Scholar Rucker Johnson on school segregation
Tackling public health disparities in rural America with Mahasin Mujahid
The 2019 Othering & Belonging conference, Illustrated Edition
Review of Three New Books on Racial Segregation

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

COVER STORY
400 years
IN THIS ISSUE

DIRECTORS’ LETTERS
From john a. powell ............................................................... 3
From Denise Herd................................................................. 4

MEDIA ROOM
Fair Housing Forum ............................................................... 5
Stories of Migration ............................................................... 5
Podcast Highlights ............................................................... 6
Town Halls on Race .............................................................. 6
Connections Between State Violence Against
Black Populations in Brazil and the US .......................... 7
New Website Platforms ...................................................... 8
New Staff ............................................................................. 9
Summer Fellows ................................................................. 9
Latest Publications ............................................................ 10

SPECIAL EVENTS
Othering & Belonging Conference 2019
Illustrated Edition .......................................................... 12

PROJECTS & PROGRAMS
Fellowship for Confronting Islamophobia ......................14

FACULTY NEWS
Disability Justice Members
Deliver Report to Congress ............................................. 16
Addressing Migration Facts and Falsehoods .................. 16
Research to Impact Series ................................................. 17
Profile: Rucker Johnson ................................................... 18

FEATURES
It’s Been 400 Years ......................................................... 22
Public Health in Rural America ...................................... 25

BOOK REVIEW
Causes, Consequences, and
Politics of Racial Segregation ........................................ 28
I HAVE BEEN ASKED lately, more than a few times, whether our current president is the most racist president in the history of this country. Bearing in mind that Andrew Johnson once called the United States “a country for white men,” that 10 of the first 12 US Presidents owned slaves, and that Woodrow Wilson screened the racist film Birth of a Nation at the White House—this question is the wrong one.

Much like the question of whether President Bush cared about Black people in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the question of whether a chief executive is racist is largely besides the point. The point, as the Dr. Rev. William J. Barber put it at the 2019 Othering & Belonging Conference, is “not what’s in your heart, but what’s in your policies.”

At a time when our world is more polarized than ever and communities face increasing threats to their rights every day, our focus should be on understanding and addressing how racial inequality is perpetuated, not whether a single individual is a racist. This work begins by remembering that racial inequality in the US is the substance with which our nation’s very structure was built. Racialized outcomes are systemic, beyond the purview of any one person or president.

And to understand how these systems came to be, and to dismantle them, we must look to the past, which is why the Haas Institute is playing an integral role in UC Berkeley’s year of events examining the enduring legacy of slavery, which arrived in the English colonies exactly 400 years ago this year. The institution of chattel slavery not only affected Black people, but everyone in the system—and not just everyone, but every system within that larger system. What I mean to suggest is that when we talk about the institution of slavery, we are not just talking about something that happened to Black people, but about something that happened to this country.

So how can we dismantle a system of racism that has affected every structure in which we exist today? From housing to education, health to criminal justice, no structure has been shielded from the legacy of slavery. Some might suggest that the discomfort at the root of these racialized outcomes is natural, that humans have always sought to dominate others and looked with suspicion upon foreign groups. We must not accept this premise. We must also remember that what we are seeing today with authoritarian leaders who use division and hate to wield power is also not new, and that people have often looked to voices of unchallenged confidence when things seem uncertain. I call these fearful and sometimes violent reactions to change “breaking,” and we have seen it before.

We have seen it, for example, with the white parents who angrily pulled their children out of public schools when they were desegregated by court order in the mid-twentieth century.

The policies and structures that underpin our lived experiences can either promote or alleviate breaking, this fear-based reaction to change. As my Berkeley colleague Rucker Johnson says in an interview on page 18, “Segregation is not inevitable, but is a direct product of our policy choices in both housing and education.”

If there is anything Johnson’s work teaches us, it’s that there is, indeed, another way to structure our world for the better and cast off the racist legacy of slavery. But while building stronger, more inclusive structures takes time, I’d like to suggest that all of us can start today by reaching out and bridging with those who are beyond our own groups, with those who we may not yet understand but who must be included in our imagined structures of belonging. There is always another way, and it begins with us.
From our Associate and Faculty Director Denise Herd

THE YEAR 2019 IS A MOMENTOUS ONE in American history. Four hundred years ago marks the forced arrival of enslaved African people to the English colonies at Point Comfort, Virginia. In January of 2018, the “400 Years of African American History Commission Act” was signed which mandated a national commission to commemorate this anniversary. The Act’s goals included a mandate to develop programs to “acknowledge the impact that slavery and laws that enforced racial discrimination had on the United States; encourage civic, patriotic, historical, educational, artistic, religious, and economic organizations to organize and participate in anniversary activities...and coordinate for the public scholarly research on the arrival of Africans in the United States and their contributions to this country.”

The importance of this initiative in the US is underscored by global recognition of the importance of the legacy of slavery for enduring and present-day racial injustice. In acknowledgement of the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition, the Director-General of UNESCO stated that: “Slavery is the product of a racist worldview, which perverts all aspects of human activity. Established as a system of thought, illustrated in all manner of philosophical and artistic works, this outlook has been the basis for political, economic, and social practices of a global scope and with global consequences. It persists today in speeches and acts of violence which are anything but isolated and which are directly linked to this intellectual and political history.”

To acknowledge this important anniversary, the Haas Institute has played a leading role in a campus-wide collaborative at UC Berkeley made up of a diverse group of staff and scholars. This group designed and developed a year-long series of events regarding slavery and its impact in society. Our commemoration was kicked off on August 30 with a day-long symposium where we brought scholars and advocates from around the country to discuss such issues as dispossession, the afterlife or legacy of slavery, post-reconstruction in today’s society, and the continuous struggles for freedom and justice waged by African Americans.

Future programs include additional talks by campus and invited speakers, films, and artistic performances that will be featured throughout the 2019-2020 academic year and are listed on a special website created for the commemoration—visit 400years.berkeley.edu for details of this historic, yearlong program dedicated to the promotion of justice, healing, and liberation from the history of slavery and oppression. We are pleased to have had a strong role in shaping this historic year.

Associate director Denise Herd opens the day at the 400 Years of Resistance to Slavery and Injustice Symposium at UC Berkeley
ELSA DIG ELSHEIKH, director of the Haas Institute’s Global Justice Program, moderated a discussion in March with artists who have personal migration stories. The round table included: multi-instrumentalist Ván-Ánh Võ; Torange Yeghiazarian, founding director of Golden Thread Productions; spoken word artist/activist Kemi Bello; and Beatriz Manz of the Center for Latin American Studies who provided commentary on politics at the US-Mexico border. The roundtable discussion was held in tandem with the world premiere of an oratorio commissioned by Cal Performances that was composed by acclaimed Peruvian composer Jimmy López and performed by the London Philharmonia Orchestra. The piece, entitled “Dreamers,” features chorus and orchestra and was informed by interactions with Bay Area and campus immigrant communities. As with the accompanying discussion, the piece seeks to tell deeply personal stories that highlight the humanity of immigrants at the center of larger debates around migratory policy.

Haas Institute headlines
Marin Fair Housing Forum

The Haas Institute was well represented at a national conference on fair housing held in San Rafael, California, organized by Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California. The Institute’s assistant director Stephen Menendian and staff researcher EJ Toppin were both invited speakers at the event which brought together community members, researchers, real estate professionals, and municipal leaders to address pressing housing issues affecting communities in the Bay Area. Talks included the impacts of racial segregation and how modern technology and data collection amplifies discriminatory practices.

During his keynote address, Menendian spoke of a fundamental problem with segregation—not that it separates people from each other, but that it separates people from resources. "Segregation is the principal mechanism in generating racial inequality and group-based inequality," he said. Those resources are comprised of both tangible ones like money, goods, and services, as well as intangible ones like social networks, social capital, and information.

Toppin, in his panel, addressed resistance to reparations, arguing that the issue must be framed larger than simple economics or the extreme wealth and equity gaps between Black and white Americans. He noted that facts and figures alone are not enough to move people and argued that resistance to reparations reveals a crisis of national identity. The national identity crisis is hinged on a notion that reparations would mean taking money from whites who historically profited from slavery, which is interpreted as an attack on white identity. Toppin posited the idea about the cost in moral standing. "It isn’t a cost that we’re asking white people to pay, but the termination of the cost Black people continue to pay toward making white identity," he said.
Podcast Highlights
Episode highlights from January–July 2019. All episodes at haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/whobelongs.

Episode 6: Victory to Regain Voting Rights in Florida. Desmond Meade, a 2018 “Time100” person of the year, kicked off the 2019 season with a conversation about the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition’s historic work leading a statewide ballot initiative in Florida which led to 1.4 million people regaining their voting rights by repealing a law that banned people with felonies from voting.

Episode 7: Abandonment in Detroit with Peter Hammer and Amina Kirk. This conversation focused on equitable development and racial justice in Detroit. Hammer is the Director of the Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights at Wayne State Law, while Kirk is a senior organizer with Detroit People’s Platform, a racial and economic justice organization.

Episode 8: The Stakes for the 2020 Census with Michael Omi and Stephen Menendian. This episode features our Assistant Director Stephen Menendian in conversation with UC Berkeley professor Michael Omi, well-known author of Racial Formation in the United States. Omi, one of our affiliated faculty, is one of only a handful of experts on the US Census. Their talk included an exploration of the immense stakes for federal funding and representation based on the census.


Episode 10: Targeted Universalism, with john a. powell. Our very own director john a. powell took the mic for episode 10 to discuss our new publication on a targeted universalism policy approach, a model conceptualized by john.

Episode 11: Engaging Asian Pacific Islanders, with Luisa Blue of the SEIU. We spoke with Luisa Blue, Executive Vice President of the Service Employees International Union and an expert on Asian Pacific Islander civic engagement issues. She is also the highest ranking leader of Asian Pacific Islander background in the US labor movement.

Episode 12: Agata Lisiak on Migration and Gentrification in Europe. Agata Lisiak is a professor of migration studies at Bard College Berlin, and in this episode she talked with us about her work on Eastern European migration to western Europe, the experiences of migrant mothers in particular, and the relationship between gentrification and language.

Episode 13: Artist Christine Wong Yap on her Places of Belonging Project. Artist Christine Wong Yap on her Places of Belonging Project. Christine Wong Yap was the Haas Institute’s first Artist in Residence, and here she talks about her “Belonging in the Bay Area” project and work with the Haas Institute.

Town Halls on Race
Two respective town halls on the themes of race in the Bay Area took place this past spring organized by US Representatives Barbara Lee and Mark DeSaulnier of California. Haas Institute’s john a. powell and Stephen Menendian participated in these events, the culmination of a concerted effort by these congresspeople to engage with their constituents on issues related to race and disparities by framing the systemic nature of racial inequality with the help of a wide array of experts. On April 27, powell spoke at the Black Repertory Group Theater in Berkeley on a panel which included Congresswoman Lee and other experts. Earlier that week, on April 23, Menendian similarly spoke on a panel about race alongside Congresswoman Bass, Congressman DeSaulnier, affiliated faculty Lisa Garcia Bedolla, and others at Diablo Valley College. During his panel, Menendian presented research on racial demographics and racial segregation in the Bay Area.
In February, the Haas Institute co-sponsored the Symposium on Anti-Black State Violence in the US and Brazil at UC Berkeley, along with a number of other campus units. Institute director john a. powell gave a keynote address at the daylong event which aimed to address multiple perspectives on how to think about transnationalism, structural racism, and anti-Black state violence, as well as the possibilities and limitations of forging sustainable transnational coalitions to combat anti-Black state violence.

powell’s keynote argued that anti-Blackness was a constitutive feature of whiteness, and that anti-Blackness can be understood as an economy of dispossession that operates through segregation and the spatialization of violence. Not limited to the coercive arm of the state, powell suggested that both frameworks offer useful ways to consider anti-Blackness across the Americas. The event was organized by a multi-disciplinary coalition of graduate students.

2019 Atlantic Fellows for Racial Equity
Twenty outstanding racial justice leaders were named as the 2019 class of the Atlantic Fellows for Racial Equity (AFRE), a program of which the Haas Institute is one of five key anchor institutions across the US and South Africa, with its hub offices at Columbia University in New York City and the Nelson Mandela Foundation in Johannesburg. The program is building a transnational network that supports the development of anti-racist leaders to lead broader social change activities to achieve equity in the US and South Africa. It includes grantees and advisors who work to accelerate progress in building a world free of anti-Black racism and white supremacy.
New Website Platforms

The Haas Institute developed and collaborated on two new online platforms

Race—The Power of An Illusion

First broadcast on public television more than 15 years ago, Race—The Power of an Illusion has become one of the most widely viewed documentaries in American history. The series asks a question so basic it is rarely raised: what is this thing called race? Jointly with California Newsreel and the American Cultures Center at UC Berkeley, the Haas Institute developed and published an updated website for the groundbreaking documentary series, featuring companion resources and materials for learnings and conversations around race. The website was launched at a February 6 public forum with series producers and UC Berkeley faculty discussing the evolution and impact of ideas about race, then and now. Visit the website at racepowerofanillusion.org.

Civic Engagement Narrative Change

In March we unveiled a new online hub for our Civic Engagement Narrative Change project. The project aims to address pressing obstacles to inclusive democratic participation by bringing together current research, scientific testing, narrative development, strategic communications, and community organizing. Together with partners across the country, the project focuses on problems of voter disaffection and racial, religious, and anti-immigrant othering by building strategy, narrative, and infrastructure that advances inclusive “we” identities in civic life.

New resources on the Civic Engagement web hub include: A paper by the development director of Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada on the problems civic engagement groups face with financial viability; a paper by the executive director of Family Action Network Movement on southern Florida’s Haitian community’s fight against climate change; Survey results from Nevada and Florida to establish baselines for each state in terms of the potential for bridging across lines of difference, threats of deepening divisions, and dispositions toward government and civic participation. The site also showcases a series of get-out-the-vote videos released ahead of the November 2018 elections, a video of a webinar led by the Pennsylvania-based organization Beyond the Choir that explored the “populist moment,” and more.
Welcome!
Meet the newest members of the Haas Institute

Mora Tulián is the assistant to director John A. Powell. Mora previously worked in the Nursing, Health & Natural Sciences Department at Holy Names University in Oakland where she assisted in a wide range of administrative processes including managing the Dean’s calendar, course scheduling for the department, managing the department website, and collecting data used to measure student and program learning outcomes. Mora also worked for many years in sales including for a handmade jewelry company as well as an organic skin care company. She has an arts background and worked several years in foundry restoration overseeing teams performing restoration of large foundry projects as well as organizing art exhibitions and educational programs.

Nilo Amiri is the Haas Institute’s new Administrative Assistant, where she supports the teams with office administration, event planning, and social media. Nilo’s professional background is mainly in event management, with over 12 years of experience. Her focus has been on live music shows, community organizing and hip hop and arts events. She previously served as the production manager at Impact Hub Oakland, led event initiatives on women empowerment (with a focus on women of color), such as the Womxn of Impact series. Nilo is a performing artist and competitive dancer in the style of popping, and also works to advance hip hop culture as a vehicle for social change.

Mina Girgis is an ethnomusicologist and a serial entrepreneur who specializes in building innovative projects for cross-cultural musical learning. In 2011, he started the Nile Project, a nonprofit that promotes the sustainability of the Nile River by curating collaborations among musicians, students, and professionals. In 2009, Mina founded Zambaleta, a community World Music school in San Francisco. Mina has received awards and fellowships from Wired magazine, National Arts Strategies, Synergos, and Seeds of Peace. Mina’s work as a senior fellow will focus on strengthening collaboration and foundation for deeper engagement of the Nile Project with UC Berkeley, Bay Area communities, and in the Nile Basin.

Summer Fellows 2019

The seventh cohort of the Haas Institute Summer Fellowship took place this summer. During this three month-long fellowship at UC Berkeley, fellows are paired with Institute researchers and staff to learn about the Institute’s research methods and frameworks and receive mentorship in research, writing, and policy analysis. Summer fellows are given opportunities to explore pressing social justice issues through workshops, local events, and direct engagements with advocates working in the field. Below are the 2019 Summer Fellows.
Curriculum Tools on Haas Institute frameworks
BY MICHELLE MUSH LEE, JESSABRIE MORENO, AND MARIAH RANKINE-LANDERS, WITH EVAN BISSELL
Developed for release at the 2019 Othering & Belonging Conference, this series of integrated tools was designed for an arts and creative-based exploration into main frameworks and approaches the Haas Institute uses to approach its work: Bridging and Breaking, the Circle of Human Concern, and Targeted Universalism. Produced in partnership with educators from Whole Story Group and Studio Pathways, each module contains three unique learning experiences that run 30, 60, and 90 minutes in length. All nine lessons draw on tenets of creative inquiry and popular education and can be used as a stand-alone experience or combined to create up to 10 hours of comprehensive study. The curriculum tools are designed for use in organizations, schools, companies, and others looking to deepen their engagement with these core topics.

Targeted Universalism: Policy & Practice
BY john a. powell, STEPHEN MENENDIAN, WENDY AKE
This primer provides a roadmap to design policy that can serve groups that are otherwise excluded, while also promising to improve outcomes for people situated in relatively privileged positions. This is accomplished by re-imagining the range of implementation strategies needed to accomplish the universal goal. The targeted universalism framework was developed by Haas Institute Director john a. powell as a response to the constraints of the two dominant approaches in policy thinking: the targeted approach, and the universal approach. Targeted universalism borrows the strengths and avoids the weaknesses of both targeted and universal approaches, but is also categorically distinct in both conception and execution.

The Road Not Taken: Housing and Criminal Justice 50 Years after the Kerner Commission Report
BY STEPHEN MENENDIAN AND RICHARD ROTHSTEIN WITH NIRALI BERI
This report shows that despite the warnings of a special Presidential Commission more than 50 years ago, our society has become separate and unequal along racial lines, despite economic advancements for some Black Americans. “The Road Not Taken” examines what has and hasn’t changed for Black Americans since the wave of race-related uprisings in 1967, which led to the formation of a bipartisan national commission known as the Kerner Commission. The report examines the recommendations and findings of the commission and how the US failed to implement its most salient recommendations, particularly in housing and criminal justice. The report was produced as a follow up to the “Race and Inequality in America: The Kerner Commission at 50” conference hosted last year by the Haas Institute in partnership with the Economic Policy Institute and Johns Hopkins’ 21st Century Cities Initiative.

Housing Segregation Report Series
BY STEPHEN MENENDIAN AND SAMIR GAMBHIR
Given the seriousness of segregation as a cause of racial inequality and the complexities in understanding the nature of this problem, the Haas Institute launched a series of briefs to illuminate these patterns and demystify the reality of segregation in the San Francisco Bay Area. The newest releases in this series include:

Latest Publications
Find all our publications at haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/resources
PART 2: DEMOGRAPHICS
In our second brief we disaggregate and untangle patterns of segregation into specific patterns of racial demographics. We examine the unique patterns of racial distribution in the San Francisco Bay region, and across major metropolitan areas. In particular, part two of this series illustrates the distribution of white, Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American populations across each large metropolitan area and many counties. We also examine specific areas of racial clustering and concentration, not simply segregation, and examine how these demographic changes have occurred over time.

PART 3: MEASURING SEGREGATION
In our third brief, we shift the discussion to a more technical, but no less important, matter: the measurement of segregation. As we emphasized throughout this series, racial segregation is not the same thing as racial demographics. Too often, maps of racial demographics are used as a substitute for mapping segregation itself. By examining several measures of segregation in juxtaposition, we can offer a better-rounded portrait of the actual reality of segregation itself and a better understanding of the perspective that any particular measure illuminates—a partial glimpse of a complex whole.

See those reports, and correlated maps, at haas-institute.berkeley.edu/seggregationinthebay.

Interactive Mapping Resource
EQUITY METRICS TEAM
As part of their housing research, Haas Institute researchers released an interactive mapping resource in March to help inform the policy discussions about zoning reform currently underway in California. The mapping tool provides data and evidence-based framing around the types of neighborhood characteristics policymakers should consider to ensure zoning reform encourages more housing production in areas of opportunity, and does so in ways that could make the state more inclusive and help meet environmental goals by reducing commute distances.

The maps were created as a collaboration between the Haas Institute, the Terner Center for Housing Innovation and the Urban Displacement Project at the University of California, Berkeley, and the California Housing Partnership and was made possible with generous support of the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. Access the online map at mappingopportunity.ca.org.

Public Banking Made Easy
BY TOM SGOUROS
In July, we published a research brief produced by our Just Public Finance program on the role of Municipal Finance Agencies that invest peoples’ funds back into local initiatives as more socially-responsible alternatives to the investment models used by big banks.

The brief explains how MFAs offer governments a greater degree of control over where their money is invested. “There is ample data to show that small local banks are far more likely to put their funds into locally productive investments than the big money-center banks,” the brief notes.

Water Equity and Security in Detroit’s Water and Sewer District
BY WENDY AKE
Ensuring access to drinking water and wastewater service is a nationwide policy challenge. Water security describes the presence of structural, systemic, and institutional arrangements that ensure everyone has consistent access to drinking water and wastewater services. Water insecurity looks different in the humid east than in the arid west, different in the Midwest from the South, different between urban, suburban, or rural. However different water insecurity problems look at the local level, they are the result of similar institutional, systemic, and structural problems.

This report illustrates what persistent water insecurity looks like in the service area of Detroit’s drinking and wastewater system (DWSD) and specific places within that system.

Grow Your Vote; Cultural Strategies for Civic Engagement
BY EVAN BISSELL AND GERALD LENOIR
Ahead of the 2018 midterm election, the Haas Institute and Power California partnered on a unique project: The Cultural Strategy Ambassadors Program. The program integrated Power CA’s cultural strategy approach and experience in electoral organizing and the Haas Institute’s Blueprint for Belonging framework on direct capacity building and project support for program ambassadors and their community-based organizations across the state. Through the program, each of the three participating organizations produced arts-based get-out-the-vote projects in California’s Central Valley, Orange County and San Diego. This report describes the framework and analysis of the program, its processes and outcomes, and the lessons learned.
April saw more than 1,500 organizers, scholars, students, and other change-makers gather together in Oakland to share stories, ideas, and strategies for bridging and belonging in a world so deeply rooted in othering and polarization. While prior gatherings placed greater focus on dimensions of “breaking” or “othering” in our world, this conference consciously centered “bridging” and “belonging”—and sought to model bridging from the stage across differences of race, age, sector, and ideology.

A number of standout mainstage speakers made the case for, and demonstrated, belonging across the conference, including moving keynote presentations by deafblind advocate Haben Girma, Dr. Rev. William J. Barber II, and a panel on “the urgency of bridging” with Desmond Meade and Neal Volz, two organizers behind the fight to re-enfranchise more than one million Floridians with a prior felony conviction. The conference also sought to go beyond one-directional speeches and addresses with opportunities for attendees to engage more deeply with others through our thought-provoking Coffee-house conversations led by Abdul-Rehman Malik; take the learnings home, with our Othering & Belonging curriculum; as well as engage with belonging culturally (with an installation from our Artist in Residence Christine Wong Yap, whose project sought to root belonging to specific spaces in the Bay Area. The conference generated overwhelmingly positive responses from participants: more than 96 percent said the conference offered content that was useful in their work or studies and 88 percent said that they left the conference with an expanded concept of “we” through engaging with ideas and models that affirmatively advance belonging.
"Maybe courageous conversations and truth are what build belonging. And running away from conversations that are rooted in truth and sometimes in discomfort are what is breaking us.... I’m asking us all to sit in discomfort, and discomfort is okay. It actually makes you a whole person when you are uncomfortable. It pushes you to evolve and be better. It actually pushes all of us."

"I think a sharper question for us will be if feminism has the ability to be anti-racist, anti-imperialist, anti-xenophobic, anti-classist, if it has the ability to be loving and humanist. Then the question is—how do we get there?"

"Our countries need and deserve justice, especially environmental justice. There needs to be protection of indigenous people and of indigenous land, especially against the pillaging of our resources from companies that are part of the global North."

"The Coffeehouse Conversations were essential to my enjoyment of this conference. I rarely get to hold conversations about race, poverty, and equity with people actually do that work. The conversations were in depth and engaging; I walked away with thoughts and questions unanswered and I am ok with that."

"I'm asking us all to sit in discomfort, and discomfort is okay. It actually makes you a whole person when you are uncomfortable. It pushes you to evolve and be better. It actually pushes all of us."

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"Our countries need and deserve justice, especially environmental justice. There needs to be protection of indigenous people and of indigenous land, especially against the pillaging of our resources from companies that are part of the global North."
In a new partnership with the Islamophobia Research & Documentation Project and Our Three Winners Foundation, the Haas Institute piloted a fellowship program over the summer designed for people working in or studying public policy to recognize biases and understand the scope of Islamophobia in much deeper ways.

“I really thought for many years we had been making progress in terms of reducing racism and hatred. And this program really showed me that it’s more rampant than I ever knew,” said Lesley Milton, a public affairs officer and city clerk for the town of Seaside, California. Milton was one of 10 fellows who comprised the first cohort of the Social Inclusion Policy Fellowship, which took place over a period of 10 days in July on the Berkeley campus. The course was rigorous and the schedule demanding, with lectures featuring top experts in law and social policy taking place during the day, followed by cultural activities in the evenings.

The fellowship teachings framed Islamophobia not as a problem that is only a result of interpersonal biases, but as one rooted in policymaking, and normalized by anti-Muslim tropes in popular media that pass on ideas and stereotypes to the public.

By recognizing these patterns, advocates such as these fellows, who came from diverse demographic and professional backgrounds, are better equipped to identify Islamophobic policies, discourses, and practices, and better able to root them out and reverse them. “One of our hopes is for
the participants to be trained in deconstructing their own biases and to prepare them for when they engage with policymaking,” said Elsadig Elsheikh, director of the Haas Institute’s Global Justice program which helped develop and lead the fellowship.

The fellows said what they learned during the intensive program made them realize how much of the work they were doing overlapped with those of Muslims in the US. The fellowship connected struggles for justice of different groups that have historically been marginalized or persecuted and made to feel they don’t belong.

“There are a lot of people who care about Islamophobia who aren’t Muslim, a lot of people who care about undocumented immigrants who aren’t undocumented, and it really shows we care about humanity, we care about people, and not just our select identity groups,” said Russell Lee, a UC Berkeley undergraduate studying political science.

Shaniqua Williams, a Ph.D. student in Public Administration and Public Policy at Auburn University in Alabama, put it this way: “When I used to think about social justice, I used to only think about the Black community because that’s what I identify with. But now I’ve broadened that to not just me and my community, it’s all of us.”

The policy component of the fellowship was the most intensive part of the program. Among the speakers were Wadie Said, a legal scholar and author, who took them through biases in criminal prosecution, with a focus on terrorism. Zahra Billoo, a civil rights attorney and the executive director of the San Francisco chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations, presented on the “Muslim ban,” and the everyday impacts of biased policies on individuals. Suzanne Barakat, a physician whose brother, Deah, was one of the three people killed in the 2015 Chapel Hill shootings, shared some personal accounts of experiencing hate. Barakat, who also chairs the Our Three Winners Foundation, administered an implicit bias test on the fellows designed to reveal their internal biases.

“It was interesting to see how during this very short time we were able to change the lenses of these fellows to recognize when narratives about American Muslims can be problematic and give them the tools to stand up and speak out and demand change,” said Somayeh Nikooei, Director of Operations at the Our Three Winners Foundation. “And that was exactly what the purpose of this program was.”

From top: Stanford Law Professor Shirin Sinnar leads a session on bias and inequality in the legal system; Group photo of the 10 fellows. Back row, from left: Amer Rashid, Eric Henson, Russell Lee, Jon Wizard. Front row, from left: Elizabeth Daliman, Shaniqua Williams, Christina Syriani, Jessica Rosalita Bank, Ana Yeli Ruiz, Lesley Milton; UC Berkeley Public Policy Professor Jack Glaser leads a discussion on the science of bias.
Research to Impact Series

SPRING 2019

THE RESEARCH TO IMPACT lecture series, curated by the Haas Institute faculty clusters, continued in January 2019 with talks from four renowned US scholars on issues related to diversity and belonging.

Anne Case of Princeton University kicked off the first event of 2019 with a lecture on “Deaths of Despair and the Future of Capitalism” on March 1, which examined the US opioid epidemic that has caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, mostly white, through overdose or suicide. Case argued that these “deaths of despair” did not directly correlate with the state of the economy at any particular downturn, but were rather due to a long process that saw people’s quality of life decrease. “Inadequate access to job networks and employment, lack of access to quality schools, decreasing availability of suitable marriage partners, lack of exposure to conventional role models, those actually would be good descriptors of what’s happening to the white working class now,” she said.

In April, Research to Impact shifted its focus to African American women, with a talk from two scholars, the University of Maryland’s Dawn Dow and UC Berkeley’s Tina Sacks, who discussed their new books that examined different aspects of Black womanhood in the US. Dow’s book, Mothering While Black: Boundaries and Burdens of Middle-Class Parenthood, examines the complex lives of the African American middle class—in particular, Black mothers and the strategies they use to raise their children to maintain class status while simultaneously defining and protecting their children’s “authentically Black” identities. Sacks’ book, Invisible Visits: Black Middle Class Women in the American Healthcare System, challenges the idea that race and gender discrimination—particularly in healthcare settings—is a thing of the past and questions the persistent myth that discrimination only affects poor racial minorities. Sacks argued that simply providing more cultural-competency or anti-bias training to doctors will not be enough to overcome the problem.

Later in the month, UC Berkeley scholar Rucker Johnson recentered the discussion to integration and re-segregation in US schools. Based on his new book, Children of the Dream: Why School Integration Works, Johnson discussed how although we are frequently told that school integration was a social experiment doomed from the start, it was, in fact, a spectacular achievement. Drawing on longitudinal studies going back to the 1960s, he showed that students who attended integrated and well-funded schools were more successful in life than those who did not—and this held true for children of all races. Yet as a society we have given up on integration—since integration’s high point in 1988, we have regressed and segregation now prevails again.

Launched in 2017, Research to Impact is an ongoing series organized by the affiliated faculty of the Institute that invites scholars from across the country to present their research at UC Berkeley. Watch videos or read transcripts from these talks at haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/researchtoimpactseries.
Making The Dream Reality: Talking School Integration With Rucker Johnson

Rucker Johnson, a Chancellor’s Professor of Public Policy in the Goldman School of Public Policy at UC Berkeley, is a member of three Haas Institute faculty research clusters: Diversity and Health Disparities; Race, Diversity, and Educational Policy; and Economic Disparities. Johnson recently published a highly acclaimed book on school desegregation and resegregation in the US today. *Children of the Dream: Why School Integration Works* argues for three main policies to tackle ongoing racial achievement gaps: robust funding for early education, active school desegregation, and educational finance reform. Editor Sara Grossman spoke with him about his research and new book.
You’ve found that the US reached peak levels of school integration in the late 1980s. Why did things turn around, both in terms of public opinion towards desegregation efforts and public policy to maintain integration? Where are we today?

The argument that school desegregation was a failed social experiment is simply not borne out by the facts. Where we failed is not sustaining those efforts to integrate our schools, to invest in them equitably, and to begin in the pre-K years.

Segregation is not inevitable, but is a direct product of our policy choices in both housing and education. There are five primary factors that led to the resegregation of our nation’s public schools. First, the 1974 Supreme Court ruling Miliken effectively confined school desegregation efforts to within school district boundaries by banning inter-district desegregation plans. This largely allowed more affluent suburban areas to not share in the responsibility of integration. In a powerful dissent, Thurgood Marshall called the ruling a “giant step backwards.”

Relatively, we have witnessed significant increases in residential segregation along socioeconomic lines, particularly with families where the search for school quality (and racialized perceptions of it) are a major impetus (as long as parents have sufficient wealth to exercise such choice). Although previously the majority of segregation occurred within districts, today roughly two-thirds of school segregation occurs between districts. While district lines may appear invisible, it does not make them any less a powerful segregation tool. The historical heavy reliance on local property taxes to fund schools is another form of segregation that leads to substantial school resource disparities.

Third, a series of conservative Supreme Court rulings in the early 1990s made it easier for districts to be released from desegregation court orders and federal oversight. This led to a return to greater concentrations of poverty among schools minority students disproportionately attend, due to residential segregation. This culminated with the 2007 Parent’s Involved case that ruled race cannot be used as the sole factor in school assignments.

The decision rendered all race-based admissions policies the same, equating racism (segregation) with attempts to end racism (integration).

Fourth, gerrymandered school boundaries that further segregation are rampant nationally. Examples abound in which affluent parents use their political power to redraw school district boundaries and secede from existing districts to form their own. The use of charter schools has become a way to effectively secede from traditional public schools while being exempt from desegregation and other equity guidelines. A recent example can be found nearby in a school district outside of San Francisco.

Finally, the hands-off federal approach regarding school integration efforts over the past 25 years has further reinforced segregation, which is reflected in the relatively little federal funding allocated to desegregation. There is still a federal provision on the books that bans federally-funded transportation support for desegregation plans—a provision first instituted in the early 1970s as part of white resistance to desegregation. There is still a federal provision on the books that bans federally-funded transportation support for desegregation plans—a provision first instituted in the early 1970s as part of white resistance to desegregation. In these ways, segregation has long been policy engineered, and if we are to address these issues, it will require similarly intentional policy designs.

Were there different ways that integration was “done” across school districts? What made some integration plans more successful than others?

Holistic integration is not only about assignments of children to schools by race but centrally about equitable school resources: funding, teacher quality and diversity, curricular quality. The substantial geographic variations in when and how desegregation was implemented across districts is revealing, as these differences led to differences in the degree of racial integration and resource equalization achieved through a district’s desegregation court order. In some districts, there were large increases in Black-white student exposure, but limited increases in school resources; in others, there were modest decreases in racial segregation, but larger increases in school spending on minority children. In Louisiana, court-ordered desegregation brought more state funding to integrated schools, while in Los Angeles, more segregated schools received more compensatory funding.

Findings: improved school resources explained a significant amount of the beneficial effects of desegregation. Among Blacks, in districts in which desegregation court orders led to greater increases in school spending, the more years children were exposed to desegregated schools, the greater their gains in educational attainments and adult socioeconomic status. In court-ordered desegregated districts in which school spending for Black children did not appreciably change, the children experienced greater classroom exposure to their white peers, but did not make a comparable improvement in their educational and socioeconomic trajectories.

This finding means, first and foremost, that in some cases, synergy has the power to take two policies (e.g., school funding and desegregation) that, in isolation, seem flat, and transform them into one package of policies with profound promise.

After many court-ordered desegregation mandates were lifted in the 1990s, what were the different ways that educational structures and policies, intentionally or not, led to school re-segregation?

Nationwide, 42 percent of Latino students and 40 percent of Black
students attended schools where less than 10 percent of their peers were white in 2016. It is important not to confuse a symptom—achievement gaps—with the underlying disease: gaping educational opportunity gaps along race and class lines that preceded them, beginning in pre-K.

The patterns of resegregation affect not only school resources but influence school practices. In addition to the five policy factors I outlined already that have influenced the amount of resegregation that occurs between neighboring districts, there has also been an increased pattern segregated classrooms within desegregated schools, due to racialized academic tracking beginning in earlier grades. As a result, in many districts that appear diverse on the surface, we see a preponderance of segregated classrooms with racially disparate placement in gifted programs, college-prep tracks on the one hand and (inappropriate) special education placement on the other. This reflects upon teachers' low expectations of achievement for minority students that may result from implicit biases. For example, studies have shown that among Black and white third graders with the same high test scores, Black children are one-third less likely to be selected for placement into gifted and talented programs. Furthermore, it was found that one of the key factors that closed this racial disparity in student placement in these programs was the presence of Black teachers.

Can you give an example of a school district where segregation is now a dominant characteristic where it wasn’t before?

Charlotte is a prime example that we highlight in the book, where the Swann decision first ruled busing could be used as an effective tool to desegregate. Our research was informed by our in-depth interview with James E. Ferguson II, the lead co-litigant of Swann. It must be remembered that busing was required because of generations of discriminatory housing policy that forced Black people to live in segregated neighborhoods. Despite an ugly and contentious battle to desegregate schools in the 60s, Charlotte became one of the national models of successful integration in the 1980s, and they were able to sustain these efforts longer than many other communities. Unfortunately, Charlotte abandoned their comprehensive desegregation plan following a 1999 litigation case brought forth by a white parent. This began the unraveling process of Charlotte being an exemplary model to a model of resegregation. Today, Charlotte’s schools are as segregated as they were before 1971, when integration began in earnest. It is a factor explaining why the city had the lowest economic mobility rates from poverty among large cities. To truly understand how integration can blossom, and how resegregation can uproot even vaunted progress, we sought to excavate the lessons the history of Charlotte taught us.

With today’s schools already so segregated, why not instead invest more money into schools with students of color?

Teacher quality is often the missing ingredient of debates surrounding school resource disparities. Teacher quality is connected to curricular quality—e.g., only one-third of public high schools with high Black/Latino enrollment offer calculus. This also draws our attention to the importance of teacher diversity. Currently, about 20 percent of teach-
ers leave the profession within five years— and even higher rates of teacher turnover are found in concentrated poverty schools, disproportionately negatively affecting minority students. Concentrated poverty schools experience greater difficulty recruiting, retaining, and developing high-quality diverse teaching workforce.

The high teacher turnover results in students taught largely by inexperienced teachers and less-highly credentialed teachers in subjects in which instruction is rendered. For example, schools with high levels of Black and Latino students have almost two times as many first-year teachers as schools with low minority enrollment; and, minority students are more likely to be taught by inexperienced teachers than experienced ones in 33 states. Today, while the majority of public school children are racial/ethnic minorities, only 20 percent of public school teachers are minorities (7 percent are Black).

You also argue desegregation policies alone are not enough—the blueprint to true educational equity would have to include school finance reform and high quality preschool.

People often ask me, “But haven’t all these things been tried?” Yes, but not as the kind of holistic cure we prescribe. In most places and times, these policies were advanced one at a time, unevenly and inconsistently, with each policy often framed initially as a panacea. Yet the substantial variation in their timing and implementation across districts is exactly what offered us a rare testing ground for what we call the “first-generation suite” of equal education opportunity policy initiatives.

Specifically, I examined the success of our three most significant equal-opportunity initiatives: 1) court-mandated integration efforts; 2) school finance reform; and 3) expansions of public pre-K investments. Using nationally-representative data sets of children followed from birth to adulthood across multiple generations, matched with their access to quality schools, we show how these three policies had lasting benefits.

The above policies have never been tried in concert for extended periods of time. Extant efforts at solving our educational woes detach health from education and early education from K-12 schooling. We must shift the paradigm from a singular approach chasing after illusory silver bullets to an integrated solution. The slow and uneven pace of integration, school funding reforms, and increases in public pre-K spending, respectively, were used as natural experiments to evaluate whether these reforms work. We find the longer students are treated for the symptoms of segregated, poorly funded education, and the higher the doses of integration and school funding reform they are administered, the better their outcomes.

Integration alone is insufficient to fulfill the promise of equal educational opportunity. There could be no cure without it, but it is not the full cure itself. It must be combined with school funding reforms, and expansions of access to high quality pre-K. This three-dimensional synergy—school integration, school funding reforms, and quality pre-K—is precisely the policy prescription I believe the nation needs to implement in order to overcome the legacy of segregation.

When are there so many restrictions on using race in admissions, how could desegregation efforts look today?

The growing developments of between-district segregation have rendered the traditional tools of integration impotent as remedies in the contemporary policy landscape. But perhaps most concerning is the fact that the quest to employ tools—or development new ones—to combat resegregation has largely dissipated from contemporary public policy debates.

Access to high-quality schools is rationed through the housing market and exclusionary zoning. “School choice” is conditioned by parental wealth, zip code, high test scores, and race. The role of parental wealth is highlighted in the fact that housing costs an average of 2.4 times as much near a high-performing public school than near a low-performing one. Parents know which are the good schools and are willing to pay for them. But this is also connected to racialized perceptions of what constitutes a high-quality school and notions of who belongs. In many ways, housing prices have come to represent as much about the price of buying higher chances of upward mobility for one’s children as the square footage of the house itself. These are inseparably linked due to heavy reliance on local property taxes to fund public schools, alongside extant policy designs that provide economic incentives to segregate.

Opportunity-rich communities where children thrive in well-funded, high-resource schools are geographically close, but socioeconomically worlds apart, from the concentrated poverty schools within the same metropolitan area. It has become far too common to find a school-to-prison pipeline near a school-to-life success one in a neighboring district.

Policymakers’ talk of the benefits of “diversity” while avoiding the policy instruments required to achieve integration is counterproductive. Promising avenues that create new opportunities to further integration aims and improve access to high-quality schools include implementing inclusionary zoning reforms, expanding affordable housing in neighborhoods with great schools, more vigorous enforcement of fair housing, and anti-discrimination laws. The time to act is now.
It’s been 400 years since the first African people were forcibly brought as slaves to the English colonies in North America. Throughout those four centuries the story of African Americans has been one of constant struggle for freedom and justice. At the Haas Institute and UC Berkeley, we are marking this anniversary with a year-long program that shines a light on those historical struggles, draws their connections to our current moment, and shows how contemporary scholars and activists are confronting old problems with new approaches.
ON PERMANENT DISPLAY at the United Nations headquarters in New York is a full-scale granite figure representing a slave kidnapped from Africa who is being transported across the Atlantic in a lower deck of a ship. But at this slavery memorial, known as the Ark of Return, the figure is not shown naked, shackled, or otherwise humiliated in other depictions of the slave trade.

Rather, the androgynous figure is fully draped in a white cloth, the head slightly elevated, and arm extended outward with an open palm as if reaching towards the memorial’s visitors in a gesture that evokes empathy and sorrow, but also invites reconciliation and healing.

“There’s a dignity there, but there’s also an incredible sadness,” Denise Herd, the Haas Institute’s Associate Director, explained as she recounted a visit over the summer to the Ark of Return. Herd made the remarks at a symposium marking the launch of a year-long initiative at UC Berkeley marking four centuries since a slave ship first docked in the English colonies.

The symbolism in this figure partly captures the complex and multi-layered mission of what the initiative at UC Berkeley, which Herd has been instrumental in leading, is trying to achieve. On one level, it’s about a recognition of the horrors of slavery and its impacts on society today. But at a deeper level it’s about imagining a future in which the country can heal from its wounds and forge a new path, one in which everyone has a stake and no one is left out.

The obstacles standing in the way of creating a common path are many. But at the heart of racial inequality and violence are the many forms of white supremacy, from the explicit hate crimes that have spiked in recent years, to the implicit forms which are embedded in this country’s laws and institutions manifested in voter suppression, residential segregation, the carceral state, and their many consequences.

By connecting the dots between slavery and the many contemporary forms of oppression and injustice that are its legacy, and by highlighting the enormous achievements of Black people in their struggles for justice, their contributions to culture, and their visions of liberation, initiatives like these can help produce an imagination for a future based on new modes of thinking that humanize people, that lead to constructive actions, and that develop a new language to get us there.

Examples of these new modes of thinking are already being demonstrated across the country. For instance, when Desmond Meade, the brilliant organizer who led an effort to re-enfranchise 1.4 million Floridians last year, talks about why his campaign adopted the term “returning citizens” to refer to people with felony convictions, he explained that “if you call somebody an ex-felon, convict, offender, you increase the likelihood of them recidivating.”

“We wanted people to speak of themselves in a positive way, and not what someone else had defined, but how we define ourselves,” Meade said in an interview with the Haas Institute earlier this year. Language was a critical part of the strategy in the imagination for a new, shared future but it wasn’t the only strategy. The campaign effort to reach out to white conservatives and break down boundaries was underpinned by a key tenet of the work, a commitment to the shared humanity of all returning citizens no matter race or ideological persuasion. And with that imagination and organizing brilliance, the campaign achieved what many thought impossible: The repeal, supported by an overwhelming majority of Florida voters, of a Jim Crow-era law established 150 years ago that had been designed to prevent newly-freed slaves from voting.

Approaches that emphasize our shared interests and values are pressing. By 2043, the Census Bureau says people of color will make up more than half the country’s population. Changing demographics has induced a level of deep anxiety in white people who view these changes as a loss. This fear of “displacement” is exacerbated by a deeply-rooted, although often unacknowledged, white supremacist idea that other groups are inferior, poorer, less educated, and more violent. The idea of “displacement” and its more exaggerated position, “replacement”, suggests a competition between an “us” and a “them” that neglects our mutuality and interconnection. Such notions, stereo-
types, and misconceptions drive dominant narratives, one which initiatives like these at Berkeley are challenging.

One of the ways the initiative is challenging this narrative is by uplifting the voices and shining the light on work by contemporary Black scholars and activists who, as Meade noted, speak for themselves, and not let their work be limited by the confines of language and space that have been constructed by predominantly white scholars.

The presenters taking part in the Berkeley 400 years initiative demonstrate a keen awareness of the role of framing in achieving justice. At the kickoff symposium, York University scholar Christina Sharpe was asked by an audience member why she chose not to show images of victims of lynchings—the topic of her presentation. Her answer was simple: Those kinds of images do not produce empathy. What can be inferred from her response is that those types of images, far from offering a sense of empowerment, instead reinforce the idea that slaves were less than human.

Angela Davis, the famed scholar, activist, and a leading advocate for international solidarity movements, has talked about the need for “richer and more critical vocabularies with which to express our insights about racism.” In a 2015 speech in St. Louis marking the one-year anniversary of Michael Brown’s murder by police in Ferguson, Davis told local activists that the current vocabulary about anti-Black violence in this country has resulted in a situation where “generations of Black people ... have not learned how to imagine the future.” “The development of new ways of thinking about racism requires us not only to understand economic, social, and ideological structures, but also collective psychic structures,” she explained.

So the deliberate choices of how to talk about certain groups or what images to show or exclude is not merely a question of sensibilities. There is push to understand the logic behind aspirational definitions of groups of people that can lead to positive outcomes for them, while also reducing the country’s general sense of social anxiety. Trabian Shorters, a strategist and head of the organization BMe Community which works to uplift Black youths, explains this logic as one based in neuroscience. In his public talks he demonstrates how the subconscious mind has already drawn conclusions about certain groups of people, even before the conscious mind has time to think. These conclusions are formed based on dominant narratives about those groups. When we shift that narrative to something positive, we also shift the thinking of the subconscious mind so it’s not primed to trigger racialized stereotypes when certain words are invoked.

By repeating statistics about the racial equity gaps in education, or poverty, or the overrepresentation of Black people in prisons, what we’re essentially doing is hardening these associations in our subconscious minds, even if our conscious minds understand the structures that create and reinforce inequality, and that’s counterproductive for a society trying to overcome racial divisions and pursue a path towards healing. By defining people by their contributions to society and their aspirations, rather than only the obstacles they face, we begin to redevelop our modes of thinking, reshape dominant narratives, and reimagine the potential for a pluralistic society in which everyone benefits. As the younger, more diverse generations replace the Baby Boomers, so too will they change the narratives and norms established by white society. “The question is, how are they going to change [the narrative],” Shorters asked in a 2017 talk. “Are they going to change it in a way that recognizes and dignifies people, or are they going to change it in a way that continues to denigrate and separate?”

This doesn’t mean ignoring the past. Nor does it mean downplaying the magnitude of the problems society faces. Like the artist who conceptualized the UN’s slavery memorial in New York, the work is to show how the past has brought us to where we are today, present it in a way that speaks to the realities of historical and contemporary forms of violence and injustice, and does it in a way that humanizes people, reveals the common interests in overcoming white supremacy, and invites new kinds of conversations about our individual and collective aspirations.

“We have to build on the past so we can actually move to a future,” John A. Powell said at the closing of the Berkeley 400 years symposium. As he acknowledged that this future must include truthful stories about the past, we must also “develop a story to create a future that belongs to all of us.”

Learn more about the 400 Years of Resistance initiative at UC Berkeley by visiting 400years.berkeley.edu.
Possibilities and Misconceptions in rural america

Haas Institute scholar Mahasin Mujahid considers rural communities the “neglected frontier” of the public health field. Together with an interdisciplinary team of doctors, social epidemiologists, anthropologists, and psychologists, Mujahid will play a leading role in a major new study called Risk Underlying Rural Areas Longitudinal (RURAL) that seeks to understand how social, economic, and biological factors intersect to create barriers to health equity. RURAL will outline the economic and social structures that create health disparities in rural communities and suggest how to best improve those structures in order to improve the health of the people living within them.

In the aftermath of the 2016 presidential election, politicians and journalists alike decried a crisis in the American hinterland. And, with that cry, came a moment of national reckoning and an attempt to understand the economic and cultural reality of rural America. Journalists painted portraits of closing factories and forlorn workers while Silicon Valley businessmen discussed how to usher these forgotten communities into a new economy. Indeed, the plight of rural America became synonymous with the unintended consequences of neoliberal policy and federal disinvestment.

The end of economic opportunity in rural communities heralded the arrival of a host of collateral consequences, the most sinister of which was a widespread loss of accessible health care. As long-term residents moved away from rural areas—leaving a void of patients and medical practitioners in rural communities—small town hospitals closed due to financial constraints, forcing residents to commute long distances for adequate health care. Expectant mothers in rural communities would have to...
and biological factors intersect to create barriers to health equity. Haas Institute faculty cluster member Mahasin Mujahid will serve as the investigator of the study’s Social Determinants Core.

“Obviously, health involves biology. But health is also impacted by a variety of other factors. Factors like family dynamics, neighborhood and community structure, hospital systems, health infrastructure, and social and economic policies,” explained Mujahid, a UC Berkeley professor of Public Health. “How do social factors coalesce to impact an individual’s health? How do they get embodied in somebody’s biology? These are the type of question I’m interested in answering.”

Today, public health scholars like Mujahid consider rural communities the “neglected frontier” of the public health field. And perhaps the opening of this frontier is well-timed. The overwhelming focus on the rural-urban divide since the 2016 election has spurred national health organizations to invest in research that probes the health disparities between rural and urban communities.

And RURAL is perhaps the most aggressive attempt to fill this gap in public health research and is a remarkable move to diversify the National Institutes of Health’s research portfolio. The $21.4 million study is the first major study to examine the health of the most rural communities in the Mississippi Delta and Appalachia, highlighting 10 never-before studied counties in Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

It also marks a moment of change in the discipline of public health. By focusing on understanding the social contexts that shape an individual’s health, the study hopes to highlight how there are multiple avenues that determine health equity and that health inequity can only be solved by looking at an integrated network of solutions. Historically, public health scholars have operated under a framework that individual explanations could explain poor health outcomes. They may have acknowledged that environmental factors impact an individual’s health and that socio-economic factors patterned the health of populations, but general consensus held that the poor were ignorant.

“There’s this idea that poor people behave badly and because they behave badly they have worse health outcomes. And to address that, we need to teach them to behave better. We need to teach them about healthy eating and get them into smoking cessation programs.” Mujahid said. “But, in order to create health equity, we need to understand that some of these health behaviors are shaped...”
This rhetoric of personal responsibility, which often sits as a subtext to the health dialogue, leads to many assumptions about people and communities who experience poor health. When many people envision rural America, they see a community of uneducated, white residents living in a region defined by economic and cultural despair. However, this homogeneous understanding covers a reality that is much more complicated and masks problems of inequity within rural communities as well. Demographically, rural communities have become more and more diverse in recent years: the 2010 Census found that Hispanic, Asian, and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island populations represent more than half of the population growth in rural America. And, with this increase in racial diversity, comes inequities in public health priorities, medical access, and health outcomes between racial and ethnic groups—a fact that is often overlooked when researchers rely on aggregated population data to base their research. One 2017 study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for instance, found that while rural communities, overall, have worse health outcomes and less access to health care than their urban counterparts, the burden of illness is often disproportionately carried by rural racial and ethnic minority populations.

“There’s a lot of concern for the status of rural whites. And, I do think there’s a lot of suffering of rural communities and that we have to do a better job of recognizing that,” acknowledged Mujahid. “However, there are still disparities within those areas that affect the health of Black and Latinx communities. We have to understand why these disparities exist and why access to health promoting resources is worse for certain marginalized groups.”

The dominant narrative of rural communities, Mujahid suggests, also focuses too centrally on the economic vulnerability that underscores the region. This focus mis-characterizes the spirit and agency of individuals living in these communities. “Many times these communities can be thriving despite their high poverty. They can be communities with strong social support networks. Communities that come together and support one another. This resilience needs to be recognized and celebrated,” Mujahid said. “And, in order to honor that resilience, we need to fix the structures that endanger health in the first place.” And that is just what the RURAL team aims to do. As an interdisciplinary team of doctors, social epidemiologists, anthropologists, and psychologists—representing institutions as diverse as Boston University, UCLA, Louisiana State, and Emory University—they hope to outline the economic and social structures that create health disparities in rural communities and suggest how to best improve those structures to improve the health of the people living within them.

By diagramming the structural causes of health disparities, the RURAL team, and social epidemiologists, outline the reasons that people look at health individually. By suggesting that structures rather than individuals are the reason for health outcomes, these social epidemiologists are shifting the scale of public health solutions. No longer can individual education and interventions be dominant solutions to health crises. Reshaping economic, social, and political structures into more just systems is now central to creating health equity. And the responsibility to advocate, restructure, and execute this reimagining cannot lie only with public health practitioners and communities with poor health outcomes. It’s the responsibility of everyone.
Recent Writing on the Causes, Consequences, and Politics of Racial Segregation

Three new books tackle the problem of segregation with fresh solutions, deeper insights, and a firmer basis for understanding how this enduring problem polarizes our politics, just in time for the 2020 Presidential campaign

There has been a remarkable boomlet of scholarly research and extended investigation into the continuing problem of racial residential segregation in the last year or so. Although hardly an original area of inquiry, this recent spate of scholarship has shed much light on the problem of racial segregation—causes, consequences, and what we must do about it.

Each generation of scholarship on this subject has precipitated important policy change. The first generation of publications was tipped off by Robert Park and Ernest Burgess’s *The City*, a landmark study of Chicago’s demographic patterns and ethnographic trends. But other major publications examining the growing problem of racial residential segregation include Robert Weaver’s *The Negro Ghetto* (1948), Gunnar Myrdal’s *An American Dilemma* (1944), and C. Vann Woodward’s *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (1955). This research informed both the nascent Civil Rights Movement as well as the legal attack on Jim Crow, culminating in major Supreme Court victories such as *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948) and *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954).

A second generation of major publications examining the problems and evolution of racial residential segregation emerged in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement, epitomized by Kenneth Clark’s *Dark Ghetto* in 1965 and the Kerner Commission’s report on Civil Disorders in 1968, which called for a national open housing law. After the passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, racial residential segregation declined significantly in most major metropolitan areas the following decade. By the 1980s, racial residential segregation had dropped from the national discourse and the policy agenda. Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton’s landmark book, *American Apartheid* (1993), systematically and persuasively illustrated the shocking extent of racial residential segregation across the United States and the harms and consequences that resulted.

This formed part of a third generation of scholarship, much of it historical in nature, revealing the evolution of segregation, including Thomas Sugrue’s remarkable *Origins of the Urban Crises* (1996), which examined postwar Detroit, and Arnold Hirsch’s *Making of the Second Ghetto* (1993), a similar examination of Chicago. Around the same time, the historian Kenneth Jackson published his remarkable *Crabgrass Frontier* (1985), which systematically described the pattern of suburbanization that were a concomitant to urbanized racial segregation.

This scholarship was part of the impetus for both the
The crux of Trounstine’s argument is an empirically rigorous linkage between racial residential segregation, political polarization, and public provision in the form of services and amenities.

Kryson and Crowder’s nuanced discussion of the search process fundamentally changes how we think about housing segregation, and re-directs our search for solutions into new arenas.

This work advances the most robust and carefully developed policy agenda for challenging entrenched segregation I’ve yet seen, with savvy, but complementary levers for advancing racial equity.

1988 amendments to the Fair Housing Act, which strengthened the law, closed loopholes, and expanded enforcement, as well as the congressionally funded “Moving to Opportunity” experiment, which ran in the mid-1990s in five cities and allowed low-income families to receive vouchers to move to low poverty neighborhoods. Despite all this, racial residential segregation has persisted, and deepened, especially in the wake of the 2007 housing crises, which was precipitated, in no small part, by predatory mortgage policies targeting non-white neighborhoods. Although there were many remarkable books in the interim, Richard Rothstein’s *The Color of Law* (2017) kicked off a fourth generation of high-profile scholarship laser-focused on racial residential segregation. Rothstein masterfully exposing the systematic federal role into the promotion and institutionalization of racial residential segregation. Rothstein, who is a senior fellow at the Haas Institute, documents the under-appreciated and largely forgotten role of the federal government in fostering racial residential segregation. In particular, Rothstein emphasized the role of the federal government in federal mortgage insurance, public housing, and urban renewal, which collectively deepened and extended racial segregation across the country in the post-war period.
Three more recent and notable entries examining the problem of racial residential segregation and how to address it include Jessica Trounstine’s Segregation by Design: Local Politics and Inequality in American Cities (2018), Cycle of Segregation: Social Processes and Residential Stratification (2017) by Maria Krysan and Kyle Crowder, and Moving Toward Integration: The Past and Future of Fair Housing (2018) by Richard Sander, Yana A. Kucheva and Jonathan M. Zasloff. Each of these books provide interesting, and often contrasting, perspectives on the problem of racial residential segregation. Perhaps most remarkably, they offer starkly different explanations for why and how racial residential segregation persists.

In contrast to Richard Rothstein’s focus on federal policy in deepening and racializing residential segregation, Jessica Trounstine “argue[s] that local government have generated segregated along race and class lines.” Emphasizing the role of local, rather than national, actors, her thesis is that white homeowners and their political representatives institutionalized segregation, not because of blind race prejudice, but in order to protect their property values, and to secure and access to high-quality public goods and services, generally to the detriment of communities of color. It is this incentive that, according to Trounstine, perpetuated and maintains racial segregation today. A tour de force, she makes this argument in a variety of clever and novel ways.

The crux of her argument is an empirically rigorous linkage between racial residential segregation, political polarization, and public provision in the form of services and amenities. The first step is to demonstrate a relationship between segregation and prior investment in public goods and high property values. She does this by looking at the first four decades of the Twentieth Century, and in particular the growth of municipal expenditures on city services, such as sanitation, safety, and infrastructure. By her account, “American cities became modern service providers” in this time period.

To demonstrate the relationship between segregation and public goods, she controls for total population and population density (which might make it more efficient to provide public services). She also controls for the proportion of homeowners and professionals in a city, on the theory that homeowners and professionals demand more services, and controls for wealth, which could make it easier to finance those services. Using Thiel’s H index as her measure of segregation (to overcome problems with more traditional measures described below), she finds that that between 30-40 percent of the variation in levels of city segregation (from 1902 to 1937) can be explained by variation in city budgets. As she notes, “[p]laces with larger budgets were more segregated five years later, compared with cities with smaller budgets up until the Second World War.”

Another critical feature of her argument is the evolution of residential segregation from neighborhoods to cities, which she argues began to shift after the Second World War. To illustrate this, she develops a separate measure for overall intra-municipal segregation and inter-municipal segregation. As contrasting examples, Chicago is heavily segregated by neighborhood whereas the Detroit metro region is segregated between cities. She shows that inter-municipal segregation has grown tremendously since 1970, even as intra-municipal (or neighborhood) segregation has declined.

Like other scholars, restrictive zoning plays a large part of her story, as it is one of the chief mechanisms by which white and affluent homeowner preferences are used to maintain high-quality public services while excluding higher-need populations. In a chapter that covers the evolution of zoning law and practice, Trounstine demonstrates how zoning policy became disconnected from planning and nuisance avoidance, and became the provenance of property value maintenance and used to control public goods. As she puts it, “zoning was a tool that enabled elected officials to generate segregation, increase property values, and make it easier to target public goods to certain constituencies.” These are more than simply bold claims, they are empirical facts: after controlling for a host of variables, she finds that an increase in public spending increases the probability that a city adopts a zoning ordinance quite significantly, with even greater effects when school spending is involved: “At the minimum educational spending level, cities had a 0 probability of adopting zoning. This rises to a 28% probability at the highest level of school spending.” She then connects these facts to race: she finds that zoning ordinances were much more likely to be adopted in places that were already segregated. She also finds that zoning had a predictable racial effect of excluding nonwhite families from moving into those neighborhoods or communities. Thus, she is able to show that early adopters of zoning became more segregated cities—even after controlling for the pre-existing level of segregation: “By 1970, cities that had adopted early zoning ordinance had segregation levels about 10 points higher on average.”

Contesting the literature that shows that greater levels of diversity are associated with reduced collective investment and public provision (such as a more anemic welfare state), she demonstrates that it is racial segregation, not diversity, that causes this. She does this by examining a large data set, which she compiled, showing that when
controlling for level of diversity, cities with greater segregation have less public expenditure than diverse cities with less segregation. Specifically, she finds that an increase in the level of segregation from the 25th to the 75th percentile lowers per capita spending by more than $100 per resident per year. Then, looking at specific goods, such as parks, police, welfare, sewers and roads, she finds the same results, regardless of the size of the minority population. In fact, she finds that the most segregated cities spend about $200 less per capita each year on sewer systems, or an average of about $60,000 less per year. It is the distribution of groups, not diversity, that correlates with public spending. In fact, she finds that cities with more non-white residents or greater foreign-born populations (from many different places) were bigger spenders.

The most important part of her analysis, however, is her theory about the relationship between municipal provision and segregation. The key is local politics. The heart of her argument—and indeed her book—is that segregated cities have more political polarization, pitting neighborhoods and cities against each other, making cooperation more difficult. As she explains, “in segregated cities, local officials have trouble convincing residents to fund public goods. As a result, services were underprovided.” This is a bold claim, but Trounstine provides ample and compelling support. She finds that the relationship between segregation and polarization is statistically powerful: A city in the 10th percentile of segregation has a 35 percent point divide in racial support for a political candidate, compared to a 63 percent point divide at the 90th percentile. In other words, the more segregated, the more political polarization.

One might wonder if the relationship between segregation and polarization isn’t driven by some deeper force. After all, what if cities where white voters are more conservative on average have more racial political polarization, more segregation, and less public spending? As usual, however, she controls for this factor, and finds that the relationship between segregation and polarization is unaffected by the conservatism of the local white population. In fact, she found that “cities with more conservative white populations have smaller racial divides.” This is a telling fact for those of us who live in large cities in blue states.

Racial residential segregation makes it easier for municipal governments to target their services to particular populations, and exclude others. Inter-municipal segregation is much more efficient than intra-municipal segregation at accomplishing this, which means that the form of residential segregation that is more prevalent today than a generation ago is much more pernicious and harmful. As she puts it, “when segregation occurs across cities, heavily minority cities have no ability to affect the distribution of public goods from neighboring white towns.” Even worse, affluent white communities exclude the neediest people, shunting them into communities with the least resources to meet those needs.

Whereas Rothstein and Trounstine focus on policy and policymakers, in the Cycle of Segregation, Maria Krysan and Kyle Crowder shift the focus to social networks and background experiences that shape the housing search process as a key driver and cause of racial residential segregation. Rejecting or complicating the three traditional explanations for segregation, discrimination, different group preferences for neighborhood types, or economic differences between racial groups, Kyrson and Crowder show how less visible social forces and background local knowledge shape residential mobility.

Previous research on the housing search process has focused on 1) the communities and neighborhoods under consideration or 2) the identification of housing units within a community. Although forces such as steering (when real estate agents direct homeseekers to demographically similar neighborhoods) and affordability may drive some level of segregation in these steps, Kryson and Crowder try to show how the housing search process is structured to perpetuate segregation even before it has formally begun. Drawing on in-depth survey interviews and secondary data sources, they systematically demonstrate how segregated social networks and different background knowledge infiltrate our “consideration set” of neighborhoods in the “pre-search stage.” As a result, metropolitan residents of different races have very different local information about, and perceptions of, the communities they may consider or rule out at the outset. For example, they find that Black residents may rule out far-flung white communities that they know very little about in advance or that have a reputation as unwelcoming to people of color or are unaffordable, even if the community might have much to offer, match their budget, or fit their demographic profile preference. Similarly, white residents may rule out large swaths of communities on the basis of reputation or racial profile without any fact-based assessment or consideration of the communities’ amenities or housing options. As a result, the authors show that residents tend to select housing in communities that are significantly more segregated than their “ideal” community in the abstract. In this way, the authors find that residential moves are structured by race in ways that reproduce racial segregation.
The authors untangle some of the knottiest matters in the race and mobility literature. For example, they find that “racial composition seems to be an important driver of assumptions about affordability and the value of neighborhoods.” In short, race is a heuristic—a mental shortcut—that signals information about a community, including safety, school quality, affordability and home value appreciation potential. Critically, these assumptions operate even in the absence of racial prejudice. Simple self-interest and ordinary cognitive shortcuts (echoing the Kahneman view that we are all “cognitive misers”) can lead to overreliance on such heuristics, where racial composition is less of a preference than a cue to other neighborhood characteristics. The focus on the search process also helps explain why racial segregation remains stronger than socioeconomic segregation, and how even upper income Black families end up in poorer and more heavily Black neighborhoods, and poor whites end up in low poverty and predominantly white neighborhoods.

Sanders, Kucheva and Zasloff have the largest entry into this body of scholarship, with their tome Mov ing to Integration. Organized into five parts, the first four parts are a chronology of fair housing and residential segregation in the United States from 1865 to about 2015. Although not without flaws or omissions, this chronology may be the single most comprehensive and detailed account of the level of segregation during that sweep of time. This narrative is punctuated by key events that shaped the evolution of segregation, such as the enactment and implementation of the federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, the Supreme Court’s 1948 landmark ruling in Shelley v. Kraemer which declared racially restrictive covenants unenforceable, the Great Recession and the mortgage meltdown, and the gentrification of urban space by young, white professionals in recent years.

With special access to restricted census data, Sander et al are able to provide more precise measures of segregation than are typically available. This allows them to tell a more nuanced story, and occasionally a contrarian one. For example, drawing on a journal article, Sanders and his co-authors argue that Shelley had a much more substantial desegregative effect than is generally appreciated. Although not entirely persuasive, their arguments are nonetheless intriguing.

The most significant flaw in the book, however, is the virtually exclusive reliance on the Dissimilarity Index as their measure of segregation, as it measures the percentage of a group that would have to move to create a complete integrated area. The Dissimilarity Index is probably the most widely used measure of segregation, but it suffers from a number of well-known flaws. The Dissimilarity Index can only calculate the level of segregation between two groups at a time, and therefore cannot provide a holistic view of the level of segregation in a multi-racial/multi-ethnic area, like the Bay Area, Seattle, or most parts of the Southwest. If segregation declines between two groups, but increases overall, the Dissimilarity Index is misleading, as we’ve shown in the Bay Area. More importantly, the Dissimilarity Index values masks the average or typical case. Dissimilarity index scores can improve when a small number of members of a different group move into previously homogenous neighborhoods, while the average or typical member of those groups remain stuck in racially segregated neighborhoods. For example, if some middle-class African-Americans move into previously exclusively white neighborhoods, the dissimilarity score will fall, even as the vast majority of black people remain in racially isolated neighborhoods.

Despite fleeting references to a couple of other measures of segregation, Sander et al rely almost entirely on the Dissimilarity Index. Alternative measures of segregation would have greatly illuminated—and likely bolstered—the narrative they developed. At a minimum, the authors should have explained why they relied so heavily on the Dissimilarity Index, especially at a time when so many alternative measures are available.

Although Moving to Integration lacks an overarching thesis, it is animated by a recognition that racial residential segregation remains a stubborn and deeply consequential problem, and provides an ambitious plan for addressing it. It is Part V, “Solutions,” where the book offers the most important overall contribution to the literature on segregation. Sander et al advance 12 “strategies” for promoting integration. The first six are a complementary set of mobility interventions: 1) mobility grants to subsidize renters and homeowners to make “pro-integrative” moves; 2) mobility counseling to nudge potential movers to consider a larger range of neighborhoods as part of the housing search process (and thereby directly address the problems identified in Kryson and Crowder’s Cycle of Segregation; 3) the creation of housing trust funds to preserve affordable housing in gentrifying neighborhoods by purchasing neighborhood housing stock; 4) tax-increment financing in gentrifying neighborhoods that captures increases in the value of housing to finance the housing trust fund and to provide better neighborhood amenities; 5) the creation of community development banks to serve under-banked communities, and provide non-predatory financial services; 6) modifying existing federal programs to make the more integrative, such as by making Section 8 housing choice vouchers portable across jurisdictions, and using small area market subsidies to allow voucher holders a wider range of neighborhood possibilities.
The next set of strategies are designed to improve our understanding of the problem: 7) task the Current Population Survey, conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau, with including a housing search component, to gather data on racial differences in the housing search process (again, addressing the problems raised in Cycle of Segregation); 8) task a federal agency with random, full-application testing for discrimination, instead of more limited audits which do not typically include a full credit check, and therefore are of limited insight into the extant problem of housing discrimination.

The final set of strategies are policies that could be tried by any jurisdiction with salutory effects: 9) Prohibit source-of-income discrimination, which makes it harder for voucher holders or people with other rental subsidies to access integrative housing; 10) reduce regulatory barriers to multi-family housing, such as restrictive zoning and land-use laws (addressing the problems raised in Segregation by Design; 11) Implement quantifiable “fair share” guidelines, which would require jurisdictions within a region to provide their share of affordable housing; 12) bring disparate impact litigation under the Fair Housing Act to challenge exclusionary and restrictive zoning.

I mention these strategies at length because this program is more than a hodge-podge of ideas or a breezy set of recommendations tacked onto a longer book. It is the heart of the book, and they are comprehensive, clever, and complementary strategies. For example, the housing trust fund proposal, they argue, would “change[] the psychology of gentrification: incumbent residents would have a reason to welcome and seek out gentrification rather than oppose it” because they would improve services and amenities without threatening their displacement.

Their target would be to get every metropolitan area to .60 dissimilarity score, which happens to be the score that divides moderately segregated regions from highly segregated ones. The authors devote an entire chapter to imagining the implementation of this program, with the centerpiece of mobility grants in Buffalo, New York. Although the sticker shock of $285 million over 10 years (including $43 million for administration and to fend off litigation) to desegregate Buffalo may scare off curious policymakers, it is also a testament to the seriousness of the authors’ recommendations that they would take the time to cost-out their ideas. And the benefits are enormous. As they conclude, “We cannot afford not to try.” I couldn’t agree more.
This year marks the 400th year anniversary of the forced arrival of enslaved Africans in the English colonies at Point Comfort, Virginia in 1619. A yearlong observance will take place throughout the 2019/20 academic year at UC Berkeley to commemorate continuous struggles for freedom and justice waged by African Americans. This work aims to spark conversations and ideas for coming to terms with the last four centuries of slavery and oppression in the US.