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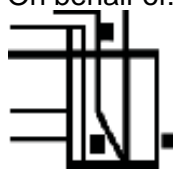
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Building Inequality: The Spatial Organization of Schooling in Nashville, Tennessee, after *Brown*


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Abstract

This article examines how school and municipal planning practices contributed to segregated schools and segregated neighborhoods well after *Brown*. In Nashville, Tennessee, a consolidated city–county municipality, federal urban renewal and housing initiatives and federal education guidelines linked with local practices to favor suburban space, neglect urban space, and reinforce segregation in both housing and schooling. School construction policies served the interests of suburban real estate development and helped to concentrate poor black children and families in the central city. The range of policies and market forces at work in linking schools and housing proves the falsity of the de jure–de facto framework courts and historians often applied to school segregation. An uneven distribution of educational resources shaped over decades by local and federal policy led to an uneven distribution of the burdens that came with busing, an inequality made to seem normal by spatial ideology that favored the predominantly white suburbs.

Keywords

school desegregation, suburbs, busing, ideology, space

In its landmark 1971 *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg* decision authorizing busing for school desegregation, the Supreme Court acknowledged the direct role of schools in shaping the housing market. “People gravitate toward school facilities. . . . The location of schools may thus influence the patterns of residential development of a metropolitan area and have important impact on composition of inner-city neighborhoods”—and the composition of suburban neighborhoods as well, the justices might have noted. The Court also recognized that past school construction and school closures “have been used as a potent weapon for creating or maintaining a state-segregated school system.”¹ The outcry over *Swann*’s remedy for school segregation—busing across neighborhood lines within a school district—overwhelmed attention to important aspects of its diagnosis. School segregation continuing after *Brown* stemmed from a wide range of local school and planning decisions that linked segregated schools and segregated neighborhoods. Local practices gained support from federal urban renewal and housing initiatives as well as federal education guidelines that favored suburban space, neglected urban space, and

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reinforced segregation in both housing and schooling. Local and federal influences built a potent spatial ideology that cast suburban space as the appropriate site for schooling and urban areas as both declining and ill suited for schools.

In Nashville, Tennessee, a consolidated countywide district since 1963, school officials concentrated most new school construction in the suburban areas of Davidson County. They did so with aid from municipal planners, whose role in school policy generally is central and understudied. Private interests, including real estate developers, sales agents, and financiers, exerted pressures on these public officials to conform the educational landscape to fit their growth agendas.² School construction patterns favored the predominantly white, middle-class residents of Nashville's suburbs while neglecting students and families in poorer and majority-black urban neighborhoods where many schools were in poor condition, overcrowded, or shuttered entirely. By the early 1970s, when the majority of white families and many middle-class black families had themselves moved to the suburbs, these forces deepened the concentration of poor black children and families in the central city.

In 1971, following *Swann*, a federal court order initiated busing for desegregation in Nashville and Davidson County. A wide range of public agents, including local and federal education administrators and elected officials, managed and shaped the busing plan. Spatial ideologies continued to influence education policy, informing a desegregation plan that favored suburban residents and disproportionately burdened urban students and families. Under busing, thousands of school children traveled daily across an uneven educational landscape shaped by local and federal policies.

The multiplicity of government and market forces at work in linking schools and housing proves the falsity of the *de jure*–*de facto* framework historians and courts often applied to school segregation, a framework that rests on four inaccurate polarities. First, the *de jure*–*de facto* dichotomy treats segregation in housing as developing independently from segregation in schools and casts schools in a reactive rather than participatory role in the making of segregation.³ Second, it views post-*Brown* segregation as the result of private or market forces, separate from public incentives and policies, when in fact public policies responded directly to and were reinforced by private markets. Although historians have shown the deep influence of public policy on residential segregation, the *de facto* label still persists when discussing schools.⁴ Third, school desegregation litigation and historical narratives often use *de facto* and *de jure* as temporal categories. They suggest a tidy progression: after courts ended school districts' *de jure* segregationist policies, school boards sought to counter *de facto* segregation until courts declared the district unitary. These categories fit for quickly modifiable, short-term policies, such as the assignment of students to schools or the drawing of zone boundaries, but fail to reckon with decisions that had decades-long consequences. When, for example, is the impact of inequitable school construction patterns, or state-sponsored segregation in public housing, over? In Nashville, public and private forces, and immediate and historic public policies, linked residential and educational segregation and fostered persistent educational inequality, both before and during busing.

The fourth misleading binary is between an exceptional, *de jure* South segregated by Jim Crow laws and a free-market, *de facto* North where school assignment patterns allegedly reflected only housing trends.⁵ Although the particular focus of this case study is a southern metropolitan district, school boards across the country adopted policies of site selection and gerrymandered attendance zones so as to reinforce and deepen residential segregation.⁶ From the late 1950s onward, local actors drew on federal policies and national intellectual currents in school construction, urban renewal, and housing, applying federal programs to a southern metropolitan landscape shaped under Jim Crow. Therefore, Nashville's story illuminates dynamics that are as much national as local, as much American as southern.

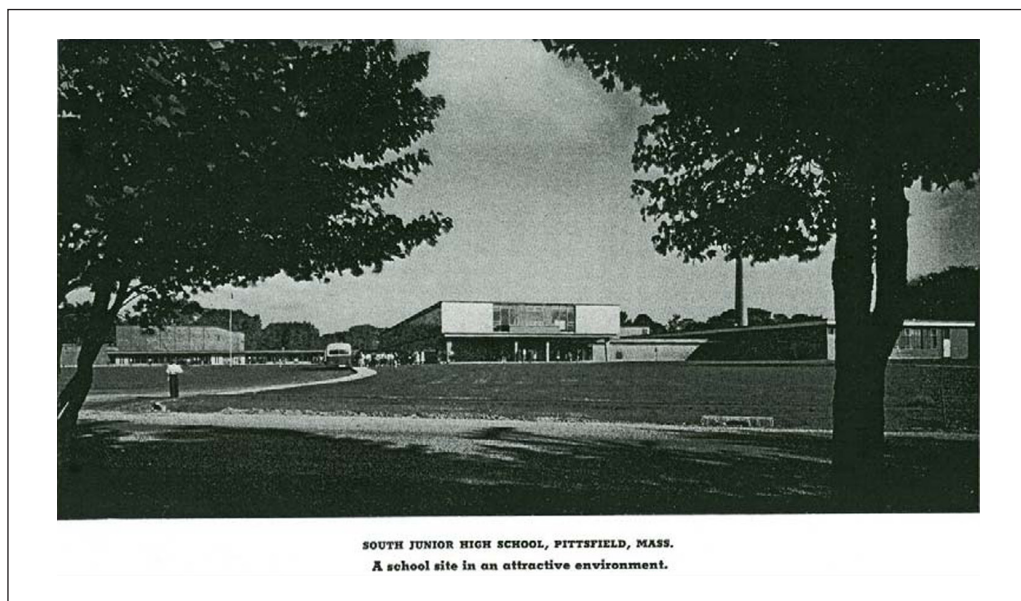


Figure 1.

Source: James Taylor, *School Sites: Selection, Development, and Utilization* (US Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education, Special Publication No. 7) (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1958), p. 35.

Schools in Metropolitan Space

During the decades after World War II, federal policies in housing and transportation encouraged the dispersion of white, middle-class families into the suburbs.⁷ Education officials also reinforced the prosuburban bent of federal policy. In 1958, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) published a guide to school site selection that reveals official federal assumptions that quality education should be found in suburban settings. Emphasizing the school site as “an educational tool itself,” HEW argued that “schools should be located in an environment that stimulates love and appreciation of the beautiful in life.” Such a statement might have allowed multiple interpretations of “the beautiful,” but the report consistently narrowed this definition to suburban locales as it set out criteria for school site selection and gave examples from around the country.⁸

The images in HEW’s *School Sites* report made the point powerfully. Fourteen of the seventeen illustrations show a newly constructed school in what can only be described as a pastoral setting—rolling lawns, an occasional stand of trees or a more densely wooded background, and possibly even a lake in view (Figure 1). Only three showed any other sign of development, and that development was limited to detached houses. The text elaborated, cautioning against noise, dust, and congestion and suggesting that schools needed “clean air and abundant sunshine.” Therefore, areas with “high buildings” should be avoided “if at all possible.” School sites and any commercial or industrial development were also incompatible, as were “crowded neighborhoods.” For federal officials, these were not trifling considerations. Factors such as smoke and noise and the presence of tall buildings were “depressing and annoying, and there is little or no justification for selecting sites that subject persons to irritations from these sources.” “School boards should give careful consideration to the health and safety of students . . . as they examine

prospective pieces of land for the location of schools, because the lives and welfare of young Americans are at stake.”⁹

Unlike explicitly segregationist policies such as Federal Housing Administration lending standards, *School Sites* issued seemingly commonsensical calls for the health and safety of children. But adding federal pressures for suburbanization to a housing and schooling landscape already divided by Jim Crow meant further segregation and encouraged the concentration of poor black families in the center city. Following the traditional de facto—de jure, housing—schools binary would suggest that school construction in the suburbs simply followed residential housing patterns. Tracing school construction decisions and their roots in politics and ideology shows instead that public officials explicitly privileged suburban space in education policy and understood the power of schooling to influence local housing markets—that educational policies drove housing patterns, not only the reverse.¹⁰

Prosuburban policies in education as well as housing and transit helped to deepen patterns of inequality even in consolidated metropolitan areas that linked city, suburbs, and rural areas under a single government. In 1962, the citizens of the City of Nashville and surrounding Davidson County approved the consolidation of their previously separate governments into a single political entity, Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County. The new consolidated unit covered 533 square miles and was home to over four hundred thousand residents, just under half of whom lived within the old city boundaries.¹¹ Nashville’s urban neighborhoods were densely populated compared to outlying areas but did not fit many stereotypes of urban space. Detached homes predominated, and apartments, including public housing, rarely rose over three stories.

Consolidation remade the demographic and political profile of local government. As of 1960, the densely settled city’s population had been 62 percent white, 38 percent black. As a proportion of the entire county, including suburban and some rural areas, black residents made up only 19 percent.¹² The new Metropolitan Charter gave the mayor appointive power over all administrative boards, including education and planning. Although the Metropolitan Council’s thirty-five council districts included six majority-black districts, six at-large members offset black representatives’ influence.¹³ The last mayor of the City of Nashville, Ben West, had governed through a coalition of white and black voters. The first mayor of consolidated Metro Nashville was a former Davidson county executive, C. Beverly Briley, who felt he could govern without the support of the black population.¹⁴

Although black plaintiffs gained leverage through litigation, the implementation of school desegregation closed them out of the distribution of educational resources. School desegregation in Nashville became a project of administrative agencies—both local and federal—rather than of democratic politics. The planning commission’s professional staff collaborated with school administrators and federal agencies to design desegregation and school construction, and they did so within the boundaries of city redevelopment and growth plans articulated by national planning consultants. This world of population projections, expert judgments, and professional standards corresponded to the powerful local growth coalition’s interests but limited access and recourse for black activists.

Both before and after *Brown*, Nashville’s city planners and school administrators adopted school construction practices that favored segregated white suburban spaces and often left urban, primarily poorer black students in crowded and inferior schools. From 1960 to 1972, Metro Nashville Public Schools opened twenty-four new schools, or more than one-sixth of the total schools in operation in 1972. The overwhelming majority of these new schools sat in areas of established or new suburban development and served predominantly or exclusively white populations, in keeping with national trends. The one school planned for a predominantly black urban neighborhood was smaller in capacity than many of its suburban counterparts, and its construction was subsidized by urban renewal grants for the area.¹⁵

As the school district engaged in extensive building in the suburbs where enrollments were rising, several existing urban schools were enrolled over capacity, using portable classrooms or nonclassroom space to house as many as two hundred students. Planners acknowledged overcrowding but turned to vague language about “land use [in the area] being in flux” or predicted that an urban residential area would be “converted to use for other purposes through public action as well as through private initiative” to avoid calling for new facilities in the city. When they did make such a call, they failed to identify where a suggested new school would be built.¹⁶ Instead, they focused on new building in suburban areas. Added to school closure decisions made in the first year of busing, these patterns amounted to an extensive redistribution of schools in metropolitan space (Figures 2a and 2b).

Although it was staffed by professional planners, the composition of the Metropolitan Planning Commission itself reflected a pattern common in Nashville agencies involved in land use. More than half of the mayor’s appointees to this and similar boards had direct ties to the real estate development industry; another 7 percent were attorneys, likely indirectly involved in real estate. In a small city with an interwoven network of banking, finance, and industrial interests (which represented the dominant forces in the local economy), nearly all of the commissioners connected in some fashion to real estate. Their membership was remarkably stable from the 1950s into the 1970s. In addition to the direct business representation on the commission, sustained pressures came from what one staffer described as the “big financial and commercial institutions,” whose lobbying was “constant and pervasive.” The commission’s staff was not likely to issue a report or make recommendations that would run afoul of local real estate interests, as deeply woven into the planning commission—and other branches of metro government—as they were.¹⁷

Real estate and development interests benefited from including a new school, already under construction, in the list of amenities that their nascent communities had to offer. The school board often cooperated with real estate developers to plan and build new schools in suburban developments. This history of cooperation merged market-driven incentives for school construction in suburban areas with the institutional habits of the school board and planning commission.

Local developers understood the value in connecting new suburbs and new schools. Beginning in the 1940s, H. G. Hill, Jr., heir to a family grocery chain turned real estate developer and banker, built a group of subdivisions in an area called Hillwood, which stretched southwest into a previously rural quadrant of the county. Hill donated land for two schools to serve his new neighborhoods. Hill’s example was followed by other developers in later years, including Moses McKissack, a pioneering developer of inner-ring suburbs for black families. By 1966, the school board saw enrollments growing in Hillwood and decided that a new school was merited, but there was limited land available in the area, nearly all being under developers’ ownership. Developers had foreseen the need for a school, having much earlier identified a parcel with excellent topography and central location, and “more or less reserve[d] this tract for school purposes for a number of years.” The owner of the plot, the Warner Park Estates Company, was interested enough to sell the land to the school board at a price one-third below the appraised value. Similar land deals were made for new, larger facilities to replace older, overcrowded ones, as in the case of an upgrade to the suburban H. G. Hill Elementary School. In this way, suburban developers secured modern schools for their subdivisions and effectively chose school sites before the school district and its planners acted.¹⁸

Having encouraged the building of schools in their neighborhoods, developers and real estate agents then used schools as important elements of their marketing and advertising efforts. In Hillwood, claims that homes were “walking distance to H. G. Hill Elementary School” or were zoned for Hillwood High School frequently appeared in real estate advertisements in the 1960s.

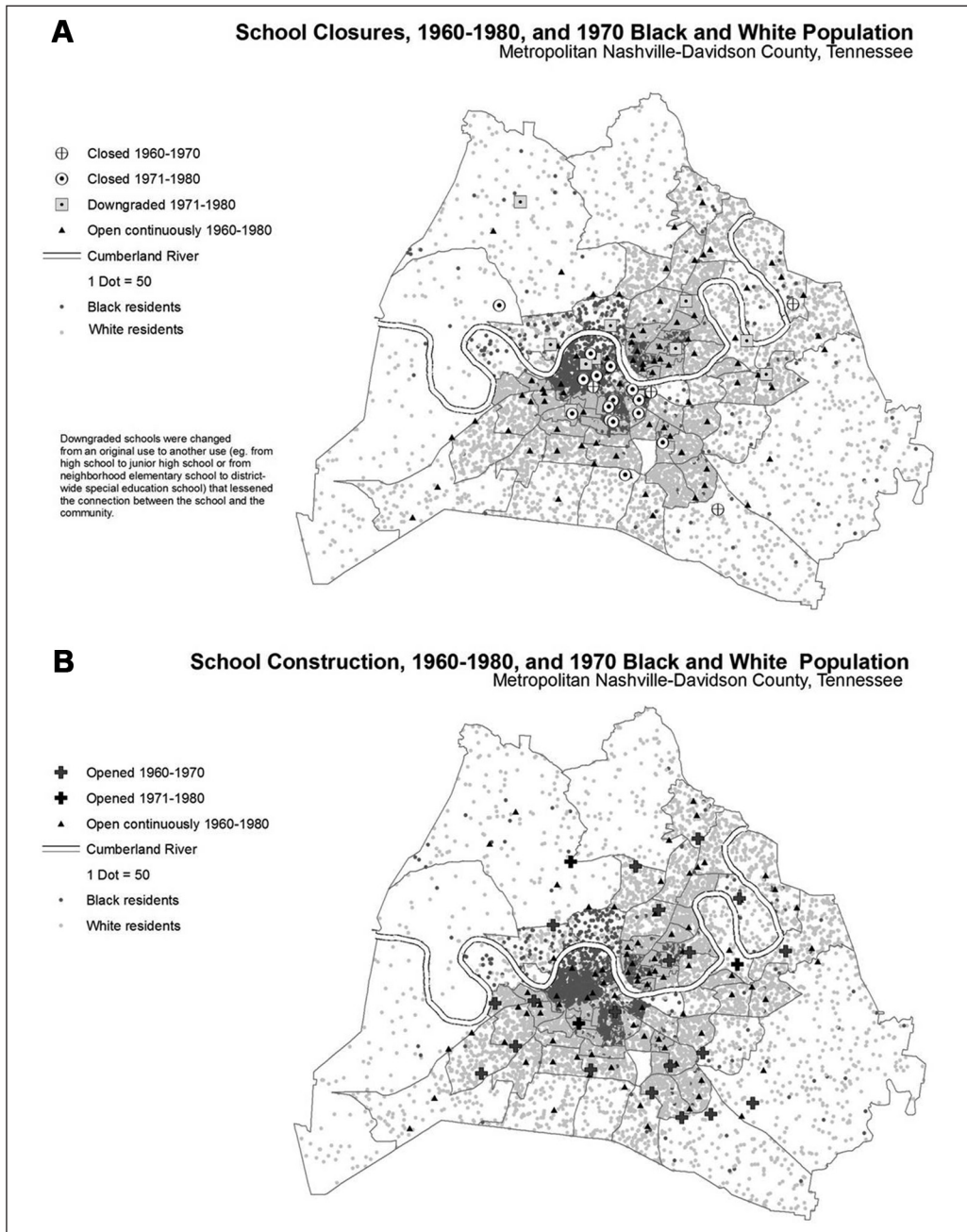


Figure 2.

Sources: MPC, *Schools for 1980*; School Directory, MNPS, 1979-1980; City of Nashville Public Schools Directory, 1960-1961; "Pupil Enrollment," 1969, Kelley, Box 11, File 4; "Fifteen Year Analysis of Enrollment Trends, Metro Nashville Public Schools," 1984, Kelley, Box 21, File 1984; and John Egerton, "Analysis of Data From Interrogatories Submitted to Metropolitan School System," 1970, Kelley, Box 11, File 4, (1 of 2). 1970 population figures are from the 1970 Decennial Census, available from Minnesota Population Center. *National Historical Geographic Information System: Pre-release Version 0.1*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota 2004, at <http://www.nhgis.org>. I am indebted to the staff of Columbia University's Electronic Data Service (now Digital Social Science Center) for extensive assistance with GIS.

A

REAL ESTATE - R. 1500 HOME CH. 11217

3 ROOMS
3 BATHS
4 ROOMS

VALLEY
LIVING, D.
BEE
LIVING, D.
GEOR.
4012 H

3 TH
101

DI

2

NEW RESIDENCE of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Layne
St. Henry's Drive in

WARNER PARK VALLEY

Where You Will Find:
So many pleasant neighbors.

PLUS: SUPERB LOCATION
On Harding Road between Belle Meade and West Meade
Nashville's largest selection of Home designs
3, 4 and 5 bedrooms, 1 or 2 dens

Something New for Nashville
The largest lots with city sewers of any community
being developed in Davidson County.
Average footage 120 feet
The best of schools
Hillwood High School, West Meade Elementary School
St. Henry's Catholic School

The Price Is Right
\$17,850-\$28,600
A multitude of the highest quality
Construction by crews who have built some of Nashville's finest buildings and
more homes than any other organization in Tennessee.
Homes under construction where you can verify the quality
of workmanship at every stage of construction.

WE TRADE
Downside: Come Harding Road to Vaughn's Gas Stand, then on Vaughn's Gas Road. Side office
directly across from St. Henry's Catholic Church.

MURPHERS REALTY COMPANY 226 THIRD AVENUE, NORTH 254-7601
291-8100 254-7601

B

CRIVIE HALL
4929 STILLWOOD DR. 3 bedrooms. CARPETED living and dining room, fireplace, central air conditioned, PAVED drive. J. R. READ, res. 832-0826.

BINKLEY AND OVERTON SCHOOL AREA
CONVENIENCE to Harding Mall Shopping, bus line. 2 bedrooms, paneled den or 3rd bedroom, attached garage with STORAGE; corner sowed lot; air conditioning unit. Possession May 15. \$15,950, \$3,750 down and assume loan at \$109.70 month. TED PEARSON, res. 352-4696.

McMURRAY JR. HIGH
Beautiful brick, 3 bedrooms, living room, dining, large den with FIREPLACE, 1½ baths; sliding glass doors to patio, 2 car garage, paved drive. 1¼ acre lot. Assume 5¼% loan. EUGENE WILLIAMS, res. 832-5765.

TUSCULUM AREA
BENZING RD. 3 bedrooms, 1½ baths, kitchen-den combination with fireplace, level lot. \$700 down FHA. JOE SNEED, res. 832-8926.

APOLLO JR. HI
3 bedrooms, 1½ baths; 5 year old brick; NEWLY DECORATED inside and out! Central air, attached garage. Assume loan, 5¼% interest, payments \$93 month. GEO. DIETHORN, res. 833-6773.

HARDING MALL
3838 SAM BONEY DR. 3 bedrooms, kitchen and dining. CARPETS; 18x24 ft. paneled den. \$3950 down and assume 5¼% loan. \$97.70 per month. \$16,500. TED PEARSON, res. 352-4696.

Figure 3. Source: *Tennessean*, May 4, 1964 and May 5, 1968. Reprinted courtesy of the Nashville *Tennessean*.

Other ads shouted “Rosebank School Area” or “Prestige Overton High!” and then continued on to describe the houses’ bathrooms, bedrooms, or acreage or the age of the roof (Figures 3a and 3b).¹⁹ Real estate agents touted proximity to a wide range of schools, typically listing more than 20 schools by name in a given day’s classifieds, a significant portion of the roughly 130 schools in operation in the 1960s.²⁰ City planners and real estate interests understood the power of schools to determine home values and steer the suburban residential development that benefited a web of interests from sales agents to mortgage banks.

The 1963 consolidation of the city of Nashville and Davidson County prompted the newly formed metropolitan school district to take stock of its facilities. Jointly the Metropolitan Planning Commission and newly formed Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools surveyed the school system and projected future need. Their efforts resulted in a more than three-hundred-page report titled *Schools for 1980*. The report set forth “principles” and “objectives” to guide future school construction, location, and closures.²¹

Schools for 1980 outlined supposedly impartial criteria that revealed the depth of metropolitan government bias toward suburban spaces and against schooling in urban ones. After broadly stating that the board should plan for “harmonious relationships between school sites and surrounding land uses,” the planning commission more specifically asserted that “areas with objectionable features [such] as dust, noise, odors, smoke, congested traffic, busy highways and railroads should be avoided as site locations,” as “these nuisances destroy the proper environment for teaching and learning.” Expressly citing HEW’s *School Sites*, *Schools for 1980* issued commonsense calls for quiet and safe school sites that implicitly required suburban over urban school location. The preference for suburban space was even more explicit by 1970, when a school construction policy that



Figure 4. Aerial view of McGavock High School, Nashville, Tennessee. Courtesy of Metropolitan Archives of Nashville-Davidson County.

reiterated the principles in *Schools for 1980* added that “locating schools in areas zoned for commercial or apartment use should be avoided whenever possible.”²²

Schools for 1980 also suggested that schools get ahead of the suburbanization trend, to achieve economies as well as respond to shifting demographics. Calls for “advanced procurement of [school] sites” suggested that the district build schools and wait for students to move to them, assuming development of new suburban population centers. When, a few years after the planning commission published *Schools for 1980*, attorneys for the school system stood up in court and drew on de facto rhetoric to assert that continuing school segregation was simply the product of residential segregation patterns that the school district followed and were out of their control, this “principle” would go unmentioned.²³

The Metropolitan Planning Commission and Board of Education adopted standards for school site size that required at least ten acres for an average elementary school and more than thirty for an average high school, with an acre covering roughly the area of a football field. Even the system’s flagship high school opened in 1971 to house 3,200 students on a forty-four-acre parcel surrounded by land recently developed as a park, only met the suggested size guidelines by including adjacent park acreage (Figure 4). Using these standards, new school construction would have to take place in suburban areas—where else would such extensive tracts of land be available and affordable? Mayor Briley capitalized on these minimum site size requirements. When arguing for court permission to continue suburban building, Briley told the afternoon paper that “I just don’t believe the court would keep us from replacing buildings which are dangerous for students and relocating them in areas where we can obtain adequate space for campuses.”²⁴

The principles and standards in *Schools for 1980* were more than rhetoric. Four years after *Schools for 1980*, school board attorneys asserted that the report guided all school construction

decisions, and two years after that the district proposed a school construction policy that clearly echoed the report's principles and standards. The impact of *Schools for 1980* is evident in the breach as well. Beneath the statements of principle and ideology at the front of the report, planners did slate some urban schools for repair or expansion. But many of these repairs did not materialize. A few years after the report, the conditions in several urban schools remained poor. Clemons School had cracking plaster ceilings and walls, broken windows, and exposed heating pipes inside classrooms, while the four-story wood-frame Pearl Elementary lacked fire escapes. Ironically, even as these poor conditions stemmed from segregation, improvements could have furthered it. Many districts in the South used facilities improvements selectively to make segregated facilities, attempting to slow plaintiffs' demands for desegregation.²⁵

In court, school administrators used their adherence to the principles and standards in *Schools for 1980* to claim unbiased decision making regarding school construction. Even if such remarks were genuine, the disparate impact remained. Prosuburban approaches to distributing public resources such as schools, drawing on national trends and rhetoric, layered on top of existing Jim Crow patterns to deepen segregation. Instead of responding to a segregated landscape in housing, often erroneously labeled de facto, school officials were helping to build this landscape by binding together housing and schooling in the process of suburban development.

If *Schools for 1980* pushed schools outward, housing planners used schools to draw and hold low-income black families inward, in the city center. Urban renewal projects in Nashville show two crucial connections between schools and housing, both of which reinforced segregation. In 1959, the then-City of Nashville undertook a two-thousand-acre urban renewal project in East Nashville. Planners used segregated black and white schools as markers for neighborhoods, identifying sections as the "Meigs School/Douglas Park" area or the "Warner School/East Park" neighborhood.²⁶ They located new public housing construction around two sides of a segregated black school (Figure 5). Although planned in the late 1950s, this housing project did not open for more than fifteen years, by which time other nearby housing projects were occupied primarily by poor black families, creating a large concentration by both race and income.²⁷

Second, the federal urban renewal formula provided financial incentive for local agencies to locate schools within project boundaries. The Nashville Housing Authority's Edgemoor Urban Renewal Project, under way in the mid-1960s, not only proposed concentrated low-income housing that officials assumed would be occupied by black residents exclusively but also included new school construction for the children living in these housing projects. Building a new school in the Edgemoor area meant that the expenditures for that school would count toward Nashville's local one-third share of urban renewal expenses. The greater the proportion of students who came from within the project area, the larger the percentage of school construction funds counted toward the city's local contribution. Two-thirds of the funds spent on a new school could be recouped in federal matching funds, which could then be spent on public housing or other urban renewal expenditures. School construction thus expanded the scope of the renewal project without cost to its administrator, the Nashville Housing Authority, while also binding segregated housing and schooling even more closely together.²⁸

Metropolitan consolidation also brought new pressures on the planning commission to document and predict current and future population in the metropolitan area. Like many post-World War II American cities, Nashville experienced simultaneous growth and demographic shifts between 1950 and 1970. In 1960, the population of the county outside of the city surpassed that of the city itself. Flight from the urban core was not the only cause. Although approximately 23,000 white people chose to move out of the city limits between 1940 and 1960, the total county population increased by over 140,000. Urban out-migration contributed to suburbanization, but the explosive growth of the 1950s, continuing into the 1960s, came from white people relocating to the Nashville area and choosing to reside in the suburbs. For the school population, this trend

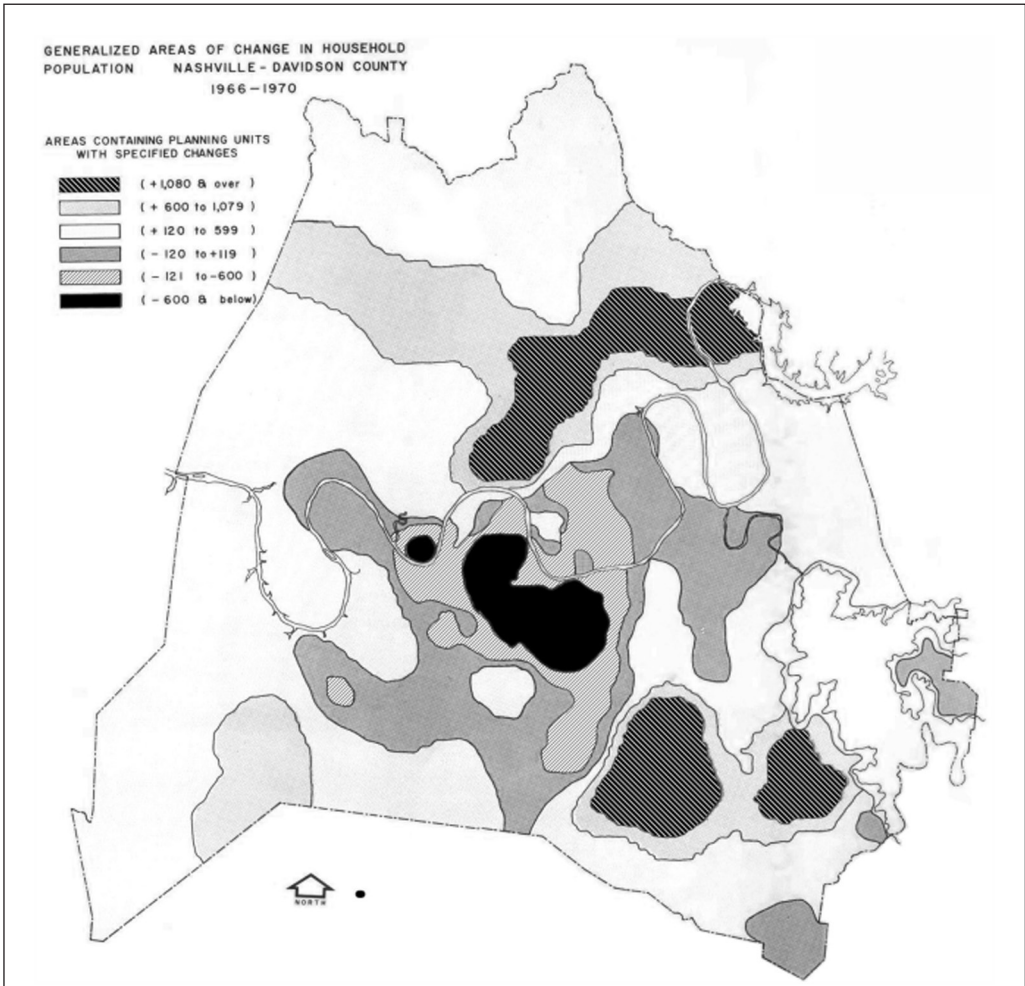


Figure 6.

Source: Metropolitan Planning Commission. "Projected Distribution of Residential Population in Nashville-Davidson County to 1985;" (Nashville, TN: MPC, 1969), Map 8. Original color image retouched for legibility in black and white.

population projections showed all demographic changes in the county in percentage-change terms. For example, a layperson looking at population projection maps from the Metropolitan Planning Commission would notice areas of growth and decline (Figure 6). Asked to answer the question of where schools were needed, they would reasonably conclude that developing schools in the city would be wasteful and that all building should happen farther into the suburbs. In this focus on suburban growth and development, planners overlooked the needs of inner-city students. Instead, planners focused on changes they assumed to be inexorable: rapid urban decline and displacement of urban residential areas by commercial development and fast suburban growth.³²

In fact, as of 1970, Nashville's school-aged population was distributed across suburban areas *and* remained densely concentrated in urban areas, as census data revealed (Figure 7). Planning maps obscured this fact for those who relied on them. How planners thought about population growth and how they represented growth or decline contributed to plans for education that separated urban communities from schooling and neglected urban black students.

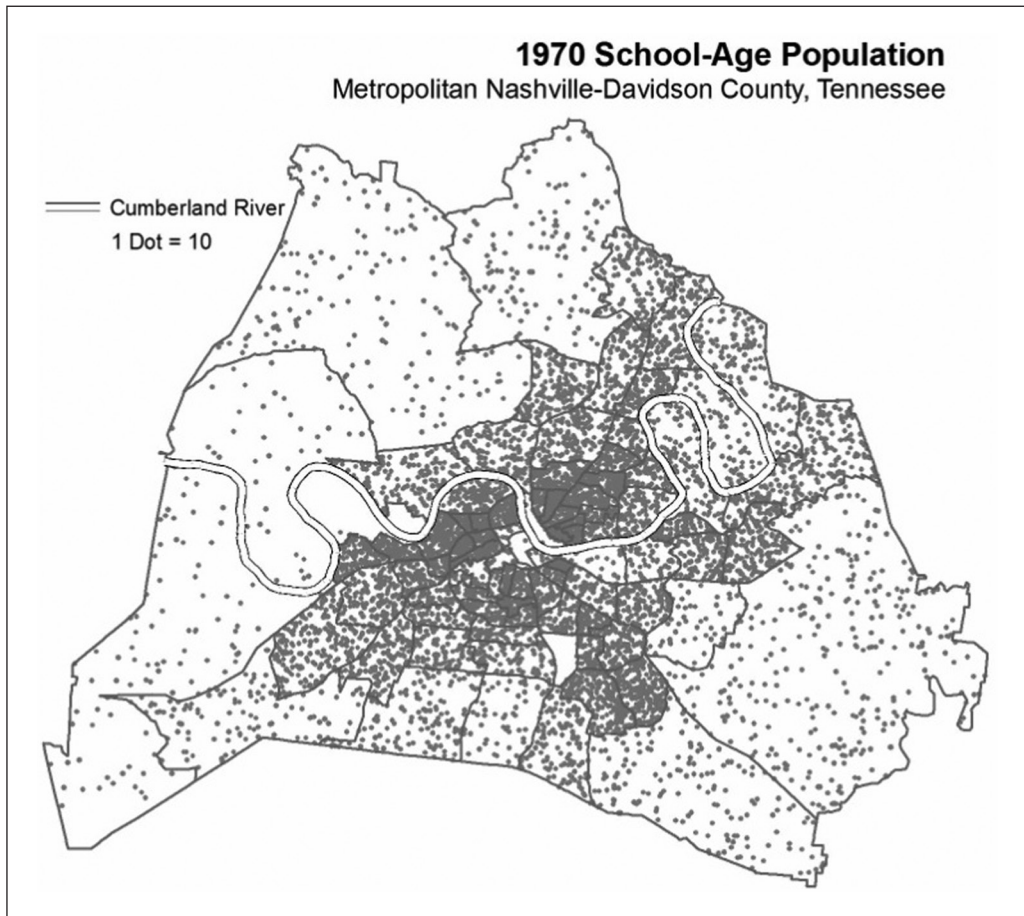


Figure 7.

Source: 1970 U.S. Decennial Census, available from Minnesota Population Center. *National Historical Geographic Information System: Pre-release Version 0.1.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota 2004, at <http://www.nhgis.org>. This map uses census age categories 5-9 years and 10-14 years to measure school-age students.

Taken together, these planning practices and ideologies of metropolitan space meant that by the late 1960s Nashville had many new suburban schools and decaying, if often crowded, city ones. It was at this time that Nashville's school desegregation case entered a new phase, the outlines of which were greatly influenced by the uneven educational landscape.

Busing: Distributing Schools and Students

By the late 1960s, Nashville schools had been under court order for desegregation for a decade, but clear signs of segregation remained. Like many urban districts in the North, West, and elsewhere in the South, the Nashville school board gerrymandered zone lines so as to bring about as little actual desegregation as possible. Nonetheless, the proportions of black children enrolled in formerly segregated white schools increased gradually over the late 1960s, primarily a product of residential racial succession instead of any school board efforts. Black children remained heavily concentrated in previously segregated black schools: 63 percent of all black

children attended schools that were less than 2 percent white. Simultaneously, 53 percent of all white children went to schools that were less than 2 percent black.³³

In 1968 the Supreme Court held, in *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, that school districts must move beyond freedom of choice desegregation plans to eliminate dual systems “root and branch.”³⁴ Nashville plaintiffs’ attorney Avon N. Williams, Jr. then returned to court in 1968 to push for more extensive desegregation. In the summer of 1970, Williams won a decision condemning the district’s gerrymandered geographic zones and its use of school construction to hamper desegregation.³⁵ Before the school board could implement a new plan prompted by this decision, the Supreme Court announced that it would hear *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*. In *Swann*, U.S. District Court Judge James B. McMillan had ordered busing between urban and suburban schools to achieve desegregation in the face of existing residential segregation in Charlotte, like Nashville a consolidated metropolitan school district. The Nashville case went on hold, awaiting a Charlotte decision that would set the terms for its own.³⁶

Nashville U.S. District Court Judge L. Clure Morton held hearings in March and April 1971, interrupted at times by antibusing protesters. After the Supreme Court issued its April *Swann* decision, Morton ruled that neither the school board’s nor the plaintiffs’ proposed plans were sufficient and that busing would be required in Nashville. The defendant school board put forward substantially the same plan from 1970, relying on rezoning and making little response to the recent *Swann* ruling. Morton found the plaintiffs’ plan lacking sufficient detail on implementation. He turned to representatives of the federal HEW to prepare a plan, as they had done for other districts in the South.³⁷

Federal officials drew on and perpetuated local spatial ideology, some of which their own organization had helped to shape through publications such as the 1958 report discussed earlier. HEW officials used data provided by the school board, including student residence patterns, existing school zone lines, and evaluation of school building condition. Much of these data came in the form of a 1971 report commissioned by the board titled “Building and School Improvement Study” (BASIS) and prepared by outside consultants. BASIS designated many of Nashville’s urban schools as “inadequate” or “unacceptable.” At the high school level, the consultants did not label a single urban school acceptable, but they praised suburban facilities. Some urban schools were in fact in poor condition because of a lack of appropriate repairs over decades as discussed above, or they failed to meet standards of site size and architecture such as those in *Schools for 1980*.³⁸

The BASIS report created a superficially objective measure of Nashville’s school facilities but included value judgments about where schools should sit in metropolitan space. The 174 criteria for evaluating schools, such as the size of the restrooms and the library’s illumination, also included the “age” and “condition” of the surrounding neighborhood. Using this matrix, a recently constructed, modern facility in a poor neighborhood would be marked down for its surroundings, implying that there could be no excellent school in a poor neighborhood. HEW planners accepted the BASIS designations without review, although they did make a driving tour of most of the district’s schools.³⁹

HEW planners identified five urban schools for closure, close to home for the area’s poorer African American residents, and downgraded four other urban schools, either from high school to middle school or from elementary school to special education school. Although these schools remained open, their historical relationship to the community around them changed significantly through this shift. HEW explained some closures through reference to the poor (and sometimes dangerous) quality of the facilities, a result of earlier divestment in urban schools. Not all of the schools in such condition were shuttered, however, and HEW praised one school’s condition but terminated it because highway construction had cut it off from its residential zone.⁴⁰

That *any* urban schools would remain open in Nashville was not a given. When HEW officials outlined options for desegregating the city, second on the list was “[c]losing all of the inner-city schools and busing of the students to the outer-suburban schools.” The HEW team did not consider the inverse. In a later phase of the busing plan, one group of white parents living in an inner-ring suburb and concerned that their children would be zoned to attend historically black Pearl High School used the same logic as they petitioned the court to close Pearl and zone their children and Pearl’s to suburban schools. Logistics helped to keep some city schools open because shuttering them would have meant increased busing and overcrowding until school construction could catch up in the suburbs.⁴¹

Working off of BASIS’s designations did not mean that HEW planners closed all schools deemed unacceptable. Instead, such designations provided cover for closing schools as they chose. HEW’s team working in Nashville commented, “As it became obvious to the HEW team that some inner city schools could be discontinued, it relied heavily upon [BASIS] . . . in determining which schools it would recommend for closing.” The team did not explain why some urban schools “could” be closed.⁴² BASIS authors drew on the planning commission’s population reports and echoed the binary growth vs. decline structure seen in planning maps. BASIS grouped schools and the geographic areas they served into “high growth” and “high loss” categories, which implicitly endorsed school closures in so-called “high loss” areas.⁴³

Working within the boundaries set by *Swann*, HEW’s team aimed for each school to have approximately 15 to 35 percent black students, while minimizing busing to the greatest extent possible. Planners first attempted to group schools together, to achieve a pool of students that would reach the 15 to 35 percent target. In some inner-ring suburbs, clustering three schools together and reassigning students by grade level could achieve the goal. Usually, clustering in this fashion was not possible given residential population distribution, so planners drew from two or more noncontiguous areas. For example, students from the zone around a previously segregated black urban elementary school rode buses to one of two previously segregated white suburban elementary schools for first through fourth grades, and then all students attended the urban school for fifth and sixth grade. HEW allowed a few elementary schools to remain outside of the 15 to 35 percent target, but Judge Morton revised their plan to bring all schools within it, through increased busing. HEW and Morton did exempt those predominantly white schools close to the county boundaries that were too far from centers of black population to make desegregation possible without excessively long bus rides.⁴⁴

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools served ninety-five thousand students in 1970–1971, roughly 75 percent of whom were white, 25 percent black. The geography of consolidation, which meant that flight to neighboring districts brought a significantly longer commute, and these demographics aided Nashville’s relative success in achieving targeted racial ratios through busing.⁴⁵ The formal equality of racial ratios, however, did not guarantee substantive equity in the process or outcomes of busing. The spatial organization of Nashville schooling meant that most black children from urban areas rode buses out of their neighborhoods for at least nine of their twelve years in school. White children from the suburbs rarely did so for more than three. Travel distances were great. The plan distributed students differently at elementary, junior high, and high school and sent black students to a greater number of schools over their school years than white students. There were wide variations in the plan, but consistently the burden of busing sat squarely on the shoulders of black urban students.⁴⁶ As Hubert Dixon, III, remembered it, riding buses out of his North Nashville neighborhood to seven different schools from second grade, when busing began, to graduation, he felt like “an agent of the federal government sent to desegregate schools throughout Nashville.”⁴⁷ Historians have placed more emphasis on the role of busing in the making of white suburban conservatism and paid less attention to the experience of students like Hubert.⁴⁸ Attending to these experiences forces recognition of inequities within busing itself.

An uneven distribution of educational resources shaped over decades by local and federal policy led to an uneven distribution of the burdens that came with busing. All families with schoolchildren under busing experienced difficulties greater than mere inconveniences. These difficulties were greatest for black urban parents, whose children were bused out of their neighborhoods for the majority of their years in school. Parents had trouble communicating with and traveling to school, especially if they did not own a car. Students who were bused out of their neighborhoods often could not participate in extracurricular activities. Black students attending school far from home often experienced harsh treatment by students and teachers, diminished expectations, and alienation. School starting times ranged from 7:00 to 10:30 a.m., closing times from 1:30 to 4:30, making school drop-off and pickup logistically difficult for parents. The more years students were bused out of their neighborhoods, the more these difficulties applied. Assigning grades 1 through 4 to suburban schools kept the youngest white students at home in the suburbs while their black age-mates rode buses. Plaintiffs' attorneys raised many of these points in 1971, as they protested the disparate burden in the busing order.⁴⁹

Inequalities in achievement persisted as well. Despite Nashville's relative success at distributing students between schools to meet targeted racial ratios, the achievement gap remained between white and black students, with white students scoring higher on standardized tests and graduating at higher rates. Black students' achievement did increase in these years relative to that of white children, but the gap did not close.⁵⁰

One logistical barrier to an equitable distribution of burdens and opportunities in busing was the 3:1 ratio of white students to black students in the district. Given segregated housing patterns, this ratio meant a 1:3 ratio in travel—that is, black students would have to travel three times as much as white students to attend desegregated schools. Spatial ideology helped to make this difference seem appropriate and unavoidable, rather than a condition policy could actively try to work against (by constructing schools between black and white neighborhoods, for example, or improving central-city facilities to attract suburban families). Given an already thorny problem, ideology that favored suburban space over urban space and the policies that followed from it worsened the situation.

The court's focus on racial ratios combined with prosuburban ideology to obscure questions of equity within the busing plan. Continued school closure patterns show this well. Once busing began, and the school district's total student population fell from roughly ninety-five thousand students in 1970 to seventy thousand at the end of the decade, school closures continued. The smaller total enrollment did necessitate operating fewer facilities, but district administrators continued disproportionately to shut schools in majority-black neighborhoods.⁵¹ This trend was particularly ironic as it was students from these neighborhoods who were the least likely to leave the district for private schools or to move to outlying counties, the chief causes of enrollment decline in the district.

School construction policies also continued to reflect a prosuburban bias, even during the era of court-ordered busing. Judge Morton's 1971 order defined a perimeter road then under construction, Briley Parkway, as the boundary between inner-city and suburban Nashville and required all new high schools to be constructed around this ring so as to facilitate desegregation.⁵² Morton's order followed a school district administrator's suggestion and reflected a national interest in midpoint schools—locating schools between black and white neighborhoods to ease desegregation. Even when the district made gestures to equity by using location in this fashion, prosuburban ideology tipped the balance in favor of suburban, predominantly white students. Referred to in court proceedings as between areas of black and white settlement, Briley Parkway was in fact adjacent to predominantly black neighborhoods only in one section to the north of the city; elsewhere in the early 1970s white suburban development predominated inside and outside the parkway. Even when Nashville planners and educators turned to the idea

of midpoint schools, encouraged by desegregation advocates, applying the notion to their own landscape shifted schools even farther from urban centers of population than the national discussion suggested.⁵³

Spatial ideology not only rationalized and underwrote unequal school facilities decisions before the beginning of busing for desegregation but also thoroughly influenced the making of the busing plan itself. Prosuburban language and imagery normalized and rendered superficially objective an unequal distribution of educational resources that shunted the burdens of busing onto black students. As white families withdrew their children from public schools under the busing order and enrollment fell, the district tried to use school location to hold on to white students, further burdening black students in the process. Richard Pride and David Woodward have shown that rates of white withdrawals from public schools in Nashville varied greatly depending on the proportion of black people residing in the areas to which students were bused. By privileging predominantly white suburban space, official action reinforced individual resistance.⁵⁴

Housing markets provided another set of forces that reinterpreted and shaped desegregation. In the 1970s, classified housing advertisements continued to provide information for consumers interested in both housing and schools just as they had in the suburban boom of the early 1960s. Ads show not only how real estate sales agents worked a shifting market but also illuminate how private property markets resegmented metropolitan space and schooling during desegregation.

Hypothesizing about how real estate advertising related to the first years of busing, one might expect that real estate agents would heavily advertise for schools in areas outside of the Metro Nashville district, or in the outer-suburban areas of the district exempted from the court order. Doing so would have labeled any area involved in busing as less desirable by omission. This was only partially the case. In the early 1970s, a typical week's classified ads contained relatively more mention of schools outside of the court order's boundaries than they had before 1971, and a few boasted "No Bussing Here." Classified ads were not silent on schools under the busing order, however, instead focusing on a narrower range of schools than had been advertised in the 1950s and 1960s. Real estate agents thus segmented the area covered by the court order for busing into regions where schools were not, or were no longer, a property asset and regions where they were still.⁵⁵

Two representative schools, both involved in busing under the 1971 order, illustrate this process. Rosebank Elementary School had been heavily marketed in the mid and late 1960s and served a middle-class white population of young families in a low-density neighborhood a few miles from downtown. After the court order, when busing brought black students from nearby black neighborhoods, Rosebank disappeared from real estate agents' list of valuable schools. Yet West Meade Elementary School, to which black students were bused from distant North Nashville, retained its marketability as seen in continued, if somewhat reduced, mention in ads.⁵⁶ West Meade bucked the trend of white departures from desegregating schools, with its white population actually increasing over the 1970s. Comparing Rosebank and West Meade could suggest the importance of tipping points—while both schools were predicted to have student populations between 25 and 30 percent African American, Rosebank began busing with a student population that was 50 percent black, 50 percent white as West Meade remained closer to 80 percent white. This difference shaped the public image of the schools and their population. Yet the location of the schools was important as well. West Meade's distance from the city core insulated it, in the eyes of its white homeowners and real estate agents, from the possibility of residential succession, and thus made the presence of black students in its school less likely to imply racial transition in property as well. Rosebank had no such geographic buffer. And the two areas posed different opportunities for real estate interests. Rosebank was at capacity for single-family homes; West Meade and the surrounding area had more land to develop, if demand warranted.⁵⁷

Real estate agents fostered a new kind of segmentation of the school system by identifying some neighborhoods as places that had lost all marketability with respect to schools while continuing in the first years of busing to assert the desirability of others, including some included within the court order. They facilitated resegregation by pointing homebuyers to farther-out suburban areas where property values were not threatened by school desegregation, and told residents of closer-in segregated white areas that busing represented a threat not only to the prior racial composition of their school but to their property values. Nashville's real estate advertising suggest that a binary understanding of white flight—that families either stayed in school systems without busing, or left ones that implemented it—is incomplete. In a few schools under the busing order, white suburban children could stay close to home in wealthy suburban areas for most of their years while sharing hallways and classrooms with black children who rode buses from the city center. In the early and mid 1970s these schools retained their implied property value, and were more likely to retain their white student populations.⁵⁸

Many familiar stories emphasize white families' moves across jurisdictional lines to avoid desegregated schooling. The city of Boston, divided by municipal lines from its many surrounding suburbs, demonstrates this pattern. The large metropolitan area of Atlanta provides a similar case, as the desegregation of city schools prompted flight to the surrounding counties. In Nashville, flight to areas beyond the reach of the 1971 busing order created a less extreme version of this pattern.⁵⁹ But Nashville also shows that even within the area covered by the court order, housing markets responded to school desegregation by further breaking the district into separate units, creating school districts within districts. Some of these areas retained the sanction of market value attached to schools. This segmentation contributed to resegregation of schools as those schools denied market value lost white students. This pattern stemmed from mutually reinforcing actions by public officials—school administrators and municipal planners—and private housing market agents.

Conclusion

As Judge James B. MacMillan explained in his 1969 opinion in *Swann*, later upheld by the Supreme Court, school construction was a historic cause of and vehicle for the perpetuation of inequality.⁶⁰ This essay shows that schools not only managed desegregation in the face of residential segregation but in fact contributed to it. That is, it portrays schooling not as a closed system operating above and separate from the dynamics among government policy, market interaction, and individual choice that animate the housing market but instead as a part of the fluid interactions among these forces. Continued segregation after *Brown* resulted not from the so-called de facto outcome of individual and market forces but from education and planning policy choices. The school location decisions in Nashville examined here did not simply follow residential housing patterns but instead reflected and participated in overvaluing the interests of some people and places in the metropolitan landscape, while undervaluing others. Working on this landscape, busing reformulated previous educational inequalities even as it tried to address them.

Nashville's story also illustrates the role of federal ideology and policy in making segregation and inequality in local settings.⁶¹ Urban renewal dollars, school planning concepts, and desegregation plans flowed from Washington to be capitalized on by Nashville planners and administrators. This trajectory shows that conceptualizing the South as an outlier region in the story of metropolitan inequity misses overemphasizes local preference and state laws and underemphasizes national and federal trends and policies. Nashville's story is one version of a national pattern of suburban white privilege and black urban neglect in which local and federal policy interacted to concentrate poor black families in city centers with relatively weaker public infrastructure.

Nashville's story reflects the potent connection between racist exclusion and many suburban spaces. Prosuburban ideology could be of benefit to black people as well as white, however, as increasing numbers of black middle-class families moved to the suburbs in the late 1960s and 1970s.⁶² School construction patterns reinforced other factors prompting middle-class African Americans to leave central cities, including displacement through public housing construction and urban renewal, and thus furthered the isolation by class of segregated urban neighborhoods in central cities.

Nashville's demographics set a challenging context for defining an equitable approach to busing: how much of the burden of desegregation should black children, in the statistical minority, be expected to shoulder? Education planners, local and federal, who designed busing in Nashville never fully engaged this question, however. The confluence of prosuburban political, economic, and ideological forces made inequitable distributions of educational resources and the subsequent inequitable treatment of different students seem logical, necessary, and even natural. Instead of seeking solutions to this thorny dilemma, many local actors instead recognized the power of schools to shape the landscape and chose to use this power in favor of suburban growth, neglecting the interests of those predominantly poor and black children and families residing in the city center. Building segregated schools and neighborhoods before *Brown* and perpetuating them after created a deeply entrenched and spatially organized barrier against substantive equality in schooling, of a kind seen throughout metropolitan America.

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Notes

1. *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*, 402 U.S. 1 (1971).
2. Some studies of school desegregation have acknowledged the manipulations of space used to impede desegregation. Davison Douglas, *Reading, Writing and Race: The Desegregation of the Charlotte Schools* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 123-33, 138-39, shows that Charlotte's desegregation process brought the closure of several previously segregated black schools in the city. David Cecelski documents a small-town case in *Along Freedom Road: Hyde County, North Carolina and the Fate of Black Schools in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994). "Dozens" of systems took this approach, as noted by Hon. James B. McMillan in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*, 306 F. Supp. 1291 (1969). Gregory S. Jacobs, *Getting Around Brown: Desegregation, Development and the Columbus Public Schools* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998) emphasizes school and municipal jurisdictional lines.

For attempts to incorporate planning, architecture, and school design, see Michael Clapper, "School Design, Site Selection, and the Political Geography of Race in Postwar Philadelphia," *Journal of Planning History* 5 (August 2006): 241-63, and the other articles in that special issue on education in planning history.

Both Jack Dougherty and Bethany L. Rogers point to the gap between urban and education history that this study and the others in this issue are working to fill: Jack Dougherty, "Bridging the Gap between Urban, Suburban, and Educational History," in William J. Reese and John L. Rury, eds., *Rethinking the History of American Education* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 245-59; Bethany L. Rogers, "Integrating Education History and Urban History: The Politics of Schools and Cities," *Journal of Urban History* 34 (July 2008): 855-69.

3. Important works on linked segregation and suburbanization include Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); Robert Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Making of Postwar Oakland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).
4. In the history of education, the de facto label still has currency in describing a period of school desegregation after massive resistance, even when scholars recognize its problems in describing housing policy. See, for example, articles in the *History of Education Quarterly* on the fiftieth anniversary of the *Brown* decision, including those by Richard Altenbaugh, Wayne J. Urban, and Michael Fultz. *History of Education Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (March 2004).
5. Matthew Lassiter offers an important critique and historical inquiry into the roots of the idea of de facto. See Matthew Lassiter, "De Jure/De Facto Segregation: The Long Shadow of a National Myth," in Matthew D. Lassiter and Joseph Crespino, eds., *The End of Southern History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). Andrew R. Highsmith demonstrates the problems with the de facto label as it applies to school policy in the North in his dissertation, "Demolition Means Progress: Race, Class, and the Deconstruction of the American Dream in Flint, Michigan" (University of Michigan, 2009), as does Jeanne Theoharris, "'I'd Rather Go to School in the South': How Boston's School Desegregation Complicates the Civil Rights Paradigm," in Komozi Woodward, ed., *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980* (Gordonsville, VA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 125-51.
6. Examples include the Los Angeles suburb of South Gate (Becky Nicolaidis, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002], 290-92), Denver, Colorado (*Keyes v. School District No. 1*, 413 U.S. 189 [1973]), and Columbus, Ohio (Jacobs, *Getting Around Brown*, 14-15, 20-21).
7. See Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*; Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*; Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*; and Self, *American Babylon*.
8. Metropolitan Planning Commission (hereafter MPC), *Schools for 1980* (Nashville, TN: MPC, 1964), 4-6; James Taylor, *School Sites: Selection, Development, and Utilization (US Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education Special Publication No. 7)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1958), 29-30, 34-35. HEW likely undertook this report in anticipation of the large investment of federal funds into school construction hoped for but not achieved under Eisenhower. See James L. Sundquist, *Politics and Policy: The Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson Years* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1968), chap. 5.
9. Taylor, *School Sites*, 29-30, 34-35. For a broader discussion of the spatialization of racial privilege and inequality, see George Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011).
10. The other essays in this volume point to a similar relationship, with schooling a driving factor in development and housing patterns.

11. Nashville's consolidation was only the fourth successful city-county consolidation in the twentieth century. Consolidated city-county governments became relatively more common in the South and West, including Miami-Dade, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, and the City and County of Denver. Brett W. Hawkins, *Nashville Metro: The Politics of City-County Consolidation* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1966), 3, 25-26.
12. An April 1960 annexation after the census count increased the city population by 82,512, of whom 6.2 percent were black. U.S. Census of Population, 1960. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961). Table 22.
13. Hawkins, *Nashville Metro*, 76; Code of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville-Davidson County, <http://www.municode.com/resources/gateway.asp?pid=14214&sid=42> (accessed April 18, 2008).
14. C. Beverly Briley interview with Paul Clement, tape 10B, March and May 1980, Century III Oral History Collection, Nashville Public Library (hereafter NPL).
15. MPC, *Schools for 1980*; School Directory, MNPS, 1979-1980, "Fifteen Year Analysis of Enrollment Trends, Metro Nashville Public Schools" (1984), *Robert W. Kelley et al. v. Metropolitan County Board of Education of Nashville, Tennessee*, record group 21, National Archives and Records Administration—Southeast (Morrow, GA; hereafter *Kelley*), box 21, file 1984; and John Egerton, "Analysis of Data From Interrogatories Submitted to Metropolitan School System" (1970), *Kelley*. On the connection with urban renewal, see "Nashville Stands at Modernization Forefront" (undated clipping, ca. 1962), NPL, Greater Nashville Association of Realtors Papers, box 1, series 1-D; Gerald Gimre, "Urban Renewal: The Nashville Story" (undated clipping from *Tennessee Town and City*, ca. 1962), Metro Archives of Nashville and Davidson County (hereafter MANDC), Dick Battle Papers, box 1, file 5.
16. Overcrowding at urban schools is documented in both MPC, *Schools for 1980* and Metro Nashville Public Schools (hereafter MNPS), "Building and School Improvement Study" (hereafter BASIS) (Nashville, TN: MNPS), for schools including Wharton, John Early, and Ford Greene, with numbers of classrooms in excess of capacity listed at MPC, *Schools for 1980*, 345-50. At Ford Greene, and others, overcrowding continued despite recent additions, indicating unsuccessful efforts minimally to meet demand. Schools like Clemons and Caldwell became overcrowded between 1964 and 1970, as was noted in MPC, "Amendment I to Schools for 1980," December 20, 1967, MPC Library, filed with *Schools for 1980*. The quotes are from MPC, *Schools for 1980*, 107, 110-11.
17. Lester M. Salomon and Gary L. Wamsley, "The Politics of Urban Land Policy: Zoning and Urban Development in Nashville," in *Growing Metropolis* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1975), 154-56. Membership on the MPC was listed in each of the many reports the agency issued in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s.

Here the phrase *real estate interests* focuses predominantly on white developers and agents in this period of strict segregation in real estate markets. Although there were at least two established black real estate development firms in Nashville in this period, I have not found evidence of their relationship to the MPC.
18. Bill Carey, *Fortunes, Fiddles and Fried Chicken: A Nashville Business History* (Nashville, TN: Hillsborough, 2000), 59, 203-4; Metro Nashville Board of Education (hereafter MNBOE), Agenda, January 25, 1966, on file at MNPS. MNBOE, Minutes, August 13, 1968, January 14, 1969, and September 28, 1971, on file at MNPS; City of Nashville Board of Education (hereafter CNBOE), Minutes, February 4, 1953, volume 1951-1954, on file at MNPS. On Moses McKissack, see Andrew Wiese, *Places of Their Own: African-American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 139.
19. For advertisements touting HG Hill, West Meade, and Hillwood schools, see *Tennessean*, section D, May 4, 1964, May 4, 1968, May 5, 1968, January 12, 1969, May 4, 1969, January 11, 1970, and May 3, 1970, among others. Steven Samuel Smith documented developers donating land to the school system to facilitate the building of new schools, in suburban areas of Charlotte-Mecklenburg County,

NC. See Steven Samuel Smith, *Boom for Whom: Education, Desegregation and Development in Charlotte* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 97.

The linkage between school and housing markets has received attention from historians such as Kevin Fox Gotham, who explains the utility of school boundaries for black or white schools in marking neighborhoods as either black or white and thus fostering residential segregation in St. Louis, and Kevin Kruse, who shows how Atlanta Public Schools' recategorization of schools from white to black marked and spurred further residential succession in their neighborhoods. Kevin Fox Gotham, *Race, Real Estate and Uneven Development: The Kansas City Experience, 1900–2000* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002); Kevin Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 165–68. Jack Dougherty's essay in this volume explores the impact of school test score patterns on home purchasers' decisions and home prices in suburban Hartford, Connecticut.

20. MPC, *Schools for 1980*, 17. This number includes both city and county schools before consolidation. It varies somewhat with school openings and closings over the decade.
21. *Ibid.*, 3–8.
22. Quotations in *ibid.*, 6; quotations in *ibid.*, 4; “Board of Education Policy for Site Selection and School Building Construction,” appendix B to Plan, August 19, 1970, *Kelley*, box 5, file 1970.
23. *Ibid.*, 2; Defendants' Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and Post-Trial Brief, March 16, 1970, *Kelley*, box 5, file 1970. On the historical development of the idea of de facto, see Lassiter, “De Jure/De Facto Segregation.”
24. Long-Term Plan: School Board Report to Citizen's Advisory Committee, Defendants' Exhibit 10, 1980, *Kelley*, box 13. These figures stand in contrast to the requirements in place as late as 1958: eight acres for a high school, plus one acre for each one hundred students. See Taylor, *School Sites*, 29. On McGavock High School, figures are from an interview with Michael Tribue, principal, McGavock High School, May 2004. Also see “McGavock Super School,” *Banner*, May 7, 1971, Special Insert. Briley quote from Nashville *Banner*, August 23, 1971.
25. “Opposition to Motion for Further Relief,” October 1, 1968, *Kelley*, box 2, file 1968, 8–10; “Board of Education Policy for Site Selection and School Building Construction,” August 19, 1970, *Kelley*, box 6, file 1970 (2), appendix B to Plan, 1. Descriptions of Clemons and Pearl are at MNPS, “BASIS,” 131–33, 159–60. The conditions here prevailed after twenty-seven modifications on majority-black schools between 1962 and 1970. “Defendants Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law,” 1. Nashville's expansions of two first-to-eighth grade segregated black schools into high schools in the early 1950s fit this pattern. CNBOE, Minutes, vol. 1951–1954, 295.
26. For examples of the labels in use, see *Tennessean*, January 23, 1958; May 21, 1961; December 6 and 15, 1964; and MNBOE, Minutes, October 11, 1966. I explore the roots of this school–neighborhood connection in planning discourse in my dissertation, “Schooling the Metropolis: Educational Inequality Made and Remade, Nashville, TN, 1945–1985” (Columbia University, in progress).
27. “Table of Public Housing Tenant Statistics by Race: 1964 and 1969,” February 2, 1970, *Kelley*, plaintiff's exhibit 18, box 11.
28. “Can the Big Cities Come Back? What's Being Done to Stop the Rush to the Suburbs,” *US News & World Report*, July 19, 1957, 73; Tennessee State Advisory Committee to the US Commission on Civil Rights, “Housing and Urban Renewal in the Nashville-Davidson County Metropolitan Area,” February 1967, MANDC, Robert Horton Papers, box 1, 3–4; Gimre, “Urban Renewal”; “Summary of Provisions of the Housing Act of 1954” (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1954). Although the flow of funds was indirect, through offsets and credits, some local participants perceived it to be direct, as seen in Mansfield Douglas III to Board of Commissioners of the Nashville Housing Authority, October 10, 1965, NAACP Papers, Library of Congress, group VI box F121, Tennessee–Nashville, Edgell Urban Renewal Project, 1965–1967, section VI.

- Adam Nelson describes Boston's consideration of urban renewal funds for school construction but does not trace whether the dollars ultimately flowed in this fashion, in *The Elusive Ideal: Equal Educational Opportunity and the Federal Role in Boston's Public Schools, 1950–1985* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2005), 22–25.
29. Census figures are summarized in Don Doyle, *Nashville since the 1920s* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1985), 273. Enrollment statistics at MPC, *Schools for 1980*, 11–13. These figures are somewhat complicated by annexation of populous areas by the city in these years. As Matthew Lassiter has pointed out, suburban growth from outside the metropolitan area renders the “white flight” narrative particularly problematic. Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 9.
 30. MPC, “Analyzing Suburban Growth” (Nashville, TN: MPC), 9–13.
 31. Edward Tufte has pioneered the critical interpretation of graphical representations of data. See Edward Tufte, *Visual Display of Quantitative Information*, 2nd ed. (Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press, 2001). His short piece *The Cognitive Style of Power Point* (2nd ed.) argues for the potential dire consequences of reductive displays of data (Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press, 2006). Nashville City and Davidson County Planning Commission, “Estimated Distribution of Population of Davidson County, Tennessee 1950–1958” (Nashville, TN: Nashville City and Davidson County Planning Commissions, 1959).
 32. MPC, “Projected Distribution of Residential Population in Nashville-Davidson County to 1985” (Nashville, TN: MPC, 1969), Map 4 and 8; MNPS, “BASIS,” 4, 15. The 1969 population projection maps for 1970–1975 and 1975–1980 did identify small central-city areas with population growth, but the 1980–1985 showed a return to population loss there, thus reinforcing the perception that the overall trajectory was that of decline.
 33. Joseph R. Garrett, “Integration Report for Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County Public Schools, Nashville, Tennessee,” October 1967, plaintiff’s exhibit 25, *Kelley*, box 6.
 34. *Green v. County School Board of New Kent, VA*, 391 U.S. 430 (1968); James Patterson, *Brown v. Board of Education: A Civil Rights Milestone and Its Troubled Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 145–55.
 35. *Robert W. Kelley et al and Henry C. Maxwell, Jr., et al v. Metropolitan County Board of Education of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee, et al.*, 317 F. Supp 980 (1970), noted, “It is apparent that the zone lines as presently drawn are designed to provide racially identifiable ‘black’ schools for black residential areas and ‘white’ schools for white residential areas.”
 36. *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*, 300 F. Supp. 1358 (1969).
 37. Morton’s order requesting HEW assistance is “Order,” April 14, 1971, *Kelley*, box 6, file 1971 (1). HEW reviewed the school board’s and plaintiff’s plans and concurred with Morton, although they sanctioned the school district’s rezoning by school at the elementary level. Their review is USOE (United States Office of Education), “Desegregation Plan,” 17–20. Morton’s order made the front page of the *Nashville Banner*, April 13, 1971.
 38. MNPS, “BASIS,” tables VII-D through VII-F summarize the findings.
 39. HEW’s use of the BASIS report is described at USOE, “Desegregation Plan,” 30–31. On criteria, see MNPS, “BASIS,” 266.
 40. USOE, “Desegregation Plan,” 30 explains closures, and changes in status and closures are listed in “Fifteen Year Analysis.” Descriptions of Clemons and Pearl are at MNPS, “BASIS,” 131–33, 159–60. On the Howard School closing, see USOE, “Desegregation Plan,” 30, and MNPS, “BASIS,” 147.
 41. USOE, “Desegregation Plan,” 32; “Petition,” November 11, 1979, Kelly Miller Smith Papers, Vanderbilt University Archives and Special Collections, box 69, file 2. Other locales proposed total closure of black schools, including Hillsborough County, Florida, and Hyde County, North Carolina, where such a plan was implemented and sparked school boycotts by black families. Barbara Shircliffe, *Best of That World: Historically Black High Schools and the Crisis of Desegregation in a Southern Metropolis* (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2006), 126, and Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road*.
 42. USOE, “Desegregation Plan,” 30–31, 59.

43. MNPS, "BASIS," chap. 1.
44. This representation derives from several sources: USOE, "Desegregation Plan," 32; this plan as synthesized in Richard A. Pride and David Woodward, *The Burden of Busing: The Politics of Desegregation in Nashville, Tennessee* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 74-82, and maps and zone descriptions published in the *Banner*, August 7, 1971. This pattern is also consistent with descriptions of the busing scheme as experienced by former Nashville students in interviews in February to July 2004. Pride and Woodward acknowledge, "Because of the logistical complexity of busing, each school was practically a unique case involving some type of alteration in the general plan," but concur in this description of the pattern (Pride and Woodward, *Burden of Busing*, 76). The greatest variation appears to have occurred in racially diverse neighborhoods close to the city center and stemming from schools structured to hold different grades.
45. This trend is clearly demonstrated in Erica Frankenberg and Chungmei Lee, "Race in American Public Schools: Rapidly Resegregating School Districts" (Cambridge, MA: Civil Rights Project, Harvard University, 2002), 13. Also see Matthew Lassiter, "'Socioeconomic Integration' in the Suburbs: From Reactionary Populism to Class Fairness in Metropolitan Charlotte," in Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, eds., *The New Suburban History* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2006), 141-42.
46. Other districts used similar patterns, including Hillsborough County (Tampa), Florida. See Shircliffe, *Best of That World*. Wilmington, Delaware, had a similar proportion as well. Jeffery A. Raffel, *The Politics of School Desegregation: The Metropolitan Remedy in Delaware* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980).
47. "Memorandum Opinion," May 20, 1980, *Kelley*, box 13, file 1980, 31, 46; interview with Hubert Dixon, III, July 2004. Residents of a few small, more integrated pockets of the city remained in the vicinity of their homes the majority of their years of their schooling.
48. Brett Gadsden has foregrounded unequal busing experiences in his work. See "The Other Side of the Milliken Coin: The Promise and Pitfalls of Metropolitan School Desegregation," *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Mar. 2010), 173-196. The busing and conservatism literature includes Jonathan Rieder, *Canarsie: Jews and Italians against Liberalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985); Ronald Formisano, *Boston against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); and Lassiter, *Silent Majority*. Works that recast the story of school desegregation by making the experiences of black students central include Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina 1998); Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road*, Vivian Gunn Morris and Curtis L. Morris, *The Price They Paid: Desegregation in an African American Community* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002); and Shircliffe, *Best of That World*.
49. USOE, "Desegregation Plan," and *Tennessean*, August 7, 1971. Interviews with Waverly Crenshaw, February 2004; Kathy Nevill, July 2004; Eugene Speight, May 2004; Aldorothy Wright, October 2006; Rev. William Barnes, July 2007. Examples of racist treatment by teachers also appear in *Kelley*. Avon Williams to Elbert Brooks, May 8, 1972, *Kelley*, box 8, file 1972 (1). Plaintiffs' complaints and other details about disparate burden are at "Memorandum Opinion," 28-30. School opening and closing times are listed in "Memorandum to Order Issued August 17, 1972," August 17, 1972, *Kelley*, box 8, file 1972 (1), 540.
50. On test score patterns in Nashville into the 1980s, see Pride and Woodward, *Burden of Busing*, chap. 6. Charles Clotfelter summarizes desegregation's impact on student achievement as "decidedly mixed," with overall increases for black students since 1971 difficult to tie directly to desegregation. Charles Clotfelter, *After Brown: The Rise and Retreat of School Desegregation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 186-87.
51. See Figure 2A.
52. "Memorandum Opinion," June 28, 1971, *Kelley*, box 6, file 1971 (1 of 2). Judge Morton appears to have elected not to publish this opinion.

53. For one example of the discussion around so-called “education parks” as an approach to desegregation, see U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, “Education Parks: Appraisals of Plans to Improve Educational Quality and Desegregate the Schools” (Washington, DC: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights). Thanks to Matthew Lassiter for the source.
54. See Pride and Woodward, *Burden of Busing*, chap. 7. Pride and Woodward place less emphasis on the spatial ideology that reinforced racist designations.
55. For 1965–1975, I examined real estate classifieds in the first Sunday in May (at the beginning of the summer real estate buying season, when many families begin the home-buying process in hopes of moving before school begins). I reviewed the Nashville *Tennessean*. The other major paper, the *Nashville Banner*, cooperated with the *Tennessean* on selling and running classified advertising. I tallied references to schools, and to which school, from all classifieds for home sales run in these issues. This method is consistent with approaches to sampling taken by historical sociologists using real estate classified ads. See Edward G. Goetz, “A Little Pregnant: The Impact of Rent Control in San Francisco,” *Urban Affairs Review* 30 (March 1995): 604–12; Avery M. Guest, Barrett A. Lee, and Lynn Staeheli, “Changing Locality Identification in the Metropolis: Seattle, 1920–1978,” *American Sociological Review* 47 (August 1982): 543–49. Jack Dougherty’s recent work uses a similar sampling strategy. My count might underestimate mentions of schools, which often carried the same name as the geographic area they served, as I recorded only those references that specifically identified schools (e.g., Granberry School) versus the area (e.g., Granberry area). Quotation from *Tennessean*, May 7, 1972, sec. D.
56. Ads also continued to mention the two comprehensive high schools in wealthy white suburban areas (Hillwood and Overton) to which black students were bused.
57. MPC, “Analyzing Suburban Growth,” 43–44, figure 12; school demographics from “Fifteen Year Analysis.”
58. Matthew Lassiter argues the importance of “class fairness” in creating busing plans that were stable and sustainable. Lassiter, *Silent Majority*, 198–221. Pride and Woodward’s analysis of patterns in white flight supports this point as well. See Pride and Woodward, *Burden of Busing*, 94–97, 102.
59. This is a pattern similar to the movement and manipulation of separate school district and jurisdictional lines in Columbus, Ohio, as described by Jacobs, *Getting Around Brown*.
60. *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*, 306 F. Supp. 1291 (1969).
61. For other examples of the dynamic, see Self, *American Babylon*; Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*; Bruce J. Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938–1980* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); and James C. Cobb, *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development, 1936–1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1982). For an example in education policy, see Nelson, *Elusive Ideal*.
62. On this trend, see Wiese, *Places of Their Own*.

Bio

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