

My area is urban geography with a specialty in the class dimensions of racial and ethnic conflict. My dissertation considers tensions under racial transition in inner suburbs of Newark, NJ, where local gentrification strategies have provoked controversy. Integration management (IM) markets housing to whites in order to slow black settlement. From the practice flow questions: How do residents, new and old, black and white, interpret IM? Who wins and who loses with its implementation? More broadly, how do race and class intersect in the peculiar geography of the inner suburb?

IM practices in the U.S. take several forms, but they are always implemented on the borders of majority African-American cities. They are analogous to 'social mixing' policies in Canada and Western Europe that seek to 'manage' the settlement of recent immigrants. Typical tactics include: 1.) Attracting white in-movers through what is termed 'affirmative' marketing and 'benign' racial steering; 2.) Seemingly race-neutral intervention in home sales such as anti-solicitation ordinances and restrictions on for-sale signs; 3.) Monitoring of black concentrations through racial record keeping; 4.) Surveillance of changing neighborhoods via strict enforcement of codes on property upkeep and illegal rentals. As local municipalities have sought to control the mix of races in various neighborhoods, the area of study has increasingly become the home of African-American middle and upper-middle class families, as well as of poorer migrants from the Caribbean who have settled directly in the suburbs. The tensions IM seeks to manage thus include not only those between black and white but also those between new and old migrants and between pre- and post-gentrification homebuyers.

The dissertation sets integration management--known as 'integration maintenance,' 'neighborhood stabilization,' or 'intentional integration' by advocates--in context at different scales. At the national scale, the legal geography of IM is a tale of courts that, after the 1980s, despite the Fair Housing Act, allowed housing to be marketed to whites even though the core purpose was exclusion of blacks. The license to exclude was underwritten by the tendency of the courts, as described by Gerald Frug, to accord suburbs, over against cities, the privileges of a private corporation. At the local scale, IM receives broad support from those who already own homes in the community. But, although many African-American homeowners support IM, as my focus groups and interviews show, they also express deep uneasiness about the practice in a way whites do not.

The historical geography of the U.S. inner suburb has shaped IM by making its assumptions so prevalent that it feels 'natural' to local residents. The mechanisms for the protection of suburban property values against feared urban invaders have been amply documented by historians, most recently by the New Suburban Historians and, from a more critical perspective, Robert Self. In addition to the structure of the real estate and mortgage



1 Suburban barriers to prevent traffic from Newark

markets, barriers put in place by the road network (see picture) and aggressive policing have imposed physical and psychological blockades that make suburbs hostile territory for blacks, particularly when disadvantaged. IM is yet one more element in this long history. American suburban boundaries have softened somewhat before the dramatic rise of the black middle class, but they remain stringent class filters.

The advisor on this research is Robert Lake.