Education and Housing Equity Project Records.

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Version 3
August 20, 2018

EDUCATION AND HOUSING EQUITY PROJECT
122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 320
Minneapolis, MN 55404
PH 871-8980
FX 871-8984

Memorandum

Date: March 24, 1997
To: Officers and Board Members, Education and Housing Equity Project
From: Dick Little, Coordinator
Subject: REVIEW OF DISCUSSION GUIDE

I am pleased to submit to you for your review the first revised draft of the community circles discussion guide prepared by Syl Jones at the request of the Board. Two objectives are paramount:

1. To assure a quality document that meets our expectations.

2. To assure that this document is used by the 50-100 Community Circles organized for the first round of discussions on education and housing equity this Spring.

To enable us to achieve both of these objectives, I am requesting that you give your immediate attention to this document and conduct a two-level review:

1. Review for acceptability of releasing the draft as an "UNOFFICIAL DRAFT" to the Community Circle Facilitators for their use with groups that are already meeting. **Please review the draft and contact me if you have any qualms about the draft no later than 12:00 Noon Tuesday.**

2. Review for revisions to be made to the draft prior to approval and publication. Discussion of the draft is an agenda item for our **Board Meeting on March 28**. Please review the draft with pen-in-hand and come prepared to discuss the draft at the board meeting. You may also fax any comments, suggested revisions or additions to me in advance—this is especially important if you not be able to attend the board meeting.

As soon as we are satisfied with the content of the draft, it will be taken to a graphics specialist for formatting and design, and then to a quality printer for publication. Your suggestions regarding these steps should also be part of our discussion on Friday.

After the Board's meeting with Syl on March 3rd, I spent virtually an entire day with him reviewing the resources you provided to me, in addition to the materials we had already pulled together for this project. I also reviewed again your concerns and expectations for the document, as well as those of the Circle Collaborative review team. Hopefully, this draft "gets it right."

Subject: Re: Letter about draft study guide
Date: Mon, 24 Mar 1997 12:36:22 -0500
From: seagan@bitstream.net (D Seaver/J Dungan)
To: micah@mtn.org

For Dick:

Thanks for running the draft of the letter by me. It looks good to me -- the only suggestion I have pertains to the following paragraph:

>1. Review for acceptability of releasing the draft as an ìUNOFFICIAL >DRAFTî to the Community Circle Facilitators for their use with groups that >are already meeting. Please review the draft and contact me if you have >any qualms about the draft no later than 12:00 Noon Tuesday.

You may want to clarify in the final sentence that you mean (I think) qualms about releasing this particular draft to the facilitators. They will undoubtably have qualms about certain parts of the draft, but not necessarily qualms that are major enough to warrant holding back the release to the facilitators.

Good luck and good job!

darcy

Partnership for Minnesota's Future
Minnesota Council of Nonprofits Children's Defense Fund-MN

Minnesota Legislative Update

Volume 2, Issue 10 March 21, 1997
For delivery changes call (612) 504-1944 or email chriss@mncn.org

In the next two years, because of federal welfare changes, over 20,000 low income parents are obliged to enter the work force and over 100,000 destitute Minnesotans will see their incomes reduced. If Minnesota fails to invest in effective support, these welfare changes will cause major disruptions in the labor market, the child care system, and the education system; and risks catastrophic increases in homelessness and hunger.

This budget year, with a $2.3 billion surplus, is an ideal time to spend wisely. The state has the money to address these issues without shortchanging other critical needs. To fail to address the issues of family support and poverty while record breaking tax breaks and subsidies are given to businesses is irresponsible and shortsighted. Don't let this legislative session reverse Minnesota's tradition of fairness and commitment to families and community.

Action Required: two phone calls: Specifically, the Partnership for Minnesota's Future asks you to call your legislators, speaker Carruthers (612-296-3709) and Majority Leader Roger Moe (612-296-2577) to commit funding above the Governor's recommendations in five areas:

1. **Employment and Training:** $25 million more, for a total of $2,000 for each E and T slot in MFIP-S, so that parents can get education, training, and on the job supports they need to become permanently self sufficient, and so that employers have workers they can use.

2. **Family assistance:** $75 million more. There are proposals to reduce family assistance levels related to housing, child support and food stamps. Current AFDC grant levels are less than 50% of the poverty level; a reduction in grants or food stamps would mean an increase in homelessness and hunger and make it more difficult for recipients to pay for job search and work-related expenses.

3. **Food assistance** (for childless adults and immigrants who have lost food stamps): $23 million. Churches and food shelves already experience severe shortages of food for destitute people.

4. **Child care – sliding scale program:** $43 million more. Families should never have to go on welfare because they can't afford child care while they work.

5. **Disability income: allow disabled and older adult immigrants losing SSI to meet basic needs:** $26 million. In immigrant families, several generations may depend on one adult's SSI check to continue paying rent.

Upcoming events:

- **Monday, March 24 9:30 AM Rally to support introduction of "Fairness to Immigrants Act." U.S. Sen. Paul Wellstone, religious and community groups supporting restoration of eligibility; Location: State Capit steps or rotunda**
- **Saturday April 5 10 AM to 4 PM Minnesota Children's Coalition, Hallie Q Brown Center, St. Paul**

NONPROFIT DEVELOPMENT FUND H.F. 811 & S.F.1204 (Sens. Kiscaden, Novak, Neuville, Moe, Johnson,D.E.), *Fo info contact MCN at 612-504-1987 for a taped update.*

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Date: March 24, 1997

To: EHEP Board

From: Dick Little, Coordinator

Subject: Draft Discussion Guide

I have just received the draft discussion guide from Syl Jones and am enclosing it for your review. I am not satisfied that this is what we were looking for, however there may be elements of it that could be used in a good discussion guide. Please read it with that possibility in mind. Also, please note the memo from Syl.
We need to decide what our next step is. Let's discuss this at Friday's board meeting. In the meantime, please feel free to call or fax me your reactions or suggestions – I am not sitting still on this and would like to take some action even before Friday's meeting.

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122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 320
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DATE: March 24, 1997

TO: EHEP Board

FROM: Dick Little, Coordinator

SUBJECT: Model Format for Discussion Guide

This memorandum is a sequel to the request for review of the draft discussion guide sent to you earlier today. Enclosed is a copy of a study circle guide prepared by MICAH several years ago intended to move along a much needed public conversation about housing choices in the metropolitan area. I have also included a copy of guidelines and table of contents of one of the Kettering Foundation's discussion forums. Although they differ from ours in subject matter and in the central questions asked, these examples illustrate the kind of model, in terms of format and brevity, that I think we are looking for in our discussion guide.

I bring these examples to your attention because I think we need to be as explicit as possible in instructing our writer (whether that person continues to be Syl Jones or someone else) about what we want the discussion guide to look like and what we want it to do. These examples can help us to do that and also help us to assure agreement among ourselves about what we are looking for. Please review the MICAH guide along with the draft by Syl Jones and let's discuss both at our board meeting on Friday. In the meantime, if you can put your finger on selected newspaper editorials, data pieces or excerpts from landmark reports that could be inserted into our guide in the same way such items were inserted into the MICAH guide, please bring them with you to the board meeting or mail them to me ASAP.

THE HEALTH CARE CRISIS: CONTAINING COSTS, EXPANDING COVERAGE

PREPARED BY THE PUBLIC AGENDA FOUNDATION

CONTENTS

Condition Critical: Overhauling America's Health Care System 4

Health care reform is one of the most prominent issues on the public agenda. The flaws of America's health care system have become increasingly apparent, a reminder that the system needs to be fixed and perhaps radically modified.

Choice #1
Minor Surgery: Making a Good System Better 7

What is needed is not a different system but an improved version of the current one, a health care system that reflects the importance most Americans attach to personal choice and state-of-the-art medical care.

Choice #2
Radical Surgery: Universal Rights and Public Responsibilities 12

Decisive action is needed to contain costs and guarantee universal coverage. The existing health insurance system should be replaced with a single, publicly administered system that meets the needs of all Americans.

Choice #3
Mandated Coverage: Fixing the System by Filling the Gap 17

To fix the health care system, we don't need to scrap it entirely. A simpler solution is to fill the gap by requiring job-related coverage for most Americans and their families, and expanding public programs for everyone else.

Prescription for Reform: Finding a Path through the Medical Maze 21

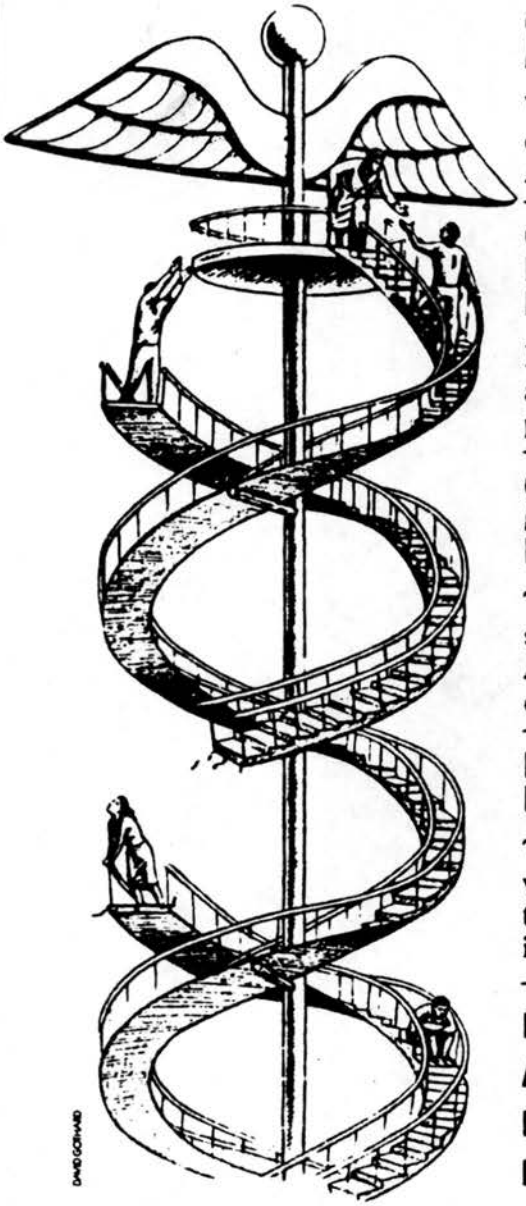
The health care debate forces us to decide not just what we want but what we are willing to pay for and live with. If we're serious about overhauling the health care system, we'll have to accept the fact that each alternative imposes certain costs and trade-offs.

For Further Reading

Acknowledgments

National Issues Forums

Ballots



DAVID GORMAN

NIF FORUMS AND STUDY CIRCLES

Why?...

Why are we here? What are we going to do? We are here to move toward a public decision or CHOICE on a difficult issue through CHOICE WORK.

How?...

How can we know if we are making progress? By constantly testing your group:

- Can your group make the best case for the option least favored?
- Can it identify the negative effects of the option most favored?

How?...

How do we do it? Through a deliberative dialogue in which we:

- Understand the PROS and CONS of every option, its COSTS AND CONSEQUENCES.
- Know the STRATEGIC FACTS and how they affect the way the group thinks about each option.
- Get beyond the initial positions people hold to their deeper motivations — the things different people consider to be most valuable in their everyday lives.
- Weigh carefully the views of others; appreciate the impact various options would have on what others consider valuable.
- WORK THROUGH the conflicting emotions that arise when various options pull and tug on what people consider valuable.

What?...

Movement from first reactions and mass opinions toward a more shared and stable PUBLIC JUDGMENT.

- The emergence of a PUBLIC VOICE, one different from the voice of personal preference or special interest pleadings.

Increased COMMON GROUND FOR ACTION found in a greater ability to:

- Identify how people worked through the conflicts, contradictions, and trade-offs, and what they were willing, and not willing to do to solve the problem.
- Identify any shared sense of purpose or policy direction and a range of actions that were consistent with one another.
- Understand the implications of how citizens sensed their interdependence on the issue and its implications for community action.

MODERATING FOR DELIBERATION

Many people who attend deliberative forums may not know what to expect. If they've attended a public meeting before, it's probably taken the form of a hearing about proposed governmental action, a political debate involving candidates, or a general discussion about some problem that has surfaced in their community.

When these people enter a deliberative forum, they find something altogether different. The purpose of this kind of forum is for citizens to make, or at least work toward, a decision about how they will act on a problem or what policy they think is best for their community or the country. Deliberation is weighing the costs and consequences of a variety of possible actions or discovering (1) that the various things that are valuable to them pull them in different directions as they consider their options, and (2) that these conflicts have to be worked through. Deliberation doesn't result in absolute agreement, but it can reveal the general direction in which people want to move, the range of approaches to a problem that would be acceptable, and what people are or are not willing to do to solve a problem.

Consistent with what deliberation is, moderators ask four basic questions in a forum:

1 What is valuable to us? This question gets at why making public choices is so difficult: the options turn on things that people care about very deeply. This question can take many forms:

- How has this issue affected you personally? (Usually asked at the beginning.)
- What things are most valuable to people who support this option?
- What is appealing about this option?
- What makes this option a good idea — or a bad one?

To uncover their deeper concerns, moderators will often ask participants how they came to hold the views they have and to ground what they say in their experiences, and not just in facts or rational arguments. They might ask these questions:

- How do you see this option?
- What experiences have led you to this perspective?
- Could you tell a story illustrating that view?
- How might others see this option?
- Does someone have a different experience, another perspective?

Notice that throughout, in every series of questions, the moderator will try to draw out different perspectives in an effort to ensure a complete and balanced discussion. That is the only way that a forum can do its job — to examine fully and weigh carefully all the possibilities.

2 What are the costs or consequences associated with the various options? This question can take any number of forms as long as it prompts people to think about the likely effects of various options on what is valuable to them. Examples include:

- What would result from doing what this option proposes?
- What could be the consequences of doing what you are suggesting?
- Can you give an example of what you think would happen?
- Does anyone have a different estimate of costs or consequences?

Deliberation requires weighing the "pros" and "cons" of different options so it is important to be sure that both are fully aired. A "pro" is simply a positive consequence, a "con" a negative one. Questions to ensure a fair and balanced examination of all potential effects include:

- What would be the argument against the option you like best?
- What would someone say is good about the option that you oppose?
- Can anyone think of something constructive that might come from this policy?
- Is there a downside to this course of action?

3 What are the tensions or conflicts in this issue that we have to work through? As a forum progresses, moderators will ask questions that draw out conflicts or tensions that people have to work through. They might ask:

- What do you see as the tension between the options?
- Where are the conflicts that grow out of what we've said about this issue?
- Why is this issue so difficult to decide?
- What are the "gray areas"?
- What remains unresolved for this group?

Throughout the forum, a moderator will intervene with questions that move the deliberations toward a choice but always stop short of pressing for a consensus or agreement on a particular solution. The objective of a deliberative forum is to chart a direction or articulate shared purposes that can be the basis for specific programs or detailed policies.

4 Can we detect any shared sense of purpose or how our interdependence is grounds for action? In the very first few minutes of a forum, the moderator should remind people that the objective is to work toward a decision. Then, as the tensions or conflicts become evident, as people see how what they consider valuable pulls them in different directions, the moderator will test to see where the group is going with questions like:

- What direction seems best, or where do we want to go with this policy?
- The moderator can follow up to find out what people are or are not willing to do or sacrifice to solve a problem with such questions as:
  - What trade-offs are we willing to accept?
  - What trade-offs are we unwilling to accept?
  - What are we willing to do as individuals or a community to solve this problem?

At the heart of deliberation is the question of whether we are willing to accept the consequences of our choices. That might lead to a question like this:

- If what we seem to favor had some of the consequences several of our colleagues worry about, would we still favor this policy or course of action?

Ending a Forum

Before ending a forum it is usually a good idea to take a few minutes to reflect both individually and as a group on what has been accomplished. Questions like the following have been useful:

- How has your thinking about the issue changed?
- How has your thinking about other people's views changed?
- Tell the rest of us how your perspective changed as a result of what you heard in this forum.
- What didn't we work through?
- What do we still need to talk about?
- How can we use what we learned about ourselves in this forum?

These questions prompted enough testimonials to demonstrate one of the most powerful effects of deliberation: It changes people's opinions of others' opinions. Those changes in perception create new possibilities for acting together, generating the political will to move ahead.

"At the heart of deliberation is the question of whether we are willing to accept the consequences of our choices."

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We need to decide what our next step is. Let's discuss this at Friday's board meeting. In the meantime, please feel free to call or fax me your reactions or suggestions – I am not sitting still on this and would like to take some action even before Friday's meeting.

To: Dick Little
Community Circle Collaborative Board Members

From: Syl Jones
Jones!

Re: Enclosed Draft of Discussion Guide

Date: March 23, 1997

As I pass on the enclosed first draft of the Discussion Guide, which is incomplete, please accept my apology. The challenge of redrafting the original study guide, based on my initial understanding of what the guide should contain, appeared to be possible within an expanded time frame. The meeting I had with the Board and my limited discussion with you, Dick, convinced me that I would be able to meet the original deadline of a "20-page discussion guide."

However, as I reviewed the dozens of monographs, newspaper clippings, studies, guidebooks, videotapes, magazine articles, etc., that you dropped off in two separate trips to my house, Dick, I began to see that it was not possible. I have spent hours reviewing these materials and attempting to construct a format that would support to goal of the project. The manuscript you now have represents my best effort to date. It is surely not good enough because it is incomplete, but there are also other important observations to be made about the materials and the process of writing this report.

1. An obvious fault of the guidebook as it was written is that it begs too many questions. It assumes that readers will automatically accept the premise that segregation is bad for society. While most of us may agree, such an assumption undermines the nature of the inquiry.

2. In order to change this assumption, the guidebook not only has to be rewritten and restructured. A new introduction explaining the historical context must be added so that readers know where the sponsors of the guidebook are coming from.

3. There are too many experts and too many points of view represented in the research materials I have been given. Although I am capable of sorting them all out and discarding those of minor relevance, I estimate that in order to do the best possible job, I would require at least another week -- and that would be adequate if I were doing only this project.

I realize that the problem is that the process has already begun in some of the circles and the guidebook is needed immediately. But now that I

understand the magnitude of this project, it's my professional opinion that much more time will be needed if this job is to be properly done.

I am still available to complete the guidebook provided I receive clear direction on format, content, length, etc., from a designated spokesperson from the Board. In fact, written feedback would be appreciated. One of the problems I encountered was the often contradictory nature of written comments about the initial discussion guide. What I would need in order to continue the job and, hopefully, complete it by the first week in April, would be feedback that allows me to establish a clear direction.

Finally, this assignment has been the first to confound me in my entire 20-year career. Where I went wrong was in assuming that the project was somewhat finite and that 20 pages could summarize the issues. Now I know that I could easily write a book length manuscript on this subject and still not cover it all.

I will certainly understand should you decide to bring in another writer at this point and, in that case, I will not bill you for my services. I guarantee my work -- which means if I accept a project and can't meet the agreed upon deadline, you do not have to pay me a cent. This is the first time I've *ever* missed a deadline (hard to believe but it's true) or felt the need to invoke my service guarantee. But there's a first time for everything.

Thank you, and I look forward to doing what I can to make this project work.

A Failure To Thrive:

A Discussion on the Challenges of Segregation, Housing and Education in the Twin Cities

Introduction to The Community Circle Collaborative Process

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the Community Circle Collaborative Process, a guided discussion focused on the challenges of segregation, Housing and Education in the Twin Cities. For at least three sessions of two hours each -- over a course of three to five weeks -- you will gather with other members of your circle to share opinions, facts, and perspectives. The goal of these sessions is to fully discuss the issue from many perspectives and to develop solutions as you and members of your circle see fit. Secondarily, we hope to share some of these solutions with public policy makers so that the entire region may benefit from this process.

Before you begin your discussion, please read this Discussion Guidebook as completely and throughly as possible. While it does not cover all possible perspectives, the guidebook provides background that can help you more fully understand the issue and can assist you in discussing it more completely.

How The Circle Process Works

In many cultures, circles are symbols of equality, fairness and completeness. The Community Circle Process has been designed with these qualities in mind. However, your cooperation is required if your Community Circle experience is to be satisfactory.

In the early days of American democracy, communities held town hall meetings or sat around pot bellied stoves or spinning wheels to discuss major issues. Communities were smaller and more homogenous, and the various members of the community usually knew each other well.

The pros and cons of those early American meetings were essentially the same: homogenity bred greater agreement and less conflict; however, other voices in the community -- those of women, slaves, Native Americans, the poor, and immigrants outside the mainstream -- were seldom heard.

As American democracy has grown to include a wider variety of individuals, the need to broaden discussion about major issues affecting the nation has increased. Today, inclusivity is highly prized in such discussions because the Jeffersonian vision of "an informed citizenry,"

which is essential to a healthy democracy, cannot be fully realized without it.

The Community Circle Collaborative Process is one way to sample the broadest possible spectrum of opinion within a community. It has been used in many parts of the nation to help create a public voice about major issues. The Community Circles themselves are a refreshing change from the narrow and often restrictive discussions of the past and the competitive debates used in present day political programs. In short, Community Circles are the wave of the future because they are cocoperative, not competive, in nature.

What The Process Requires From You

Your role as a participant in the Community Circle Collaborative Process includes the following requirements:

- A commitment to the entire 3-5-week meeting schedule
- A promise to share your thoughts and feelings honestly and respectfully
- A willingness to listen deeply to others
- A preference for collaboration rather than competition
- A desire to find common ground and creative solutions
- Realistic expectations of the process and the people of your circle.

What You Can Expect From The Process

On the other hand, when you invest your time and effort in the Community Circle Collaborative Process, you will receive:

- The opportunity to be heard by others
- Challenges to some of your beliefs, attitudes and assumptions
- Moments of great insight and inspiration
- Feelings of confusion and, at times, alienation
- A sense of accomplishment

How To Begin

1. Your facilitator has been trained to help your circle begin discussions. Please follow his/her guidelines as outlined at the beginning of each Community Circle meeting.

2. Read the materials in this guidebook before you begin discussions.

3. Please feel free to conduct your own research using the bibliography in the back or any other materials.

4. Please do not seek to dominate discussion or monopolize the floor at any time. Remember to be courteous.

5. Although the discussion period may vary depending on the size of each Community Circle, keep in mind that it is difficult to sustain sessions of more than three hours.

A Failure To Thrive:

A Discussion on the Challenges of Segregation, Housing and Education in the Twin Cities

Introduction

Many people in the Twin Cities believe that segregation is something akin to slavery -- a social disease that occurred in the South many years ago and is no longer a critical issue. Some also fancy that in the comparatively liberal social climate of the Upper Midwest, individuals are free to live in virtually any community, regardless of race or socioeconomic background. Still others believe that our public schools have long since been integrated and that no one is denied an education because of the color of their skin or their economic situation.

But, what if these people are wrong? What if this image of openness and diversity is just that -- an image -- and the reality is far different? How would we feel about our community if we learned that our neighborhoods are still divided along racial and socioeconomic lines? That such divisions foster continued hatred and mistrust and hinder our development as a safe and prosperous metropolitan area? That our children are, in effect, isolated from each other and therefore at a distinct disadvantage in the global marketplace?

What if we discovered that previous attempts to remedy old but highly documented problems -- like segregation in housing and education -- had actually made matters worse? That the list of those who felt aggrevied by inequities based on ethnicity and class was growing instead of shrinking? That far from being a haven for social justice, the Twin Cities and many of its cherished public and private institutions may have perpetuated injustice, inequality and perhaps intolerance?

How would we react if we knew these things were true? Would we study the problem? Would we be moved to take action? Would we deny reality despite empirical and anecdotal evidence to the contrary? Would we point fingers and assign blame? Or, would we move?

This discussion guidebook is intended to help citizens from every walk of life find answers to these disturbing questions. The final solutions, if there are any, must come from you. But before attempting to answer, consider the following information carefully.

The Historical Context

America began as a nation of separatists who founded a New World in order to purse ideologies that were unpopular in Europe. It was a haven

for those who felt they were persecuted for their various beliefs. The Puritans and Quakers were just the beginning. Soon came a host of rugged individualists who saw in this New World the chance to create a life free of interference from patriarchial governments. In so doing, the first settlers of the land came to this country and constructed separate neighborhoods based largely on nationality: German, Swedish, Irish, Italian, Dutch, English, etc. Although settlers often mixed across nationalities in public places, most lived in communities populated by fellow countrymen.

But the New World contained thousands of inhabitants long before the first settlers arrived. These native Americans, incorrectly labeled "Indians," did not give up their land easily or without a fight. In fact, they hotly contested the acquisition of their territories by Europeans. Because their skin was considered red and their traditions viewed as foreign, the native Americans were seen as being a "lower form of life" than Europeans. As writer David Roedigger notes in The Wages of Whiteness:

> "...the prehistory of the white worker begins with the settlers' images of Native Americans. Moreover, the images developed by colonists to rationalize dispossession of Native Americans from the land...held that improvident, sexually abandoned, lazy Indians were failing to husband or subdue the resources God had provided and thus should forfeit those resources."

In other words, many European settlers believed they had a God-given right to lands that were already occupied. Conflicts between the native Americans and European settlers -- founded on the basis of the above beliefs -- were never fully resolved in discussion or debate. One reason for the lack of resolution is that European settlers quickly began to out number the native Americans and drove them off the land through physical force. Although later efforts were made to pursue peaceful settlements, all of these ultimately failed, and the indigenous population was never able to win a respected place in American society. Entire tribes were wiped out by wars fought by the government on behalf of European settlers. Many died; others were marginalized on reservations.

The new settlers had long kept their distance from the people they called "savages," and the native Americans did, after all, live in tribes. But the idea of the reservation -- a place of restricted access for a people who had been defeated in battle -- carried segregation to its greatest extreme in American history. Both groups believed that segregation, through tribal boundaries or through institutions like the Burea of Indian Affairs, was the best way to avoid conflict, to strengthen ethnic and family ties, and to survive.

Thus, the pattern for interacting with those who were different was established in America from the very beginning. The clear message of the

white settler regarding the crucial issues of segregation, land (housing) and education was that native Americans had forfeited their right to such things. Because they had not built great cities, had not cleared the land and lived in ways that were considered peculiar, they were seen as expendable.

Had the early settlers and Native Americans been able to find common ground, some of the issues plaguing us today might not be with us. If, for example, Native Americans had been given status as full and equal citizens; if both parties had been able to create a new credo that recognized the need for integration while preserving cherished traditions; and, if these new approaches had resulted in a successful amalgamation of the two cultures, our views on race and perhaps class might have developed differently. But because this did not occur, early American society remained compartamentalized, divided, and extremely competitive.

Into this compartmentalized America in 1619 came black slaves, whose status differed from those of other immigrants in two important ways. First, black slaves were captured and forcibly removed from their homeland and brought to America to work without pay. While there were also white slaves (notably from Ireland and Germany) and white indentured servants in colonial America, these were often set free after working off their debt. Black slaves had no particular debt and were enslaved because of their status as "savages" and their reputation as good workers. Second, black slaves were prevented from learning to read, from speaking their foreign tongues, and were not allowed to become citizens in any sense of the word.

These differences were palpable in the daily intercourse between white settlers from Europe and black slaves from Africa. Regardless of whether individual settlers were slave owners or not, it was clear that the status of the slave differed completely from that of an English, Irish or Swedish immigrant. In short, those who came from Europe and had white skin had the hope, no matter how poor, of one day becoming American citizens. Blacks slaves knew -- as did the white settlers -- that blacks who were given their freedom and allowed to gain citizenship were major exceptions to the rule.

Thus, the stage for race-based segregation in America, based on double standards, was set even before the nation formally rebelled against England in 1776. European nationalism -- carried to this country by its earliest immigrants and intensified by home sickness and waning memories of oppression -- blended easily with ethnic prejudices, the Native American experience and the special status of black slaves to produce intractable differences. In addition, economic pressures encouraged the accentuation of ethnic differences as a means of securing a foothold in daily commerce. The result was two extremely different nations living along side each other but never completely with each other.

Although there are many landmark events in American history concerning race, most are negative. The Revolutionary War -- which celebrated political freedom from English tyranny -- but it no such effect on the status of African Americans, Native Americans, women or the poor. In fact, by the end of the war, Americans had consigned Native Americans to a status of nonexistence, as noted by Thomas Jefferson's complete absence of reflection upon their fate:

> "Deep-rooted prejudices entertained by the whites; ten thousand recollections, by blacks, of the injustices they have sustained; new provocations; the real distinctions which nature has made; and many other circumstances, will divide us into parties, and produce convulsions, which will probably never end but in the extermination of the one or the other race."

Roedigger reports that the very document that articulated freedom for whites was also an effective instrument in supporting slavery:

> "The Constitution, as it codified an impressive range of freedom for whites, accepted that black slavery would continue by providing for return of escaped slaves, by aggrandizing the representation of slaveholding districts through the partial counting of slaves for purposes of legislative apportionment and taxation, and by allowing for twenty years of noninterference with the slave trade. Remarkably, the framers did all of this without using the words slave or slavery."

In so doing, those early patriots left room for a massive contradiction: black slaves living and working alongside their white masters, nursing their master's children along with their own, while being treated as inferior. This kind of integrated but unequal society had the force of law behind it. Slaves were owned in the same manner as horses, although masters had the option of treating them like human beings. They were forbidden to travel without papers from their owners; bred like cattle for the benefit of the slaveowner; and without even the most basic human rights.

Although many Southern intellectuals had always believed that slavery was right and proper, the effect of living along side slaves brought two distinct reactions by the early 1800's. Some Southerners began to feel that slavery might be wrong and that the institution debased those who used it. Others, in reaction to a new wave of questions about slavery from Abolitionists, began to seek new justifications for their peculiar institution.

The earliest example of a blow against segregation on a national scale is the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, wherein black slaves were declared free by the government. By this time, the land in the East and

South had been completely developed, giving the nation a distinctly European flavor. Land owners -- all male, all white -- controlled the nation and its policies. Women, Native Americans, African Americans, and many poor whites could not vote. In addition, few public servants could be found who championed their needs and interests.

The positive effects of the Emancipation may have been all but negated by the deep tragedy of the Civil War. Although the War is often said to have been about the general rights of the states, at bottom it was fought over the state's right to control life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness of black slaves. By war's end a larger proportion of whites than ever before agreed that blacks should have a measure of freedom. However, as the events in Reconstruction soon proved, true freedom for African Americans could not be gained without access to land and to education. In addition, whites would need to let go of long-held racial prejudices -- prejudices that were being compounded at that very moment by a series of deadly wars with Native Americans -- if equality was to be a reality.

African Americans made massive efforts to educate themselves through black schools established in the South. There, in one-room school houses, 85-year-old former slaves sat nedt to five-year old children and learned their ABC's. But very few slaves could have afforded to buy land, even had it been available to them. Those who stayed in the South continued to work for whites as sharecroppers, where their economic disenfranchisement continued. Those who went North encountered an even more virulent form of racism in urban areas where competition for jobs was fierce.

Prior to the establishment of Jim Crow laws in the North, a period of relative intergration occurred where blacks and whites lived adjacent to each other. Before the development of suburbs and motorized transportation, it was not uncommon to witness poor people and rich people, whites and blacks, dwelling on the same street. This, in fact, was one reason the urban centers of the nation were so attractive at the turn of the century -- they offered the opportunity to see and experience all sorts of people from every walk of life.

But as industrialization grew and competition over jobs increased, racial prejudice expanded for highly practical reasons. White unskilled laborers demanded priority in the marketplace, pushing black labor to the back of the line. And, because many black workers were not as educated as whites, employers preferred whites, if they could hire them at the same or slightly higher rates of pay.

When A. Philip Randolph sought to unionize Pullman Car Porters -- who were nearly all black because the Pullman company insisted that they be -- he faced the great dilemma of black leadership in a white society. His goal was to develop the first all-black union -- a form of segregation -- as a

means of helping blacks fully enjoy the benefits of the American dream, which included integration. After founding the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, he then began to build relations with the American Federation of Labor, an all-white organization that refused to admit blacks.

From 1925 to 1937, Randolph struggled to stabilize wages and benefits for Porters and to lay the foundation for the first extensive black middle class in American history. Randolph was the first black leader to make a connection between class and race and attempt to bridge the gap between blacks and whites by uniting against a common enemy. In Paula Pfeffer's A. Philip Randolph, Pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement, the author paints a picture of the difficulties Randolph faced:

> "The Great Migration of southern blacks to northern industrial cities in search of wartime jobs and increased opportunities had resulted in overcrowding, with blacks spilling out of their narrowly defined ghetto areas. The subsequent competition with whites for jobs and the increased tensions led to antiblack riots...(Randolph) argued that capitalists ignored color in their exploitation of labor; hence, black and white workers had the same interests...but Randolph's gospel of labor solidarity was not readily accepted by black workers..."

At the same time Marcus Garvey's "Back to Africa" movement preached a new racial consciousness for African Americans. Garvey's followers -- mostly urban blacks located in the larger cities -- represented the first important group of black militant segregationists. Garveyities believed that the only hope for African Americans was to separate from America permanently and seek redemption in their ancient heritage. The movement failed, but it introduced the idea of segregation as a positive option for the first time on a large scale.

Meanwhile,

The Way It Is

"The Twin Cities region is becoming increasingly segregated along income, racial and geographic lines. People of color, low income people and persons with disabilities are heavily concentrated in the central areas of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Moving outward from this central area, the population becomes increasingly whiter and wealthier. Although media hosuehold income in the cities as actually increased slightly, household income levels have increased faster, and to higher levels, in most suburbs." --"The Face of the Twin Cities," United Way of Minneapolis

Every year the Twin Cities ranks high on the list of America's most livable cities. When compared to other major urban centers, the Twin Cities region *is* a good place to live. But the question is, do such comparisions help us in establishing the quality of life we want? What do we have in common with Detroit, Milwaukee or Chicago? How do we differ? And, do we want to maintain those differences as distinquishing characteristics of the Upper Midwest?

What we have in common with other metropolitan areas is the malaise of urban decay in our inner cities, marked by:

- Increased poverty
- Aging housing stock
- Overburdened schools
- Growing crime
- Fear

These and other problems are destabalizing our inner cities and spreading rapidly to the suburbs. Fear, the most subjective and wide ranging of the issues listed above, knows no boundaries and has fueled flight from the central cities for many years. But reports of gun violence, drug dealing, domestic abuse, sexual abuse, drunk driving, gang-related crime and other major problems are now commonplace in rural areas, small towns and suburbs as well.

Poverty

In recent decades, poverty has deepened within the core of Minneapolis and St. Paul. By the end of the 1980s, the core had gained 30,000 poor people, while its total population grew by less than 10,000 people. This suggests that some of those who were above the poverty line slipped below it during years of wage erosion and a stagnant economy.

Also, individuals who reached a certain income level migrated from the central cities to the surrounding suburbs, where there is more space, bigger and newer houses, lower property taxes, and the perception of lower crime rates and better schools.

Most low-income families have no choice but to locate in the central cities, particularly given limited public transportation and the lack of low-income housing in the suburbs. This shift from city to suburb is further illustrated by the 1990 census showing that the central cities contained 28% of the region's population but 60% of its poor.

But poverty isn't just deepening -- it's growing *and* spreading. In 1979, 11 Twin Cities census tracts saw 25% or more of its population sink below the poverty line. In the 80s, 35 additional census tracts in the core area reached the 25% level, which doubled the poverty rate in terms of population and area involved. Of 121 census tracts in the core area, 105 saw their poverty rates

increase.[1] This trend has continues today and is beginning to spread into inner-ring suburb.

Two-thirds of those in poverty are white, but the number of people of color living in poverty is disproportionate to the population. In the core area of the central city, poverty rates for African Americans (44%), American Indians (56%), Asians (62%) and Hispanic residents (31%) are dramatically higher than poverty rates for whites (18%).[2]

The Impact on Schools

Recent media reports have shown that our public schools are in trouble. Not only have the number of students increased but a greater percentage of those students are poor and in need of social services. At the same time, public resources available to schools have been shrinking in an environment that demands greater educational skills than ever before.

One measure of the difficulty facing schools is student test scores. The table below shows the percentage of students passing the 1996 Minnesota Basic Skills Test for all districts in the seven-country region. Minneapolis schools rank the lowest with only 42% of its students passing the math test and 37% passing the reading test. Minneapolis schools also have the highest per pupil expenditures ($9,136) within the seven county region, as well as the highest percentage of students living in poverty. Approximately 60% of Minneapolis students receive free or reduced-price lunches -- a federal program available for families with incomes below 185% of the poverty level. Furthermore, 63% of Minneapolis' student body are children of color.

Figure 13. Basic Skills Test Scores and Spending Levels, By District, 1996[3]

	Percent Passing:				Per Pupil Spending:	
District	Math	Reading	Poverty	Enrollment	Gen. Fund	Total
noka-Hennepin	70	52	15	38,670	$4,663	$5,826
oomington	79	65	16	11,371	$5,210	$6,034
ooklyn Center	64	53	44	1,650	$4,856	$6,707
irnsville	74	65	13	11,195	$5,427	$6,541

[1]Metropolitan Council. *Trouble at the Core: The Twin Cities Under Stress.* November 1992. p. 8.

[2]Metropolitan Council. *Trouble at the Core: The Twin Cities Under Stress.* November 1992. p. 14.

[3]O'Connor, Debra. *Spending Isn't Key to Success.* St. Paul Pioneer Press. 1996. (Data based on information from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning.)

olumbia Heights	70	57	31	2,987	$6,328	$7,259
len Prairie	91	79	4	9,198	$4,709	$6,495
lina	95	88	2	6,181	$5,583	$7,081
rmington	79	66	18	3,400	$4,550	$6,649
rest Lake	81	65	15	7,867	$4,367	$5,597
idley	75	71	24	2,607	$5,950	$6,723
astings	84	65	13	5,119	$4,615	$5,617
opkins	88	81	10	8,029	$6,132	$7,743
ver Grove Heights	74	69	18	4,005	$5,014	$6,101
keville	82	73	5	7,319	$4,472	$7,237
ahtomedi	90	78	6	2,670	$4,562	$5,854
inneapolis	42	37	61	46,151	$7,115	$9,136
innetonka	90	83	4	7,235	$5,714	$7,440
ounds View	86	71	10	12,043	$5,142	$6,220
orth St. Paul-- aplewood--Oakdale	73	61	17	10,600	$4,909	$5,835
rono	90	87	4	2,576	$5,037	$6,298
sseo	81	65	14	21,280	$4,877	$6,454
ior Lake	87	76	8	3,859	$4,387	$5,775
ndolph	78	62	8	473	$5,250	$5,972
chfield	71	62	22	4,343	$5,843	$7,020
obbinsdale	71 N/A		22	13,507	$5,490	$6,460
oseville	80	72	18	6,772	$6,102	$7,377
osemount-- pple Valley--Eagan	78	68	9	25,554	$4,210	$5,691
. Anthony-- ew Brighton	78	71	10	1,255	$5,833	$6,401
. Louis Park	76	66	22	4,285	$6,597	$7,816
. Paul	51	44	56	42,046	$6,017	$7,095
akopee	68	61	15	3,011	$5,437	$6,577
ring Lake Park	82	64	20	4,181	$4,975	$5,989
uth St. Paul	65	60	24	3,562	$4,975	$6,179
uth Washington o.	84	71	12	13,886	$4,245	$5,666

illwater	83	73	7	9,063	$4,992	$6,342
ayzata	87	71	7	8,046	$5,106	$6,688
est St. Paul--endota Hts--Eagan	67	61	16	4,787	$5,014	$7,781
estonka	78	72	14	2,364	$5,417	$6,854
hite Bear Lake	84	70	12	9,610	$4,944	$6,111

Children who attend school hungry, chronically sick, and mentally fatigued have a far more difficult time learning than do children without such disadvantages. Resources for districts like Minneapolis -- which is among the poorest in the state -- often get diverted away from education toward necessities like free and reduced lunch programs, special education services, and bilingual education.

When schools must spend significant proportions of their budgets on simply getting their students to the "starting line," they often fall short of the finish line. This means that education is unequal in our state and that poor children often do not develop the basic skills -- such as reading, writing, math and relationship building -- they will need to succeed. The result of these inequities is a multi-tiered education system in which some children are doomed to failure as adults while others are likely to succeed.

The connection, then, between poverty and education is this: poverty tends to render achievement less likely by preventing children from learning and sapping resources from the education system. Society suffers from inequities in education because under-educated children are less able to contribute to the quality of life and more likely to need public assistance as adults. Finally, poverty in one generation often leads to an impoverished next generation as the cycle of neglect, mental and physical deficiencies, low achievement and failure continues.

Public Education and Equality of Opportunity

Public schools were chartered to do the important work of developing and maintaining American society. They were designed to establish a nation dedicated to certain shared principles and values, such as individual freedom, justice and self-sufficiency. In fact, one of the most persuasive arguments for the establishment of public education was that it "would open a gateway to opportunity that would otherwise be closed to many youngsters," and would "eliminate the dwarf of social inequities which plague other nations."[4]

Quality public schools and equality of educational opportunity are essential to both individual economic enterprise and general prosperity. Advances in

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[4] Tesconi, Jr., Charles A. and Emanuel Hurwitz, Jr. Education for Whom? NY: Dodd, Mean & Company, 1974. p 15

technology and shifts in the labor market have largely eliminated the need for unskilled workers. Students who do not learn crucial skills in school no longer have factory jobs to fall back on. To maintain a productive and profitable economy, as well as compete globally, all individuals in our society need to maximize their literacy through lifelong learning that begins in the public schools.

But because of competing needs and the loss of income within the core cities, financial resources available to public schools have dwindled steadily over the last two decades. The combination of increased poverty, larger populations of students of color and a decreasing tax base means greater pressure on the public schools in the years ahead. For example, the population of white Minnesotans between the ages of 15-19 is projected to decrease by 6% between 1995 and 2015. For African Americans, that the same population will *increase* by 187%, while American Indians, Asian Americans, and Hispanic/Latino Americans will increase by 61%, 111%, and 128%, respectively. This averages out to be an increase of 122% for communities of color.[5]

"In today's world, a youngster who leaves school unable to read, write, and do simple arithmetic faces a bleak future. When a substantial portion of boys and girls leave school uneducated, the rest of us face a bleak future."

--Lisbeth Schorr, Within Our Reach

The Search For Solutions

No one knows the precise causes for the failures of our public schools. Nor is it easy to uncover all of the reasons for growing poverty in the Twin Cities. What we do know is that as the region becomes more segregated, as poverty becomes more concentrated among families of color, and as schools continue to underserve our students, the quality of life lowers. This is true now and will be even more obvious in the near-term as the demographics of our region change.

There is evidence that many of the differences between white families and families of color -- in school performance and economic prosperity particularly -- are remnants of past and present segregation. Historically, segregation and the system of laws established to protect it were designed to create separate and unequal societies based on mythologies about white racial superiority. While segregation has been outlawed and is no longer officially tolerated, it remains a demographic reality.

What does segregation have to do with the quality of life? A house divided cannot stand, and a nation divided is structurally weakened. Natural

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[5]Urban Coalition. *Statement from Citizen's League Communities of Color.* 13 December 1996.

differences will always occur within populations with diverse histories. But when a phenomenon like segregation persists -- and when a significant proportion of our population is plagued by poverty and ignorance that threatens to engulf us all, regardless of where we live -- it is time to investigate the possibility of a systemic problem.

The fact that economic and racial polarization seem to go hand-in-hand is a clue to the multi-faceted nature of the problem. So, too, is our shared history of racial and economic turmoil, which has persisted for 400 years and cost us thousands of lives and million of dollars. Government intervention has been both part of the problem and the solution, from the writing of the Constitution to the "Separate But Equal" ruling, to Brown vs. The Board of Education, to bussing, affirmative action and afrocentric education.

In the pages that follow, three of the major perspectives on economic and racial isolation are presented along with potential solutions. These perspectives are in no way mutually exclusive; nor are they the only ones circulating in the marketplace of ideas. Our purpose in selecting these three perspectives is to stimulate discussion and provide a framework for what is, perhaps the ultimate thinking exercise:

> *If we are to ensure our future as a people and halt the increasing polarization of this region, where do we begin? What are the interrelationships between segregation, housing and education and how will they impact us in the future? What must we do to improve the quality of life for the region and what are we willing to sacrifice, create and sustain for the sake of so doing?*

Perspective Number One

Building Communities: Enrichment and Revitalization

Separate But Equal or *Separate But Unequal?*

In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed an earlier decision in Plessy vs. Ferguson that declared in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas,* that "in the field of public education, the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place." Forty three years have since passed, and America is now beginning to rethink that precept. Familiar remedies to discrimination and segregation--busing, affirmatve action, specially drawn voting districts, and mobility programs--are beginning to draw fire. Today, then, it seems as if we are faced with a new choice: *separate but equal* or *separate but unequal*?

"The practical barriers to desegregation are in many places so high that the moral clarity promised by *Brown*--a simple choice between segregation

and integration, between racism and justice--has blurred."[6] Many of the simple assumptions undergirding the civil-rights movement have been eroded. For years segregated neighborhoods and schools were protested as cruel and unjust. The *Brown* Court in fact found that segregation conferred an ineradicable stigma of inferiority on black children. Today, however, many people of color feel this assumption is *in itself* condescending and racist. After all, seldom do you hear of an all-white neighborhood or school being referred to as "segregated." As well, it is never assumed that white children *must* go to school with children of color or it will damage their self-esteem.

Indeed, what exactly is right and wrong nowadays is no longer clear. Justice has become a matter of interpretation. In the words of Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton, "Better for African-Americans to spend the millions in (busing) transportation money improving inner-city schools. Better to build affordable housing throughout Minneapolis. Better to rely on 'children going to school in their own neighborhoods. If that means fewer integrated classrooms, so be it."[7]

Why does the mayor--and so many other people of color--feel this way? Perhaps because, as a nation, we have never truly embraced *integration*. We have attempted *desegregation*--through court-ordered mandates--but the two are not synonymous. Desegregation implies a lack of choice--a "forced" integration. And that very likely *is* damaging to people's confidence and self-esteem. Many people feel that underneath it all, efforts to desegregate neighborhoods and schools with high proportions of minorities assumes that it is better to live and go to school in majority white settings. They feel that it is not a matter of multiculturalism, but assimilation. This is disrespectful of the strengths of communities of colors.

Segregation and Schools

The battle over "separate but equal" has most clearly manifested itself in the public schools. For more than 30 years now, cities across America have engaged in extensive busing efforts to create more culturally and economically diverse classrooms. People with this perspective feel that the results have been costly and largely ineffective, and many feel that busing has outlived its usefulness.

Why has busing been so ineffective? Largely because it has been carried out for the wrong reasons. After all, if one goes back to the initial concern

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[6]Traub, James. *Can Separate Be Equal?* Harper's Magazine. June 1994. p. 36.
[7]Fineman, Howard. *Redrawing the Color Lines.* Newsweek. 29 April 1996. p. 34.

of the black community, it was not about being with white people. It was about quality education. Former Atlanta mayor Andrew Young explains, "It was really the integration of the money to provide a quality education for all children that was black folks' goal. Racial balance was a means for achieving that goal."[8]

One *could* argue that busing has given some poor, minority children access to the opportunities that white students have. Never mind, however, that children--once "integrated" by schools--are often re-segregated by a tracking system which assigns minority children to the least challenging, least interesting classes, often taught by the least experienced or least motivated teachers. Never mind the limited expectations for minority children, culturally biased instructional methods, and stereotyping and ability grouping. Under these circumstances, many people of color say, never mind busing at all.

The busing efforts undertaken in American cities have placed an unfair burden on communities of color. Not only is there a disproportional busing of children of color, but the widespread use of busing has led to the demise of many neighborhood schools, which some minorities view as a root cause of the destruction of their communities. Schools serve as a hub for communication, interaction, and activities within a community. Desegregation efforts (through busing) have stripped many communities of this vital interaction and communication. It has dismantled community support and parental involvement for many minority children. When children are bused out to the suburbs, many inner-city parents have commented that they cannot find public transportation to attend parent-teacher conferences and other school events. People often blame "unsupportive, uninterested parents" for the demise of public schools, complaining that parents no longer engage in their children's education. But when government policies create such barriers for parents to hurdle, can we truly blame them?

Finally, busing has failed to assist people of color in securing adequate educational opportunities for their children largely because most desegregation plans have been crafted and carried out by the white community with minimal black influence. As a superintendent of a Chicago school district commented, "It's always been on someone else's terms."

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[8]Traub, James. *Can Separate Be Equal?* Harper's Magazine. June 1994. p. 39.

- "The effort to achieve racial balance through desegregation has acted in conjunction with other forces to erode the community fabric that once provided support to children and families."

- "Focus less on student racial percentages and more on student outcomes--resources must be in place to support equity in outcomes."

- "I will venture and offer my humble opinion (as a non-educator) on the issue of busing as a tool to improve educational achievement among "minority" children. As a product of a public school system with 100% Latino students (Puerto Rico), I find it hard to believe that "minority" kids need to sit side-by side with white kids in order to learn!"

- "I've always chosen to put my children in schools that are close to me . . . and the fact that they are black to me is an asset. . . .That's the best for my children, to be taught by people who understand them, who want to teach them, and who expect that they will achieve."

- "Frankly, I find most arguments FOR busing self-defeating, in the sense that by busing kids we seem to imply to our kids that 'whites are smarter and maybe their 'smarts' will rub off on you' by attending mostly-white schools! Also, busing is a cheap way out for those in power to claim that they are doing something to improve education in ghettoes and barrios, instead or adopting the right (but politically unpopular approach) of providing more resources to the neighborhood schools and the 'minority' community in general."

- "As a parent, I see no intrinsic value in having my daughter travel for hours to a far away school, potentially risking harassment by white kids because of her heritage, in order to get an education. She should be entitled to a perfectly good education right at her neighborhood public school!"

The Polarization of the Region

While many government policies and programs exist which aim at integrating both schools and neighborhoods, the actual trend in housing and education has been towards economic and racial segregation in the last fifteen years--not away from it. "Using Census data and what demographers call a segregation or dissimilarity index, between 1970 and 1990, poor households became 13% more segregated in the 40 largest metropolitan areas."[9] Similarly, studies of racial segregation show that America's major urban centers remain highly segregated, with cities in the northern "rustbelt" typically being the most segregated.[10]

With the acceleration of white and middle-class flight from the central cities in recent decades, poverty has concentrated in the core of Minneapolis and St. Paul. According to the 1990 census, the central cities had only 28% of the region's population but 60% of it's poor. Moreover, 65% the region's minorities live in the central cities.[11] As a result, the communities in this region are rapidly becoming polarized.

The damage that racial and economic segregation inflicts on individuals has its counterpart in the damage inflicted on an entire metropolitan region--both the urban core and the suburbs. A strong and prosperous core is key to the health of the entire region; without the city, there would be no suburbs. Suburban communities benefit from the unique economic and cultural opportunities that only large urban centers can provide. Segregation, however, prevents wealth accumulation by residents of isolated, poor communities, thereby establishing major barriers to market participation. Metropolitan regions as a whole suffer when large percentages of people do not have the skills necessary to participate in the economy as workers, consumers, and citizens.

The greatest concentration of jobs in this region is currently in the core. As of the early 1990s, it had approximately 374,000 jobs, more than 2.8 jobs for each of its 133,000 households.[12] Nonetheless, the core has the highest rates of unemployment and poverty in the region. Why? Because there is a serious mismatch between the skills and knowledge of low-income core residents and

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[9]The Institute on Race and Poverty. Examining the Relationship Between Housing, Education, and Persistent Segregation. Summer 1996. p. 4. (From Alan Abramson, et al, *The Changing Geography of Metropolitan Opportunity: The Segregation of the Poor in U.S. Metropolitan Areas, 1970 to 1990*. Housing Policy Debate 6 (1), --1995.

[10]Ibid. p. 4.

[11]United Way Minneapolis Area. *The Face of the Twin Cities: Another Look*. 1995. p.8.

[12]Metropolitan Council. *Trouble at the Core: The Twin Cities Under Stress*. 1992. p. 18.

the skills and knowledge required by available jobs. The jobs available in the core--which contains not only two downtowns but the University of Minnesota, the Midway area, and the Capitol complex--are highly professional. As a result, jobs are typically filled by suburban commuters. This is one side of the story.

The other side of the story is that while the central cities still maintains the largest percentage of jobs, job growth in the central cities has virtually come to a halt. The region's economy is rapidly becoming suburbanized. The suburbs captured almost 98% percent of job growth in the 1980s--66% of which went to the fast growing outer-ring suburbs.[13]

**Housing and Disinvestment in core neighborhoods
**Discrimination in rental markets
**crime

Per Capita Income by Race and Hispanic Origin, 1990 Census (in $1000s)

	7 County Region	Minneapolis	St. Paul	Suburbs
Average	**$14.5**	**$13.3**	**$12.9**	**$15.0**
White	**$14.8**	**$14.1**	**$13.5**	**$15.1**
African American	**$9.1**	**$8.4**	**$8.2**	**$13.1**
Am. Indian	**$6.8**	**$5.9**	**$6.2**	**$8.6**
Asian	**$9.4**	**$6.9**	**$5.5**	**$11.9**
Hispanic	**$8.4**	**$7.5**	**$7.3**	**$9.7**

Source: Metropolitan Council. *Trouble at the Core: Twin Cities Udner Stress.* November 1992. p. 38.

Percent Change in Per Capita Income, By Race and Hispanic Origin, 1979-1989 (1989 dollars)

	Region	Minneapolis	St. Paul	Suburbs
Average	**18.4%**	**11.5%**	**6.5%**	**20.9%**

[13]Ibid. p. 18.

White	21.3 %	20.1%	13.9%	21.9%
African American	- 3.5 %	-7.5%	-5.0%	-8.1%
Am. Indian	20.1 %	-5.7%	4.9%	56.8%
Asian	- 12.1 %	-11.6%	-25.1%	1.8%
Hispanic	8.4 %	14.9%	-2.3%	10.5%

Source: Metropolitan Council. *Trouble at the Core: Twin Cities Udner Stress.* November 1992. p. 39.

Income disparities in the central cities and the suburbs increased thorughout the 1980s. Per Capita income in the suburbs was higher than in the central cities to begin with, and then increased at a faster rate throughout the decade. Areas outside of the cetral cities expereinced a 21% increase in average per capita income, while average per capita income in Minneapolis and St. Paul went up about 12% and 7%, respectively. More strinking, however, is the difference in per capita income between white and minorities. Average per capita income for African Americans and Asians actually *decreased* throughout the decade. This may be in part due to the shift in the regional economy. The economy of the Twin Cities (like that of the nation) has become increasingly based on services and trade activity and proportionatey less on manufacturing. Two-thirds of all the region's new jobs in the last decade were in services and trade sectors. These jobs--largely in retail--generally have lower wage rates than jobs in manufacturing. In fact, less than half of the jobs in Minnesota today pay a liveable wage.

The Prescription: Strengthening the Core

Many people feel that providing the "token" few with more opportunities and choices--greater "mobility"--will do little good for the region if the communities that are left behind remain poor and isolated.

If we are to strengthen the core--and thus the entire region--it is imperative that we focus on job training and placement programs for the unskilled inhabitants of the core. Moreover, we must begin preparing "tomorrow's workers" today by providing quality educational opportunities for *all* children. Currently Minneapolis and St. Paul have the highest drop-out rates and lowest achievement scores among all school districts in the seven county region. This suggests that we need to focus on equalizing resources between suburban and

urban schools, through some sort of revenue-sharing plan or suburban-urban transfer. As well, we could redirect funds earmarked for busing to improve neighborhood schools in the central cities.

It is also essential that we reverse the outflow of economic activity to the suburbs. Due to changes in technology and transportation structures, large firms no longer find it necessary to locate in the central cities. As a result, more and more companies are relocating to the suburbs. To prevent this flight of capital, as well as to entice capital back into the cities, redevelopment grants, loans, and tax exemptions--the distinguishing tool of urban enterprise zones--could be used. Beyond providing more job opportunities for the urban poor, an influx of capital into the central cities would help compensate for the deteriorating urban tax base.

What Critics Say

- Pumping money into the central cities is not the answer because it is prohibitively expensive. When poverty is so concentrated, using money to tackle the problem is like throwing it down a black hole because it is absorbed so quickly. Given the fact that many of these communities are in serious debt, it would take an impossible amount of money to revitalize their economies. It isn't realistic to believe that we can generate that much investment, particularly as it will largely have to come in the form of transfers from the suburbs.

- Creating "enterprise zones" is not an effective way to stimulate economic activity and create jobs in the urban core. Enterprise zones are not pro-labor or pro-community, but pro-profit. Jobs are not guaranteed to go to the urban poor; they can (and very often are) filled by suburban commuters. Moreover, the communities providing the tax-exemption must provide resources to compensate for the tax expenditure granted to the enterprise zone--either through increased tax burdens or decreased services.

- In order to create more regional stability, our communities need to be more economically and racially diverse. Building up infrastructure in the cities will do little good if our communities are still divided along and race and class lines.

- The only way to break down the racial hierarchy that currently exists is to integrate. People of color need to enter into the economic and social mainstream where they will have more access to good jobs and good schools. Equally important, white folks must diversify and expand their understanding of people of color. If we continue to stay apart, the structure of the "racial other" goes unchecked.

- People need to have real choices about where they live. Since a majority of the new jobs are in the suburbs, and because we have limited mass transit in the region, there needs to be more low-income housing in the suburbs.

Personal Responsibility and Market Mechanism

A Safety Net or A Trap?

Can a society take care of its *deserving* without encouraging people to become *undeserving*? Can society create a welfare system that doesn't undermine the moral character of its people? The general answer, as history has taught us, is no.

A government's social policy establishes the rules by which its citizens live. It creates incentives and strategies to go about making a living, raising a family, and having fun. All people--poor and not-poor--respond to these incentives as rational human beings, attempting to maximize their own utility. The primary difference between the poor and not-poor, however, is that they play under different constraints: poor people cannot wait as long for results.

Beginning in the early 1960s, social policy in the United States underwent a major transformation. Programs initiated under the War on Poverty radically changed the rules for poor people, making it profitable for the poor to behave in the short term in ways that were destructive in the long term. The changes in benefit levels and eligibility requirements ushered in by the social policies of the 60s dramatically changed incentives to the poor. As a result, we saw an increase in unemployment among the young, a decrease in labor force participation, and an increase in illegitimacy and welfare dependency.[14] Since then, we have been masking these losses by further subsidizing destructive behavior. We tried to provide more help to the poor, but instead we only created more poor. We tried to prevent people from becoming dependent, but instead created long-term dependency.

We cannot blame people for acting rational. If a young, single mom has a choice between working a full-time, minimum wage job with no insurance (and then paying half of her income for child care), or staying at home with her child, claiming AFDC benefits, Medicaid, Food Stamps, and Section 8 rent subsidies, what is the rational choice? Of course it is the latter of the two. The problem, however, is that this woman is only looking at her short term needs. When this woman's child grows older and she suddenly finds herself needing and wanting to work, she will also find herself lacking a solid employment history and job skills. As a result, she will have no choice but to stay dependent on government assistance.

Moreover, every assumption young blacks or Latinos might make about their inability to compete with whites is fed by targeted social policies which tell them that they are un-responsible victims. We tell youth from disadvantaged families to be proud and to believe in themselves, yet our actions tell them that no one else believes in them. It is, in essence, the self-fulfilling prophecy. Low-income minorities typically live in the most isolated communities, experience the most severe negative conditioning, and have been granted by policy the most immunity from responsibility.

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[14]Murray, Charles. Losing Ground. NY: Basic Books, Inc., 1984. p. 9.

Essentially, then, instead of a safety net, we inadvertently built a trap. By allowing people to be lean on the government during hard times, we've taken away their ability to be self-sufficient. People *would* play the incentives offered by the market if they didn't have the option of playing the incentives offered by the government. If we eliminated assistance for everyone but the truly needy, it would leave the able-bodied no recourse whatsoever except the job market. "It is the Alexandrian solution: cut the knot, for there is no way to untie it."[15]

"The most troubling aspect of American social policy toward the poor in the late twentieth-century America is not how much it costs, but what it has bought."

--Charles Murray, Losing Ground

The Culture of Poverty

Spending on social programs has steadily increased since America first began waging its "war on poverty." Public assistance costs were thirteen times higher in 1980 than they were in 1950 (in constant dollars). Education costs in 1980 were 24 times their 1950 cost, while housing costs were 129 times their 1950 cost. Overall, civilian social welfare costs increased by twenty times. During that same period, however, the United States population increased by one half.[16] Clearly, a fundamental change took place in American social policy. But why hasn't this investment paid off?

As some suggest, this investment has not paid off because a certain group of individuals--what is now typically referred to as the "underclass"-- will always be poor regardless of their external circumstances. While the "underclass" and the "lower class" both lack economic resources and opportunities, the two classes are different in that the "underclass" has a different set of values. Moreover, the underclass is delineated from lower class populations in that their poverty traits are transmitted intergenerationally and they thus become stuck in a self-perpetuating cycle of disadvantage. This is in contrast to individuals who have experienced the loss of a breadwinner, are involuntary unemployed, are ill. Their poverty is typically not enduring and certainly not transmitted from one generation to the next. Research shows that this "culture of poverty" transcends regional, rural/urban, and national differences, and that everywhere individuals stuck in the culture of poverty show "striking similarities in family structure, interpersonal relations, time orientation, value

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[15]Ibid. pp. 227-228.

[16]Ibid. p. 14. (From Office of Research and Statistics. *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1981.* Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census, 1982.)

systems, and patterns of spending."[17] This culture is characterized by things such as (1) hopelessness, indifference, alienation, apathy, and a lack of effective participation or integration into the social and economic fabric of society; (2) a present-tense time orientation; (3) cynicism and mistrust of those in authority; (4) strong feelings of marginality, helplessness, dependence, and inferiority; (5) lack of impulse control and the inability to defer gratification; (8) the absence of childhood as a specially protected and prolonged state, and thus early initiation into free sexual unions or consensual marriages; (9) a high incident in the abandonment of wives and children; (10) a matriarchal family structure; and (10) a minimum level of organization beyond the nuclear or extended family, a low level of community organization, and a strong sense of territoriality.[18] Approximately only 20% of those living below the poverty line are actually trapped in the culture of poverty, but indeed this 20% is largely why our increased investments have *not* paid off. An expensive program such as Section 8--one that costs approximately $6000 per year per family--is a futile effort because those in the culture of poverty will remain poor whether they live in core of whether they live in the Eden Prairie. Improvements in environment will superficially affect their poverty, but only a change in values and family structure can help break the cycle of disadvantage.

"The Poverty of Values"

History is replete with individuals who have climbed their way out of poverty. But what is it that allows some people to hurdles life's barriers while others consistently stumble?

General Colin Powell grew up in Harlem and the South Bronx, two of America's very poorest and crime-ridden neighborhoods. He was not a exceptionally gifted student nor a star athlete, but he was a hard-worker. In 1989, the 52-year-old was appointed chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The youngest man and first African-American ever to hold that position, Colin Powell is greatly respected by the American public. When asked the secret of his success, Powell gives a definitive response: "My family." In his own words, "The worst kind of poverty is not economic poverty. It is the poverty of values."[19]

Today, one out of every four children is born to a single mother. A third of these single mothers are teenagers.[20] Studies show that children in single-parent families are more likely to have problems. They tend to do more poorly in school and are more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol. They typically earn less and are more likely to become single parents themselves. This breakdown of values is ultimately what causes the perpetuation of poverty. Children do not have role-models and thus do not learn how to be disciplined and self-sufficient.

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[17]Karger, Howard Jacob and David Stoesz. *American Social Welfare Policy.* White Plains, NY: Longman Publishing Group, 1994.

[18]Ibid. p. 148.

[19]National Issues Forums. *The Troubled American Family.* 1995. p. 7.

[20]Ibid. p. 7.

Our current public policies and practices counteract traditional American values of hard-work, self-sufficiency, and strong, two-parent families. Aid to Families with Dependent Children, for example, allows a woman to have a child out of wedlock with no conceivable way of supporting that child. No-fault divorce laws are another example; by allowing couples to easily get divorces, they place a low value on family and marriage. Our current laws and practices need to be restructured to encourage two-parent families and family values.

The Impact on Schools

Perhaps nowhere has the break-down of the family structure had a stronger impact than on our schools. People often voice dissatisfaction with the public schools, but schools nowadays are asked to do the impossible: they are asked not only to educate children, but raise them, protect them, and discipline them too. Schools are asked to provide children with their breakfast and lunch, their after-school activities, their values and morals. Teachers are forced to discipline children who cause disruptions and create problems. They must spend extra time helping children with assignments who get no help at home. Where are the parents? When teachers are asked to take on so many other roles, it seriously diminishes their capacity to do their primary function: teach.

Not ironically, it is in the best schools that we see the most two-parent families. In these schools, teachers are free to teach without constantly having to deal with disruptions and incomplete assignments. Indeed, many studies have found that it is not the amount of money that a school spends that has the greatest impact on educational achievement, but rather the socioeconomic make-up of the students. In 1964, John Hopkins sociologist James Coleman conducted an extensive study of equality of educational opportunity in America. When measured by the "input" criteria, Coleman found that differences in the quality of schools was not very closely related to differences in student achievement. Instead, he found social class mix to be the crucial factor in explaining differences in achievement. Children from low socioeconomic backgrounds--regardless of race--improved when studying along side of children from a mixture of *social* classes. This may be because children from middle- and upper-class families typically have a different values system and receive discipline and instruction at home. The crucial point, according to Coleman, is that "schools have little influence on a youngster's achievement that is independent of his social, economic, and cultural background."[21] Our own experience in the Twin Cities seems to confirm Coleman's point. While the Minneapolis school district is the highest spending district in the region, it also has the lowest achievement rates (as measured by the Minnesota Basic Skills Tests). It also has more children living with only one parent (46.2%) than with two parents (42.5%).[22]

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[21]Tesconi, Jr. Charles A. and Emanuel Hurwitz, Jr. *Education For Whom?* NY: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1974. p. 23.

[22] The Urban Coalition. *Minneapolis Public School Neighborhood Student Data, 1995-96.* p. 42.

"At its worst, public housing under HUD has served as an incubator for social pathologies which have been unleashed on our society hurting the very ones such programs are suppose to help."

--Zenoa Henderson, Project 21 member

Despite the best of intentions, government intervention in markets such as education and housing has produced less-than-desired results and numerous unintended consequences. Public housing stands out as a testament to the failed social engineering of the 1960s. While the original housing constructed under the Housing Act of 1949 consisted predominantly of low-rise, two- and three-story apartment buildings, and while the first tenants of public housing apartments were predominantly young, employed, working-class families, beginning in the mid-1950s, pubic housing underwent a dramatic shift. Higher urban land costs led to more and more high-rise buildings. Architectural designs took little account of the needs of families with children (apartments had few bedrooms and little recreational space). Municipal housing authorities and elected officials decided to concentrate the buildings. In some instances, design standards were even lowered to make public housing less attractive to force more reliance on the public sector.[23] Eventually, large numbers of poor families began to crowd into the projects. In many communities, "the projects" became a code for poverty, crime, and despair. Today, the Department of Housing and Urban Development is thought by many to be the largest slum-lord in the country.

Public education stands out in the mind of many as another bureaucratic failure. Again, despite the best intentions, political institutions burden schools with excessive bureaucratic redtape, inhibit effective organization, stifle innovation and flexibility, and thereby impede student achievement. People nowadays consider private schools to be a beacon of excellence. The main difference, many contend, is that private schools maintain a safe and disciplined environment in which people can learn, and that teachers engage parents more fully in their children's education.

From an institutional perspective, however, private schools are successful for a different reason. They are successful because the market mechanism of competition ensures that parents have more control than they do in public schools. Private schools have the incentive to please their "customers" and respond to their wants and needs lest they should take their "business" elsewhere. In contrast, public schools are democratically governed; they are represented by varied interests all vying for control over and within the system. A single school is governed by a huge and heterogeneous constituency comprised of politicians, administrators, teachers, and various groups at all

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[23]Egan, John, et al. *Housing and Public Policy: A Role for Mediating Structures.* Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1981. p. 16.

levels. Parents and students are but a small part of this constituency. And because political resources are distributed unequally and the interests of the politically powerful do not always, if even occasionally, parallel the interests of the average citizen, parents wants and needs are often considered last. Low-income families are particularly disempowered. While wealthy parents might in fact choose to remove their children from public schools and send them to private schools, or they perhaps might even choose to move to a different neighborhood, poor families have no such recourse. Because of the steep financial costs of alternatives, public schools can attract and keep students without being particularly good at educating them.

These two anecdotes on housing and education suggest that we must reverse the policies of the last fifty years. The government has grown steadily larger and more intrusive, spending more and more money to tackle problems that simple cannot be solved with money. To avoid the mistakes of the past, we need policies that encourage self-sufficiency and maximize individual choice. Recognizing that many jobs today do not pay livable wages, it may be an appropriate policy for the government to subsidize low-income families with vouchers for housing and education, but that is where government intervention should end. The market should then take over. For example, it is inefficient and intrusive for governments to mandate "fair share" housing policies. There will obviously be a greater demand for low-income housing in some areas than in others, and the market is by far more accurate and efficient in measuring that demand than the government. Where there is sufficient demand, suppliers will appear. Individuals who are motivated and responsible will take advantage of the opportunities created through voucher systems, but it is otherwise inappropriate and unnatural (and expensive) for the government to try and help those who do not want to be helped and who are unwilling to "help themselves."

What Critics Say

- Less than half of the jobs in Minnesota pay a livable way. Sixty-one percent of Minnesota's 85,348 families in poverty have at least one person in the work force. Approximately 400,000 Minnesotans lack health coverage--72% of which are in the work force.[24] If we want to create less dependency on the government and more dependency on the market and on the individual, we have to create a market system which allows responsible people to survive.
- Discrimination remains a significant barrier for people of color, no matter how "responsible" they are.
- Poor people do not have the time or money to lobby for their interests and rights. The wealthy, on the other hand, abuse their power and continue to get richer at the expense of the poor. The new Twins stadium is one

[24] United Way of Minneapolis Area. The Face of the Twin Cities: Another Look. 1995. p. 9.

example of how the needs and wants of the wealthy are considered above those of the poor.

- Everyone in this country receives government benefits of some sort. Whether it is in the form of a check or a tax deduction is immaterial. In fact, the federal government spends $66 billion a year on mortgage-interest and property tax deductions for homeowners-- two-thirds of which goes to families with incomes over $75,000.[25] This is more than *four times* as much as is spent on low-income housing programs.
- The poor will always be with us; a reserve labor pool is essential to capitalism.. The chief function of social programs is to regulate labor. When mass unemployment leads to outbreaks of turmoil, relief programs are initiated or expanded to absorb/control the turmoil and restore order. As turmoil subsides or as labor is needed, the relief programs contract, expelling those who are needed back into the labor market. Responsibility has nothing to do with it.
- The problem with social welfare policies in this country is not that we've done too much--creating dependency--but that we've done too little. The actual amount spent on programs like AFDC is very small. If we truly want to help people get back on their feet again, we need to invest more in these programs.

Mobility: Creating Choices

No Turning Back?

"Forty percent of America's cities are programmed to fail. Gary, Camden, and East St. Louis are already clinically dead. Bridgeport, Newark, Hartford, Cleveland, and Detroit are on life support systems. New York, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis, and Philadelphia are sinking. Through seemingly healthy, Boston, Minneapolis, and Atlanta are already infected."[26]

--David Rusk

David Rusk, urban policy expert and author of Cities Without Suburbs, visited the Twin Cities a few years ago. He warned that Minneapolis and St.

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[25] DeParle, Jason. *The Year that Housing Died.* The New York Times Magazine. 20 October 1996. p. 53.

[26] Rusk, David. *Without Urban-Suburban Unity, Cities Future Looks Bleak.* Pioneer Press. 10 June 1994.

Paul were headed down the same one-way track that cities like Detroit and Cleveland have already traveled. The basic pattern remains the same: poverty concentrates in the core, middle class flight accelerates, and the core is then left with a higher percentage of poor but less resources to meet their needs. As a result, we end up with a polarization of the region on race and class lines.

"Inelastic" cities that are unable to expand their city limits are programmed to fail, according to Rusk, because they become "their own suburbs' poorhouse."[27] For many reasons--a lack of affordable housing in the suburbs, limited mass transit in the region, discrimination in lending and realty markets, myopic city politics, racism--low-income families in the Twin Cities have remained trapped within city limits, and largely, within certain neighborhoods. When poverty is concentrated, it exacerbates a myriad of other problems: poor schools crime, unemployment, drugs, dependency, and illegitimacy. The most effective solution is simply to get people out of the ghettos and into neighborhoods with good schools and jobs opportunities.

Poor Communities = Poor Schools

Education is typically viewed as the path to self-sufficiency. History is ripe with examples of
individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who pulled themselves up "by the bootstraps" and out of poverty. Clarence Thomas and Colin Powell--prominent, successful, national figures. Through hard work and dedication, these two individuals defied the odds. But unfortunately, those hard to beat. These men are statistical anomalies. The reality is that for children who grow up in poor families and live in poor communities, the odds of escaping those deprivations are infinitesimal. A school may be a child's only hope for a transcendent future, and when that school is overcrowded, impersonal, and gray as well, hope fades fast. At the very minimum, then, we must assure that children have access to good schools.

In Minnesota, many options currently exist which allow families to choose their school. The "open enrollment" option, for example, allows students aged 5 to 18 to transfer to public schools outside of their residential district unless the receiving district does not have room or the transfer will have a negative impact on desegregation efforts. Currently less than 2% of all students take advantage of this option.[28] A major obstacle for poor families, however, is fact that transportation is not provided for students using the open enrollment option. If the family does not have a car, and because public transportation is not available to all areas within the suburbs, choices are effectively limited. Moreover, some parents may be unwilling or unable to invest the time and money seeking out a quality school for their child. As a result, transportation

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[27]Ibid.

[28]The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. School Choice. Princeton, NJ: The Carnegie Foundation, 1992.

subsidies and extensive outreach programs are vital if school choice programs are to provide options to the families who need them most.

Busing, of course, is another way in which we have traditionally attempted to provided low-income and minority students more opportunities in education. For more than 30 years now, cities across America have engaged in extensive busing efforts to create more culturally and economically diverse classrooms. Some people feel the results have been costly and ineffective, but a significant number of people still express strong support for desegregated schools. Research has shown that desegregation has modest positive effects on the achievement of black students, while having no negative affect on white student achievement.[29] Furthermore, students attending integrated schools have a better chance of attending selective colleges, majoring in technical fields, and working /living in integrated settings.[30] And while raising the achievement of children of color is important, equally important is how children are socialized to become the next generation of adults. Thus even if no gains in achievement were evident, one might still argue that busing is a worthwhile endeavor.

Desegregation proponents argue that the failure of desegregation-based education strategies to produce better academic results, particularly in regard to students of color, comes from its incompleteness. For example, we haven't done enough in our schools to make students of color feel welcomed and valued. There is a lack of diversity among the teaching staff in the region, and staff development efforts to help all teachers develop skills, knowledge, and strategies to work with students from various cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds have not been made. Moreover, even though schools may be desegregated, classrooms aren't. Once desegregated by school, children are often "re-segregated" by a tracking system that assigns minority children to the least challenging, least interesting classes, often taught by the least experienced or least motivated teachers. In other words, we should actually *try* busing before we condemn it.

Overall, however, a child's educational opportunities and achievement depends on the entire spectrum of resources available through their *whole* environment: home, school, and neighborhood. How they speak and think, how they interact with others, their goals and dreams ... these things depend on where a child lives, and thus, how he or she sees the world. Is it hopeful and bright? Is it dangerous and threatening? Is it gray and sad? Even if one part of a child's spectrum thrives, it will, on average, not be sufficient to counter the impacts of the other two. This is not to say, of course, that we should abandon short-term desegregation strategies such as busing, but if we are ever going to make *real* changes, we will need to "exchange rose-colored glasses for binoculars and move from the false hope of a quick fix to slow but steady

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[29]Minneapolis Public Schools. Quality Schools Report. 17 April 1993. p. 24.
[30]Ibid p. 24.

improvements in the long term."[31] That is to say, if we want desegregated schools, we need desegregated neighborhoods.

Barriers to Choice

The Twin Cities economy is increasingly becoming suburbanized. The region gained 225,000 new jobs in the 1980s, only 5,400 of which went to the central cities. As a result, there is a significant special mismatch between those who need the jobs and where the jobs are actually located. More than one in four households in the core lack a vehicle, making it largely impossible for low-income families to take advantage of job opportunities in the suburbs. For minorities, the percentages are substantially higher: 47% of African-American households, 56% of Native American households, and 36% of Asian households lack a vehicle.[32] Bus routes do serve the developing suburbs, but only go to a limited number of locations and with much less frequency. Increasingly, the distance between job locations and people's homes is a major barrier of economic opportunity.

Perhaps the biggest barrier to low-income families, however, is the lack of affordable housing in the suburbs. Seventy-one percent of the rental units affordable to very low-income renters[33] and nearly two-thirds of the homes valued at $60,000 or less were located in Minneapolis and St. Paul. As well, the central city and the inner-ring suburbs possess a majority of the region's subsidized housing. While the central cities' share of all subsidized housing in the region has declined from 90% in the early 1970s to 65% today, the fact remains that low- income families still have a limited number of choices of where to live.[34]

There are many reasons why there is a shortage of affordable housing in the suburbs. Perhaps the biggest reason: local zoning laws which prohibit the construction of low- and middle-income housing. Because so many vital services (such as education) are funded through property taxes, municipalities have an incentive to keep low-cost developments out of their communities. "Exclusionary zoning" occurs when municipalities increase the required standards of housing quality beyond those necessary for healthy and safety standards. Examples include specifications of minimum square footage for new homes and lots, prohibitions on multi-family housing units, maximum densities limitations, and garage requirements. For example, while the Metropolitan Council's Advisory Standard for minimum lot size (for single family housing) is 7,500 square feet, Minnetonka has a minimum lot size of

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[31] O'Connor, Debra. *Promises Unfulfilled.* St. Paul Pioneer Press. 11 may 1995, p 10A.

[32] Metropolitan Council. Trouble at the Core: The Twin Cities Under Stress. 18 November 1992. p. 20.

[33] Low income renters are those at 30% of the median income.

[34] Ibid p. 1-2.

22,000 square feet. As well, Lakeville requires that each single family site provide space for a three-car garage regardless of whether the garage is constructed.[35] Though land costs, building costs, and utility connection costs, these requirements contribute significantly to the cost of a house.

Housing is a basic human need that changes with people's age and economic condition. Over their lifespan, people's needs change in respect to housing type, size, price, and location. As a result, exclusionary zoning not only keeps people out of communities, it actually "squeezes" established community members out as their circumstances or needs change. For example, when people retire and suddenly find themselves on fixed budgets, they may have to leave the community altogether if they cannot find housing which meets their needs. Hence it is not just low-wage workers who need housing options, but the elderly, young people just entering the job market, and people going through life changes, such as women who become single moms after a divorce.

Other barriers for low-income and minority households include discrimination in lending markets. "Redlining," or the refusal by banks or companies to issue loans or insurance on property in certain neighborhoods, occurs quite frequently. The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston claims that people of color are sixty percent more like to be rejected for loans for home purchase, improvement, or refinancing than similarly situated white applicants (controlling for financial, employment, and neighborhood characteristics).[36] The incidence of racial discrimination specifically in the Twin Cities home mortgage lending market is well documented. Recent statistical analysis found that approximately 70% of the disparity between home mortgage loans rejection rates of nonwhites and whites is due to the unequal treatment of similarly qualified loan applicants.[37]

Discrimination in the rental market is also severe. A review of seventy-one fair housing audits conducted in cities across the nation throughout the 1980s found that blacks seeking homes for sale encountered a 20% chance of discrimination (on average) while blacks seeking rental units faced a 50% chance of discrimination.[38] Similar discrimination exists for Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans. A recent study conducted by the Minnesota

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[35] Lukermann, Barbara and Michael Kane. Land Use Practices: Exclusionary Zoning, de Facto or de Jure? Center For Urban and Regional Affairs. p. 17-18.

[36]The Institute on Race and Poverty. Examining the Relationship Between Housing Segregation and Persistent Segregation. (Executive Summary). 1996. p. 6.

[37]The Institute on Race and Poverty. Examining the Relationship Between Housing Segregation and Persistent Segregation. 1996. p. 54. (From Tze Chan and Samuel L. Myers, Jr., "Racial Discrimination in Housing Markets: Accounting for Credit Risk," *Social Science Quarterly*, Volume 76, No.3, September 1995 and *Disparities in Mortgage Lending in the Upper Midwest Summary of the Results Using 1992 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act Data.*)

[38]The Institute on Race and Poverty. Examining the Relationship Between Housing Segregation and Persistent Segregation. 1996. p. 35.

Fair Housing Center (MFHC) on the rental practice in two Minneapolis Communities found the incidence of discrimination to be even higher. The MFHC conducted a series of survey tests in the Northeast and Southwest neighborhoods, and found that a total of 72.2% of the cases received different treatment based on race, family status, or public assistance status. In 55.5% of the survey tests, applicants received less favorable treatment based on race.[39] A range of discriminatory behavior uncovered: more information was offered to white testers than testers of color, white testers were encourage to fill out applications right away while testers of color were not, agents failed to show up for testers of color, units were said to be unavailable for testers of color but were available for white testers, testers of color were shown inferior units, and testers of color received more burdensome terms and conditions.[40]

What's the Prescription?

To prevent local governments from acting like monopolists, housing policies should be made at least in part on a regional level. A national myth holds that small government is better than big government. But according to Dean Rusk, our *national reality* is that small governments act to exclude racial and economic groups. "Broad-based government can promote diversity. In short, multiple, independent suburbs are machines to keep poor blacks and Latinos trapped in inner cities away from middle class America."[41] The power now held by dozens of independent, local governments should be placed in the hands of an effective, accountable, elected metropolitan government.

At the very least, however, suburbs need to accept their "fair share" of responsibility for creating affordable housing. It is to their own benefit to provide life-cycle housing in a range of types and prices for their own community members as well as individuals wanting to re-locate closer to job opportunities. To prevent creating new pockets of poverty in the suburbs, low-income housing should be scattered throughout neighborhoods and communities. When poverty is not concentrated, it tends to mitigate many of the other problems often associated with poverty, such as crime and declining property values. In order to get suburbs to comply, special incentives may be needed. If tax incentives are not strong enough, mandatory policies with penalties for noncompliance could be adopted.

Incentives directly to developers are another possible option. The state of Massachusetts, for example, adopted guidelines in 1969 requiring local governments to take regional needs into effect in the implementation of local

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[39]Minnesota Fair Housing Center. *Housing Discrimination: A Report on the Rental Practices in Two Minneapolis Communities.* December 1996. p. 9..

[40] Minnesota Fair Housing Center. *Housing Discrimination: A Report on the Rental Practices in Two Minneapolis Communities.* December 1996. p. 10.

[41]Rusk, Dean. *Without Urban -Suburban Unity, Cities Future Looks Bleak.* Pioneer Press. 10 June 1994.

planning and development standards in its "Anti-Snob Zoning Law." The law allows developers of projects that are at least 30 percent low-income affordable to bypass local planning commissions in securing permits. Developers have won most of the appeals filed as a result of the law, and some 20,000 units of affordable housing have been created.[42] Massachusetts also withholds federal and state assistance grants from municipalities that implement exclusionary zoning ordinances or unreasonable restrictions on private developments of low-income housing.[43]

Another possibility includes replacing exclusionary zoning with "inclusionary" zoning. Density bonuses and mandatory set-asides are two of the main instruments of inclusionary zoning. Density bonuses increase the permitted density of a development as the amount of affordable housing increases. Mandatory set-asides require developers to reserve a certain portion of units in each development for low- or moderate-income residents.[44]

On the flip side, the government needs to expand voucher programs and lending programs to enhance the purchasing power of low-income households. As well, the enforcement of anti-discrimination laws is critical. Housing audits, such as the one recently conducted by the MFHC, is one important and relatively inexpensive method of checking discrimination in the housing market. Courts rely on evidence gathered in such tests to determine if violations of the fair housing laws have occurred. An ongoing, comprehensive program of random testing with penalties for violators ought to be enacted.

Finally, community outreach efforts should be made to integrate new residents and make them feel a part of the community. Home-improvement training programs and seminars could be implemented to help new residents maintain their property. Mentoring programs would help the new residents learn what healthy communities demand in terms of values and responsibilities.

Gatreaux Mobility

The strategy of giving the minority poor more choice in where they live can be traced largely to the relative success of a plan in Chicago that grew out of a 1966 lawsuit. Residents of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA)--led by Dorothy Gautreaux--charged that the CHA reinforced segregation by locating nearly all public housing in overwhelmingly African American

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[42] The Institute on Race and Poverty. Examining the Relationship Between Housing, Education, and Persistent Segregation. 1996. p. 34 (From Sylvia Lewis, "A Parallel Experience," in Planning 58 (May 1992): 14.

[43]Ibid. p. 35. (From Justin D. Cummin, Recasting Fair Share: Toward Housing Law and Principled Social Policy, 54 Law and Inequ. J. 339, 364, 1996.)

[44]Ibid. p. 35.

neighborhoods. The plaintiffs successfully sued to force HUD and the CHA to fund a rent-subsidy voucher program throughout the six-county Chicago area.

The Gatreaux Assisted Housing Program is the oldest and most renowned of the special mobility programs. Northwestern University sociologist James Rosenbaum and his colleagues found that improvements in economic outcomes for parents and educational outcomes for children are associated with enhanced opportunities in neighborhoods less severely impacted by poverty. Specifically, they found that children who had grown up in the suburbs were more likely to have completed high school, attended college, be employed, and earn higher wages.

Source: Dreier, Peter and David Moberg. *Moving From the 'Hood.* The American Prospect. no. 24 (Winter 1995): 75-79.

What is "affordable housing"?

Under standards established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, housing is classified as "affordable" if it consumes no more than 30% of a household's income. Housing that exceeds 50% of income is defined as a severe cost burden. According to the 1990 Census, the region faces a serious need for affordable housing. There is a current shortage of over 36,800 units which would be considered affordable to low-income renters at the 30% benchmark. This shortage may even be understated as it fails to consider the current mismatch between low-income households and affordable housing units. Many of the units deemed affordable for low-income households are actually occupied by households with higher incomes. As a result, large percentages of the Minneapolis and St. Paul poor face severe housing cost burdens. In 1990, 76% of the region's low-income renters (84,000 households) paid 30% or more of their income on rent, while 43% of these low-income households (48,000) paid over 50% of their income on rent[45].

HUD's Section 8 program was created in 1974 to assist individuals with severe housing cost burdens. The program provides subsidies directly to individual households to help close the gap between income and housing costs. Section 8 funds are also needed to protect residents whose units are lost to government initiated disposition or demolition from displacement. Section 8 subsidies cover the difference between 30 percent of an eligible tenant's income and the "fair market rent" for comparably new, rehabilitated or existing units in that particular area. Provided the housing they find meets government quality standards and the landlord is willing to sign a Housing Assistance Payment contract with the local Public Housing Authority, the tenant can move into that apartment. A major obstacle for Section 8 recipients is the lack of housing within the "fair market rent." In fact, even though only 4.5 million of the 15 million eligible households receive *any type* of housing assistance, and even though Section 8 waiting lists in many areas are closed off, Section 8 vouchers go unused every year because people cannot find units within the FMR. Furthermore, just last year Congress approved legislation which reduced the FMR from the 45th to the 40th rent percentile--inevitably making it even more difficult for families to find suitable housing within the FMR.

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

	Central Cities	Fully Developed Suburbs	Developing Suburbs	Total

[45]Metropolitan Council. Housing Policies for the 1990s. February 1994. p.2.

1980	445,371	324,437	216,560	1,040,0139 1
1990	450,818	376,674	377,292	1,293,12 1
2000	459,000	426,075	501,576	1,498,89 1
2010	463,500	446,355	567,926	1,602,96 1

Source: Metropolitan Council. Housing Policy for the 1990s. November 1994. p. 18

While the central cities still has the largest concentration of jobs, the fast-growing suburbs captured two-thirds of net-job growth in the 1980s. This trend id projected to continue in the next decade.

Current Level of Affordable Units in Twelve Twin Cities Communities, 1996

City	Affordable Owner-Occupied Units	Affordable Rental Units
Eagan	**62%**	**22%**
Eden Prairie	**42%**	**11%**
Edina	**31%**	**14%**
Maple Grove	**69%**	**4%**
Minneapolis	**88%**	**67%**
Minnetonka	**47%**	**17%**
Plymouth	**42%**	**15%**
Shoreview	**60%**	**42%**
St. Paul	**90%**	**68%**
Wayzata	**43%**	**36%**
Woodbury	**55%**	**15%**

Source: Metropolitan Liveable Communities Act, Metropolitan Council, January 1996. (From the Institute on Race and Poverty. Examining the Relationship Between Housing, Education, and Persistent Segregation. (Executive Summary.) 1996. p. 10.

Minneapolis, St. Paul, and a number of inner-ring suburbs already meet or exceed their share of affordable housing units in the metropolitan area. Other communities, however, fall

substantially short. The lack of affordable housing in the suburbs is one of the largest barriers to economic opportunity faced by low-income households.

The Armageddon of Section 8

"The weak political constituency for the Department of Housing and Urban Development makes it a prime candidate for cuts."

--House Speaker Newt Gingrich in the The Washington Post 12/13/94

The bipartisan desire to achieve a balanced federal budget by the year 2002 is having a dramatic effect on American social policy. The proposal now under consideration would require sharp cuts of at least 25% in discretionary spending over seven years. And unfortunately, it is not likely that all programs will be cut proportionally; HUD programs could very well receive a disproportionate cut.

At the same time that funding is shrinking, need is growing. HUD expenditures have been growing at a rate of 9% per year over the past 15 years--faster than any other federal agency except the Commerce Department. Many opponents of public housing like to use such statistics as evidence of HUD's bloatedness and inefficiency. Yet, the simple fact is that housing spending has increased because the number of poor Americans has increased--and--because the cost of housing has increased . Quite simply, housing need has rapidly outstripped federal expenditures. Many studies have found that the gap between affordable housing units and the number of families in need of assistance is wider than at point since the Great Depression. While approximately 15 million households qualify for federal housing aid, only 4.5 receive any type of assistance (whether it be project-based or tenant-based).[46]

A principle source of the cost growth is the federal government's policy of renewing all housing assistance. Section 8 housing was developed with time-limited contracts, most of which were only for 15 or 20 years (a few were for 40 years). These contracts, now providing housing assistance for up to one million families, will expire in the next few years. The amount of money needed to renew these contracts will explode from about $2.2 billion in FY 1995 to $16.1 billion in FY 2000.[47] Considering HUD's total budget has already been cut down from $25.7 billion in FY 1995 to $19.7 billion in FY1996, it almost goes

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[46] Deparle, Jason. "The Year that Housing Died." *The New York Times Magazine.* 20 October 1996. p. 52.

[47] "Federal Housing Budget Debate." http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~txlihis/fedbuddeb.html p.3

without saying that the $16.1 billion cost of contract renewals would usurp many of the other functions currently performed by HUD. There is currently no formal federal commitment to continue providing the subsidies after the contracts expire. Many housing budget experts have referred to this situation as the "Armageddon."

What Critics Say

- "The solution to pollution is not dilution." It is better to help people where they are than "disperse" poverty into other communities. Instead of making other communities worse, we need to clean up the bad neighborhoods. (An influx of low-income families could lead to increased crime in the suburbs. As well, low-income home-owners and tenants of low-income housing projects who do not maintain their property will lower surrounding property values.)
- People move to the suburbs to escape crime and bad schools. It is not fair or realistic to expect suburban residents to take these problems on again.
- "Transplanted" low-income families may not share the same values as existing residents; as a result, they may feel alienated and/or cause problems.
- Efforts to desegregated neighborhoods and schools with high proportions of minorities assume that it is better to live and go to school in majority white settings. This is disrespectful of the strengths of communities of colors. Furthermore, people of color need to remain together in order to preserve their culture and maintain their--albeit small--political representation.
- "Mobility" may heighten racial tensions and lead to more racist encounters and attacks.
- Public transportation in suburbs does not provide 24 hour, 7 day-a-week service. The suburbs are not geared for families without vehicles.
- It is inappropriate for the government to interfere in issues that should be worked out though natural market forces.
- "Mobility" as an option will take a long time to implement. It is a gradualistic approach and will do little to help the thousands of poor who need help *right now*. Furthermore, it is a tokenistic approach. Past attempts to provide mobility to low-income families and people of color have been limited in scope, actually helping few people. Using the few "token" low-income and minority families living among them as proof that they have done their "share", suburbs may feel they are then exonerated from the problems of the central cities.
- Dispersing poverty may help the few, token families who are lucky enough to escape the ghettos, but it does little for the people, schools, and deteriorated neighborhoods that are left behind. Even under the most renowned mobility program of all, the Gatreaux program in Chicago, very

little improvement was seen in the neighborhoods from which the participants left.

- Even if obstacles are removed and the poor are granted more mobility, the fact remains that their is a general mismatch between the skills of the poor and the skills necessary for available jobs.