Divided by Design? Urban Renewal's Differential Impacts on Economic Outcomes by Race

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Divided by Design? Urban Renewal's Differential Impacts on Economic Outcomes by Race

Will be submitted to:
Professor Venit-Shelton & Professor Bjerk
Year Long Senior Thesis in History and Economics Spring 2024
By: Derik Suria
LURA Reflective Statement

As a History/Economics double major concentrating on race and inequality, I noticed that urban renewal in the US had a dismal legacy of fragmenting underserved communities to promote private real estate interests. To advance my research, I attended a library workshop by Adam Rosenkrantz on how to use research guides, advanced search functions, and databases. From this, I was able to use keywords to narrow down my search and used resource sharing to access primary sources on urban renewal in Chicago. Sources like *The Politics of Urban Renewal: The Chicago Findings*, borrowed from UChicago’s library challenged my economic-centric understanding of urban renewal which suggested that it was associated with less poverty and unemployment alongside higher incomes and property values.

I realized that there is remarkable continuity within the roots of urban renewal; many renewal projects were based on plans by large corporations, businesses, merchants, and other entities with substantial involvement and stake in urban center real estate. The implicit relationship between powerful business owners and city planners demonstrated how urban renewal supported a mutually beneficial, and even symbiotic relationship. In this process, proponents of urban renewal framed blight as an economic liability in a community while slums were a social liability. Doing so helped to justify the legality of displacement due to urban renewal in the name of the public good. This misalignment in priorities that trivialized the struggles of displaced individuals and families and the incongruence between displacement and public housing creation led me to question: What happened to displaced individuals, families, and communities? Were they economically better or worse off due to urban renewal efforts? Did urban renewal actually work for the public good or were the benefits unevenly concentrated among the most affluent? Eventually, these questions transitioned into the central research
question of my thesis—what were the long-term race-specific economic impacts of urban renewal funding on cities? This led me to take an interdisciplinary and novel approach to explore the impacts of urban renewal from an individual and city-level perspective.

Considering the multitude of stakeholders as well as the interplay between private interests and the public good makes this question difficult to definitively answer. Existing economic literature focused on the aggregate effects of urban renewal. As such, I wanted to explore how urban renewal influenced the trajectory of specific demographics, especially disproportionately targeted Black Americans. To do so, I needed city-level demographic data. From a thesis research seminar held by the library, I made an appointment with social sciences librarian Mary Martin. Mary taught me how to parse and access historical census data while directing me to databases like Statista and Social Explorer and data aggregators like Data-Planet to find time series data for economic indicators. My newfound knowledge of Statista granted me access to an array of variables that were critical to my empirical strategy. Using this data, I conducted a replication study of Collins and Shester (2013) supplemented by a historical analysis of Chicago neighborhoods to examine how city-level economic benefits changed during 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. I used data from the Decennial Census and American Community Survey to examine race-specific outcomes—income per capita, employment, and poverty rates—and quantify the differential impacts of urban renewal while extending the scope of the original study. By doing so, I explored how (i) the positive effects of urban renewal faded out over time and (ii) urban renewal affected different populations. But this was only half the puzzle.

To round out my regression analysis, I chose Chicago as a representative case study for urban renewal that occurred on a national level. Chicago experienced significant urban growth starting from the 1840s and onwards until the point that it was hailed as the “gateway to the
West.” Focusing on Chicago provided a comparison between a micro and macro lens into the short and long-term impacts of urban renewal. Realizing that the most telling sources were physical records located in Chicago archives, I applied for funding from the Stasneck Fellowship for Archival Research. In this process, Mary helped to strategize special collections, archives, and primary sources to focus on; Mary’s support with navigating finding aids from regional libraries in Chicago helped me identify the most relevant sources and helped me secure funding. In this process, I coordinated with librarians from the Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, Harold Washington Library Center Special Collections, and Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection. Being able to visit the aforementioned archives reminded me of the difficult, but rewarding nature of research. As a result, I not only located and scanned studies on relocation and displacement due to urban renewal but more importantly found records and interviews from individuals who were displaced.

Undertaking my senior thesis has strengthened my passion for research to the point that I am considering pursuing a Ph.D. in Economics. Post-grad, I’ll be working as a predoctoral research associate and my involvement in the research process has prepared me to make immediate contributions. I hope that taking an interdisciplinary approach to the impact of urban renewal will result in a more nuanced understanding of its stakeholders, motivating factors, and lasting impacts—allowing me to gain a fresh perspective on its legacy. In doing so, my research will contribute to scholarship surrounding the impacts of housing legislation and serve as an intermediary between dichotomous historical and economic perspectives.
Historical Overview

The Great Migration and Formation of the Ghetto/White Flight

Since the end of the nineteenth century, Black Americans have migrated to cities to seek out opportunity, social mobility, and possibilities. However, Black Americans perceived a hierarchy in terms of what types of towns were most desirable. According to American Lawyer and Professor specializing in urban housing, Richard H. Sander, “there was a hierarchy of urban places in the black vision of opportunity: small Southern towns, minor Southern cities; major Southern cities, and major Northern cities.”¹ This perceived hierarchy made migrating to Southern cities a prerequisite for the ultimate goal of arriving at a Northern city.

Prior to the Great Migration (1915 - 1960s) where over 6 million African Americans moved from the South to northern cities, an equally critical but much smaller wave of Southern urbanization in the post-civil War period set the stage for the Great Migration. To understand the Great Migration, we have to define two categories of Black Americans in the South—those attached to white families through tenancy and sharecropping contracts and those who lived independently as workers and small business owners. Attached Black Americans experienced more intergenerational income stability under a strict hierarchy whereas independent blacks had more potential for upwards and downward social mobility. This variability was worsened by how Black people were limited by poor social capital and the inability to accumulate capital intergenerationally due to the legacy of slavery and racism in the United States. Sanders describes the range of successes and struggles where “[independent Blacks] could achieve a middle-class lifestyle or die of malnutrition and cholera.”² In other words, leading an

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independent life was a high risk, high reward endeavor. Due to rapid industrialization in the decades following the Civil War, populations in the urban south increased threefold; black urban populations rose, specifically in the independent sphere, increasing disproportionately relative to black populations attached to white families. This contributed to the economic and social formation of a Southern Black middle class. Independent blacks also posed an ideological threat to White Southerners’ perception of social control—forcing whites to consider ways to segregate and exclude black people from reaching social (and later) racial equality.

Between the post-Civil War era to pre-WWI, Black Americans migrated to the North at a rate roughly equal to 1% of the population per year. Black migrants were typically more educated, wealthy, skilled, and had higher levels of social capital relative to the rest of the Black population. The “port of entry” phenomenon, where Black migrants were more likely to settle down in predominantly Black districts, increased segregation. During times of increasing racial animosity, Black Americans experienced more difficulty assimilating into society. By comparison, the geographic, social, and race-related developments of Italian, Polish, and Jewish immigrants was markedly different than that of African Americans. Over time, other groups of European immigrants gained acceptance as “White’, through practices and institutions and, often, through inter-racial marriage. Historian and Professor of African American Studies, Matthew Frye Jacobson, similarly argues that the ideas and conventions of “race mixing” highlights the unreality of race in and of itself. “The Irish, Armenians, Italians, Poles, Syrians, Greeks, Ruthenianis, Sicilians, Finns, and a host of others-who came ashore in the United States as “free white persons”...became Caucasians only over time.” Whereas White women were

3 Sander, Kucheva, Zasloff, Moving Toward Integration, 24.
4 Sander, Kucheva, Zasloff, Moving Toward Integration, 44.
5 Ibid.
6 Sander, Kucheva, Zasloff, Moving Toward Integration, 42.
capable of giving birth to Black babies, there were no recorded instances of a Black woman giving birth to a White baby. Contradictory ideas like these not only highlighted a white supremacist mentality that prioritized preserving racial purity but also the arbitrariness of racial labels. In comparison to immigrant groups that were gradually classified under Caucasian, Black Americans were persistently perceived as distinctly culturally and economically different from White Americans. Hence, as ethnic segregation broke down, Black-White segregation became more entrenched.

Concerns about Black infiltration into white neighborhoods were exacerbated by the demand for industrial production during WWI—accelerating South-North Migration and heightening racist tensions surrounding residential segregation. At the onset of WWI, European demand for industrial goods rose, leading to a need for cheap labor in Northern industrial centers. This demand skyrocketed upon America’s entry into WWI, increasing existing demand for industrial production to unprecedented levels. Coupled with labor shortages due to white worker union strikes, wages rose sharply while Northern factories looked to Black Southerners as a cheap source of labor. Between 1915 - 1920, Black migration to the North increased tenfold compared to pre-WWI levels. Southern factory recruiters often traveled to the South offering superior wages (though still less than white counterparts), housing, potential bonuses to care for family, and even railway tickets to Black Southerners; the resulting surge in migration was hardly a surprise.

Working in the North offered unprecedented opportunities for economic and social mobility. A Black American who had migrated from Hattiesburg Mississippi to Chicago during

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10 Sander, Kucheva, Zasloff, *Moving Toward Integration*, 44.
11 Ibid.
WWI to pursue a career as a carpenter detailed his newfound political rights, social freedoms, and sense of integration into White society.

I was promoted on the first of the month I was made first assistant to the head carpenter when he is out of the place I take everything in charge and was raised to $95 a month. You know I know my stuff…I should have been here 20 years ago. I just begin to feel like a man. It’s a great deal of pleasure in knowing that you have got some privilege. My children are going to the same school with the whites and I don’t have to umble to no one. I have registered—will vote the next election and there isn’t any ‘yes sir’ and ‘no sir’—its all yes and no and Sam and Bill…”

By describing his career progression, the writer of this letter emphasized the capacity for Black Americans to experience upwards mobility, even in higher paying skilled professions like carpentry. This economic freedom is closely linked to a sense of control, independence, and being able to provide for his family as the head of the household. Outside the economic sphere, Black migrants also experienced newfound political freedoms and civil rights—such as being able to vote and send their children to integrated schools. Being able to exert autonomy and provide for one’s family in an relatively (compared to the South) less racist environment was also bolstered a sense of manliness and independence. All these factors outlined in the letter suggested that migrating to Northern cities was not only a logical economic move, but also a prerequisite for accessing more equally funded educational and political opportunities—which served as an ideological stepping stone towards racial equality.

Despite higher wages, better benefits, and greater civil rights relative to what Black Americans found in the South, migrant laborers were still targets of racism. This influx of Southern Black workers transformed the demographics of working class neighborhoods; previously white neighborhoods were now majority-Black, and, because they were not typically

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admitted into all-white Unions, Black workers constituted an increased supply of cheap industrial labor that effectively undermined white labor unions’ progress in securing higher wages and benefits.13

Simultaneously, in response to the increasing affluence of Black migrants, Black families sought to move out of increasingly crowded Black urban cores into upper-middle class White neighborhoods. Targeting more affluent White neighborhoods helped to minimize the potential for a violent, racial driven response from White homeowners. Although purchasing these properties required large amounts of cash, many Black families were already homeowners and had accumulated wealth. In response to this demand for property, a segment of Black real estate brokers, or those not part of an established guild because of their race or involvement in these transactions helped to covertly facilitate sales between affluent Blacks striving for better living conditions and White homeowners fearing black invasion.14 So long as the White seller could keep their sale from their neighbors, they were able to capitalize on the peak of their property value. However once the knowledge of the first sale became public, this created a successive effect of panic selling with each subsequent sale often more devalued than the last. This practice gave rise to more widespread White Flight—which was the large-scale migration of economically secure White families from racially integrated areas into monolithic White suburbs. Eventually, this caused a self-reinforcing cycle of property devaluation, white flight to the suburbs, and eventual black replacement of previously upper-middle class white neighborhoods. This resegregation process increased the prevalence of ghettos.15 Gunnar Myrdal who was a Swedish economist and sociologist studying race relations in the US in 1944 characterized white flight as a positive feedback loop.

13 Sander, Kucheva, Zasloff, Moving Toward Integration, 46.
14 Sander, Kucheva, Zasloff, Moving Toward Integration, 56.
15 Sander, Kucheva, Zasloff, Moving Toward Integration, 57.
Such a situation creates a vicious circle, in which race prejudice, economic interest, and residential segregation mutually reinforce one another. When a few Negro families do come into a white neighborhood, some more white families move away. Other Negroes hasten to take their places, because the existing Negro neighborhoods are overcrowded due to segregation. This constant movement of Negroes into white neighborhoods makes the bulk of the white residents feel that their neighborhood is doomed to be predominantly Negro, and they move out—with their attitudes against the Negro reinforced. Yet if there were no segregation, this wholesale invasion would not have occurred. But because it does occur segregational attitudes are increased, and the vigilant pressure to stall the Negroes at the borderline is kept up.\textsuperscript{16}

At the root of White Flight was racial prejudice. This prejudice led to Black oppression in arenas of politics, education, health, culture which White Americans used to justify further discrimination. Through this process, Myrdal emphasizes the tension between “American Creed” internalized by many White Americans celebrating democracy, egalitarian ideals, and the “American Dream” with the harsh, enduring reality of race-based discrimination and inequality.\textsuperscript{17} Myrdal argues that this creed—which was supposed to unite people in the United States regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background under a set of common beliefs—was antithetical with racial discrimination. In this way, segregationist attitudes and the White perception of Black invasion into residential ideas reinforced each other—causing extreme overcrowding in Black urban neighborhoods which incentivized affluent Black families to search for better living conditions. In response, the movement of Black families into White neighborhoods reinforced the sense of “impending doom” or invasion.

To illustrate the changing urban social structure due to White Flight, Sander incorporated race into the Concentric Zone model created by sociologist Ernest Burgess. Doing so highlighted

\textsuperscript{17} Myrdal, Sterner, and Rose, \textit{An American Dilemma}, p. xlii.
the previous relationship between housing value and proximity to the Central Business District with how White Flight led to a rise of affluent, heterogenous White suburbs.

This diagram captures the sense of perceived “Black invasion” from the perspective of White city residents. The line between the Black ghetto and middle-class border areas represents the border between White and Black neighborhoods while the arrows demonstrate the gradual perceived ‘invasion’ of black people into white neighborhoods. Over time, the borders between immigrant neighborhoods and white middle and upper middle class areas became more blurry over time, and eventually, previously middle-class white neighborhoods were transformed into predominantly Black areas.

Early Experiments in Urban Renewal in the 1920s and 1930s

Prior to World War II, most perceived areas of concentrated blight were limited to immigrant quarters (New York’s Lower East Side or Chicago’s West Side) or African American neighborhoods like Harlem or Chicago’s Black Belt. Due to white flight from urban cores to the
suburbs in the 1920s to 1930s driven by pollution from industrial activity, availability of mass transport, and racial factors, population growth in great urban centers, such as Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Boston, plateaued and in some areas even began to decrease. In turn, business owners in these cities were worried that decreasing populations, and the subsequent loss in tax revenue threatened the survival of their businesses and urban centers more broadly. At the time, city leaders and planners hypothesized that this process of decentralization was due to the increasing prevalence of blight, slums, and inadequate neighborhood planning that impeded development. White flight was compounded by poor economic conditions. Specifically, the deflation of the real estate bubble in the 1920s followed by The Great Depression in the 1930s heightened concerns by urban core property owners—banks, businesses, commercial land developers, and merchants—who were worried about declining property values due to white flight from city centers to suburbs. As a result, local area banks in the Lower East Side banded together and pushed for a re-planning scheme. In turn, local governments seized large plots of land under a provision that allowed them to do so in the name of public works, selling excess land to private developers. The first instance of use of eminent domain laws was in Manhattan’s Lower East Side in the 1920s. However, a condemnation hearing forced the city to pay high prices for these slum properties which raised the market price of the land and defeated the purpose of the initial seizure. The private real estate industry mostly dealt with high value properties reserved for the White middle to upper class. There was a consensus that industrial and lower income areas in city centers depressed surrounding land value, resulting in a push for

19 Ibid.
21 Mitchell, Federal Housing Policy, 256.
high income residences and high-end commercial buildings in its place. However, the first use of eminent domain in 1920s Manhattan demonstrated that acquiring slum real estate was a paradoxical task. Small businesses who had grown up in the slums rarely wanted to sell their property—leading to high acquisition costs, and further legal hurdles associated with the use of eminent domain.

Emerging Opposition in the Post-World War II Era: Private Real Estate vs Neighborhood Planners

At the onset of World War II, the US government rapidly expanded industrial and military sites across the country. This in turn overwhelmed the abilities of existing infrastructure to adapt to the needs of rapidly expanding populations. As a result, the government adopted wartime housing policies that took over all residential developments on a nationwide scale with the goal of laying the foundations for readily available post-war public housing. Federal government administrators “embraced cooperative ownership, public defense housing, regional and local planning, and modernist design” in the process of designing post-war public housing. The idea of public housing that the private real estate industry could not profit off of galvanized leaders of the home building industry to form the National Association of Home Builders—which later became one of the most influential lobbying groups. In response to lobbying pressures from the private real estate industry and the restructuring of the federal housing departments into the National Housing Industry in 1942, the government shifted directions and opted for cheaply built temporary housing. This stark change in policy directions aligned with the goals of the

24 Ibid.
private real estate industry because it allowed them to fulfill a nationwide need for post-war public housing. In this way, government and private interests continued to work together. Public housing advocates opposed this proposition as they believed that these temporary, low quality dwellings would eventually turn into slums and widen existing disparities in housing quality. In contrast, the private housing industry supported this direction as it meant that they could profit off post-war redevelopment.

The increased demand for wartime industries prompted another wave of migration towards urban cities. In turn, this surge of working and lower class immigrants replaced previous middle and upper class populations.25 The Great Depression (1930s) resulted in swaths of unemployment, mortgage foreclosures, and a general deterioration of housing conditions that sparked efforts by public housing reformers. As a result, liberal public housing advocates (public housers) initiated a concerted effort arguing a need for public provision of affordable housing. This advocacy was led by the Catholic Church, public planners, reformers, and trade and labor unions.26 Eventually these groups managed to persuade the Roosevelt administration to pass The Housing Act of 1937, consisting of subsidies to housing agencies to improve the living conditions of low-income individuals.

Despite widespread support for increasing the accessibility of affordable housing, the private real estate industry adamantly opposed. Specifically, real estate owners, builders, and private lending entities starkly opposed efforts to democratize housing–arguing that the fair housing act of 1937 was socialistic by nature and aided undeserving people.27 In their eyes, quality housing was reserved to those who could afford it (hence deserved it) and was not a legitimate form of social assistance.

27 Ibid.
Organizations like The National Association For Real Estate Boards (NAREB) and the Urban Land Institute were at the opposite end of the spectrum—who launched a concerted push for urban renewal initiatives. In the 1930s, the NAREB and the ULI launched large-scale efforts to advocate, popularize, and lay the principles of district replanning—later serving as the foundation of urban redevelopment schemes. Herbert U. Nelson, the executive secretary of the NAREB at the time, pushed for neighborhood protections and district improvements but saw little success at local and federal government levels. In response, they established the ULI as its research arm. In 1940, the ULI rebranded itself as “an independent agency for research and education in field of real estate” and an “advisory service to aid cities in replanning and rebuilding.” The ULI instituted the idea of a postwar replanning program. Local development commissions were created under state enabling legislation to use powers of eminent domain to condemn land using federal funds; these plots of land were then sold or leased to private developers. An integral part of this program was that the federal government provided grants to neighborhood planning committees to prepare redistricting plans in metropolitan areas to eliminate areas of urban blight.

In 1943, the discourse surrounding urban redevelopment revolved around whether condemned land could be used for public or private use. This debate was epitomized by the contentious Neighborhood Development Act and Federal Urban Redevelopment Act. There was a lot of political struggles and controversy surrounding these acts. On one hand, the Federal Housing Administration’s (FHA) held a close relationship with the NAREB, private realtors, lenders, and builders who advocated for private redevelopment of condemned areas. In contrast,

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29 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
“planners” consisted of The National Resources Planning Board, The American Institute of Planners, and The National Planning Association who saw urban redevelopment as a means to more rationally and efficiently organize central areas. In particular, their efforts focused on establishing long term public sector powers in city planning and land use. These oppositional forces represented a tension between a vision of city planning driven by economic efficiency versus one that was grounded in private interests. Broadly speaking, planners and private corporations competed for whether condemned land could be used for private or public use.

Political struggles over public housing policy continued into the post-war period, eventually leading to discussion of urban redevelopment policies. These discussions were centered on whether they should involve government-provided housing or public housing. In a bid to gain support, private corporations emphasized in political debates that public housing associated with urban renewal would effectively eliminate slums. The motives and incentives driving urban redistricting and replanning evolved from a tool to maintain residential segregation (due to fears of racial intermingling) to a way for the private real estate industry to protect potential redevelopment projects and profits. As such, the post-war environment became a battleground between public housing advocates and the private real estate industry in a bid to exert influence over federal legislations involving urban redevelopment. Seeing that urban redevelopment legislation was associated with more public housing, the NAREB (who originally proposed the idea for urban redevelopment) joined forces with trade organizations and the private real estate industry to oppose the bill. These developing alliances emphasized the growing and emerging political powers representing the private real estate industry; increasing

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the size and breadth of this implicit coalition demonstrated their growing sphere of political influence in congress.

The unintended consequences of high prices paid for seized properties highlighted the need for innovative approaches to avoid such pitfalls in future urban renewal initiatives. This nascent use of eminent domain in conjunction with neighborhood planning was a potential solution for parties suffering from slipping property values who later formed a “coalition of powerful interests” to push their agenda to the government. The concept of redevelopment for a greater ‘public good’ helped to justify the concept of heavy federal subsidies. These subsidies helped to lower high cost lands and later allowed local governments to reassign land to local developers at discounted rates. Through these channels, organizations like the NAREB, ULI, and allied parties made a concerted effort to push for city redistricting and neighborhood improvement at local, state and federal levels. On top of redistricting efforts, organizations like the ULI that represented private interests advocated for one time subsidies–preventing the federal government from having any decision-making power over redevelopment projects. Conversely, planners advocated for a version of the eventual 1949 Fair Housing Act that provided leases to redevelopment agencies alongside long term low interest loans and annual payments that went towards the loan. This would allow the federal government to maintain some control over redevelopment projects over time. The way that organizations like the ULI fought against this provision suggests that urban renewal was crafted with private real estate interests in mind and its benefits were unevenly concentrated among the affluent land-owning class.

34 Mitchell, Federal Housing Policy, 256.
35 Mitchell, Federal Housing Policy, 259.
36 Mitchell, Federal Housing Policy, 260.
37 Mitchell, Federal Housing Policy, 259.
Federal government subsidies that often covered up to ¾ of land acquisition costs allowed local governments to acquire land and resell it to private developers at substantially discounted prices. Meanwhile, local governments were expected to upgrade infrastructure and city planning to match urban renewal projects; these efforts enhanced and preserved property values in the urban core. Doing so required large investment in high quality infrastructure such as parks, schools, transportation systems, public spaces, and medical facilities to keep up with urban renewal efforts. In doing so, the public sector was responsible for preserving and enhancing the value of private real estate investments.38

The Committee on Blighted Areas and Slums, created by Herbert Hoover during his stint as secretary of commerce, defined the criteria of how to select sites for urban renewal. The Committee set out to use “a combination of governmental aid in the clearing of sites and of private enterprise in rebuilding upon them.”39 To do so, the committee promoted the use of “enabling legislation [to] facilitate the large-scale condemnation of slum areas.”40 More importantly, the Committee justified urban renewal by conflating social and economic implications of slums and blight. In reality, slums did not necessarily entail blight, and blighted areas were not always slums. Urban renewal was used to address blight—which referred to an area with concentrated declining property values. Meanwhile, slums were a social concept that referred to areas with high rates of poverty, crime, and generally unsanitary conditions. Overall there were unclear definitions of blight and it later expanded to encompass social and economic

38 Mitchell, Federal Housing Policy, 257.
40 Ibid.
blight. How different organizations defined ‘blight’ became critical in the selection of sites for urban renewal.41

The Fair Housing Act of 1949

Despite founding the Fair Housing Act of 1949, Senator Robert A. Taft opposed the ULI-FHA model of federally funded urban redevelopment and pushed for redevelopment for affordable housing. After a heavy onslaught of political opposition by the private real estate industry, “Taft's efforts to block ULI redevelopment failed, and all that survived was the toothless predominantly residential language.”42 This meant that the Fair Housing Act of 1949 not only failed to specify that the rebuilt housing had to be geared towards low income or vulnerable populations, but also was not specifically catered towards displaced individuals and families. In a congressional hearing about urban renewal, Senator Taft questions:

But why should we undertake to relieve cities just because they don't look nice and because they don't have the real-estate values that somebody once thought they had, I don't understand that. Some people made plenty of money out of that real estate at one time. What is the justification for our going into that thing beyond the housing question? As long as it is just housing I can understand it "I like the idea, myself, of tying it up to housing, as compared to the more ambitious plans that are being presented both by the Bettman-Hansen group and the real-estate boards… a limited redevelopment in the hands of public housing authorities is a more defensible program than one of having the Federal Government interest itself in rebuilding the whole city.43

During a US Senate hearing regarding the eventual Fair Housing Act of 1949, Taft expressed his confusion regarding why the profit maximizing interests of the real estate industry were so entrenched in slum clearance efforts. This was in contrast to the idealized legacy of the

42 Mitchell 263
43 U.S. Senate, Hearings Pursuant ro S. Res. 102, 1945, pp. 1558, 1699, 1792
Fair Housing Act that declared a commitment to “the realization as soon as feasible of the goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.” Taft's statement illuminated the contradictory objectives of urban renewal that aimed to uphold real estate values while ostensibly enhancing housing conditions for low-income communities living in substandard housing.

In contrast, American Urban Planner and historian Alexander Von Hoffman argued the passage of this act was a win for public housing advocates. In Title 1 of the 1949 Fair Housing Act, there was a provision that land use before or after redevelopment had to be predominantly residential. Hence, from Von Hoffman’s perspective, the language of “predominantly residential” before or after redevelopment implied that displaced residents would be rehoused in government backed public housing.45

The Housing Act of 1954 is where urban renewal came to be, acting as a compromise between private real estate and public housers that used the language of neighborhood conservation and rehabilitation to draw the emphasis away from public housing. In particular, funding was now approved for conservation and rehabilitation of decaying urban cores. This was a shift in language from urban redevelopment to neighborhood conservation to prevent cities from deteriorating further. Despite the passage of the act, logistical challenges associated with home builders and redevelopers that had the unique skill set of political skills and industry experience made it difficult to attract redevelopers to take on the task of building low income public housing.46 Along the same lines, restoration of deteriorating neighborhoods was an arduous, time consuming, and unpredictable endeavor. No two projects were the same and made

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46 Mitchell, Federal Housing Policy, 294.
it hard to efficiently replicate.\textsuperscript{47} Overall, home builders and redevelopers found it much more profitable to build on vacant plots of suburban land (mostly geared towards the white middle and upper class).

Mitchell notes: “The sluggishness of new programs...anemic appropriations, and ugly site battles for public housing did not bode well for economically declining neighborhoods.”\textsuperscript{48} By the late 1950s, one of the creators of public housing described it as “not dead but never more than half alive.”\textsuperscript{49} The weak foundations of public housing were highlighted by a fundamental mismatch in the amount of funding appropriated to public housing versus the number of individuals displaced by urban renewal—which suggested that there was significantly more displacement compared to public housing creation.\textsuperscript{50}

By June 30, 1967, over 400,000 residential units were eradicated in the name of urban renewal while only 10,760 low rent public housing units were built in the same sites.\textsuperscript{51} There is remarkable continuity within the roots of urban renewal; many renewal projects were based on plans by large corporations, businesses, merchants, and other entities with substantial involvement and stake in urban center real estate. The implicit relationship between powerful business owners and city planners demonstrated how urban renewal supported a mutually beneficial, and even symbiotic relationship.\textsuperscript{52} In this process, proponents of urban renewal framed blight as an economic liability in a community while slums were a social liability. Doing so helped to justify the legality of displacement due to urban renewal in the name of the public good. However, it is clear that urban renewal was a strictly self-interested endeavor because the Committee on Blighted Areas and Slums could have just as easily encouraged local governments

\textsuperscript{47} Mitchell, \textit{Federal Housing Policy}, 294.  
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{50} Mitchell, \textit{Federal Housing Policy}, 295.  
\textsuperscript{51} Mitchell, \textit{Federal Housing Policy}, 253.  
\textsuperscript{52} Mitchell, \textit{Federal Housing Policy}, 254.
to strictly enforce building codes. This meant that slums could have been restored while the ownership of land remained the same.\textsuperscript{53} However, the Committee preferred district replanning that involves local governments seizing land and transferring ownership to private developers at discounted prices.\textsuperscript{54}

J. Paul Mitchell argues that through urban renewal, “the public sector was being called upon to protect and enhance the value of the current and future investments of the large-scale rebuilders and their downtown allies.”\textsuperscript{55} This sentiment was echoed by the President Conference’s Final Report and how the Committee's priority was clearing the land for redevelopment while rehousing displaced residents was an afterthought.

We do not concur in the argument that the slum must be allowed to exist because there are persons dwelling in them who could not afford to dwell in better surroundings. It is our view that the slums must, nevertheless be removed for the benefit of the community. We are confident that a large portion of the group displaced by slum clearance will be able to find suitable accommodations elsewhere.\textsuperscript{56}

Although the supposed goal of urban renewal was to improve substandard housing for low income and underserved communities, it is clear that rehousing displaced individuals and families was an afterthought.

This misalignment in priorities that trivialized the struggles of displaced individuals and families and the incongruence between displacement and public housing creation led me to question: What happened to displaced individuals, families, and communities? Were they economically better or worse off due to urban renewal efforts? Did urban renewal actually work

\textsuperscript{53} Mitchell, \textit{Federal Housing Policy}, 257.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, Slums, Large Scale Housing And Decentralization, 1932, 9.
for the public good or were the benefits unevenly concentrated among the most affluent?
Considering the multitude of stakeholders as well as the interplay between private interests and the public good makes this question difficult to definitively answer. Existing economic literature focused on aggregate effects of urban renewal. As such, I wanted to explore how urban renewal influenced the trajectory of specific demographics, especially disproportionately targeted Black Americans. Eventually, these questions transitioned into the central research question of my thesis—what were the long term race-specific economic impacts of urban renewal funding on cities? This led me to take an interdisciplinary and novel approach to exploring the impacts of urban renewal at an individual and city level perspective. Chicago experienced significant urban growth starting from the 1840s and onwards until the point that it was hailed as the “gateway to the West.” It became home to immigrants, African Americans, and represented a diverse range of cultures, demographics, and socioeconomic statuses. Chicago's pivotal role as America’s “Second City” underlined its rivalry with New York City as a cultural and economic hub. While New York remained the nation's financial capital, Chicago emerged as a center of innovation and creativity—particularly in fields like architecture, literature, and the arts. Consequently, this significance is why I chose Chicago as a representative case study for urban renewal that occurred on a national-level—which provides a comparison between a micro and macro lens into the short and long term impacts of urban renewal.

Why Chicago: Chicago as a Representative City in the Post-War Era

Notably, Chicago housing segregation was not initially motivated by racial tensions. In a report by the Chicago Commission on Race Relations, the commission argued that housing segregation would further intensity mutual hostility, and would be futile considering the rate of
Black population growth. Increasing racial violence between Black and White Americans exemplified by the “Red Summer” of 1919 heightened racial tensions and put integration further out of reach. Incidents such as the race riot of Chicago in 1919, spanning 13 days, 600+ people and turning the South-side a war zone, turned implicit racial boundaries into a matter of political urgency and security. This led to an urgent need for white individuals to ensure their safety by insulating themselves from Black working communities and neighborhoods. Specifically, both white individuals in Black neighborhoods and Black individuals in white neighborhoods faced heightened safety risks—which intensified divisions based on security concerns rather than solely on social status. As a result of these concerns, the White middle class grew concerned about how Black presences would affect the desirability of a neighborhood. In a bid to preserve real estate values, organizations like the Chicago Real Estate board instituted municipal racial zoning targeting racial homogeneity “as a campaign to stabilize housing conditions and values.” Under the threat of expulsion from the board, racial zoning stated that real estate agents were not allowed to sell properties in neighborhoods with over 75% white people to Black home buyers.

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Literature Review

Historians and sociologists have extensively studied urban renewal’s disparate impacts on wealth transfer and racial inequality. However, there is significantly less discourse investigating what mechanisms of urban renewal had lasting impacts on generational racial inequality. Specifically, historical and economic literature examining the long-term impacts of urban renewal reveals a chasm between the legacies of urban renewal—one that highlights persistent segregationist attitudes and another that underscores its city-level economic benefits. In 2013, Collins and Shester examined the impact of urban renewal funding per capita on city-level economic outcomes. In contrast to historical and sociological arguments, they found that cities with more funding experienced less poverty and unemployment alongside higher median family incomes and property values. I wondered how the positive aggregate economic effects of urban renewal were distributed among different populations, especially since over 90% of projects targeted neighborhoods were home to minority communities and vulnerable populations. Focusing on discrepancies between econometric results and individual lived experiences allows me to take a unique vantage point to an extensively studied topic.

A professor of Urban Sociology, Patrick Sharkey in his book Stuck in Place: Urban Neighborhoods and the End of Progress Toward Racial Equality investigates how inequality is a product of ecological environments—suggesting that urban renewal exacerbated neighborhood inequality over generations. Mindy Thompson Fullilove’s article titled Root Shock: The Consequences of African American Dispossession builds on the sociological impacts of mass dispossession and displacement on African-American urban communities—highlighting the importance of spaces to income, social organization, and generational inequality.\(^6\)

urban planner and historian, Alexander von Hoffman, in his work *A Study in Contradictions: The Origins and Legacy of the Housing Act of 1949* hones in on fundamental issues with the mechanisms and incentive structures of the urban renewal program that opened opportunities for cities to legally but forcibly displace thriving African-American communities. In turn, von Hoffman argues that urban renewal merely displaced people from existing affordable housing in urban centers to low-income housing in areas with less value. A professor of history specializing in housing segregation, Arnold R. Hirsh, in his study, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* builds on the importance of institutional interest and profit motives behind urban renewal by focusing on how white resistance against neighborhood integration impacted Chicago’s government-sanctioned post World War 2 ghetto expansion. Professor of urban planning, Lawrence J. Vale, in his book *Purging the Poorest: Public Housing and the Design Politics of Twice-Cleared Communities* further examines Chicago inner city dynamics by delving into how the Chicago Housing Authority—under the influence of Mayor Martin H. Kennelly—transformed into an institution that used urban renewal to champion segregation.

Sharkey argues you cannot gain a complete understanding of American racial inequality by only focusing on income, wealth, educational attainment, and occupational status. While they are essential factors, they limit the scope of inequality to an individual or family level. Hence, attributing inequality to these factors implies that American society is organized around these dimensions of stratification—suggesting that “neighborhoods [are] simply derivative from inequality in other domains.” In reality, inequality is “organized or clustered in social settings

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61 Sharkey, *Stuck in Place*, 299.
like neighborhoods, schools, and political districts.\textsuperscript{64} These neighborhood settings create, maintain, and perpetuate enduring racial inequalities.\textsuperscript{65} As a result, Sharkey maintains that the impact of where you were raised is “amplified [and] reinforced by the consistency of disadvantage” over generations–making racial inequality a multigenerational issue.\textsuperscript{66} Specifically, innate advantages and disadvantages associated with living in neighborhoods with varying resources are consistent over time and have strong implications for children. In this way, neighborhood disadvantages accumulate over generations which contributes to lingering racial inequality. Considering the inherited and enduring nature of race-based neighborhood inequality can inform policies and investments to “alter the trajectories of the neighborhoods [disadvantaged families] occupy, in ways that will persist over time.” Overall, Sharkey argues that urban renewal programs allowed cities to conduct projects that discriminated against African Americans. In turn, this created urban ghettos–which were areas of concentrated and lasting disadvantage characterized by “the interaction between race and concentrated poverty.”\textsuperscript{67}

Fullilove expands on Sharkey’s work by examining the sociological impacts of mass dispossession to contextualize urban renewal in the broader historical trajectory of African-American urban communities. Fullilove similarly contends that urban renewal projects disproportionately targeted African-American communities. This caused a loss of wealth, social organization, and psychological trauma in the short run while fragmenting social networks and miring African-American communities into generational debt.\textsuperscript{68} Instead of improving the quality of life for African Americans, urban renewal simply intensified neighborhood segregation by

\textsuperscript{64} Sharkey, \textit{Stuck in Place}, 25.
\textsuperscript{65} ibid.
\textsuperscript{66} Sharkey, \textit{Stuck in Place}, 17.
\textsuperscript{67} Sharkey, \textit{Stuck in Place}, 24.
razing integrated communities and creating segregated ones. More specifically, urban renewal relocated urban ghettos into less desirable areas—increasing the population density of Black Americans living in substandard environments. In particular, Fullilove notes how urban renewal increased the prevalence of illness and exacerbated existing racial inequality by forcing large numbers of African Americans to expend economic, social, and political capital to resettle—further disadvantaging them relative to the rest of society. More broadly, Fullilove argues that the mass dispossession driven by urban renewal ruptured the upward historical trajectory of African-American urban communities and neighborhoods. This disruption not only prevented the eventual integration of African Americans into predominantly white urban neighborhoods, but also fragmented the African-American community’s political participation, activism, and sense of collective action.

Von Hoffman delves deeper into how urban renewal enabled cities to target African-American communities and maintain neighborhood segregation. Von Hoffman argues that there was a fundamental misalignment in the goal of providing quality housing to all Americans and the limited mechanisms of urban renewal to achieve that goal. In this way, urban renewal was an overly simplistic and idealistic solution to the problem of housing. Housing disparities were entrenched in interweaving social issues unique to each American city. Von Hoffman notes that The Housing Act of 1954 and 1956 were key developments that relabeled urban renewal as urban redevelopment to expand the scope of the program. Redevelopment now not only targeted slums but also blighted and potentially blighted areas which loosened requirements allowing cities to misuse funds. Placing the jurisdiction of redevelopment projects

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70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.
72 Fullilove, “Root Shock,” 78.
73 Ibid.
in the hands of cities opened avenues to misuse federal loans which made it difficult to parse intentions and evaluate the validity of each project. As a result, urban renewal displaced people from existing affordable housing in urban centers to low-income housing in areas with less value.\textsuperscript{75} These peripheral areas merely served as temporary residences that would eventually become slums.\textsuperscript{76} Von Hoffman summarized “Like public housing, slum clearance only compounded the disease; it did not cure it”.\textsuperscript{77}

Whereas von Hoffman focused on how cities misused urban renewal, Hirsh hones in on the institutional actors and powerful organizations in Chicago that drove these changes. Large “downtown” interests and powerful organizations, like the University of Chicago, realized that racial integration in Chicago urban centers would disrupt their business interests.\textsuperscript{78} Instead, they employed “the power of the state–not as it then existed but in greatly augmented form” to prevent Black infiltration into high-income urban areas.\textsuperscript{79} These powerful institutions vying to maintain strict segregation used their resources to conduct surveys, draft legislation, and establish plans for urban renewal projects to displace thriving Black communities. Specifically, these organizations employed “the rhetoric of the ‘public interest’ in each new legislative proposal…[to wed] private interests and public powers”.\textsuperscript{80} This meant that each renewal initiative was designed and conceived to serve the interests of those who directed it. Hirsh argues “the public interests were by-products of a desperate struggle for individual survival and never

\textsuperscript{75} Hoffman, “A Study in Contradictions,” 299.
\textsuperscript{76} Hoffman, “A Study in Contradictions,” 318.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
the primary force behind the program”.

Apart from institutional actors, Hirsh outlines how wealthy outlying white communities shaped Chicago Housing Authority policies to such an extent that they “served as the bulwark of segregation”. Hirsh argues that Chicago’s government-sanctioned ghetto expansion and segregation efforts use restrictive covenants and judicial sanctions. Furthermore, discriminatory practices and segregationist attitudes were perpetuated by national agencies like the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) and the Federal Housing Administration—which enabled cities to continue practices of de jure neighborhood segregation. As such, white hostility shaped future patterns of Black settlement through violent and non-violent means, specifically cooperation with local real estate boards and neighborhood associations. In turn, Hirsh stressed that urban renewal policies and public housing programs had a significant impact on the redevelopment of the South Side Black Belt. Hirsh noted that “decaying neighborhoods were torn down, and their inhabitants shunted to other quarters” to redevelop the areas into middle-class housing and for institutional expansion. High-rise public housing created to rehouse individuals displaced by urban renewal “literally lined State Street for miles as a new, vertical ghetto supplemented the old”.

Vale delves deeper into the evolution of the Chicago Housing Authority where “the ethos of slum clearance gave way to an era of urban renewal” and the creation of twice-cleared

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81 Hirsch, Making the Second Ghetto, 213.
82 Ibid.
84 Vale, Purging the Poorest, 10.
85 Vale, Purging the Poorest, 9.
86 Vale, Purging the Poorest, 10.
87 Ibid.
Twice-cleared communities refer to urban renewal and slum clearance efforts followed by the mass demolition of public housing. Both stages replaced poor minority communities with less poor individuals which “entailed a purging of the poorest residents”. The Chicago Housing Authority championed urban renewal as a way to increase the quality of public housing while the business community pushed to redevelop the cleared areas into high-productivity industries. However, rising fiscal and social concerns surrounding excessive decentralization lead to an effort to re-urbanize and revitalize the middle class by making the Chicago city center as attractive as the suburbs. Vale argues that ultimately, the goal of redevelopment was to attract more desirable families to Chicago. Whether urban renewal was motivated by improved housing or economic outcomes still meant that Chicago’s poorest black population would be displaced. However, redevelopment meant an obligation to rehouse poor displaced families; these concessions came from a place of pragmatism as quicker rehousing meant fewer construction delays. Simultaneously, the CHA intentionally tried to make displacement more palatable as a strategic move to reduce political and social resistance.

The aforementioned research deals with the role urban renewal plays in perpetuating cycles of neighborhood inequality, which in turn led to persistent racial inequality. A great deal of literature hones in on Chicago and the authorities, institutional actors, and economic incentives that complicated the well-intentioned goals of urban renewal. My research lies on the cross-section of historical and economic analysis to explore the differential impact by race of urban renewal projects across the United States. By conducting a replication study of Collins and Shester (2013) supplemented by a historical analysis of Chicago neighborhoods, I can examine

88 Vale, Purging the Poorest, 193.
89 Vale, Purging the Poorest, 33.
90 Vale, Purging the Poorest, 194.
91 Vale, Purging the Poorest, 197.
92 Ibid.
how city-level economic benefits faded out over the following decades (1980, 1990, 2000, 2010). In addition, disaggregating outcomes by race sheds light on how urban renewal affected different racial demographics at each point in time. I hope that taking an interdisciplinary approach to the impact of urban renewal will result in a more nuanced understanding of its stakeholders, motivating factors, and lasting impacts–allowing me to gain a fresh perspective on its legacy. In doing so, my research will contribute to scholarship surrounding the impacts of housing legislation and serve as an intermediary between dichotomous historical and economic perspectives.
Economic Methodology

Urban renewal–state and federally-sponsored redevelopment of neighborhoods–may have made cities better off economically, but at what cost? Urban renewal was controversial because it allowed governments to forcibly seize properties and displace residents via eminent domain. Collins and Shester examined the impact of urban renewal funding on city economic outcomes. They did so by compiling a dataset on cities with more than 25,000 residents between 1950 and 1980 from the Decennial Census and Urban Renewal Directory records; this timeframe spanned the majority of urban renewal projects. Specifically, Collins and Shester tried to determine whether urban renewal affected economic outcomes by displacing individuals with low human capital or improving infrastructure, employment, and the overall productivity in a targeted area. Unsurprisingly, they found that cities with more funding between 1950 - 1974 experienced less poverty and unemployment alongside higher median family incomes and property values by 1980. But while city-level outcomes are important, they don’t inform us about within-city dynamics. In 2021, Lavoice showed that urban renewal resulted in a decreased share of black residents in redeveloped neighborhoods. Her findings raise the possibility that households at the lowest end of the income distribution may have been harmed even as the overall effect was positive. Perhaps, the disproportionate targeting of minority communities for redevelopment meant that urban renewal projects improved outcomes by displacing low-income communities.

I test this idea using Collins and Shester’s methodology to analyze the impact of urban renewal funding between 1950 - 1974 on economic outcomes in four decades (1980, 1990, 2000,

2010) disaggregated by race (Black or White). Collins and Shester examine four main economic indicators: median housing value, median family income, employment rates, and poverty rates. To build on this work, I use data from the Decennial Census and American Community Survey to examine race-specific outcomes—income per capita, employment, and poverty rates—and quantify the differential impacts of urban renewal. In addition, I analyze outcomes in 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010, which extend beyond the scope of the original study. By doing so, I explore how (i) the positive effects of urban renewal faded out over time and (ii) urban renewal affected different populations.

Examining race-based outcomes over a generation is significant because it allows us to evaluate whether improvements in long-term economic outcomes offset short run displacement costs—which were concentrated among racial minorities. Displaced, majority Black populations viewed urban renewal site selection as an unfair process—which was complicated by the political struggles and intricacies behind urban renewal implementation. This debate was centered on what seized land could be used for (private vs public) and who ultimately had control over the land. This struggle between private and public uses of seized land complicated the motivations behind urban renewal site selection. Many critics questioned whether private real estate firms (who eventually purchased the seized properties at discounted rates) had profit motives. I expanded the time horizon because the dependent variable is the amount of urban renewal funding each city applied for. Hence, analyzing outcomes in 1980 only captures the effect of the projects that were approved, and completed before 1980. Even under these conditions, changes in productivity, employment, income (among other indicators) would take time to materialize. Advocates of urban renewal framed the program as a long term investment with cascading effects. In the same way blight spread across neighborhoods, improvements in productivity
would also have spillover effects. However, redevelopment often took years and the subsequent changes in demographics, economic outlook, and behavior took time to crystallize as well. I hypothesize that there was a time lag associated with redevelopment and changes in human capital, productivity, and other outcomes that were not immediately apparent.

Urban renewal had lasting positive effects on per capita income and poverty rates among Black populations. Overall property values and family incomes increased, and poverty rates declined while maintaining the racial composition of the neighborhood. I came to this conclusion by first looking at the number of years between 1950 and 1974 that a city could apply for urban renewal funding. This eligibility criteria, termed years under enabling legislation, is exogenous because it solely impacts economic outcomes through its predictive effect on urban renewal funding. Empirical evidence from Collins and Shester’s reduced form regression shows a correlation between enabling legislation and economic outcomes in urban areas while remaining uncorrelated with outcomes in rural areas. This controlled comparison suggests that urban renewal policies influenced economic outcomes independent of broader economic trends–indicating that years under enabling legislation were not correlated with unaccounted for factors affecting economic conditions. This provides evidence that years under enabling legislation satisfied an instrument’s exogeneity requirement. Using “years under enabling legislation” helped me predict each city’s funding. Then, I used this predicted funding amount to see how it related to our economic outcomes. This indirect method, termed an instrumental variables approach, enables me to separate the effects of urban renewal funding from other factors that might simultaneously affect economic outcomes thus more accurately measuring the impact of urban renewal funding per capita on city economic outcomes.
Preliminary Results Discussion (Draft)

Figure 1 (left): Visualizing the impact of per capita urban renewal funding on per capita income by race (1980 - 2010)

Figure 2 (right): Visualizing the impact of per capita urban renewal funding on the % of people below the poverty line by race (1980 - 2010)
I found that urban renewal funding had positive effects on per capita income, employment rates, and poverty rates. Median urban renewal funds per capita were $118.06–so I report marginal effects for a $100/capita increase in funding. A $100 increase in urban renewal funding per capita between 1949 and 1975 was associated with a predicted increase of 0.0479 and 0.198 percentage points in 1990 per capita income for White and Black populations respectively. Over the longer horizon to 2000, this effect declined slightly to 0.0707 and 0.111 percentage points. In 2010, White incomes continued to grow (0.172 percentage points), while the effect on the Black populations diminished to 0.0598 percentage points. These trends suggest short-term income benefits for Black populations that waned over time, contrasting with persistent income growth for White populations following urban renewal. By contrast, the effects on Black poverty reduction were longer lasting. A $100 increase in urban renewal funding per capita was associated with a change of -0.074% percentage points in 1990 poverty rates in black populations. Later, this effect changed to -0.042 percentage points in 2000 and -0.051 percentage points in 2010. All results were significant at a 95% level. This suggests that positive changes to per capita income faded out by 2010 but Black populations experienced sustained reductions in poverty rate. At the same time, I find no evidence that urban renewal funding was associated with changes in racial demographics across cities.

While the results suggest urban renewal was successful in reducing black poverty without shrinking the black community, it is difficult to tell whether individuals displaced by urban renewal stayed in the city. It is possible that gentrification occurred within the black community. Nonetheless, my findings suggest urban renewal had persistent modest positive effects.
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Meeting with Mary Martin (Social Sciences Librarian at Claremont Colleges)

Conceptualizing potential data sources, navigating library databases
- 1950’s census data is less specific–Asian/Black/Hispanic would be easier in the 50’s and 60’s
- Actual measurable things health,
- Economic databases (refer to econ research guides, broad view of literature available, primary and secondary sources)
  - Social explorer, Statista (aggregator)
    - Wanted income in city (search income and
  - Look at primary sources in Economics
  - Data aggregators (economic, demographic) Data planet
- Social explorer (sorted by types of statistics), based on the census, later in 1987 American community surveys begin
  - American community survey → begin a report → choose city, metropolitan statistical area
  - Decennial census only in 50/60s (every 10 years)
  - House value, income,
- Use the map interactive function to narrow down data (safer from decennial census)

When I met with Mary, we discussed and strategized what primary sources I should focus on when navigating Special Collections in Chicago.
- Navigating/parsing through finding aids to identify which materials to request
- Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center
- Harold Washington Library Center Special Collections Neighborhood History Research Collection
- Woodson Regional Library, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature

Requesting materials via Resource sharing allowed me to access primary sources on the political struggles and intricacies of urban renewal in a timely manner

Research guides