History

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Divided We Live: Racial and Ethnic Segregation in Housing in the U.S.

Abstract
This study is focused on racial and ethnic residential segregation in the U.S. Residential segregation was firmed by federal housing policy in the 1930s since it helped to keep American neighborhoods segregated. Nowadays, neighborhoods are still segregated due to ongoing discrimination in the rental, sales and mortgage markets. The situation is getting better but slowly. The article concludes that minorities will integrate naturally and no federal program can accelerate it because it is politically and socially impossible.

Keywords: Racial and ethnic residential segregation, federal mortgage policy, real estate industry, public housing, housing vouchers.

Introduction
The area where one lives significantly influences their overall quality of life as well as their job, school opportunities or access to a mortgage. These aspects have an impact on socio-economic status and the accumulation of assets, and this makes housing crucial for the integration of minorities into U.S. society. As social scientists point out, minorities rarely live in predominantly white communities where living conditions are usually better than in minority communities. Therefore, it is impossible to integrate minorities into general society when residential segregation remains.

This article analyzes why Americans still mostly reside in racially or ethnically divided neighborhoods at a time when no discriminatory laws exist and minorities can move everywhere. Residential segregation enormously increased in the 1940s-1970s and has been slowly declining since the 1980s. However, the U.S. is far from being a post-racial society and no integration policy can accelerate residential integration because it is not politically and socially possible. The article discusses black-white segregation more as African Americans are more segregated than Hispanics and Asians and used to be the biggest minority in the U.S. It should be also noted that not a small number of blacks wish to live together, and therefore, they stay in racially isolated places (John Goering, undated:11). Thus, black-white segregation is a complicated issue.

The first part of this study discusses discrimination in the private housing market and its support by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). It addresses issues such as steering in the rental and sales market, and redlining in the lending industry. It explains why only whites left the inner city to suburbs after the Housing Act of 1934 was authorized, and why minorities largely stayed to live in segregation from the white majority. It underlines the role of the FHA in residential segregation in the past, and discrimination in the rental and sales market, which prevents minorities from living beyond their communities.

The second part explains the ongoing discrimination in the government subsidized housing programs. The study includes only the two largest ones – public housing and housing vouchers. The public housing projects were mostly built in poor neighborhoods with worse public services and facilities compared to predominantly white neighborhoods. The majority of the projects were projected racially separated. Nowadays, segregated public housing projects still exist.

Once the projects were considered to be unsuccessful, the Nixon Administration’s policy created housing vouchers that were based on cooperation with landlords. Recipients of vouchers

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1 The other programs have not played the kind of role in racial and ethnic discrimination as the two mentioned above.
can live in a private unit and the government contributes to a portion of the rent. It could potentially integrate minorities, particularly blacks, but the program has failed in this respect because minority voucher holders face discrimination in finding a unit in a white community. While no nationwide research exists to corroborate this, the most recent studies suggest this thesis. Some of these studies are mentioned in the text.

This article focuses on racial and ethnic residential segregation in the U.S.

Private Housing Market and Its Cooperation with the Federal Housing Administration

Racial/ethnic segregation is mostly measured by the index of dissimilarity (also called the index of segregation) and the index of diversity. The first one indicates the percentage of one race or ethnicity, which would have to move to a neighborhood occupied by a different race or ethnicity to achieve the greatest possible integration. The index of diversity reflects how many places are racially or ethnically diverse. Social scientists pay more attention to metropolitan area as the majority of Americans live there. The most recent census found 71.2% of Americans living in 367 metropolitan areas (U.S. Bureau, 2010). Rural areas are less integrated, but the difference is small (Edward Glaeser and Jacob Vigdor, 2012).

Segregation decreased from its peak 79% in the 1960s-70s to 59% in the first decade of the new century. Nevertheless, blacks are highly segregated in most metropolitan regions despite of the progress. In addition, blacks are the highest segregated minority comparing to Hispanic-white and Asian-white segregation, however, the levels of the two groups have rarely changed since the 1980 census, 50% to 48%, respectively 41% to 41% (Logan and Stults, 2011:11, 17). This could be explained by the growth of their population. On the whole, there are still a high number of households living in racially or ethnically segregated neighborhoods (Susan J. Popkin, 2008:139).

Over the course of the 20th century, there were several types of discrimination in housing that were gradually banned, such as zoning (by Buchanan v. Warley, 1917), racially motivated covenants (by Shelley v. Kraemer, 1948), racial steering, blockbusting, and redlining (by the Fair Housing Act of 1968). All these kinds of discrimination constituted residential segregation. Segregation in the housing market was also supported by real estate boards and banks in the early 20th century (Kevin Gotham, 2000:300-1). However, not all whites in the housing industry supported racial segregation. Residential segregation was widely practiced against minorities, particularly against blacks in the aftermath of the early 20th century’s two great migrations from the South to the North, and especially between 1940 and 1970, when the housing market was already struggling to meet demand for home ownership or rent. Hence African Americans were not welcomed in the white neighborhoods of Northern cities, and often had to make a home in slums. City slums became overpopulated, and the overflow of African Americans moved to places inhabited by whites, contributing to the tensions that resulted in deadly riots (Alexander von Hoffman, 1998:5). In fact, Americans had already lived in segregated neighborhoods before any federal housing policy was created by the New Deal. These older patterns of segregation were cemented with the creation of a new, two-tiered U.S. housing policy.

The First Tier of Housing Policy and Discrimination

Gail Radford divides American housing policy into two tiers (Radford, 1996). The first one is semi-private, with government assistance to those eligible to obtain low mortgages, while the second is public housing for the poor. The National Housing Act of 1934 created the first tier of housing policy, the FHA (Federal Housing Administration), which

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2 Demographers consider levels over 60% to constitute a highly segregated area, 59% to 39% as moderately segregated, and levels under 39% as less segregated.
3 The U.S. Census Bureau divides the U.S. into urbanized areas, more than 50,000 residents, urban clusters, 2,500-50,000, and rural according to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
4 Data on residential segregation in rural areas after the most recent census has not been analyzed yet. See an old study using statistic data from 2000 where the index of dissimilarity in urban areas is compared with the index in rural areas: Daniel T. Lichter, Domenico Parisi, Steven Michael Grice, and Michael Taquino (2007).
5 Hereinafter referred as whites.
6 Zoning in residential racial and ethnic segregation means excluding minorities from a given community. Municipal governments legally practiced exclusionary zoning since the turn of the 20th century. Towns were divided into zones, and banks then followed zoning in providing mortgages. If a property was in an ‘unwanted’ area, often an African American neighborhood, then a bank appraised the property for a low value.
7 The Fair Housing Act of 1968 mentions zoning as well.
Redlining is a method using a red color to mark all neighborhoods inhabited by African Americans on a map (Gotham, 2000:306). The method was used by banks, insurance companies, and especially by the FHA. In the years 1930-1959, almost all properties insured by the FHA were built in suburbs, and less than 2% of FHA-insured loans were for African Americans (Gotham, 2000:309). Redlining was encouraged by the FHA because most of its employees came from the private sector, which actively promoted segregation in housing (Gotham, 2000:303-4). There is no doubt that the FHA used taxpayers’ money to support banks that discriminated against minorities, and it helped to build lucrative suburbs for whites. This practice was banned in 1968, but it is still practiced (Annalyn Kurtz, 2012).

The FHA’s Underwriting Manual contained references stipulating that communities constructed thanks to the government were to be racially segregated, in effect all white. In conclusion, the FHA encouraged and insisted on using racially restricted covenants for developments insured by the agency, and it did not stop doing so even after the Shelley Supreme Court decision (Arnold R. Hirsh, 2000:209). In 1949, the FHA finally promised not to insure builders using racially restricted covenants and delete racially motivated references in its Underwriting Manual. However, the agency did not fulfill its promise until 1950. Even so, the FHA continued to exclude black or mixed neighborhoods from insurance. Racially motivated covenants were still practiced (Joe T. Darden, 1995:681; von Hoffman, 1998:18). The Housing Act of 1949 could not forbid residential segregation because of a trade off for votes for the act from Southern Democrats.

The G.I. loan programs included in the Veterans Administration (VA) were not obtainable for black soldiers because banks denied loans to African Americans. The FHA and the VA financed almost half of all housing in suburbs in the 1950s and 1960s (Michael De Leeuw et al., 2008:4). These discriminatory policies changed the face of U.S. cities when a significant number of higher income whites moved out of the inner city, and it reinforced residential segregation. The most well-known examples of white suburbs are the Levittowns in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and on Long Island. Their creator William Levitt used FHA-VA subsidies to build white suburban neighborhoods that excluded nonwhites. For example, Levittown on Long Island with its 82,000 residents did not have any African American tenants until the 1960s (Thomas Hanchett, 2000:167).

On the whole, the private housing sector discriminated minorities without any legislative barriers. All discrimination methods used by the private market were gradually considered illegal by the Supreme Court. However, discrimination within the private market has not end yet.

**Discrimination in the Rental and Sales Markets**

The methods of discrimination in the rental and sales markets are blockbusting and steering, two illegal practices. This shows that segregation is strongly rooted in American society and no law can change it.

When racial covenants became prohibited, real estate agents and developers, some of whom were black, largely practiced blockbusting (von Hoffman, 1998:27). Blockbusting is a method in which a white homeowner is persuaded to sell their property fast and usually at below market price under the impression that minorities are moving into the area and as a result their property would soon lose value. The property is later resold to a minority household at inflated prices. Blockbusting real estate agents and developers hired African Americans to take walks in white blocks in order to terrify their residents (von Hoffman, 1998:27). Although this method reinforced racial segregation, their raison d’etre was not discrimination but profit for small brokers who exploited the anxieties generated by the changing racial composition of urban neighborhoods (von Hoffman, 1998:27). It is also a truth that many brokers, white or black, sold blacks houses in white neighborhoods. It does not matter what was their motives, but they definitely helped some black families to integrate at least for a time.

Blockbusting was even practiced after it was prohibited in 1968, however, it diminished and today, it does not play an important role in residential segregation. This cannot be said about steering (Michael De Leeuw et al., 2008:3).

Steering means that real estate agents treat white customers differently than minorities. Whites and minorities are shown houses located in different neighborhoods. This is considered as the most important practice, which maintains residential segregation (see more Michael De Leeuw et al., 2008). More homes and units in predominantly white neighborhoods are recommended and shown to whites, while minorities are shown property in mostly minority neighborhoods. This unfair practice of agents has been monitored for decades by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Since the 1970s, HUD has conducted four
tests about the social, racial and ethnic discrimination in the sales and rental markets. The first test was about discrimination against blacks in 1977. The second one was carried out in 1989 and concentrated on discrimination against African Americans and Hispanics. The third test included Asians as a third minority in 2000.

The most recent study on discrimination was undertaken in 2012, and it included all three minorities. The tests were conducted by same sex pairs, with one tester white and the other black, Hispanic, or Asian. The pairs pretended to be potential renters or homebuyers and later compared the information given to them about sales and vacant properties, and the number of shown houses and units. The last research was based on more than 8 000 tests in 28 metropolitan areas. The study concluded that discrimination still exists in the sales and rental markets, but that situation is improving. Discrimination within the rental and sales markets has resulted in segregation which remains in many metropolitan areas. In addition, Hispanics and Asians are less likely to live in segregation from whites than African Americans do (HUD, 2013:xxii).

Segregation in neighborhoods has been decreasing due to a combination of three factors: immigration which has changed the national composition, better access to white neighborhoods for minorities due to acceptance of whites to live with minority neighbors and gentrification of minorities and some improvements in minority neighborhoods such as a lower crime rate and better school performance that make a certain minority neighborhood attractive for the white majority, however, an average predominantly white neighborhood still has better facilities than a minority one (HUD, 2012:xxii-xxiii).

Considering the fact that white neighborhoods have better services than minority ones, minorities are moving into white neighborhoods, and therefore, residential integration is based on the will of whites to have neighbors of different race or ethnic. Willingness of whites to live with minorities is higher than it used to be as it was found in survey in Detroit, one American highly segregated metropolis, in 2004 (Reynolds Farley, Mick Couper, and Maria Krysan, 2007). A half of the white respondents in the Detroit survey would feel uncomfortable if the racial composition of their neighborhoods would turn to fifty-fifty while three quarters of white respondents would in 1976. The improvement is obvious, but there were still a considerable number of respondents who would wish to move out if they became the minority in their neighborhood (Reynolds Farley, 2011:40).

Acceptance of black neighbors is also obvious according to the recent census. In 1960, the U.S. Census Bureau split the country into 22 688 census tracts and 4 700 (20%) of these tracts were not occupied by any African American resident. In 2000, there were only 902 neighborhoods without black inhabitants and ten years later, the number declined to 424. It should be noted that the number of census tracts increased to 72 531. The half of census tracts without any black inhabitant, 424 tracts, are in rural, micropolitan, and metropolitan areas where African Americans compose less than 1% of the population. What is interesting that metro areas affected by the subprime mortgage bubble where among those with declining segregation such as Washington, D.C. or Miami, FL. The boom of the subprime mortgage market might have helped African Americans to
integrate but it needs time to be proved as the crisis is a recent issue (Glaeser, and Vigdor, 2012:7-8). The process of integration began in the 1970s as discrimination in housing was forbidden and no subprime mortgage market existed, so, it is hard to say if the subprime mortgage helped to accelerate residential integration.

The emerging black middle-class can afford property in white suburbs from which the majority became the most integrated neighborhoods in the U.S. Moderate income black households were able to buy a property in these neighborhoods thanks to the subprime lending market and the majority of them were not foreclosed (Glaeser, and Vigdor, 2012:7). On the other hand, the current financial crisis hit minorities more than whites and this fact could limit the possibility of buying a house in predominantly white neighborhoods (See more: Jacob Rugh, and Douglas Massey, 2010; William C. Apgar, and Allegra Calder, 2005).

Federal housing policy, including public housing, played a remarkable role in increasing residential segregation. The government changed direction in the 1960s and the 1980s census could reflect drop in black-white segregation. However, the progress is slow because it is easier to change policy but not society. If minorities experience discrimination in the housing market, they have to prove it and this is not always possible. This explains why minorities are steadily discriminated against even though it is illegal.

**Government-Assisted Housing Programs and Their Shortcomings**

**Public Housing**

Public housing, the second tier of U.S. housing policy, is the oldest housing subsidy program. The Housing Act (also known as the Wagner-Steagall Act) of 1937 created the United States Housing Authority (USHA) and the Local Housing Authorities (LHAs). The USHA coordinated public housing projects in villages and towns. Cities had their own local housing authority. In 1947, both tiers of housing policy and the other federal bodies connected with housing were united under one administration, the Housing and Home Finance Administration (HHFA). This administration was subsequently succeeded by the HUD in 1965.

Public housing was launched already under the Housing Division of the Public Works Administration in 1933. After the war, more white families were able to obtain a mortgage through the government’s programs. Therefore, a significant number of white households left the projects.

1 The Housing Act of 1954 and following ones made mortgages more affordable for low earning families.

project residents were chiefly very low-income households.

The Housing Act (also known as the Taft-Ellender-Wagner Act) of 1949 launched urban redevelopment inter alia. Urban redevelopment aims to renovate cities by demolishing dilapidated houses and building parks, roads, new housing and other kinds of development. Local governments used redevelopment to eliminate black slums in the inner cities, and African Americans were moved from slums to public housing projects. Some local governments did not even rehouse the slum inhabitants and these ones had to resolve the situation by themselves. Sometimes the governments allowed developers to build primarily commercial buildings and units for upper-income residents, and minorities were in effect banned to live from living there.

Promulgated under Eisenhower, the Housing Act of 1954 refashioned urban redevelopment as urban renewal. Different from its predecessor in that it prioritized the revitalization of slums, urban renewal did not mean that slum clearance stopped. In fact, it even got worse for African Americans. Some social scientists have called this practice “African American clearance” from the inner city: local authorities often cleared slums without offering alternative dwellings for the inhabitants (mostly blacks) or they rehoused them in high-rise public housing projects that are today considered by social scientists as modern ghettos (see more: Roger Biles, 2000; Nathaniel S. Keith, 1973:chs. 6-8; R. Allen Hays, 1995:91-101; D. Bradford Hunt, 2009:chs. 3-6; von Hoffman, 2008:281-301). The units in renewed areas were apparently built for minorities - studies found that 97% of the residents were not white. Generally, a majority of white families left the projects, as was obvious in 1977 when over half of the projects for families were occupied by black households, and almost half of the projects were occupied by white seniors (Popkin, 2008:143). Whites and blacks lived in segregated projects, as it will be discussed below.

The urban renewal policy was replaced by the Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs), authorized by the Housing Act in 1974. Community development is based on cooperation between local or state officials, the recipients of the federal money, and community volunteers, who are organized into non-profit organizations. The grants fund projects such as rehabilitation of buildings, affordable housing, or social services. On the contrary, the programs of previous housing policies were based on specific projects and the recipients were limited in spending the money. The block grants policy largely ended slum clearance and the removal of African Americans from the inner city.
African Americans were not just uprooted from their homes, but they were also segregated in public housing projects. Neighborhoods were usually planned for one ‘race’, and thereby the city planners turned previously integrated communities into segregated ones. The public housing authorities promoted racial segregation. Only a few of them encouraged at least some integration in projects, and not even these were always successful as they met with strong disapproval from white residents (Hunt, 2009:107). In 1960, 80% of all American public housing projects were completely segregated. The majority of the other remaining 20% of projects were inhabited by a small number of minority families (von Hoffman, 1998:26).

HUD permitted the construction of public housing projects in already segregated neighborhoods (De Leeuw, et al., 2008:6), and furthermore, state and local governments in many cities spent federal highway funds to construct highways around these developments, which, in effect, made minorities geographically isolated from the majority (Popkin, 2008:143), and segregation was kept intact (Hirsch, 2000:221-2). Some scholars see highway construction more destructive for houses of blacks than urban redevelopment and urban renewal (Hirsch, 1998; Raymond A. Mohl, 2000). It was obvious that local governments built segregated public housing projects to prevent minorities from moving to mostly white neighborhoods as a court case proved that to the housing authority in Dallas in 1989 (De Leeuw, et al., 2008:5).

Since the 1990s, the average black resident of public housing has lived in the projects, where 85% of tenants were black, while the average white resident lived in projects mostly occupied by whites (Popkin, 2008, 143). This fact demonstrates the true extent of residential segregation in public housing. Nonetheless, it is truth that most blacks do not reside in public housing. They compose 45% of households in public housing (HUD, 2014).

The face of public housing changed in 1993, when the HOPE VI program was launched. The Clinton Administration was aware of racial and ethnic segregation, and there was a political will to desegregate the projects, but proponents of the initiative assumed that it would be a politically sensitive issue. Thus the primary goal of the new initiative was to reduce poverty in public housing projects, since racial and economic segregation were believed to be connected. The champions of the program thought that the deconcentration of poverty would help facilitate integration (Popkin, 2008:145-6). However, the program failed in integration and public housing projects are still highly segregated and located in poor neighborhoods.

Even though public housing dramatically changed, it remains segregated after all these efforts. Still, some housing authorities succeeded in constructing units for minorities in predominantly white communities (Popkin, 2008:146-7). Therefore, housing vouchers, an alternative program to public housing, are seen as a solution of residential segregation.

**Housing Vouchers**

The Nixon Administration launched a new program by the already mentioned Housing Act of 1974, which created the Section 8 program. Section 8 became an alternative to public housing projects by enabling low-income households to obtain certificates to rent a privately owned unit, with a local housing authority paying a certain portion of the rent. The Nixon Administration authorized the Section 8 program that gives minorities a theoretical chance to move into neighborhoods with better living standards (often occupied by the white majority), and to integrate into mainstream society. Housing vouchers have continued to play an important role in housing policy. They contributed 17% to government subsided housing in 1978 and 44% in 2008 (Edgar Olsen, and Jens Ludwig, 2013:16). Minorities are still significant recipients of vouchers. Nowadays, 46% of voucher holders are African American households and 49% are white households, but this number includes Hispanic households that compose 15% of white voucher recipients (HUD 2014). Thus, vouchers should help minorities to integrate as a minority voucher recipient might move to a neighborhood with a smaller concentration of minorities, but they mostly move to predominantly minority neighborhoods (Kirk McClure, 2005:350).

Landlords have the right to refuse voucher holders, and this may explain why minority voucher holders do not manage to integrate. It is not clear if minorities choose to live in segregated neighborhoods or if they are discriminated against because no research has been done on a national level. Nevertheless, some lower-level studies have pointed to discrimination as the primary reason for the low degree of integration (McClure, 2005; Popkin, and Mary Cunningham, 2000). As discussed above, landlords can refuse a voucher holder. Their reasons for refusal might be the ‘race’ or ethnicity of the applicant, or a reluctance to do all the needed paperwork, or a tight market in which a landlord can easily find another potential renter. However, some studies concluded that minority holders are discriminated. For example, the numbers of whites and African Americans who were

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2 Discrimination against voucher holders is illegal in many cities and states.
denied the chance to rent property in Orange County in California suggests discrimination: 49% of white voucher holders were refused by landlords compared with 71% of black applicants, which is a 22% difference (McClure, 2005:352). Further research was conducted in Kansas City, Missouri. The settlement pattern of a similar sample of voucher recipients, mostly African Americans, was observed over a longer period. These voucher holders did not move beyond African American areas (McClure, 2005:352-3).

Another reason why vouchers cannot resolve residential segregation is enormous black-white segregation. African Americans make up 19% of the rental market, and 48% of this number (2.8 million) live in neighborhoods that are over 50% occupied by African Americans. Furthermore, most blacks do not use vouchers, thus, their relocation would not be enough to achieve full integration if the index of dissimilarity in metropolitan areas is only one point under hyper segregation.

So, is it some federal integration policy a solution to accelerate integration? No, it is not. There has not been such as policy, only two temporally local programs – the Gautreaux program and the Move to Opportunity (MTO). The first one is seen as a blueprint for integration by scholars, the latter one was modeled according to Gautreaux but was focused on deconcentration of poverty and racial/ethnic integration was seen as a second effect.

The Gatreaux case started in the 1960s but lasted until the 1990s. In 1966, Dorothy Gatreaux and many other black inhabitants of the Chicago projects sued the CHA and the HUD for being forced to live in poor, African-American neighborhoods. The plaintiffs considered this to constitute a violation of the Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits racial discrimination in programs subsidized by the government. The case Gatreaux et al. v. CHA lasted until 1976 when the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs. The main outcome of this case was a provision of adequate housing for black households in low poverty and integrated neighborhoods in suburbs or inside Chicago. The CHA provided them housing vouchers and their replacement ended in 1998, the majority of families were moved in the 1980s. The holders of these vouchers were usually successfully integrated into society by means of housing counseling and placement services that are not provided to regular voucher holders.

The Gautreaux program seems to be as a good blueprint for residential integration through the U.S., but it is not. Firstly, only 7,000 participants were chosen from all applicants to the program (William A.V. Clark, 2008:517). Secondly, it took a long time to find suitable housing for all participants and not all of them were placed in low-poverty and racially integrated neighborhoods, not a small number of families were placed in very poor and highly segregated neighborhoods because the counselors had difficulties in meeting the criteria of the program (Micere Keels, Greg J. Duncan, Stefanie Deluca, Ruby Mendenhall, and James Rosenbaum, 2005:52,54). If the Gautreaux program had problems to realize its goals with a small number of participants then it is hardly to imagine a similar program functioning at a national level. In addition, the participants were volunteers and it cannot be sure that many African Americans would want to move to mostly white neighborhoods.

The MTO was a social experiment sponsored by HUD in the 1990s and the target were deeply poor families living in public housing projects in five cities, Boston, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Chicago, and New York. The number of families was 4,610, a half of them were black families. 2,298 (Clark, 2008:519). The families were split into three groups. One group was eligible for all social programs in housing except vouchers, the second one obtained vouchers without special counseling and the last group received vouchers with counseling to help them to find a unit in low-poverty neighborhood, if they did not succeed, they could move everywhere after one year.

The program was designed according to Gautreaux but was based on poverty deconcentration as its designers supposed that poverty is less politically controversial issue than racial integration. They did the same mistake as creators of the HOPE VI did, they connected poverty with segregation, and thus the designers of the MTO hoped that poverty deconcentration would help African Americans to move to predominantly white neighborhoods. However, the result of the MTO was deconcentration of poverty but not racial integration (Popkin, 2008:150). The program ended because Congress did not approve more funds for it.

Gautreaux helped to move black residents of public housing projects and persons on the waiting list to predominantly white neighborhoods but only a few families could participate and some of them were placed into highly segregated neighborhoods, then it is questionable if the program can work at a federal level. Furthermore, the Gautreaux program is based on distribution of vouchers that can hardly integrate a significant number of African Americans as it was demonstrated in the text above. The HOPE VI and the MTO programs were created to eliminate poverty, not residential segregation because of political consensus, and therefore, they failed in integration. To sum up,
any housing policy cannot effectively accelerate or even end residential segregation because it is impossible.

**Conclusion**

Residential segregation has been decreasing slowly since 1970. Minorities still experience discrimination in the rental and sales market and public housing projects are steadily segregated. The U.S. has never had an integration policy and probably never will as this issue is considered controversial. However, there is one positive change in American society, namely that more young people are growing in racially/ethnically diverse communities (Barrett L. Lee, John Iceland, and Gregory Sharp, 2012). These people have a different point of view about a typical American neighborhood than their grandparents do, so, next generations will be more tolerant to minority neighbors, particularly to African Americans. American neighborhoods will naturally integrate but it will take a long time. Before that, the society, which was mostly raised in racially/ethnically homogenous communities, must change.

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