

Testing *Market-Led Pluralism* from a Household and Community Perspective: Analyses of Racial/Ethnic Intermixing in Two Mid-sized Metropolitan Statistical Areas of USA

This project seeks to test the newly developed framework of residential intermixing -- Market-Led Pluralism from an opposite side of the housing market spectrum, the household perspective. Brown and Chung (2008) based on their in-depth discussions with the supply side of housing market suggest that the realtors, developers/builders, and lenders/bankers don't discriminate people based on their racial/ethnic background, but that it is the income/class and the purchasing power of people that influences their decisions of residential choices. An important question is -- how households perceive this nexus -- as they are the entities making decisions and making the system move one way or another. This project, thus, tests this framework from a critical perspective by examining and analyzing household perspectives of residential choices. Some of the key questions that will be answered in this project are, "*Do households think differently as consumers than the way a market-maker perceives matters? Do household perceptions differ according to their own characteristics, racial/ethnic composition, and neighborhood/housing characteristics?*" Both secondary and primary data will be employed, with an emphasis on the latter. A representative sample of households will be selected to adequately represent opinions of all racial/ethnic groups. Besides adding a critical perspective towards understanding intermixing, this will also address important geographic questions on ecological fallacy and masking of micro-scale segregation. This will be done initially by gaining knowledge of neighborhoods and the research sites, and from archival and census-based research to familiarize myself with their socio-economic (SES), demographic, built-environment, and spatial characteristics. Other tools employed will be participatory urban appraisal techniques, in-depth protocol driven interviews, and household surveys. This will be conducted in selected households from the identified census-tracts in Columbus and Milwaukee. The central element of this project, and the qualitative tools employed therein is to create a dialogue with and among neighborhood residents, often in a group setting with the intention of bringing out their perception of the area in terms of racial/ethnic aspects, resources available, concerns regarding neighborhood change, thoughts on the elements of *M-LP*, etc.

Some interesting photographs from the field work of this project ...



Fig.1: Conducting open-ended interviews and surveys with research participants in Columbus (left) and Milwaukee (right)



Fig.2: Interviewees in Milwaukee central city area (left); Showing the gun-shot hole on a television screen in a crime affected neighborhood of Milwaukee

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