partnerships and roles for local institutions like churches, neighborhood groups, and school associations to support new tenants while providing anti-racist education and developing race consciousness within receiving communities. Considering the likelihood of local resistance to directing funding for social services that would benefit relatively few residents in a municipality, there is also a need for national policy efforts to expand and deepen the social safety net. This means both providing more funding to existing programs like SNAP and Medicaid and also identifying and universalizing other critical resources.

### *Place-Based Investment and Anti-Displacement Measures*

Black neighborhoods have repeatedly been the targets of disinvestment and punitive social policy. At the same time, white neighborhoods have been the beneficiaries of massive public subsidy that have been effectively enclosed from broad access by local zoning regulations and racial hostility. Given the well-documented social isolation tenants tend to experience in these communities, the limited material outcomes that the mobile voucher program does offer to low-income Black households could certainly be owed much more to access to these otherwise inaccessible resources than to proximity to white people. However, national housing policy has committed “tremendous energy ... to the centralized policy of integration, but little attention ... to the integrity and health of Black neighborhoods and institutions” (Peller, 1990, p. 843). Recognizing and redressing these issues requires a shift from dispersing residents from their communities to investing in Black neighborhoods while taking measures to combat displacement. This cannot occur without a mass redistribution of resources to Black communities and institutions, which should be advocated for as reparations to correct for historic and ongoing social injustices.

## Section 8: Conclusion

The impetus to integrate is prevalent in current housing policy even as the empirical research on such efforts has shown that they do not quite live up to their promises of robust material advancement or cross-racial relationship-building (Chaskin & Joseph, 2010; Chetty et al., 2016; Keene & Padilla, 2010). Even so, policymakers still laud such interventions for improving access to public services, job opportunities, and social networks and have channeled resources to initiatives like Small Area Fair Market Rent. I argue that there is an ideological basis for such dedication. Current forms of racial integration require Black households to move into white neighborhoods in order to access material resources that have been systematically cordoned off. Failure to consider the role of historical oppression in producing these disparities as well as the racial power dynamics in segregated communities will lead to the reproduction of inequitable opportunities and outcomes. As experienced by Black households who use housing vouchers to move to majority-white communities, this has meant community exclusion and social isolation, leading to diminished power and collective efficacy.

Future research that engages with impacted residents is necessary to discern specifically how these dynamics impact both individual movers and the communities they move from. As previously mentioned, this study's research process was limited by time, access, and a global pandemic. However, this is a critical moment for interrogating the assumptions and implications behind recent policy changes that ally with private housing markets and operate on the individual level, encouraging households to move away from the neighborhoods that may be more apt to offer solidarity and political power. Such a body of research and the framework offered by the Black nationalists should spur creative and radical thinking that addresses racial segregation with a recognition of the importance of racial and community identity.

## Works Cited

- Allard, S. (2019). The Changing Geography of Poverty Demands Changes to Safety Net Provision. In I. G. Ellen & J. Steil (Eds.), *The Dream Revisited: Contemporary Debates About Housing, Segregation, and Opportunity*. Columbia University Press.
- Barron, D. J., Frug, G. E., & Su, R. T. (2004). Dispelling the Myth of Home Rule: Local Power in Greater Boston. *Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston*.
- Boston Housing Authority. (2019, July 1). *Boston Housing Authority Implements Small Area Fair Market Rents For Greater Boston Area*.  
<https://www.bostonhousing.org/en/News/Boston-Housing-Authority-Implements-Small-Area-Fai.aspx>
- Boston Housing Authority. (2020). *Dataset of Boston Housing Authority Mobile Voucher Recipients*.
- Bowles, S., Durlauf, S., & Hoff, K. (Eds.). (2016). *Poverty Traps*. Princeton University Press.
- BPI Chicago. (n.d.). *The Gautreaux Lawsuit*. <https://www.bpichicago.org/programs/housing-community-development/public-housing/gautreaux-lawsuit/>
- Browning, C. R., Dirlam, J., & Boettner, B. (2016). From Heterogeneity to Concentration: Latino Immigrant Neighborhoods and Collective Efficacy Perceptions in Los Angeles and Chicago. *Social Forces*, 95(2), 779–807. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sow064>
- Chaskin, R. J., & Joseph, M. L. (2010). Building “Community” in Mixed-Income Developments: Assumptions, Approaches, and Early Experiences. *Urban Affairs Review*, 45(3), 299–335. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087409341544>
- Chetty, R., Hendren, N., Jones, M., & Porter, S. (2019). Race and Economic Opportunity in the United States: An Intergenerational Perspective. *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series*.
- Chetty, R., Hendren, N., & Katz, L. F. (2016). The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment. *American Economic Review*, 106(4), 855–902. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.20150572>
- Crenshaw, K. (1988). Race, Reform, and Retrenchment: Transformation and Legitimation in Antidiscrimination Law. *Harvard Law Review*, 101(7), 1331–1387.

- Curley, A. M., Graves, E., & Weismann, G. (2019). Barriers and Opportunities in the Housing Voucher Program: The Importance of Race in the Housing Search Process. *Federal Reserve Bank of Boston*.
- Dawson, M. C. (1994). *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African-American Politics*. Princeton University Press.
- de Souza Briggs, X. (1998). Brown Kids in White Suburbs: Housing Mobility and the Many Faces of Social Capital. *Housing Policy Debate*, 9(1), 177–221.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.1998.9521290>
- de Souza Briggs, X., Popkin, S. J., & Goering, J. M. (2010). *Moving to Opportunity: The Story of an American Experiment to Fight Ghetto Poverty*. Oxford University Press.
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2012). *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*. NYU Press.
- dRworks. (2020, April). *Racism Defined*. <http://www.dismantlingracism.org/racism-defined.html>
- Duncan, G. J., & Zuberi, A. (2006). Mobility Lessons from Gautreaux and Moving to Opportunity. *Northwestern Journal of Law and Social Policy*, 1(1), 18.
- Einstein, K. L., Palmer, M., & Glick, D. M. (2019). Who Participates in Local Government? Evidence from Meeting Minutes. *Perspectives on Politics*, 17(1), 28–46.
- Fisher, L. (2007). *Chapter 40B Permitting and Litigation: A Report by the Housing Affordability Initiative*. MIT Center for Real Estate.
- Geronimus, A. T., & Thompson, J. P. (2004). To Denigrate, Ignore, or Disrupt: Racial Inequality in Health and the Impact of a Policy-induced Breakdown of African American Communities. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 1(02).  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1742058X04042031>
- Goetz, E. (2019, September 16). Why Opportunity Neighborhoods Aren't Really for Everyone. *Shelterforce*. <https://shelterforce.org/2019/09/16/why-opportunity-neighborhoods-arent-really-for-everyone/>
- Hochschild, J. L. (1995). *Facing Up to the American Dream: Race, Class, and the Soul of the Nation*. Princeton University Press.
- HUD. (n.d.). *Moving to Opportunity (MTO)*. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/mto.html>
- Small Area Fair Market Rents—Final Rule, 80567 (2016).
- HUD. (2020). *Fair Market Rents*. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html#2020>

- Jackson, K. (1987). *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. Oxford University Press.
- Joseph, M. L., Chaskin, R. J., & Webber, H. S. (2007). The Theoretical Basis for Addressing Poverty Through Mixed-Income Development. *Urban Affairs Review*, 42(3), 369–409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087406294043>
- Kadushin, C., & Jones, D. J. (1992). Social Networks and Urban Neighborhoods in New York City. *City & Society*, 6(1), 58–75. <https://doi.org/10.1525/city.1992.6.1.58>
- Karas, D. (2015). Highway to Inequity: The Disparate Impact of the Interstate Highway System on Poor and Minority Communities in American Cities. *New Visions for Public Affairs*, 7.
- Katz, M. B. (Ed.). (1993). *The “Underclass” Debate: Views From History*. Princeton University Press.
- Keene, D. E., & Padilla, M. B. (2010). Race, Class and the Stigma of Place: Moving to “Opportunity” in Eastern Iowa. *Health & Place*, 16(6), 1216–1223. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2010.08.006>
- Kissane, R. J., & Clampet-Lundquist, S. (2012). Social Ties, Social Support, and Collective Efficacy Among Families from Public Housing in Chicago and Baltimore. *Journal of Sociology*, 4.
- Kurwa, R. (2015). Deconcentration Without Integration: Examining the Social Outcomes of Housing Choice Voucher Movement in Los Angeles County. *City & Community*, 14(4), 364–391. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cico.12134>
- Lewis, O. (1966). The Culture of Poverty. *Scientific American*, 215(4), 19–25.
- Lipman, P. (2018). Segregation, the “Black Spatial Imagination,” and Radical Social Transformation. *Democracy & Education*, 26(2), 9.
- Matsuda, M. (1989). Public Response to Racist Speech: Considering the Victim’s Story. *Michigan Law Review*, 87(8), 2320–2381.
- McAdam, D., & Paulsen, R. (1993). Specifying the Relationship between Social Ties and Activism. *American Journal of Sociology*, 99(3), 640–667.
- Mitchell, B., & Franco, J. (2018). *HOLC “Redlining” Maps: The Persistent Structure of Segregation and Economic Inequality*. National Community Reinvestment Coalition. <https://nrc.org/holc/>

- Modestino, A., Ziegler, C., Hopper, T., Clark, C., Munson, L., Melnik, M., Bernstein, C., & Raisz. (2019). *The Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2019*. The Boston Foundation.
- Peller, G. (1990). Race Consciousness. *Duke Law Journal*, 4, 758–847.
- Pendall, R., Hayes, C., George, T., & McDade, Z. (2014). Driving to Opportunity: Understanding the Links among Transportation Access, Residential Outcomes, and Economic Opportunity for Housing Voucher Recipients. *Urban Institute*.
- Robinson, C. J. (1983). *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. Zed Press.
- Rothstein, R. (2017). *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. Liveright.
- Sampson, R. J. (1997). Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy. *Science*, 277(5328), 918–924. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.277.5328.918>
- Sampson, R. J., Morenoff, J., & Felton, E. (1999). Beyond Social Capital: Spatial Dynamics of Collective Efficacy for Children. *American Sociological Review*, 64, 633–660.
- Sard, B., & Rice, D. (2016). Realizing the Housing Voucher Program's Potential to Enable Families to Move to Better Neighborhoods. *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: Policy Futures*.
- Stanley, D. (2003). What Do We Know About Social Cohesion: The Research Perspective of the Federal Government's Social Cohesion Research Network. *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 28(1), 5–17.
- Tach, L., & Emory, A. D. (2017). Public Housing Redevelopment, Neighborhood Change, and the Restructuring of Urban Inequality. *American Journal of Sociology*, 123(3), 686–739. <https://doi.org/10.1086/695468>
- Tach, L. M. (2009). More Than Bricks and Mortar: Neighborhood Frames, Social Processes, and the Mixed-Income Redevelopment of a Public Housing Project. *City & Community*, 8(3), 269–299. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6040.2009.01289.x>
- Taylor, E. (1998). A Primer on Critical Race Theory: Who Are the Critical Race Theorists and What Are They Saying? *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*.
- Vale, L. J., & Freemark, Y. (2012). From Public Housing to Public-Private Housing: 75 Years of American Social Experimentation. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 78(4), 379–402. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2012.737985>



- Vale, L. J., Shamsuddin, S., & Kelly, N. (2018). Broken Promises or Selective Memory Planning? A National Picture of HOPE VI Plans and Realities. *Housing Policy Debate*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.2018.1458245>
- Walton, E. (2016). “It’s Not Just a Bunch of Buildings”: Social Psychological Investment, Sense of Community, and Collective Efficacy in a Multiethnic Low-Income Neighborhood. *City & Community*, 15(3), 231–263. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cico.12189>
- Wilson, W. J. (1987). *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*. University of Chicago Press.
- Young, I. M. (1990). *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton University Press.