Racial Segregation of the Affluent and Poor in Nineteen Florida MSAs

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Throughout the twentieth century millions of blacks have migrated from the rural South to cities within the South and elsewhere in the nation. More recently large numbers of blacks have migrated between cities. This huge movement has been well documented, literally thousands of studies having been published on the subject (Kaplan and Holloway 1998).

The migration of rural blacks to the nation's cities greatly changed their internal structure. Most blacks arrived poverty stricken, with few marketable skills. Their choice of residency was limited by their lack of money, and most had to pack themselves into the poorest neighborhoods, usually near the city center. Here they settled among earlier urban migrants, mostly from Europe. Urban population densities rose to astronomical heights. As soon as earlier occupants could afford it, they moved to less dense residential areas farther from the city center, leaving the older inner city neighborhoods largely black. This process, known as "invasion and succession," to varying degrees was experienced within most of the nation's cities, and gave rise to "black ghettoes"(Taeuber and Taeuber 1965).

In the past thirty years, largely as a result of equal rights and fair housing legislation enacted in Washington, many black households are no longer poor, and they now have greater latitude in choosing where to live within the city. Affluent black households have left in such numbers from the old black neighborhoods that, according to Wilson (1987), the ghetto has become overwhelmingly the home of the poor, and the absence of the more affluent blacks, who previously provided the leadership, has contributed to neighborhood social disintegration.

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As early as the 1970s the author noted that in Tallahassee professional blacks who arrived to work in state government or the city's higher educational institutions overwhelmingly chose to live in neighborhoods where they were in the minority (Winsberg 1979). During that decade professional blacks of long residence began to leave the few affluent black enclaves that had developed during the long period of official segregation and take up residency in white neighborhoods. An incipient dispersal of affluent blacks among the white population of other Florida cities, similar to that in Tallahassee, also began during the 1970s (Winsberg 1983).

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the degree that this diffusion took place during the 1980s. Intuitively one would expect that in the Tallahassee MSA affluent blacks would disperse among the affluent white population more than in most other MSAs in Florida. During the 1980s many affluent blacks arrived in Tallahassee to work in its universities and in state government, institutions that began to pursue affirmative action earlier and more vigorously than organizations within the private sector. The same should be true of Gainesville, where the University of Florida dominates the economy. The Lakeland, Jacksonville, and Ocala MSAs, which have an unusually large share of their workers employed in blue collar jobs in the private sector, should have experienced less racial integration of their affluent blacks.

The diffusion of affluent black households among affluent white households will be compared with the diffusion of poor black households among poor white households between 1980 and 1990. This will be followed by an examination of the degree of segregation of affluent black households from poor black households in 1980 and 1990. For comparison purposes the level of segregation of affluent white households from poor white households was also calculated for 1980 and 1990.

The author stresses that this study assigns no value judgment to the word "segregation" when it applies to those black households that are affluent enough to be able to select from a range of places within a metropolitan area in which to live. Today the level of segregation of affluent black households is as much influenced by the households themselves as the economic and social environments of the community. Some affluent black households prefer neighborhoods in which they are in the majority instead of ones in which they are a small minority. Voluntary segregation is not an option for most poor black households. Usually their poverty, which largely

originates from racism, prevents them from living outside the old black ghetto.

Data and Methodology

The dissimilarity index was used to calculate the degree of isolation of one group from another. The dissimilarity index, also known as the segregation index, has enjoyed widespread use in segregation studies for over forty years. Although it has been criticized (Duncan and Duncan 1955; Jakubs 1979), no better index has been devised for calculating degree of segregation. In the simplest of terms in this study it indicates the number of families or households that would have to change block groups to have the same distribution as another group. Thus, in 1980 within the MSA of Bradenton, 79 percent of the poor black households would have had to move to another block group to have had the same block group distribution of poor white households (Table 2).

The manipulation of the data was greatly facilitated by the availability of 1980 and 1990 census data on compact disks (CDs) (Geolytics, Inc. 1996, 1999). These CDs permitted the rapid transfer of an immense amount of data into spreadsheet files. There were, unfortunately, problems associated with data collection. The gravest was that in 1980 the only complete income data at the block group level available on CD were for families and not households, while in 1990 the only data were for households and not families. The definition of families and households differ: families include only those who are related while households include everyone who is a resident. In both 1980 and 1990, for most of the nineteen MSAs, there were about one-third more households than families. The dissimilarity indexes for 1980 were calculated using families, while those for 1990 used households. Since data are available in 1990 by block group for total families (but not by income category), the geographical distribution of families was compared with that of households for several Florida MSAs. There proved to be very little difference in their distributions. Black household income data are available at the MSA level for 1980, permitting an accurate comparison of the growth of the total MSAs poor and affluent households between 1980 and 1990 (Table 1).

The second problem was that the inflation of the dollar between 1980 and 1990 was 58 percent, making it difficult to find comparable affluent and poor income categories for the two censuses. The best

Table 1
Poor and Affluent Black Households 1980 and 1990

MSA	Number of Block Groups 1990	Percent Households Black 1990	Number Poor Black Households 1980	Number Poor Black Households 1990	Percent Change 1980-90	Number Affluent Black Households 1980	Number Affluent Black Households 1990	Percent Change 1980-90
Bradenton	176	5	1670	2406	44	155	360	132
Daytona Beach	313	6	4197	5102	22	181	804	344
Fort Myers	476	3	2220	2936	32	75	418	457
Fort Pierce	222	7	3426	4222	23	135	693	413
Fort Walton Beach	94	5	994	1403	41	63	271	330
Gainesville	141	11	4065	6447	59	297	731	146
Jacksonville	652	15	21964	27004	23	1754	5655	222
Lakeland	243	9	5720	7841	37	423	972	130
Melbourne-Titusville-PC	339	4	3000	4064	35	260	1007	287
Miami-Ft. Lauderdale	1586	10	39875	65563	64	6665	22810	242
Naples	111	3	1090	945	-13	13	122	838
Ocala	147	8	3221	4098	27	121	398	229
Orlando	574	7	11012	15114	37	1050	4179	298
Panama City	118	8	1888	2311	22	74	236	219
Pensacola	304	11	6450	9856	53	366	1024	180
Sarasota	155	3	1410	1820	29	66	292	342
Tallahassee	196	14	5911	10906	84	388	1795	363
Tampa-St. Petersburg	1582	5	20080	28093	39	1406	5034	258
West Palm Beach	495	6	9148	12649	38	1100	3195	190

Poor in 1980 below $11,900 (1990 dollars) poor in 1990 below $15,000.
Affluent in 1980 above $55,500 (1990 dollars) affluent in 1990 above $49,999.

fit was to designate those who were poor in 1980 as having had incomes less than $7,500 ($11,900; 1990 dollars) and those that were affluent as having incomes greater than $34,999 ($55,500; 1990 dollars). Though far from a perfect match, it is a fair approximation of the income intervals used for 1990. In that year poor households are here defined as those with incomes less than $15,000 while affluent household had incomes greater than $49,999.

The comparison of white households with black households did not present a problem except in two MSAs, Miami-Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach-Boca Raton. Many blacks in these metropolitan areas by 1990 were from the English and French speaking Caribbean islands, and had different geographical distributions than African Americans. Yet these black subgroups cannot be disaggregated from each other. Income data are given for only "Hispanics," and not for their subgroups. Yet both black and "other" Hispanics have different geographical distributions than white Hispanics. Furthermore white Hispanics also do not have the same distribution as nonHispanic whites.

Block groups were used instead of tracts because some MSAs, especially in 1980, had so few census tracts. Census tracts are formed based on population and not area. Although tracts in large MSAs may have racially, ethnically, or economically homogeneous populations, in smaller ones tracts may contain large numbers of poor and affluent blacks, whites or other racial and ethnic groups. The block groups are much smaller and their boundaries can be more easily drawn to include a homogeneous population. Block groups, unfortunately, are redefined more frequently than tracts from one census to another, but not so frequently as to prevent comparisons of dissimilarity indices between censuses.

Interpretation

The share of black households within the nineteen MSAs varied greatly in 1990: from a high of 15 percent in Jacksonville to a low of only 3 percent in Sarasota, Fort Myers and Naples (Table 1). Between 1980 and 1990 in most MSAs the number of affluent and poor black households increased substantially. This was especially true of the affluent blacks, whose numbers at least doubled during the decade in all nineteen MSAs, and in some tripled or even quadrupled. The growth in the number of poor households was far less than the growth in the number of affluent households, but there was growth in all of them with the exception of the Naples MSA. A likely

explanation for the decline in that MSA was that it attracted many Hispanics from Mexico and Central America during the 1980s who replaced blacks in its pool of cheap unskilled labor.

Although it does not pertain to this study, it is worth mentioning that between 1980 and 1990 in 12 of the 19 Florida MSAs, the share of both the poor and the affluent black households in the total increased, accompanied by a decline in that of the middle income group. This trend in income distribution has been experienced in many MSAs throughout the United States, and is true for white as well as black households. The decline in the share of black households within the middle income category was especially great in Bradenton, Gainesville, and Pensacola. In all three the decline was largely the result of increases in the share of poor black households.

Between 1980 and 1990 the number of affluent black households in most of the state's MSAs grew. Some of this growth resulted from the entry level to affluence being $5,500 (1990 dollars) higher in 1980 than it was in 1990. Nonetheless, there were many more black households in all of Florida's MSAs who in 1990 could afford to relocate where they wished than in 1980. The growth in affluent black households was especially impressive in Naples, Fort Myers, and Fort Pierce. The growth of the group in Naples and Fort Myers can be explained, to a degree, by the small base from which the growth began. That for Fort Pierce had a different origin. All the MSAs located on the eastern half of peninsular Florida, in both 1980 and 1990, with the exception of Fort Pierce, had a higher share of their black households in the affluent category than any of the other MSAs in the state. Actually, in 1980, the Fort Pierce MSA had the smallest share of affluent black households in the city's total of any MSA in the state. During the ten-year period Fort Pierce's black households began to participate in the relatively high degree of prosperity enjoyed by black households in other east coast MSAs. By 1990 the percentage of affluent black households in its total had almost reached that of its east coast neighbors.

The rate of growth of the number of poor black households within the 19 MSAs was much slower than that of the affluent. In part this could be explained because in 1980 entry level into the poor income category was $3100 less than it was in 1990, but also because the growth of poor households began from a much larger numeric base than did the affluent. Nonetheless economic conditions for many blacks within the state, who during the 1980s increasingly had to compete for low wage jobs with legal and illegal foreign immigrants, contributed to the absolute growth. In 12 of the 19 MSAs,

between 1980 and 1990 the share of poor black households in their total increased. The biggest increase was in Pensacola where 44 percent were in the poor category in 1980 but the share had risen to 53 percent in 1990. In 1990 Orlando and Fort Walton Beach had the lowest percentage of poor black households within their totals, 35 percent.

The dissimilarity indexes were calculated for affluent black households in 1980 and 1990 to ascertain the degree that their distribution corresponded to that of affluent white households (Table 2). In 1980 both affluent and poor black households were highly segregated from their white cohorts. In the case of several the dissimilarity index was over 90, and in two it was 100. In that year, in all Florida MSAs, the affluent black households were more segregated from the affluent white households than poor black households were from poor white ones. The situation reversed dramatically during the decade. By 1990 in nine MSAs poor blacks were more segregated from their white cohort than affluent blacks from theirs. In two MSAs the dissimilarity indexes of poor and affluent households of the two racial groups were equal. In 1980 there were no MSAs with segregation indexes between affluent black and affluent white households below 71. By 1990 there were 14 and 4 were below 60.

The data suggests that between 1980 and 1990 affluent households in Florida cities became racially more integrated than poor households. This, despite the fact that a great effort was made during the decade to make affordable housing available for the poor of both races on a nondiscriminatory basis. Between 1980 and 1990 the greatest fall in the affluent index was in Gainesville (44 points), followed by Pensacola (41 points) and Ocala (37 points). The drop in the poor index between those two years was greatest in Fort Walton Beach (32 points) followed by Gainesville (29 points).

Massey and Denton (1993) calculated segregation indexes for blacks and whites by income categories for thirty metropolitan areas throughout the United States using data from the 1980 census. They found that between the lowest income category and the highest there was no trend toward a higher degree of integration. Consequently, they concluded that in 1980 segregation continued to be more associated with race than class. The data for Florida, using block groups, suggests that class in 1990 had begun to play a more important role.

If housing integration can be thought of as a desirable goal, Gainesville certainly has been the most successful among the 19

Table 2
Dissimilarity Indices Between Poor Blacks and Poor Whites and Affluent Blacks and Affluent Whites 1980 and 1990 (block groups)

MSA	Poor 1980	Affluent 1980	Poor 1990	Affluent 1990	Poor Difference 1980-90	Affluent Difference 1980-90
Bradenton	79	87	73	79	-6	-8
Daytona Beach	82	90	70	65	-12	-25
Fort Myers	88	100	79	88	-9	-12
Fort Pierce	87	88	89	74	2	-14
Fort Walton Beach	75	87	43	62	-32	-25
Gainesville	67	84	38	40	-29	-44
Jacksonville	72	80	61	63	-11	-17
Lakeland	79	88	62	65	-17	-23
Melbourne-Titusville-PC	72	81	61	61	-11	-20
Miami-Ft. Lauderdale	81	85	73	67	-8	-18
Naples	82	82	83	75	1	-7
Ocala	73	90	55	53	-18	-37
Orlando	87	87	66	57	-21	-30
Panama City	80	100	61	59	-19	-41
Pensacola	68	79	57	61	-11	-18
Sarasota	80	97	73	73	-7	-24
Tallahassee	64	71	57	61	-7	-10
Tampa-St. Petersburg	83	87	74	65	-9	-22
West Palm Beach	88	94	80	73	-8	-21
Median	80	87	66	65	-11	-21

Poor in 1980 below $11,900 (1990 dollars) poor in 1990 below $15,000.
Affluent in 1980 above $55,500 (1990 dollars) affluent in 1990 above $49,999.

Florida MSAs. Whereas its poor in 1980 were somewhat less racially segregated than in the median Florida MSA, its affluent households were almost the same as the median. By 1990, in Gainesville, both the poor and the affluent indexes had fallen into the moderate range, well below that of the 1990 MSA median. The presence of the University of Florida may account for this rapid integration of both income groups. However, given that Tallahassee is also a university town it also should have experienced the same decline between 1980 and 1990 as Gainesville. It did not. In 1980 both Tallahassee's poor and affluent blacks were less segregated from their white counterparts than in Gainesville. The rapid integration of the two groups in Gainesville that took place between 1980 and 1990 was not experienced in Tallahassee. In that year segregation indexes in Tallahassee, for both income groups, were well above those of Gainesville, although in the ten-year period they had declined modestly. The author, a resident of Tallahassee, and previously a resident of Gainesville, cannot account for this difference between the two university towns. Perhaps the presence of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) in Tallahassee may have something to do with Tallahassee having higher dissimilarity indexes in both income categories than Gainesville. FAMU is an essentially black state institution whose faculty and staff are overwhelmingly black, and a high proportion of its student body lives in campus housing.

In 1990 the Fort Myers and Naples MSAs had very high dissimilarity indexes for both the affluent and the poor. Both also had high indexes in 1980 as well. A large share of the white population of both MSAs is retirees. Also, the share of blacks in both is among the lowest of Florida's MSAs. Whatever the causes, racial integration within both is proceeding very slowly.

A comment should be made about the changes in black household segregation in the three MSAs within the state with the largest black populations (Miami-Ft. Lauderdale, Tampa-St. Petersburg, and Jacksonville). It already was noted that the study of racial groups by income level in Miami-Fort Lauderdale is complicated by the presence of a huge number of white Hispanic households who cannot be disaggregated from the total white households. Also, many English and French speaking Caribbean black households cannot be isolated from the total black households. In other ways, however, social scientists have examined aspects of the MSA's demography very closely (Boswell 1993; Portes and Stepick 1993; Winsberg 1994). The accuracy of the dissimilarity indexes for Miami-Ft. Lauderdale calculated for this study should be regarded with a

degree of skepticism (and for that of West Palm Beach-Boca Raton as well). None of the three in either 1980 or 1990 experienced levels of racial segregation of their poor and affluent that differed greatly from the median Florida MSA. Nor did the change in the dissimilarity index between the two years differ greatly from the typical Florida MSA. Like the rest of Florida's MSAs, the affluent desegregated themselves more rapidly than the poor.

Earlier in this paper reference was made to Wilson's thesis regarding the concentration of minority poverty in inner cities (1987). It was his belief that as the affluent left the inner city ghettoes for better housing they left a leadership gap within the ghetto which contributed to social disintegration. Wilson's view was challenged by Massey and Eggers (1990). They analyzed the distributions of whites, blacks, Hispanics, and Asians in 60 metropolitan areas throughout the United States in 1970 and 1980. They concluded that race and not class remained the overwhelmingly most important element in understanding housing segregation during the 1970s. Massey and Eggers conclusions were, in turn, challenged by St. John (1995), and several others. Thus the discussion over the Wilson thesis continues (Fainstein, 1993), but now with data from the 1990 census, and soon with that of 2000.

Table 3 shows the degree of segregation of poor black households from affluent black households in the 19 Florida MSAs in 1980 and 1990, and for comparison purposes that for poor white and affluent white households for the same years. In 1980 the median degree of segregation of poor black households from affluent black households was 40, the same as that for poor and affluent white households. During the 1980s the relationship changed for both races. However, whereas the poor and affluent white households became less segregated from each other during the decade, the poor and affluent black households became more segregated. This would suggest that among black households, class, at least within urban Florida, is playing an increasing role in their geographical distribution. Affluent black households clearly have shown a greater desire to live outside of poor black neighborhoods than have affluent white households shown a desire to live at a distance from poor white households.

The increase in class segregation among the blacks during the decade of the 1980s was greatest in Bradenton and Panama City. In 1990 Naples, Tallahassee and Tampa-St. Petersburg were the three cities where the two black income groups were most segregated from each other. The index of dissimilarity of poor from affluent

Table 3
Dissimilarity Indices between Poor Whites and Affluent Whites and Poor Blacks and Affluent Blacks 1980 and 1990 (block groups)

MSA	Whites 80	Whites 90	Difference 1980-90	Black 80	Black 90	Difference 1980-90
Bradenton	43	43	0	16	46	30
Daytona Beach	33	29	-4	35	45	10
Fort Myers	37	33	-4	24	25	1
Fort Pierce	32	31	-1	40	48	8
Fort Walton Beach	37	33	-4	56	44	-12
Gainesville	49	37	-12	31	33	2
Jacksonville	43	37	-6	45	51	6
Lakeland	41	35	-6	29	36	7
Melbourne-Titusville-PC	37	33	-4	37	51	14
Miami-Ft. Lauderdale	41	29	-12	46	48	2
Naples	44	29	-15	100	62	-38
Ocala	31	28	-3	39	34	-5
Orlando	42	36	-6	46	48	2
Panama City	31	32	1	24	45	21
Pensacola	40	33	-7	41	47	6
Sarasota	37	29	-8	32	45	13
Tallahassee	52	61	9	51	59	8
Tampa-St. Petersburg	43	41	-2	52	55	3
West Palm Beach	43	42	-1	45	49	4
Median	40	33	-4	40	46	8

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white households was also very high in Tallahassee. In fact, it was the highest of the 19 MSAs, and far higher than the second highest. One might conclude that Tallahassee's segregation of both blacks and whites was the most class oriented of any Florida city.

Conclusions

Several generalities can be made regarding changes in the number of the poor and affluent black households in Florida's MSAs between 1980 and 1990. In all the MSAs but one the number of households in both income categories grew. The exception was the Naples MSA, where the poor black households declined by 45 during the ten years. In all MSAs the rate of growth of the affluent black households was markedly greater than the poor black households. Growth in either group does not appear to be related to the share of blacks in the total population of the MSA. Although it does not pertain to the study, it is worthy of note to point out that in 12 of the 19 Florida MSAs, between 1980 and 1990 the shares of the affluent and poor black households in the total rose, and as a consequence the share of the middle group declined.

Between 1980 and 1990 the degree of racial segregation of the affluent and poor fell. The decrease in racial segregation of the affluent was much greater than was the decrease of racial segregation among the poor. During the 1980s class distinction among blacks increased, their affluent increasingly separating themselves from their poor. The opposite was true of affluent white householders, who in 1990, in most MSAs, were less isolated from poor white householders than in 1980. Affluent blacks clearly are less inclined today to live in the same neighborhood as poor blacks. If this is a national trend, it does not augur well for improving the social stability of black ghettoes. In the past affluent blacks provided most of the leadership and social control in these neighborhoods, a role now greatly reduced as their numbers decline.

This study must end with an acknowledgement of at least partial failure. A number of trends were identified with regard to the relationship between affluent and poor black households with their white cohorts between 1980 and 1990, as well as relationships between affluent and poor black households and affluent and poor white ones. It was also the intent of the author, through an interpretation of the data, to identify some variables that would explain the trends. None were identified, but that does not imply that they do not exist. Perhaps a more skilled social scientist, using more rigorous

statistical techniques, can discover them. In the meantime it appears that each MSA has a different set of social and economic variables that affect the degree of racial and class segregation.

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