Why Geography Matters:
How geography and path dependency have aided in the black and white divide in Kansas City, MO

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Introduction

"Questions of space have always been critical to the idea of race. Race, after all, came into intellectual prominence as a concept during the late eighteenth century as part of inquiries into the world geography of human difference debates (Nightingale 2006, 669)." Questions of space were very important in shaping Kansas City. Over time, space has aided in the geographic and hence social isolation of many people. This paper will look at the causes of segregation in the US and Kansas City, and subsequently how geography has helped segregation become the norm in many cities, including Kansas City, concluding with a look at path dependent processes in a modern day framework and what policies should be enacted to move forward.

Before we continue, some terms should be defined. *Ghetto* is not used to connote strictly race or a way of life, but rather as a "poor section of a city inhabited primarily by people of the same race, religion, or social background (American Heritage Dictionary 2000)." The *underclass* is a group of "economically disadvantaged people in a society… [whom are disadvantaged] for a wide variety of sociological reasons (Business Terms 2000)." Lastly, *segregation* "is a process of spatially isolating an ethnic subpopulation in areas where they cannot have the same access to valued resources as do those who are not isolated (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 7)." Furthermore, Massey and Denton, argue segregation is not a natural phenomenon due to culture it was created by the dominate whites (Massey and Denton 1993).

History

One of the most obvious signs of geographic segregation in Kansas City is Troost Avenue, seen locally as 'the great divide' in the city separating the predominantly black neighborhoods on the East, from the predominantly white neighborhoods on the West. Troost was perpetuated as a racial divide in the city, by the Kansas City Missouri School District (KCMSD) which used Troost "as a racially identifiable school attendance boundary from 1955 through 1975 (Gotham 2002, 25)." Before the turn of the Twentieth Century in Kansas

City, whites and blacks were able to live peacefully next to each other. "Whites did not intentionally exclude Blacks from public accommodations, restrict them from living in certain areas of the city, or confine them to specific neighborhoods. The close proximity in living arrangements and accommodations suggest much interracial contact and intermingling and show that residential segregation was not the rule (Gotham 2002, 28-29)." After the turn of the Twentieth Century, the harmony and peace between the races was all but erased. A change occurred thus, beginning the stages of racial hatred and segregation in America.

What was the fundamental change that occurred in the hearts and minds of white America at the turn of the century causing those in Kansas City and many other American cities in the north or near north to completely change gears and no longer accept black people as equals? One major reason was the migration of blacks up from the former slave states to find work in the north. "This rapid influx of African-Americans was prompted by the mechanization of Southern agriculture, the decline of the system of tenancy, the yearn for jobs in the industrialized north, and the prospects opened by the prosecution of two world wars (Heathcott 2005, 708)." Blacks "poured into northern and southern cities from the rural south, transforming the society and politics of urban America…as Katherine Corbett and Mary Seematter put it, within the span of a single generation, the most rural segment of the American population became the most urban (Heathcott 2005,

708)." Due to this population influx, the urban landscapes of these cities were changing rapidly, transforming them into industrial powerhouses. To be an industrial powerhouse you need workers and "many of the early migrants to northern cities initially found jobs during the peak of wartime production" to fill the need of cheap labor (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 83)." While working in these low paying jobs they experienced discrimination and violence from whites. ... This hostility towards blacks based on the threat of job displacement and persists today in many urban areas of the Northeast and Midwest (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 84). This threat and hostility was due in part to the sheer size of the black population migrating north. "With each passing decade there were many more blacks who were recent migrants to the North, whereas the immigrant component of the new Europeans dropped off over time. Eventually, other whites muffled their dislike of the Poles and Italians and Jews and directed their antagonism against blacks (Wilson 1987, 142)."

As the population of free black got larger people's concern began to grow with the size of the population. They were concerned about this group of blacks coming in and taking jobs from whites and began to think something more should be done to separate "us from them."

In discussions which spanned [the globe, people] debated the merits of [the] separation of the races [on] the macro-scale of the continent—whether it was suitable for races from one part of the world to live on continents deemed to be "natural habitats" of others. … The idea that cities should have separate sections for the races helped resolve

some of the ideological problems that arose in these debates (Nightingale 2006, 669-700).

Much of these discussions took place in the era of emancipation. After emancipation, people were not so keen on having the races commingle in a single region. They liked to think of "the South's 'negro problem' as a unique historic cross the region had to bear. It was a situation which could only work if blacks were deprived of the vote, thus bringing them under tutelage to whites that would more closely approximate colonialism elsewhere (Nightingale 2006, 670)." They felt that "only by depriving blacks of political ambition could the region minimize the clash of 'race instincts' inevitable between differing races living in close proximity (Nightingale 2006, 670)." This constant question of racial segregation was unheard of before emancipation, in fact slave owners restricted the number of blacks that could gather in area to prevent future uprisings. Others felt that "the big threat cities posed to most Old South paternalists even well after emancipation was the *distance* blacks elected to put between themselves and whites, not the proximity of the races (Nightingale 2006, 674)."

When the make up of the city began to change and it became obvious that the 'negro' problem was not going away, those in charge began to wonder, what should be done with the large migration of blacks. Their solution was to segregate the races through the formation of ghettos, over time turning blacks into the underclass they are today.

How did this happen and what was the role of geography in this transformation.

This solution took the form of Jim Crow Laws, a set of "carefully constructed white supremacist social and spatial order embedded in the politics, institutions, real estate, and daily life of the city (Heathcott 2005, 709)." Of all the things to come from these laws, residential segregation had the longest lasting effects. Initially residential segregation caused blacks to live in poorer areas so the whites where could sustain their control over urban property and especially housing (Nightingale 2006, 686). "In that context, the fusing of race and property values became the touchstone of the American segregationist imagination, not segregation by city ordinance. That made American segregation no less dangerous, and in the longer run it has proved itself more durable than other forms (Nightingale 2006, 686)." Besides residential segregation, the Jim Crow laws lead to "lynching, terror, spatial restriction, political oppression, and economic deprivation" as part of everyday life for many blacks in the beginning of the Twentieth Century (Heathcott 2005, 709). The terror and violence that the Jim Crow laws spread was just one of the four main ways that the ghetto was constructed. Over time, the use of neighborhood associations, Real Estate Agents and legal segregation all took their part in forming the ghetto.

Violence

The first tool in the construction of the ghetto was violence. Violence first spread throughout cities between 1900 and 1920. These disturbances were

"communal in nature, and victims were singled out strictly on the basis of skin color. As history has repeatedly shown, during periods of communal strife, the only safety is in numbers. Blacks living in integrated or predominantly white areas-or even simply traveling through white areas to their own homes-proved extremely vulnerable to attacks (Massey and Denton 1993, 33-34)." After an attack, assuming they survived, blacks did not want to return to their old house, rightly fearing a second wave of violence. "Following the riots, there was an outflow of blacks from outlying neighborhoods into the emerging ghetto, as the old integrated elite resigned itself to the new realities of racial segregation (Massey and Denton 1993, 34)." As migration increased, the ghetto got smaller and the newcomers "had to be accommodated within a very compact and spatially restricted area that was not open to easy expansion (Massey and Denton 1993, 34)." This lead to ever expanding borders and subsequently "violence aimed at driving blacks out of white neighborhoods…along the periphery of an expanding ghetto (Massey and Denton 1993, 34)."

The white majority had what seemed to be a sliding scale of measures to be taken to ensure segregation would continue. They started with treating letters and harassment with the warning of more harsh action to follow. Then they moved toward taking up a collection in churches or neighborhood associations to buy the homeowner out, again treating less civilized responses to come if they did not comply. If these methods did not work then, (spontaneous) mobs would

form "surround the house, hurling rocks and insults and at times storming the house and ransacking it. Periodic outburst of mob violence would be interspersed with sporadic incidents of rock-throwing, gunshots, cross burnings and physical attacks (Massey and Denton 1993, 34-35)." The last step in this sliding scale, to catch the attention of the homeowner and the black community was bombing (Massey and Denton 1993, 35)." Violence however had its own problems for the perpetrators, "not only did violent actions often destroy property within neighborhoods being 'defended,' but injuries or death could bring legal charges as well as unfavorable publicity that decreased an area's stability (Massey and Denton 1993, 35)." After this realization people switched to more covert methods to keep the color line. The period of violence peeked in the 1920's although, used intermittently, violence is still a tool that is used to maintain the color line today.

Neighborhood Improvement Associations

After the mixed success of violence at keeping the color line, whites switched to the shrewd method of creating Neighborhood Improvement Associations to separate the races. In the history of Kansas City, the Improvement Associations and the subsequent actions they took were one of the most important aspects to maintain the color line. These groups were charted with the intention of "promoting neighborhood security and property values, their principal reason d´être was the prevention of black entry and the maintenance of the color line (Massey and Denton 1993, 35)." The

Improvement Associations had many tricks up their sleeves to maintain the racial homogeneity of endangered neighborhoods. "They lobbied city councils for zoning restrictions…they threatened boycotts of real estate agents who sold homes to blacks; they withdrew their patronage from white business that catered to black clients; they agitated for public investments in the neighborhood in order to increase property values and keep blacks out by economics means…(Massey and Denton 1993, 36)." The zoning restrictions they tried to pass would create large residential lots away from the city in areas desirable for all folks, where blacks would like to buy a house but the large lot size makes it unaffordable for them thus keeping blacks out of the expanding area, again by economic means. Individually people did not have much power to enact change in these areas but once organized they could make changes within their part of the city.

In lobbying the government, circa 1910, they formed petitions, and one item that was routinely included on the petition was 'health problems' caused by 'Negroes'. Since providing for the public health is one of the obligations of the city, these petitions, or at least the part of the petition dealing with health was routinely heard by the government (Nightingale 2006, 679). These homeowners vigorously complained about the horrors of the alleyways and kept tabs on the count of black tuberculosis deaths (Nightingale 2006, 679)." Meanwhile, these same homeowners were not willing to give up laundry services, including bedding,

towels, and clothing preformed by the same blacks in the community of whom they were so scared of catching black tuberculosis that they did not want them living on their street (Nightingale 2006, 680). It seems however, that sleeping in sheets and wearing clothes a black person had handled would be more dangerous then living even living next door to them, if the health were truly their main concern.

One of the most lasting things these organizations were able to do was to create and implement restrictive covenants.

> These documents were contractual agreements among property owners stating that they would not permit a black to own, occupy or lease their property. Those signing the covenant bound themselves and their heirs to exclude blacks from the covered area for a specific period of time. In the event of the convent's violation, any party to the agreement could call upon the courts for enforcement and could sue the transgressor for damages. As typically employed, covenants took effect when some fixed percentage of property owners in a given area had signed, whereupon the remaining nonsignatories were pressured to sign also. A typical covenant lasted twenty years and required the assent of 75% of the property owners to become enforceable (Massey and Denton 1993, 36).

Prior to 1900 the only legal restrictions on the sale of property took the form of deed restrictions, only covering a single parcel and was not able to counter large movements of black migration (Massey and Denton 1993, 36). "After 1910, the use of restrictive covenants spread widely throughout the United States, and they were employed frequently and with considerable effectiveness to maintain the color line until 1948, when the U.S. Supreme Court declared them

unenforceable (Massey and Denton 1993, 36)." In Jackson County, MO these convents lasted from 1908 to 1954 were 62% of the residential subdivisions included these racial covenants (Gotham 2002, 39). In Johnson County, KS where much of suburban growth has happened, these covenants were in place from 1917 to 1962 and 96% of the subdivisions included racial covenants (Gotham 2002, 39).

Real-Estate Agents

After restrictive covenants were declared unenforceable, another force took over in perpetuating the ghetto and that was the real-estate agent. "The National Association of Real Estate Brokers [NAREB], which in 1924 adopted an article in its code of ethics stating that 'a Realtor should never be instrumental in introducing into a neighborhood…members of any race or nationality…whose presence will clearly be detrimental to property values in that neighborhood' (Massey and Denton 1993, 36-37)." This article remained in effect until 1950; if one violated this code, they could loose their license. Even under the prospect of expulsion from the NAREB, there were great profits to be made by opening up previously white areas to black families, this method become know as "blockbusting" (Massey and Denton 1993, 37). "Blockbusting is a practice in which a real estate agent attempts to move a nonwhite, usually black family into an all white neighborhood for the purpose of exploiting white fears of impending racial turnover and property devaluation to buy up other property on the block at depressed prices (Gotham 2002, 25)."

These real estate agents found property that was adjacent to the ghetto, following an expansion path of least resistance and quietly bought up a few single-family house and apartment units in a single block. They then took the single-family homes and divided them up into many units and along with the apartment; units sold them to at high prices to poor blacks that were migrating from the south. The agents then went to all the neighbors warning them about the black 'invasion' and offered to buy their houses at generous prices and sometimes depressed prices to turn around and sell these homes to middle class blacks at even higher prices. The whites moved because of their distaste for blacks in general and especially distaste for there distaste of the lower class blacks chosen especially by the agents to feed the fears of the white occupants (Massey and Denton 1993, 38).

The blacks found out about these homes though the agents advertisements in the ghetto about a newly opened area creating heightened demand to get out of the overcrowded ghetto and were willing to pay any price (Massey and Denton 1993, 38). The prices charged must have been extraordinary because the high density in black neighborhoods and the rigid color lines, made home prices in black neighborhoods higher then many in white neighborhoods (Massey and Denton 1993, 37). To afford these inflated home prices many needed loans, but the catch was white banks would not make loans to black families which allowed the realtor to act as the banker as well, charging high interest rates and earning more even more money (Massey

and Denton 1993, 38). "The prevalence of these quick-profit schemes meant that the ghetto constantly followed the black middle class as it sought to escape from the poverty, blight, and [the] misery of the black slum (Massey and Denton 1993, 39)." This cycle was simple and perpetuated by the real-estate agents, throughout the boarder neighborhoods to create the ghettos we see today. This cycle "yielded a distinct class gradient in the ghetto, with the poorest families being concentrated toward the center in the worst most crowded and least desirable housing, and the middle and upper classes progressively increasing their share of the population as one moved from the core toward the periphery of the ghetto (Massey and Denton 1993, 39)." Real-estate agents were not the only ones with law on their side in promoting segregation. Legal segregation was also prevalent in American Cites at the turn of the twentieth century.

Legal Segregation

Legal segregation did not occur for many years but it left its mark on the communities it touched. In 1910, Baltimore was the first city to establish legal segregation. If this was going to happen anywhere Baltimore would be the place as it had the largest or among the largest black populations of the day. Baltimore Mayor, John Barry Mahool, in 1910 signed the West Segregation Ordinance, sponsored by City Councilman Samuel L. West. This law "divided every street in Baltimore into 'white blocks' and 'colored blocks,' based on the 'race' of the majority of their inhabitants at the time of the

Ordinance's passage (Nightingale 2006, 667)." For anyone who wanted to move to a block designated for the other race the fines were steep, "a penalty of one hundred dollars and up to a year in the Baltimore City Jail [for these neighborhood switchers] except black servants who lived in the houses of their white employers (Nightingale 2006, 667-668)." This segregation law was problematic in the courts and was rewritten four times by September 1913. This law however, was well received by those in other cities numerous letters were received asking for a copy of the latest version (Nightingale 2006, 668). This law might have been subject to even more rewrites if the NAACP did not take action and bring lawsuits against these residential segregation laws. "Its efforts bore fruit in the Supreme Court's *Buchanan vs. Warley* decision which declared residential segregation by municipal ordinance unconstitutional (Nightingale 2006, 668)." Never the less in the south the west Ordinance remained inspirational to racists, "in Ku-Klux-Klan-dominated Indianapolis passed new versions well into the 1920s and even as late as 1940 (Nightingale 2006, 668)."

This initial victory by the NAACP however was not the end of the story, they needed multiple victories to prove there case. The next victory came in Louisville, the local president of the NAACP, contacted to purchase a 'white home' in a white majority neighborhood, but backed out of the sale because it would have been illegal under the residential segregation ordinances. The white homeowner then sued the (black) NAACP president, "claiming the

ordinance violated his property rights (Nightingale 2006, 685)." The state court subsequently upheld the ordinance and the case was then heard by the U.S. Supreme court. It was "unanimously decided in November 1917 that 'the difficult problem arising from a feeling of race hostility' was not enough of a justification to enact ordinances which 'directly violat[ed]… the fundamental law enacted in the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution preventing state interference with property rights by due process of law'(Nightingale 2006, 686)."

Behavioral and Geographic Path Dependence

Years of violence, restrictions by neighborhood associations, real-estate agents and legal segregation have all taken their toll on the black community in one way or another. They segregated the blacks into ghettos being mindful of geographic barriers such as major roads, highways, railroads, etc. These combined actions became the "unique historic cross" people have to bear when there address puts them on the wrong side of the tracks or in the case of Kansas City, on the wrong side of Troost. Juxtaposed to whites thinking of "the South's 'negro problem' as a unique historic cross the region had to bear (Nightingale 2006, 670)." I would argue that the way the "negro problem," "solved" through segregation has created more problems then it supposedly solved and in Kansas City, the "solution" has created the "Troost Problem." The Troost problem is one of path dependency where history started a ball rolling and no one has been able to stop it.

One of the key elements in looking at path dependence is that history matters. "Path dependence assumes that initially decisions are open to revisions. In time, however, past decisions become increasingly irreversible and thus restrain subsequent choices (Gruber 2006, 3)." In the case of Kansas City, the subsequent choices that are restrained are not those of the decision maker, but those that their policy was designed for. This type of path dependency is largely subject to the behaviors of people in charge and the historical geography to which they were confined. Another term often used with path dependency is lock-in. Lock-in, in general is something that keeps one from switching paths and in this case behavioral lock-in also plays a key role. "Behavioral lock-in occurs when a process, product or service is 'stuck' on a sub-optimal path when an actor'(s) habit, organizational learning or culture is preventing the change (Gartland and Stack 2006, 7)."

There are many clues when looking into history to see why segregation is indeed a path dependent process. Looking at how the discrimination, oppression, and un-equal access to opportunity have created institutionalized discrimination. Institutionalized discrimination produces "ethnic stratification. When members of subordinate ethnic subpopulation receive only certain types of valued resources, it becomes possible to establish their location on the social hierarchies of society. On the basis of this location, the distinctiveness of an ethnic group is retained, thereby making it a target of

further prejudice and discrimination (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 21)." Thus, these policies have helped to turn much of the black community into the *ghetto underclass*. Where the term *ghetto underclass* refers to the heterogeneous groups of households "who inhabit the cores of the nation's central cities. The term suggests that as fundamental social transformation has taken place in ghetto neighborhoods, and the groups represented by this term are collectively different from and much more socially isolated than those that lived in these communities in earlier years (Wilson 1987, 143)."

Some may argue that this took place so long ago that "aren't we all equal now." They do not understand the importance of history and that "the effects of three hundred and fifty years of oppression are not suddenly undone, for the weight of the past stands as a barrier in the present (Pinkney, 1984) as quoted in (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 61)." The past is not the only barrier they have to face, biological differences act as another boundary. "Even though biological differences are superficial and difficult to use as markers of boundaries between people, they are important sociologically. For if people believe that others are biologically distinctive, they tend to respond to them as being different (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 2)." Similarly, "When someone is labeled 'black' more than skin color is involved; whole clusters of assumptions about historical experience, behavior, organization, and culture are associated with this label (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 3)." What we can draw from this is that

"the notion of race and ethnicity are thus social constructions. They are conceptions, often inaccurate, that people have of what makes certain people different and unique (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 3)." Despite that fact that these are social constructions, they are still utterly important to how the world works and how business is done. In fact, purely because of race, blacks were and in many cases still are routinely denied access to professional groups within their field of specialization to be able to form networks and advance their careers. This was also the case for unions, where most highly skilled blacks were not able to enter the trade union because of their race. If they could not enter the union then they more or less were unable to work. Those who even made it as far as to be rejected by professional groups or unions were lucky, as "separate but equal", was all but equal. "Many African Americans [then and] today live in urban slums away from decent schools, housing, and jobs (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 11)." The pattern remains today "because of past patterns of discrimination. In this environment they [blacks] do not acquire the education, jobs skills, or motivation that would enable them to leave the slums and take advantage of new opportunities that were not available to them even 30 years ago (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 11)."

People's thoughts and subsequent actions also had their effect in residential segregation. It became "average opinion about what the average opinion" would be among whites, that blacks would drive down property values. This subsequently placed "race at the very

heart of the valuation of real estate, and thus gave all white people regardless of their racial ideology an economic stake in segregation (Nightingale 2006, 686)." Hence, effectively institutionalizing the residential color line within the very economic core of the housing market. "It guaranteed that the color line would remain intact, even as many urban whites lost their fight to keep their neighborhoods white in the face of expanding black ghettos (Nightingale 2006, 686)."

Another problem that is a by-product of these patterns of discrimination is the lack of role models in the urban core.

Black middle-class professionals today tend to be employed in mainstream occupations outside the black community and neither live nor frequently interact with ghetto residents, the black middle-class professionals of the 1940s and 1950s (doctors, lawyers, teachers, social workers, etc.) resided in the higher-income areas of the inner city and serviced the ghetto community. The exodus of the black middle-class professionals from the inner city has been increasingly accompanied by a movement of stable working-class blacks to higher-income neighborhoods in other parts of the city and to the suburbs. Confined by restrictive covenants to communities also inhabited by the urban black lower classes, the black working and middle classes in earlier years provided stability to inner-city neighborhoods and perpetuated and reinforced societal norms and values. In short, their very presence enhanced the societal organization of ghetto communities. If strong norms and sanctions against aberrant behavior, a sense of community, and positive neighborhood identification are essential features of social organization in urban areas, inner-city neighborhoods today suffer from a severe lack of social organization (Wilson 1987, 143).

"Thus, sometimes the legacy of the past operates as a barrier in the present and constitutes a pervasive pattern of discrimination. We must acknowledge that institutionalized discrimination has a lag effect beyond the period in the past when individuals and organizations practiced discrimination routinely (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 11)." This argument is at the very heart of path dependency and behavioral lock-in. We must now recognize the problem, how it got started, how it was perpetuated and what some of its lasting effects are.

What can be done?

The Geography of segregation has changed drastically since the early 1900's, where the battle for housing was fought doorstep to doorstep, now the battle is fought from suburb to city. This change started in the 1970s because of while flight that coincidently coincided with the surge of inner city blacks (Massey and Denton 1993). As the white population moved to the suburbs industry and commerce followed pulling residents out of the cities. Some but not all blacks were able to commute to these jobs because of the deteriorated mass transit system. This shift of the wealthy to the suburbs took money out of urban schools causing them to weaken and conversely those in the suburbs gained political power helping to strengthen the emerging industry (Aguirre and Turner 2004, 93).

What then can be done to fix the problem of suburban growth in the face of urban blight, what can we draw from this history to help develop policies that will move us off our present path dependent path and the geographic lock-in we as a nation presently find ourselves. In general, William Julius

Wilson argues for a policy to be effective it has to be something that everyone will buy into, a universal program. As he says, "The problems of the truly disadvantaged may require *nonracial* solutions such as full employment, balanced economic growth, and manpower training and education (tied to-not isolated from-these two economic conditions) (Wilson 1987, 147)." In 1980, the government did not heed his warning and "implemented anti bias legislation to promote minority individual rights, but also mandated and enforced affirmative action and related programs to enhance minority group rights (Wilson 1987, 147)." The aftermath of these policies left many Americans puzzled, as the conditions for most in the black communities were not improving (Wilson 1987, 147). The problem with these policies was that they were "derived from the broader processes of societal organization and therefore may have no direct or indirect connection with race [the architects of these policies failed to] emphasize the relationship between poverty and the broader processes of American economic organization (Wilson 1987, 148)."
The other part of the policy puzzle for Wilson is to promote social mobility.

> Social mobility leads to geographic mobility. Geographic mobility would of course be enhanced if efforts to improve the economic and educational resources of inner-city residents were accompanied by legal steps to eliminate (1) the 'practice at all levels of government' to 'routinely locate housing for low-income people in the poorest neighborhoods of a community where their neighbors will be other low-income people usually of the same race'; and (2) the manipulation of zoning laws and discriminatory land use controls or site

> selection practices that either prevent the 'construction of housing affordable to low income families' from securing residence in communities that provide the services they desire (Wilson 1987, 158)."

I think the best kind of policies to help promote growth and integration within Kansas City as well as the US are policies that are universally applicable, promote social mobility, understanding the root of the problem to form a non-racially targeted upward mobility policy.

Specifically I think a policy to promote "duel movement" would be effective, thus supporting movement from the urban core to the suburbs as well as other parts of the city and conversely supporting movement from the suburbs back into downtown. To do this the downtown has to be a more inviting place with a captivating nightlife, delightful local places to eat, and a feeling of safety and security while living the heartbeat of the city. If the current housing philosophy to move people to the suburbs remains, soon there will be no city left for those in the suburbs to enjoy on the weekends, leaving another city gone in the path of segregation and white flight.

Along with revitalizing the downtown, they need to revitalize the urban core providing business and jobs locally to promote economic growth. This has to be done to create a unique place that residents and non-residents alike will want to and feel comfortable going into the urban core to patronize the businesses that are created there. The core competency of the urban core needs to be isolated and expanded upon to give them the edge they need to bring more

economic life into that part of the city. Where a core competency is a unique skill set that provides customer benefits, is hard for competitors to imitate, and can be leveraged widely too many products and markets (Hamel and Prahalad 1990).

The problem with most of the existing low-income aid programs is that they do not address the fundamental need of low-income families besides access to opportunity they need to know the hidden rules of a middle class life once they get there. People bring the ghetto with them because that is the only way they know how to be. They parent like they have been parented and live like they have seen those around them live.

Without role models around them, an intervention is needed to show them there is another, and typically more accepted and safer way to be. The goal is not to create a society of middle class people, but there are manors and hidden rules in life that many people are not being taught. These hidden rules will get you a long way. This is something people of all class levels could benefit from. Seminars should be conducted in schools and in local community organizations, through support networks that will provide this knowledge to **all** groups of people. Life and children do not come with a handbook. All people can benefit from this universal policy.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have looked at how the questions of race and space are related. More specifically we have looked at the history that has lead Kansas City down the path dependent "avenue" that it now follows, leaving a residential

racially segregation city in its wake. This path started by the influx of blacks into northern cities created competition and subsequently struck fear in the hearts of whites it was the first step on the avenue of path dependency. Whites then took a running start down this path through the perpetuation of violence, restrictive covenants from neighborhood improvement associations, blockbusting real-estate agents, and legal segregation ensured that residential segregation would last. This was later perpetuated by the KCMSD, when they used Troost as the racial divide for schools. While paths cannot be reversed, it is hoped that through the formation of historically grounded policy that Kansas City and other cities are able to move to paths that are not dependent on residential segregation.

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