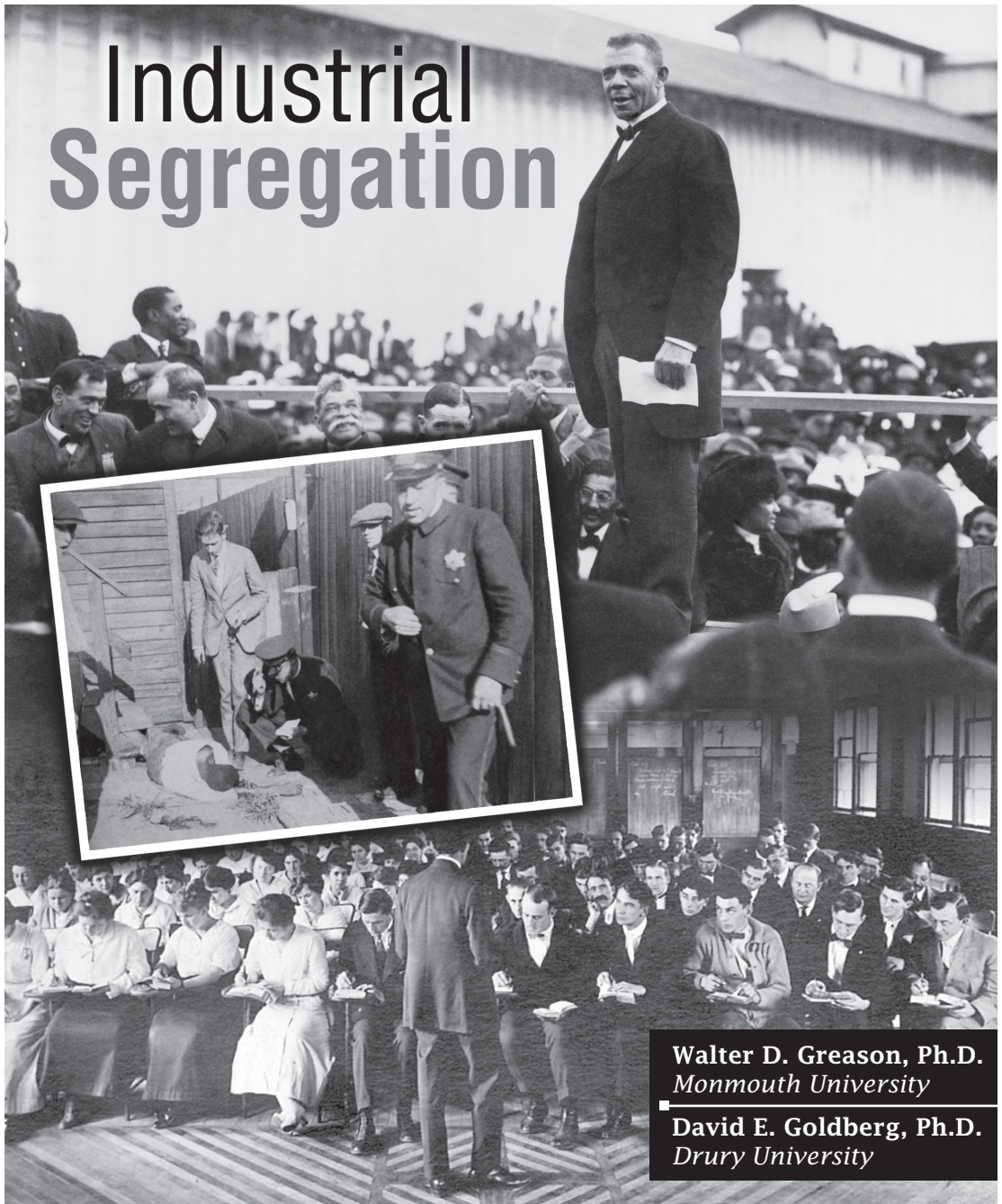


Industrial Segregation



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Walter D. Greason

De facto and *de jure*, *de facto* and *de jure*—those phrases have informed a century’s study of racial inequality. C. Vann Woodward’s *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* still dominates the ways Americans understand their society and the ways they communicate their experiences to people around the world. When the Civil Rights Movement transformed into the Black Power Movement marking a decisive transition in the Black Freedom Struggle, scholars and public voices reified the distinction between segregation *by law* and segregation *by custom*. Thankfully, in the last twenty years, historians, geographers, and sociologists have attempted to complicate this binary oversimplification. Carl Nightingale’s magisterial *Segregation* reflects a generation struggling to articulate a myriad of intersectional realities that threaten to shape human experience permanently. *Industrial Segregation* contributes to the effort in understanding the relatively recent creation of institutions and organizations that maintain racial injustice.

I could not have made progress on this project without my distinguished colleague and co-author, David E. Goldberg. When I first read his Master’s thesis on Asbury Park, New Jersey, I thought, “Here is an extraordinary historian. One day, I hope we’ll have a chance to collaborate.” Well, the day has finally arrived. With the ink still fresh on his monograph, *The Retreats of Reconstruction*, the future is bright for my good friend. First, and foremost, he has earned my heartfelt thanks. If someone had told me in 1991 that two Villanova historians would lead a global conversation on segregation, I would have laughed aloud. Yet, here we are. A special note of thanks to Melissa LaVenz, Brenda Rolwes, and the entire team at Kendall-Hunt Publishers for bringing this academic vision to reality. They have the courage and strength to bring innovative scholarly products to market in ways that stretch the boundaries of academic freedom.

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It is time we understood that racial segregation relied on a series of industrial ideologies. This realization provides the tools we need to dismantle the master’s house.



INTRODUCTION

Walter D. Greason

T. Thomas Fortune opened the *New York Age* in 1881. Born in Florida, educated in Virginia, Fortune built one of the most aggressive newspapers in defense of African-American humanity in the late nineteenth century. In the wake of the failure of American Reconstruction, his voice carried the banner that Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth created in pursuit of the abolition of slavery. Fortune was the leader who demanded that the local forms of racial segregation collapse before a united movement to sustain the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution. The *New York Age* confronted the violence, especially lynching, that accompanied the consolidation of political power by the Democratic Party across the South between 1872 and 1896. In Fortune's era, American segregation took deep root, but its origins stretch back to the seventeenth century. Before slavery, segregation shaped the early colonies of North America.¹ Thus, slavery and segregation existed in several relationships at specific moments and in specific places. These relationships, and their economic consequences, are the focus of this work.

Segregation declined as a North American phenomenon as the need for social control of enslaved Africans prevailed between 1670 and 1820. The exception to this pattern was the experiment with gradual emancipation in the New England and Mid-Atlantic states through the process of national revolution between 1775 and 1810. The connection between these specific transformations became the foundation of modern industrial segregation later in the nineteenth century. The commercial revolution in the "free" states in Revolutionary America relied on segregation as the primary alternative to the social controls that enforced economic productivity with the enslavement of Africans.² As the assumptions of racial difference shaped slavery, they also governed the deeper institutionalization of markets. White Americans (as a group) specifically denied African-American land and business ownership by legislative, executive, judicial, and mob action constantly in the "unfree" northern and Midwestern states in the first half of the nineteenth century. It was only natural that the southern states, defeated in the Civil War, would move swiftly to model the transition to black codes and Jim Crow laws that their regional siblings had implemented almost a century earlier.³ However, the accelerated pace of segregation under the industrial order of the Midwest became the fulcrum of racial injustice between 1870 and 1950. Rationalism and science became the most powerful propositions for racial segregation in the emerging industrial world order. Indeed, the prevailing organizational principle of the Industrial Revolution was segregation. Avoiding this recognition only enables this relationship to continue its poisonous evolution.

Robert Wiebe famously indicated that the period following American Reconstruction was a "search for order" that persisted through the first half of the twentieth century. The order was

a sense of control and measurability in human experiences that had never existed in previous human history.⁴ Order was a scientific construct, replacing a divine sense of mystery regarding the natural and social phenomena of human life. Where God once ruled human perceptions of events and thought, rationality became the foundation of epistemology. It is hard to overstate the importance of this shift. In many ways, the twentieth century was the most rational of all in human experience, but that belies the deep and persistent irrationalities at the heart of civilization in that period. White supremacy was the most influential delusion to support both the ascendant belief in reason and the persistence of insanity beneath the surface. Nell Irvin Painter captured many aspects of this fundamental tension in her work, *Standing at Armageddon*.⁵ For a people convinced that God's structure for the natural world faced unprecedented challenges in the face of emergent rational science, *Gottterdammerung* was indeed the prevailing feeling. The loss of traditional underpinnings of morality gave rise to a powerful political movement—temperance—in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This movement was the last gasp of nineteenth century religion at the core of civic virtue—giving way to a market-driven empiricism that marshalled industrialization as its primary evidence of scientific superiority. Where Martin Luther, John Calvin, and John Winthrop once stood, Andrew Carnegie, John Rockefeller, and J.P. Morgan rose to dominance. It was the hegemony of the industrial capitalist that ran aground in 1929, opening the door for an unusual political coalition to develop under Franklin D. Roosevelt between 1932 and 1945. Combining the charisma of a civic minister with the rationality of a global bureaucrat, Franklin Roosevelt managed a coalition that included Catholics, Protestants, integrationists, segregationists, feminists, and patriarchs that represented the rebirth of American democracy for the remainder of the twentieth century. One of the most profound creations of this coalition was the urban historian—a scholar who created the idea of the city as the paragon of human civilization. Unlike the original political or military historian, the urbanist looked beyond the spectacular events of war or the superficial ambitions of legislation. Instead, the urbanist derived a specific analysis of the local geography based on the questions and presumptions of a generation of economic historians bankrupted by the global calamity of industrial depression. In the emerging reality of American hegemony between 1945 and 1992, the urban historian crafted a set of hermeneutics that justified exceptionalism as she condemned its weaknesses.⁶ By the end of the twentieth century, urban historians emerged as the leading critics of globalization precisely because they knew the political, economic, social, and cultural foundations of rational policy were just as flawed as the religious and moral proclamations against immigration, railroads, and alcohol were a century earlier.

Partha DasGupta's approach to understanding social capital offers an opportunity to understand both the economics and the ethics of globalization—both in the present moment and historically. DasGupta explains three forms of capital that an advanced economy uses to maintain and expand its wealth. First, there are natural resources. The most traditional form of wealth, natural resources include any products of agriculture, mining, forestry, animal husbandry, or seafaring. Sadly, this ancient form of measure remains the core of too many conservative economic analyses. The story of the West in global economics relies on DasGupta's second measure—physical infrastructure. This asset category includes the value of mercantile trade, railroads, telegraphs, telephones, highways, superhighways, air corridors, and digital satellite communications. They are the ways that transportation and communication enabled the

industrial evolution of national and global networks since 1750. The final category of assets emerged as decisive in the last forty years, but also offers the most difficult questions for the historian—human capital. DasGupta calculates this resource based on the educational level and specific categories of expertise that a nation’s population exerts in the global marketplace.⁷ In Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, human capital distinguishes the resilience of their markets from the rest of the world. In the nineteenth century, the conversion of natural resources into physical infrastructure defined the emergence of regional and global empires. In the twentieth century, the coordination of physical infrastructure in the expansion of human capital made the United States into an economic superpower. *Industrial Segregation* presents a detailed history of the nineteenth century processes in ways that illuminate the early twentieth century systems. As a result, readers will better understand the stages of economic development in the emerging economies of the twenty-first century, while also envisioning the untapped markets of the twenty-second century in space, in digital intelligence, and in biological resilience.

The approach to the questions about economic change over time has moved forward rapidly since the start of the twenty-first century. David Freund’s *Colored Property* was one of the earliest works to document the ways that race shaped perceptions of market value in real estate after 1945.⁸ It also demonstrates the determination of banks, realtors, and community associations to disguise their language and motivations in these processes. Carl Nightingale’s magisterial *Segregation* revealed the deep historical roots in the relationship between race, space, control, and empire.⁹ More recently, Devin Fergus, Marcia Chatelain, and Nathan Connolly complicated the understanding of racial capitalism in the twentieth century by showing that property exercised a distorting ideological effect in the marketplace, especially among African Americans during Jim Crow segregation.¹⁰ One of the most stalwart organizations in pursuing this line of inquiry was the Society for American City and Regional Planning History. Led by Mary Sies, Chris Silver, Alison Isenberg, Joseph Heathcott, John McCarthy, and an array of exceptional scholars, the Society provided sustained support for new research and unfettered exploration of the ways institutions maintained anti-black racism across more than a dozen generations of economic change and beyond the boundaries of any single nation.¹¹ A group of heterodox economists, including William Darity, Trevon Logan, Tressie McMillan Cottom, and Darrick Hamilton, has used this history to challenge the longstanding resistance within their discipline to change its fundamental methods and assumptions. Finally, scholar Keeanga Yamahtta-Taylor and journalist Ta-Nehisi Coates have built on this generation of historical research to attract global audiences to the urgent need for reparations if there will be any justice in the twenty-first century.¹² This coalition defines a new history of capitalism that this work hopes to advance.

Industrial Segregation considers four phases of economic change and their ethical implications. It begins with a consideration of “Industrial Slavery”—a description of the ways that agricultural production remained reliant on enslaved populations while adopting the principles and practices of standardization that typically are associated with the “free” marketplaces of the northern and Midwestern United States. Second, the sources examine the creation of “Systemic Segregation.” Segregation had been a fragmentary and diverse practice for almost four centuries by the end of the American Civil War. Precisely as industrialization became the center of the United States economy, segregation as a legal and cultural practice

standardized between 1877 and 1896. Over the next fifty years, state repression and cultural hegemony entrenched a system that remains largely implacable as the middle of the twenty-first century approaches. The third section of *Industrial Segregation* examines the “Economic Imperatives” that support this commitment to global inequality—it opens the door to understanding how the policies and languages of color-blindness maintain injustice without specific references or justifications for inequity. The final section addresses “The Futures of Housing and Labor” by exploring innovative solutions that reduce the essential costs of human life and expanding access to time and capital for all people.

In the end, this work prepares its readers to ask a series of difficult questions. Should property be an inalienable right? Is the acquisition of property the only legally defensible happiness? Is production a more reliable indicator of both wealth and happiness, compared to consumption? These fundamental questions (and more) come back to an idiosyncrasy of the English language that confounds most policy debates. Values remain a cypher in economic history. There are ideological values, and there are economic values. Rarely do people successfully discern them in policy debates. Value from an economist’s perspective is a measurable phenomenon in the context of a market transaction. It is the building block for all conceptions of free or fair trade. Value from an historian’s perspective is an inherently subjective relationship that constantly shifts from one moment to the next. It is an impossibly unreliable indicator for the basis of law, justice, or equality. This tension, and an infinite number of derivations from it, drove the pursuit of an historical analysis of economic change that emphasizes the ethical compromises unfolded from these misunderstandings. Partha DasGupta provided the quantitative tools to establish a framework for the analysis, while the generations of urban historians created the qualitative record to demonstrate both the possibilities and pitfalls of industrialists and their legislators’ grand ambitions. These resources will offer the chance for better decisions moving forward.

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