# THE ENDURING CHALLENGE OF RACIAL INTEGRATION IN THE UNITED STATES<sup>1</sup>

# **Sharon Stanley**

Department of Political Science, University of Memphis

#### **Abstract**

This paper formulates a new model of racial integration for African Americans in the United States, based upon a careful consideration of the weaknesses in previous models. Instead of spatial mixing, this model of integration calls for transformed habits of interaction between citizens in public spaces, as well as a redistribution of power, understood as access to resources and opportunities. Integration along these lines would produce mutual transformation rather than compulsory assimilation. However, this model does not necessarily answer the concerns of integration critics who question the capacity of the United States to achieve true racial equality. Hence, the conclusion considers three significant obstacles to the achievement of integration, and acknowledges that unprecedented, radical transformations would be necessary to lay the groundwork for integration. In the end, both integration pessimism and a renewed commitment to integration are reasonable and defensible responses to our still-segregated present.

Keywords: Integration, Segregation, Assimilation, Blacks, Whites, United States of America

#### INTRODUCTION

The concept of racial integration no longer occupies the same prominent place in contemporary U.S. popular discourse on racial justice as during the 1950s and 1960s. In part, this reflects one of the great successes of the Civil Rights Movement: *de jure* segregation—a fundamental part of the Jim Crow regime of White supremacy—has been definitively dismantled. Yet, even as the term has faded from the front pages of newspapers and the front lines of protest marches, a more muted chorus of activists and scholars alike have warned that we simply abandoned the ideal of integration rather than achieving it (Anderson 2010; Boger and Orfield, 2006; Kozol 2006; Orfield and Eaton, 1997; powell 2012). In particular, they point to the persistent and dramatic residential, educational, and economic segregation of Black Americans as evidence of our collective failure to pursue true racial equality. They have called for dramatic, interventionist policies designed to combat not only *de jure* but also *de facto* segregation,

ranging from a national relocation program to break up neighborhoods of concentrated poverty to regional governance of metropolitan areas (Fiss 2003; powell 2005). These calls for a renewed movement for racial integration demand a careful articulation of the meaning of integration in a post-Jim Crow era, as well as a clear-eyed accounting of the obstacles that confront any such movement.

Insofar as the battle for integration in the United States was principally intended to counter the system of Jim Crow segregation in the South, it has unique resonance for and application to the Black community. While other racial and ethnic groups have obviously suffered from explicitly discriminatory policies of subjugation as well as violent and brutal treatment at the hands of private citizens and institutions, Jim Crow was a system of social control designed specifically to secure the ongoing social marginalization, economic exploitation, and political disenfranchisement of Black Americans in the wake of emancipation and Reconstruction. Consequently, this paper is about integration as an ideal intended to secure the incorporation of Black Americans on terms of full equality into the polity.

In many ways, the collapse of Jim Crow proved a daunting challenge to the movement for integration. When states mandated segregation by law, integration had an obvious target, and its meaning seemed unproblematic. But in an era in which the factors driving observed patterns of segregation are more complex and often hidden from view, the meaning and the desirability of integration becomes murkier. Indeed, all three terms related to this struggle—segregation, desegregation, and integration—are contested. This paper critically engages with two competing models of integration drawn from the line of post-*Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) school desegregation cases. Based on the shortcomings of both models, I offer an alternative model of integration that would be less vulnerable to the longstanding critiques of Black nationalists, critical race theorists, and some academics in law, political theory, and sociology.

Yet simply articulating a worthy ideal of integration misses the force of its most persuasive critics. The question is not simply whether we can paint a beautiful picture of integration on an empty canvas. Rather, we must examine our already existing canvas, with all the wounds and scars of a history of White supremacy and racial subordination, and consider whether and how we can transform it into the beautiful picture. On this count, integration skeptics from classical Black nationalists to the present cast doubt on the capacity of the United States to incorporate Blacks on terms that do not simply alter but effectively preserve the underlying logic of White supremacy. Consider J. Phillip Thompson's (2003) dubious response to Owen Fiss's proposal for a massive, nationwide housing relocation program:

[His] proposal to integrate White suburbs is far removed from political reality. White suburbia has already shown *in practice* where it stands on racial integration and poverty deconcentration. With so many of those Fiss wants to move into White suburbia coming out of prison today, it would be harder than ever to convince White communities to accept them. Trying legally to force White Americans to integrate against their will, in a country where they are a voting majority, has not worked and it will not work (p. 65).

Thompson identifies White intransigence as an insurmountable obstacle to residential integration. I am not sure if he is right that it is insurmountable, but it is certainly daunting. In this spirit, I conclude the paper by identifying three significant obstacles to the sweeping model of societal integration that I present. The point is not to endorse an absolute pessimism that rejects integration as an impossible fantasy, but to offer a realistic assessment of the challenges confronting any movement for true integration.

By confronting these challenges, both the proponents and critics of integration can better articulate not only their alternative visions of racial justice but also the necessary conditions for their achievement. I do not "pick sides" in this paper. Rather, I recognize that the battle for integration requires substantial sacrifices for the sake of a highly uncertain end. As such, reasonable people committed to building a more racially just society might well disagree about whether it is worthwhile to enlist in such a battle, or about when our society is actually prepared to fight that battle.

#### **HOW NOT TO INTEGRATE**

Let us begin with a closer look at inadequate models of integration that have driven critics to reject the ideal. School desegregation court cases provide excellent examples of problematic or incomplete visions of integration. One might object that desegregation and integration are distinct concepts, and that desegregation cases cannot be taken as examples of badly conceived projects of integration. Yet this objection misses the significance of these decisions in creating a popular, folk understanding of integration. The experiences of countless Americans with redrawn school district lines, shuttered Black schools, busing, and angry White mobs harassing Black students have indelibly imprinted a series of images associated with "integration" in the minds of many Americans. To the extent that these decisions shaped a generation's understanding of integration, they can also help us to understand the growing dissatisfaction with integration as a goal of the Black community itself, to say nothing of a White backlash against integration. And this, in turn, helps us to see what problems must be avoided in formulating a viable model of integration.

In the early years following the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Court took a decidedly aggressive approach to school desegregation, represented especially in the cases Green v. New Kent County School Board (1968) and Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education (1971). Most notably, in Swann, the Court upheld a desegregation plan that included busing against the school district's challenge. In doing so, they laid out certain principles guiding the desegregation process that exemplify what I call the aggressive approach to desegregation. First, they established that numerical comparisons of Black versus White students in particular schools may be used as a baseline for judging whether a school district has made a sincere effort to desegregate. Thus, although quotas cannot be imposed, racial imbalance may function as a presumption against the school district. Second, the Court emphasized that the object of desegregation is not merely to dismantle present patterns of discrimination, but also to "eliminate from the public schools all vestiges of state-imposed discrimination" (Swann 1971, p. 15). If district courts can establish a reasonable connection between present patterns of racial imbalance and discriminatory policies in the past, then they may refuse to declare the school systems adequately desegregated. Finally, the Court embraced so-called affirmative action, meaning that desegregation orders may demand affirmative, intrusive remedies for existing segregation: "The remedy for such segregation may be administratively awkward, inconvenient, and even bizarre in some situations and may impose burdens on some" (p. 28). In Swann, this meant affirming the lower court's order for redrawn attendance zones and extensive busing of students.

After Swann, however, the Court began to retreat from this aggressive posture. In a series of cases beginning with Milliken v. Bradley (1974), a case that struck down an interdistrict busing plan in Detroit and its suburbs, and continuing until the present day with Parents v. Seattle (2007), the majority on the Court has upheld what I call a minimalist approach to desegregation. In its purest form, the minimalist approach to desegregation holds that a school district is considered desegregated as long as segregation mandated by law (de jure segregation) is dismantled. If schools become racially

### Sharon Stanley

imbalanced due to demographic and residential patterns—such as large numbers of White people moving to the suburbs—this does not constitute resegregation. Segregation is necessarily a state-imposed system of racial separation. Racial imbalance due to the allegedly private decisions of families does not require a judicial remedy. Justice Thomas's concurrence in *Parents v. Seattle* (2007), in which the Court struck down voluntary school integration plans in Louisville and Seattle, offers the purest statement yet of the minimalist approach:

Contrary to the dissent's arguments, resegregation is not occurring in Seattle or Louisville; these school boards have no present interest in remedying past segregation; and these race-based student-assignment programs do not serve any compelling state interest. Segregation is the deliberate operation of a school system to carry out a governmental policy to separate pupils in schools solely on the basis of race. Racial imbalance is the failure of a school district's individual schools to match or approximate the demographic makeup of the student population at large. Racial imbalance is not segregation. Although presently observed racial imbalance might result from past *de jure* segregation, racial imbalance can also result from any number of innocent private decisions, including voluntary housing choices (p. 748).

I do not here aim to criticize this position as a matter of constitutional law. Whether it is founded upon a viable interpretation of the equal protection clause is a separate question from what sort of model of integration might be derived from it. The latter, I argue, would be profoundly deficient. And the reason for this deficiency starts not from the implicit definition of desegregation or integration, but rather from the *explicit* definition of segregation. After all, integration does not simply describe a particular arrangement of society but rather the undoing of a previous arrangement, segregation, that had secured the subordination, marginalization, and stigmatization of Black Americans. Therefore, what integration means, and what it looks like, depends crucially on what we mean by segregation. If segregation signifies only the presence of explicit statutes mandating racial separation on the books, then integration means nothing more than the elimination of these statutes. Such a model of integration would tolerate a virtually complete separation of the races, provided this separation was not legally compelled. A world of lily-White suburbs and exclusively Black inner cities could be considered integrated.

This picture of integration is problematic for multiple reasons. First, the mere fact of such a rigid, marked separation can produce democratic pathologies. The lack of interaction and common understanding between citizens can make democratic cooperation and communication difficult. Relative isolation produces norms of speech and self-presentation specific to the distinct communities. If we are unfamiliar with the style of speech and self-presentation of other citizens belonging to a particular community or group, we may find their claims less comprehensible or compelling. We also tend to be less familiar with the grievances of those who inhabit entirely separate spheres of society, and thus perhaps less sympathetic to these grievances or less able to formulate suitable policy responses. In short, this model of integration fails to reckon with the disconnect between a singular democratic nation and a pattern of sustained, systemic separation between racial groups.

Second, this approach entails an almost shocking naiveté about the enduring impact of history on the shape of our schools and communities. Justice Thomas's suggestion that present patterns of racial imbalance are likely results of "innocent" private decisions ignores the extent to which these decisions are themselves shaped by a prehistory not only of *de jure* segregation, but also of racial zoning policies, racially

restrictive covenants enforced by the courts, discriminatory federal mortgage policies, urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s, the creation of subpar public housing projects as replacements for razed neighborhoods, and numerous other complicit government policies (Bryant 2001; Fiss 2003; Kaplan and Valls, 2007; Massey and Denton, 1993). White families may "choose" to move to the suburbs, although their choices are clearly enabled by this history of state action, but surely Black families do not really "choose" to reside in crumbling, impoverished, blighted inner-city neighborhoods with struggling school systems. Furthermore, not only does the emphasis on individual innocence and state neutrality mask the enduring effects of historical segregation, but it also refuses to acknowledge more subtle forms of racialized state action in the present, such as exclusionary zoning laws in the suburbs, the prosecution of the War on Drugs, and school funding and attendance schemes that entrench patterns of spatial separation. Justice Thomas's account of segregation, taken as a basis for theorizing integration, ultimately erects false barriers between history and the present, and between state and private action.

Third, even if we accept that some distinction between state action and private action is possible, we surely would not describe a society as integrated in which pervasive private racism persisted even after all the vestiges of state discrimination were dismantled. Racially discriminatory legal policies are only one component of racial injury. Democracy also entails relations between citizens, what Danielle Allen (2006) calls "the basic habits of interaction in public spaces" (p. 5). If a Black family can buy a house in a predominantly White neighborhood, but their neighbors greet them with open hostility, or icy silence, this is hardly a model of an integrated nation. Obviously, it is not the role of the Court (nor within its capacity) to compel feelings of acceptance and love. My point is not that the Court fails if it does not order the elimination of private racism. Rather, the point is that any serious theory of integration must reckon with the ordinary patterns of interaction, communication, and cooperation between private citizens. An exclusive focus on legal discrimination cannot do this.

Fourth and finally, and perhaps most crucially, Justice Thomas not only overstates our capacity to distinguish *de jure* and *de facto* segregation, he also misunderstands *de jure* segregation itself by defining it as state-imposed racial *separation*. For segregation has always been about more than mere physical separation in the United States—rather, it was about separation for the purpose of securing *subordination*: "Segregation was an instrument of subordination that used a strict and rigid caste system to clearly define and limit the social, political, and economic mobility of Blacks" (Lawrence 2001, p. 189). Thus, an alternative definition of segregation would emphasize the way in which the distribution of material, social, political, and educational resources and opportunities still closely tracks the spatial distribution of race. To claim that these gaps entirely reflect individual choices of group members is to deny the role that geography plays in our access to resources and opportunities, and to deny the role that the state has played and continues to play in the creation and entrenchment of racial geographic patterns. Integration as a remedy for this understanding of segregation must close these gaps.

But can we really say that these gaps are a consequence of contemporary segregation? In her pathbreaking defense of integration, *The Imperative of Integration*, Elizabeth Anderson (2010) argues for an explicit causal connection between enduring racial segregation and the large gaps in health, wealth, employment, education, political standing, and access to goods and services, including public services, between Blacks and Whites. Although causality is difficult to establish conclusively, a growing academic literature across a variety of fields, including sociology, economics, political science, and public health, lends credence to her argument. While space constraints prevent an

exhaustive review of this literature, a few examples may be helpful. The public health literature is particularly damning, with numerous studies establishing plausible causal connections between racial segregation and a variety of negative health outcomes, including exposure to ambient air toxics that increase the risk of cancer (Morello-Frosch and Jesdale, 2006), likelihood of low-birthweight babies (Grady 2006), likelihood of tuberculosis transmission (Acevedo-Garcia 2000), and higher all-cause mortality rates (Jackson et al., 2000). The racial health gap may also be related to unequal access to healthy food. For example, Latetia Moore and Ana Roux (2006) find a lower incidence of supermarkets, fruit and vegetable markets, and bakeries and a higher incidence of smaller grocery stores and liquor stores in predominantly Black neighborhoods than in predominantly White neighborhoods in North Carolina, Maryland, and New York. A voluminous literature also exists on the spatial mismatch hypothesis, which holds that the relatively high rates of unemployment in predominantly Black, urban neighborhoods can be explained in part by their physical distance from available jobs. While not every study confirms the hypothesis, most reviews of the literature indicate the prevalence of studies confirming the hypothesis (Gobillon et al., 2007, p. 2402). These findings suggest that a complete understanding of contemporary racial segregation cannot focus exclusively on the mere fact of spatial separation, but must consider the relationship between spatial separation and access to opportunities, goods, services, and what we might call public bads such as pollution and crime.

Given the flaws with Justice Thomas's minimalist approach, we might expect the aggressive approach to desegregation to provide a better starting point for a viable model of integration. Certainly, this approach brings more skepticism to bear on the alleged distinctions between state action and private choices, and historical discrimination and present racial imbalance. This approach also recognizes the important democratic function served by racially integrated schools. But at the same time, a close reading of Justice Breyer's dissent in *Parents v. Seattle* reveals the dangers of well-intentioned, good-faith "liberal" integrationism. Contrary to Justice Thomas, Justice Breyer asserts in his dissent that resegregation has occurred in both Seattle and Louisville. Following one of the central principles of *Swann*, he measures this process of resegregation via numbers:

As of 2002, almost 2.4 million students, or over 5% of all public school enrollment, attended schools with a White population of less than 1%. Of these, 2.3 million were Black and Latino students, and only 72,000 were White. Today, more than one in six Black children attend a school that is 99–100% minority (*Parents*, pp. 805–806).

Whereas Justice Thomas dismisses these numbers as "mere" racial imbalance, Justice Breyer reads them as a lamentable retreat from desegregation. Although Seattle has no history of *de jure* segregation, he points to less overt, more subtle forms of state-sanctioned racial discrimination. Thus, he reasons, school districts may take race into account when determining attendance policy in order to maintain integration.

A model of integration built on Breyer's dissent would not tolerate a society of *de facto* segregation. Nor would it dismiss processes like White flight and suburbanization as "innocent" and therefore beyond the reach of integration policy. For these reasons alone, it is preferable to the minimalist approach. But this model of integration would also be vulnerable to familiar critiques of integration. For Breyer, as we have just established, racial proportionality is a rough measure of integration. If he bypasses Thomas's obsession with identifying explicit state laws as the source of racial imbalance, he shares his narrow focus on racial imbalance itself. As we have seen, though, the wrong

associated with segregation is not simply imbalance, but subordination. An overemphasis on numerical proportionality fails to address the root of the problem.

This becomes clear when we take a closer look at how Breyer determines when racial disproportionality warrants a remedy. For ultimately, Breyer and other liberal integrationists view only non-White groups, generally Blacks, as "segregated" to begin with. Malcolm X famously recognized this fact in 1964: "They never refer to the White section as a segregated community. It's the all-Negro section that's a segregated community." Racial disproportionality therefore sets off alarm bells only when racial minorities are overrepresented. Consequently, Breyer only laments the number of schools in Seattle that do not have enough White students. He zeroes in on a racial "tipping point" beyond which White students ineluctably flee a school: "Moreover, there is research-based evidence supporting, for example, that a ratio of no greater than 50% minority—which is Louisville's starting point, and as close as feasible to Seattle's starting point—is helpful in limiting the risk of White flight" (*Parents* 2007, p. 851). So, integration is a matter of avoiding the racial tipping point, and therefore avoiding the creation of majority-minority institutions or spaces.

Breyer thus unwittingly enshrines proximity to White people as the goal and prize of integration. A school with a mixed student body consisting of 33% Blacks, 33% Latinos, and 34% Asians would appear lamentably segregated, while a 100% White school would not even register as a problem. An integrated society is therefore one in which Blacks share all their spaces and institutions with substantial numbers of Whites. The presence of other racial and ethnic groups is simply ignored. Indeed, given the racial demographics of the country, an integrated nation would inevitably require Blacks to be the minority in every school and neighborhood. Though he was writing nearly four decades before *Parents v. Seattle*, Stokely Carmichael's (later known as Kwame Ture) classic critique of integration speaks exceptionally well to Breyer's formulation:

Integration speaks to the problem of Blackness in a despicable way. As a goal, it has been based on a complete acceptance of the fact that in order to have a decent house or education, Blacks must move into a White neighborhood or send their children to a White school. This reinforces, among both Black and White, the idea that 'White' is automatically better and 'Black' is by definition inferior. This is why integration is a subterfuge for White supremacy (Ture and Hamilton, 1992, p. 54).

Breyer's numerical, White-centric approach to desegregation is reflected in the very statistical instruments that social scientists, demographers, and policy analysts use to measure levels of segregation in metropolitan areas. The most commonly used segregation index "ranks metropolitan areas on the degree to which the African American population is evenly dispersed, with the goal of the same White-Black ratio in every census tract" (Quinn and Pawasarat, 2003, p. 1). Specifically, this measure of segregation, known as the dissimilarity index, derived from Karl and Alma Taeuber's work in Negroes in Cities (1965), shows the minimum percentage of Blacks who would have to move in order to secure an even distribution throughout the city of Blacks living alongside Whites in each census tract or, potentially, depending on the data being analyzed, on each city block. Like Breyer's model of desegregation, the dissimilarity index measures integration through proximity to Whiteness and views excessive concentrations of Blacks, regardless of conditions in the relevant neighborhood or the presence of other non-White groups, as intrinsically problematic.

When proximity to Whiteness becomes the measure of integration, predictable consequences follow. "Whiteness" becomes normalized, and those cultural, social,

and political traits that diverge from hegemonic White norms are marked as aberrant and deviant. "Good" minorities are those most able to thrive under the laws, norms, and expectations of already-existing institutions—institutions very often shaped by a history of White supremacy and racist exclusion. While Whites are merely asked to receive minorities into their schools and neighborhoods, without fundamentally changing the schools and neighborhoods, minorities are asked to abandon their own schools and neighborhoods and often to transform significant and sometimes cherished aspects of their lives: styles of speaking and dressing, political commitments, prominent placement of their history and culture in school classrooms, etc. For Iris Young (2000), the lopsided sacrifices demanded of minorities are constitutive of the very idea of integration and render it an unjust ideal: "[A]ttempts to bring about integration tend to leave the dominant group relatively undisturbed while requiring significant changes from members of excluded groups" (p. 216). And indeed, these sacrifices have long animated Black critiques of integration.

But this is only part of the problem. For Breyer's relentless focus on numbers as a measure of desegregation also screens off internal classroom dynamics from scrutiny, and this is where his approach becomes blind to the continuing problem of subordination even in nominally desegregated institutions. For racism can and does endure in racially mixed spaces and institutions. Indeed, Jim Crow was only established in the wake of emancipation—plantations were themselves racially mixed spaces. The point is not to compare desegregation to slavery, but rather, to demonstrate that strict *role segregation* maintaining White supremacy can thrive when Whites and Blacks inhabit the same spaces. If desegregation only goes so far as to compel the latter, but fails to transform either explicit racist attitudes (as with the example of hostile White neighbors) or racially imbalanced power relations, then it does not provide a worthwhile model of integration. Any integration worthy of the name must tackle not only racial separation but also White supremacy.

# **HOW TO INTEGRATE**

Many scholars and activists have offered alternative visions of integration that avoid the weaknesses of a model drawn from Breyer's dissent. These visions emphasize a process of mutual transformation rather than compulsory assimilation. Writing specifically about school integration, john a. powell (2005) explains that integration "is transformative rather than assimilative. That is, while desegregation assimilates minorities into the mainstream, true integration transforms the mainstream" (p. 298). Anderson (2010) assures us that "integration does not view disadvantaged communities as the only ones that need to change. Integration aims to transform the habits of dominant groups" (p. 115). Allen (2006) interprets integration as a process of mutual blending, for which the central question is "how to integrate into one citizenship the healthy political habits of both the dominators and the dominated" (p. 116). Meredith Lee Bryant (2001) defends a "right to racial identification" as a core component of true integration, securing respect for racial and cultural differences in an integrated society (p. 71). Michelle Adams (2006) theorizes a concept of radical integration that "rejects the notion that Blacks cannot form a stable and strong Black identity in an integrated environment" (p. 276). While these authors do not conceive of integration identically, all of them believe it is crucial to distinguish integration from assimilation conceptually, so as to guarantee that a truly integrated society is one that does not demand sacrifices exclusively from members of racial minorities.

Of course, written assurances that integration will entail mutual transformation rather than assimilation are easy enough to offer. More challenging is to offer a clear picture of how this mutual transformation can actually take place. To this end, I highlight two essential dimensions of a mutually transformative integration that mere physical mixing does not capture. First, true integration requires not only external transformation but also internal transformation. Second, integration requires a redistribution of power in addition to the recomposition of spaces. Let us begin with the necessary internal transformation. As we saw in the critique of the minimalist approach to desegregation, a nation in which private racism is pervasive does not deserve to be called integrated even if all forms of state discrimination have ceased. For Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a truly integrated society transcends mere desegregation by realizing the human aspiration for a community defined by cooperation, mutuality, and love. No new laws can secure King's beloved community, though they can dismantle segregated spaces and institutions. Rather, individuals must find the resources within themselves to act in accordance with a spirit of brotherly love: "Such obligations are met by one's commitment to an inner law, written on the heart. Man-made laws assure justice, but a higher law produces love" (King 1991, p. 123).

Yet perhaps such a vision is altogether too lofty for imperfect human beings to achieve. One can still formulate a less transcendent model of integration in which internal transformation plays a crucial role. On this model, not love but mutual respect is necessary for the establishment of democratic community. Acknowledgment of the other's basic human dignity requires us to take seriously their claims as citizens and to treat them as deserving a space and a voice in the public realm. Segregation relied not only on laws but also on the deeply ingrained belief held by numerous White citizens that they were entitled to maintain "key public spaces as their exclusive possession" (Allen 2006, p. 4). Habits of interaction echoed this belief. Reflecting on the famous photographs of Elizabeth Eckford being heckled by a White mob while attempting to enter Little Rock High School in 1957, Allen (2006) identifies the two "etiquettes of citizenship" for Whites and Blacks under segregation—"the one of dominance, the other of acquiescence" (p. 5). For integration to proceed, then, it is not enough merely to allow Elizabeth Eckford to sit in the classroom alongside White students. They must abandon their posture of dominance and truly recognize her right to be there as an equal participant, and she must be able to claim that right assertively, not forced by the hostility of others into a posture of acquiescence. She must feel comfortable speaking in class, and White students must welcome her contributions, even (or especially) when they induce uncomfortable self-reflection. Our imaginary classroom may not quite describe a beloved community, but it does describe a community of mutual respect.

Accepting Elizabeth Eckford's right not only to a space but also to an equal role in the classroom, whether this entails love or simply respect, requires a transformation of the self. True integration, therefore, requires psychic conversion. This process of psychic conversion ensures that racially mixed spaces are not spaces of distrust, rancor, and exploitation, but rather spaces of spirited discussion, collaboration, and reciprocity. Perhaps we have already travelled part way down this road. For explicit racial attitudes have improved markedly in the post-Civil Rights Era. The vast majority of Whites now repudiate segregation and legal discrimination, and reject theories of biological inferiority (Quillian 2006, p. 310). Yet the social unacceptability of explicit, hostile racism does not indicate a completed process of psychic conversion. As John Dixon and colleagues (2007) note, prejudice is complex and multidimensional; rather than disappearing, it acts in "contextually adaptive ways" (p. 867). Hence, audit studies of discrimination find strong evidence of continuing racial discrimination in housing and employment (Quillian 2006; Turner et al., 2013). Perhaps even more challenging,

research in social psychology demonstrates the persistence of implicit racial prejudice, or negative attitudes or feelings against a specific racial group of which a person is not consciously aware but which nonetheless may influence the person's judgments and actions (Greenwald et al., 1998; Ito and Urland, 2003; Quillian 2006). Indeed, in a review bringing together social psychology and child development literature, Sarah Hailey and Kristina Olson (2013) find that implicit racial attitudes, particularly negative feelings toward Blacks on the part of Whites, develop at a very early age, "as early as racial intergroup categories are acquired" (p. 463). These implicit racial attitudes are particularly difficult to target, given the individual's lack of conscious awareness. Indeed, they may be partially responsible for ongoing discrimination in housing and employment, to say nothing of less measurable awkwardness and discomfort in routine interracial interactions.

One might hope that the mere act of increasing contact between formerly distant racial groups would improve intergroup relations and diminish prejudices. This is precisely the premise of the contact hypothesis, originally formulated by Gordon Allport in 1954. If so, psychic conversion could well be a natural effect of racial integration, rather than an integral component that must be individually targeted and secured. Countless studies since 1954 have attempted to test the contact hypothesis in a wide variety of contexts, with complicated and mixed results. It is certainly possible to find reasons for optimism. In a comprehensive review of the relevant literature, Thomas Pettigrew and Linda Tropp (2006) find consistent confirmation of the contact hypothesis: "The meta-analytic results clearly indicate that intergroup contact typically reduces intergroup prejudice" (p. 766). Although the review examines literature on all forms of intergroup contact, not just interracial contact, Pettigrew and Tropp also isolate race as a target group and find "average" but still positive effects as compared to other target groups (p. 763). Even studies specifically designed to test the effect of interracial contact on implicit racial prejudice have yielded positive results. Jay Van Bavel and William Cunningham (2009) find that "membership in a mixed-race group can improve automatic racial evaluations" (p. 325). Yet positive results depend crucially on the meaning of "contact"—Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) limit their review to situations of "direct intergroup interaction" (p. 755). While sharing a school or a neighborhood with others certainly increases the likelihood of direct interaction, it does not guarantee it. Nor does it guard against types of contact that might provoke anxiety or distrust between groups, such as contact under competitive conditions or between groups with a longstanding history of mutual hostility. Thus it appears, at the very least, that integration must be managed in a way intended to secure sustained interracial interaction. A society truly committed to integration as mutual transformation must create spaces, institutions, and practices carefully designed and administered to foster interracial contact, communication, and cooperation.

This is not to endorse racial balance theories of integration that would consign Blacks to minority status everywhere, but merely to recognize the significance of public spaces and institutions that enable sustained interracial engagement. Needless to say, primary and secondary schools are the most obvious candidates, and school integration policies designed not only to bring Black and White children together under the same school roof, but also to promote their mutual engagement in racially mixed classrooms and extracurricular activities could play a significant role in sparking internal transformation. But schools are not the only places where interracial contact may be encouraged. Private and public actors can also promote positive forms of interracial contact through a variety of organizations, events, and spaces: recreational sports leagues, arts programs, civic organizations, neighborhood festivals, public events in libraries, museums, and parks, etc. However, we must guard against a naively optimistic

interpretation of the literature on the contact hypothesis. As we shall see in the final section of this paper, psychic conversion as an effect of integration produces a temporal paradox that is very difficult to overcome in political battles for integrative policies.

Furthermore, internal transformation alone is not enough. For racial subordination persists after the dissolution of Jim Crow not only in citizens' modes of interaction, but also in the distribution of resources that secure the exercise of meaningful power in the United States. Positive feelings toward another racial group, both conscious and unconscious, will not necessarily translate into White support for policies that would significantly diminish their own power as a group. But integration as mutual transformation will also require a redistribution of power. Following Clarissa Rile Hayward (2000), I conceive power "as social boundaries (such as laws, rules, norms, institutional arrangements, and social identities and exclusions) that constrain and enable action for all actors" (p. 12). This means that both Black and White Americans operate against the backdrop of a field of power that pre-exists them, at least partially constitutes them, and exceeds their ability to unilaterally transform it. Under a regime of White supremacy, social boundaries operate in such a way as to enable many more Whites than Blacks (or, indeed, than other non-White groups) to access the resources and opportunities that secure comfortable living standards, respectable status, and, most of all, an influential role in the recreation and reconstruction of those very social boundaries. To redistribute power is not to remove some portion of it from Whites and hand that portion over to Blacks, but rather, to transform the operative social boundaries that produce such discrepant effects in the lives of Blacks and Whites, and to transform them in a way that is shaped by the effective participation of Blacks in the transformation process itself. What Whites actually lose in this transformation is not so much power as privilege—the privilege that comes from occupying a more favorable position in the field of power.

Which social boundaries continue to produce limited opportunities and resources for Blacks in the present, and which boundaries make it difficult for them to redress this inequality? Education, housing, economic resources, and political influence play a crucial rule in positioning any group in American society. Furthermore, all four categories are tightly linked. Home ownership has been a cornerstone of middle-class wealth since the FHA began insuring loans against default in the 1930s. Yet Blacks were cut off from this new source of wealth, as well as the neighborhoods where the new middle class settled, because of a combination of explicitly discriminatory federal lending policies, racially restrictive covenants (until Shelley v. Kraemer in 1948), and endemic discrimination in the real estate industry, the latter of which continues to the present (Turner et al., 2013). Unequal home ownership therefore contributes both to the enormous wealth gap between Blacks and Whites in the United States, and to the deplorable conditions in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty that have been starved of resources and employment opportunities as the middle class fled to greener pastures with jobs and businesses following them. Residential segregation feeds into school segregation, particularly as families move into new school districts. This pattern of flight leaves behind not only overwhelmingly Black and Brown schools, but also resource-poor schools that must educate a student body facing the most acute challenges in the nation. powell (1995) has persuasively argued that only a coordinated plan combining housing and school desegregation can begin to address these problems, and can do so in a fashion that moves us toward true integration rather than mere desegregation. Finally, both wealth and education enable a greater voice in the political process. At the same time, urban Black populations are perennially marginalized in national electoral politics, as the electoral college overemphasizes issues of concern to a narrow group of swayable voters in battleground states. Two oft-cited examples

# Sharon Stanley

include disproportionate attention during presidential elections to U.S.-Cuba relations in order to appeal to voters in Florida and support from most viable presidential candidates for continuing ethanol subsidies to appeal to voters in battleground farm states like Iowa and Ohio. Meanwhile, issues of importance to urban Black populations such as mass incarceration, police brutality, and housing rights receive virtually no acknowledgment. Thus, across all four dimensions of power, Blacks are systematically disempowered, often in ways that feed into and mutually reinforce each other.

In this context, a redistribution of power signifies a transformation of these social boundaries to enable more equal access to crucial resources and opportunities. It is not my intention here to specify how exactly this redistribution should be implemented as a matter of policy; indeed, to do so would be to sidestep the necessary public and democratic deliberation over the shape of these policies in which the Black community must play a central role. But I will briefly discuss examples of the type of policies that we might consider. These examples are intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Jonathan Kaplan and Andrew Valls (2007) point to the history of housing and lending discrimination as a justification for reparations payments to Black Americans, which could be used to fund policies designed to close the wealth gap:

For starters, the federal and state governments should devote greater resources to preventing and prosecuting the racial steering that we have good evidence to believe continues to take place. Furthermore, African Americans ought to be eligible for very favorable terms on mortgages, with very low interest rates and low or no down payment, subsidized by the government. Also, African Americans should be provided with opportunities that would lead to the creation of wealth through means beyond the housing market alone: access to good education, favorable terms for loans to start new businesses, etc. (p. 269)

Similarly, we might propose programs that enable residents in high-poverty neighborhoods to find housing in lower-poverty neighborhoods, where they would likely have access to better schools and job opportunities, to say nothing of safer streets and a healthier environment. Such programs could take the form of providing housing vouchers directly to eligible participants, or incentivizing property owners in lowpoverty neighborhoods to provide low-income housing options. Along these lines, Fiss (2003) has proposed a \$50 billion/year federal program to "provide those who still are trapped in the ghetto with the economic means to move into middle- or upperclass neighborhoods" (p. 21). Yet this idea is also controversial, insofar as it threatens to break up predominantly Black communities, many of which provide a sense of solidarity and pride to their residents, while securing a base of political power, as well as to leave behind the poorest of the poor in even more devastated neighborhoods. An alternative proposed by Young (2007) is to provide a massive infusion of resources directly to disadvantaged neighborhoods: "Disadvantaged neighbourhoods of high racial concentration need massive public and private investment in housing renovation and development, commercial spaces and businesses, public spaces like community centres, parks, and playgrounds, and job-creating enterprises" (p. 227). In fact, we need not choose between these alternatives—a combination of both could ensure that the residents of these neighborhoods could make a meaningful, uncoerced choice between staying and leaving. Valls (2010) has proposed exactly this. Finally, serious reform of the electoral system is needed to empower urban Black populations whose votes are simply taken for granted under the present system. Linda Martin Alcoff (2003) emphasizes the radical potential of such a transformation: "If we eliminated the electoral college the urban population would therefore determine the presidency, which

would mean real enfranchisement for people of color for the first time in U.S. history" (p. 5). What all of these proposals have in common is that they attempt to break down the walls—some literal and some figurative—that deny access to high-quality housing, employment opportunities, wealth, high-quality schools, and a political voice to all too many Black Americans. In other words, they all seek a redistribution of power.

Criminal justice reform, too, is a crucial arena in the contemporary civil rights struggle, one that has recently received a great deal of mainstream attention owing to the publication of Michelle Alexander's The New Jim Crow (2010). The name of the book alone indicates why we must consider it here. Alexander demonstrates that our criminal justice system functions to create a new undercaste, entirely "locked out of mainstream society" (p. 13). Thanks to the wide discretion available to police and prosecutors in the so-called war on drugs, the undercaste created by mass incarceration is overwhelmingly Black and Brown. If Black power activists in the 1960s rightly warned against a form of pseudo-integration that left behind an invisible and forgotten mass of impoverished ghetto residents, then we cannot today leave behind the astonishing number of ex-felons against whom it is perfectly legal to discriminate. Perhaps no one in the United States has their ability to realize their aspirations more systematically thwarted. Ex-felons are denied public housing assistance and frequently turned away by private landlords. They are forced to check boxes on employment applications acknowledging their past criminal convictions, often dooming any chance of receiving an interview, let alone a job offer. Drug felons are permanently denied access to federally funded public assistance, including food stamps. And, to varying degrees in different states, felons have their most fundamental citizenship right—the right to vote—limited and sometimes entirely denied. The pursuit of meaningful integration must include, as the name of one organization within the movement for criminal justice reform indicates, "all of us or none" (LSPC, 2014).

In practice, combating the impact of mass incarceration could entail a number of different struggles. Overturning legalized forms of felon discrimination is clearly essential. Limiting police and prosecutorial discretion so as to prohibit racial discrimination is also important. We must restore full voting rights to all felons and ex-felons for the sake of our democracy. For many critics of mass incarceration, drug prohibition itself lies at the root of the problem, and drugs should be either decriminalized or legalized. While I am sympathetic to this argument, it is beyond the scope of this paper to enter such a complex policy debate. The key point is that mass incarceration is yet another bar in the invisible prison that disempowers so many within the Black community. Along with housing and lending discrimination, inadequate schools, political underrepresentation, and consignment to resource-poor neighborhoods, it must be dismantled if we are seriously committed to the project of racial integration.

This model of integration notably departs from conventional usage because it is no longer spatially defined. It does not seek to achieve an even distribution of Blacks and Whites in all the spaces and institutions of a region, nor does it view majority-minority spaces or institutions as intrinsically objectionable, so long as they do not act as obstacles to the aspirations of their inhabitants. We have already seen that a substantial degree of racial mixing is necessary for a truly integrated nation, insofar as it secures the kind of sustained contact that may diminish racial prejudice and provoke greater feelings of mutuality and reciprocity. In contrast to Anderson, however, I would not preclude the possibility of strong feelings of racial identification and solidarity amongst formerly disenfranchised racial groups, including Blacks, nor would I rule out the existence of predominantly Black spaces and institutions designed to foster these feelings. Indeed, such spaces and institutions could be crucial to resist assimilation. Like Young's (2000) proposed model of differentiated solidarity, our model

of integration would affirm a "freedom to cluster, both in urban space and in religious, cultural, and other affinity group associations" (p. 224), so long as clustering is not exclusionary and does not preclude other sustained forms of interracial contact. This new model of integration attacks Black subordination in both majority-minority and racially mixed spaces. Ultimately, this vision secures integration as mutual transformation because it provides Blacks with the necessary resources and opportunities to contribute to the rules and norms that will govern the many different integrating spaces and institutions—from neighborhoods to workplaces to schools to political movements—within an integrating nation. The point is not to deprive members of the previously dominant group of a voice but rather to prevent them from monopolizing the megaphone. In this still-imaginary integrated society, everybody contributes to and is changed by the newly fashioned, more genuinely democratic, norms, values, and institutions.

This model of integration is clearly an attractive one, insofar as it avoids the pitfalls of other approaches that have drawn fire from integration's critics. If it were possible to simply wake up tomorrow in an integrated country based on this model, it is difficult to see a persuasive argument against doing so. But of course, it is not possible. The process would be slow and laborious, and its ultimate outcome uncertain. For our ability to achieve true integration depends on questions that are difficult to resolve, particularly the intensity and enduring power of American racism. If one agrees with Derrick Bell (1993) that "[w]hites are rallied on the basis of racial pride and patriotism to accept their often lowly lot in life, and encouraged to vent their frustration by opposing any serious advancement by Blacks," then one will be highly skeptical of the country's capacity to overcome not just racial separation but also racial subordination (p. 8). Such, indeed, is Bell's own conclusion: "Black people will never gain full equality in this country....This is a hard-to-accept fact that all history verifies. We must accept it, not as a sign of submission, but as an act of ultimate defiance" (p. 12). Though I am less certain than Bell of the inevitability of White supremacy, I take his warning against empty optimism and recycled civil rights platitudes seriously. In that spirit, I would like to conclude by examining three of the most difficult challenges to realizing the aspirational model of integration we have traced here.

#### CHALLENGES TO INTEGRATION

First, is the problem of integration across multiple domains. As we have seen, American society is segregated in numerous, cross-cutting, and mutually constitutive ways—educationally, economically, residentially, and socially, etc. It is difficult to remedy segregation in any one domain without simultaneously taking on segregation in the others. But this kind of comprehensive solution is difficult to envision and has little precedent in legal or policymaking history. Second, is the problem of integration's fundamentally aporiatic nature. We know that true integration is not only an external but also an internal process, that true integration entails a genuine feeling of interracial solidarity. But this produces a classic chicken-and-egg problem. Interracial solidarity is crucial to the creation of a powerful political movement for genuine integration, but genuine integration is precisely the foundation of interracial solidarity. Third and finally, at the root of both of the preceding problems, is the issue of White privilege itself. If Joel Olson (2004) is correct that Whiteness is fundamentally "a form of power" (p. 113) then integration requires nothing less than the "dissolution of Whiteness as a significant social-political category" (p. 67). And this, in turn, will require substantial

sacrifices from White citizens of the nation—sacrifices that many will perceive (wrongly, in my view) as unjust, and that may prove exceedingly difficult to extract from them against their will.

Let us tackle these problems in the order I have raised them. W. E. B. Du Bois brilliantly recognized the significance of multiple domains of integration more than a century ago, when he analyzed six forms of "racial contact" which, at the time of writing, he condemned as badly strained and deformed. It is worth quoting from Du Bois (2005) at some length:

In the civilized life of today the contact of men and their relations to each other fall in a few main lines of action and communication: there is, first, the physical proximity of home and dwelling-places, the way in which neighborhoods group themselves, and the contiguity of neighborhoods. Secondly, and in our age chiefest, there are the economic relations,—the methods by which individuals cooperate for earning a living, for the mutual satisfaction of wants, for production of wealth. Next, there are the political relations, the cooperation in social control, in group government, in laying and paying the burden of taxation. In the fourth place there are the less tangible but highly important forms of intellectual contact and commerce, the interchange of ideas through conversation and conference, through periodicals and libraries; and, above all, the gradual formation for each community of that curious tertium quid which we call public opinion. Closely allied with this come the various forms of social contact in everyday life, in travel, in theatres, in house gatherings, in marrying and giving in marriage. Finally, there are the varying forms of religious enterprise, of moral teaching and benevolent endeavor (p. 161).

Du Bois clearly implies that these domains of integration are distinct but not autonomous. In other words, the lack of sympathetic or fair contact in any one of these domains can distort and undermine the possibility of positive, harmonious contact in another domain. Thus, despite the general confirmation of the contact hypothesis discussed earlier, the conditions of contact still matter. As Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) note, literature on the contact hypothesis has yet to provide a sustained investigation of "factors that curb contact's ability to reduce prejudice" (p. 767). But Du Bois's eloquent examination of the different domains of contact in American society provide a compelling framework for theorizing likely factors that may reduce the positive impact of contact. For example, the practice of busing to desegregate schools usually entails busing Black students from poorer neighborhoods into predominantly White schools in more prosperous neighborhoods, thus attempting school desegregation in isolation from residential (or what Du Bois calls physical) and economic desegregation. Yet the very fact that these students, who look different from the others, arrive and leave every day by means of a special system of transportation, works to emphasize their quality as racial and class "others"—an alien presence in the school. Meanwhile, students from poor families often struggle to keep up in the classroom, and their marked difference often makes them the object of taunting and scorn on the playground. These are not conditions likely to produce mutual respect between students.

Yet residential integration alone is also not sufficient to redress these problems. In the 1994 federal program Moving to Opportunity, a random sample of mostly Black and some Hispanic families in five cities (Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York) were offered the opportunity to use a housing voucher to move from high-poverty to low-poverty neighborhoods. Social scientists tracked the impact over

the short- and long-term. The families who moved to low-poverty neighborhoods did experience substantially improved outcomes in mental and physical health, but there were virtually no "detectable effects on schooling or labor market outcomes across the five demonstration sites in either the interim (4- to 7-year) or long-term (10- to 15-year) followup studies" (Ludwig 2012, p. 3). One key explanation for the disappointing results in schooling outcomes is that the MTO children often found themselves in the worst schools in their new school districts, often with only marginally better conditions than the schools they had left behind: "...they were still in generally low-performing schools that served overwhelmingly poor and majority-minority student populations" (Gennetian et al., 2012, p. 160). Similarly, the impact of individual poverty helps to explain the lack of improved labor market outcomes for adults in the study: "Nonetheless, the attributes of low-income people that may serve as barriers to success—for example, low education, lack of skills and job experience, poor health would be present regardless of their residential location" (Shroder and Orr, 2012, p. 38). In sum, at the very least, it appears we need to address residential, school, and economic segregation simultaneously to lay the groundwork for stable, healthy patterns of integration. As the politics of austerity and right-wing populism sharply limit political possibilities in the present, it is difficult to imagine such a comprehensive plan getting a serious hearing, let alone becoming law.

The problem of integrating across multiple domains simultaneously illustrates the temporal conundrum of integration. Here we must reconsider even more strongly the optimism of our earlier account of apparent confirmations of the contact hypothesis. Though it originally seemed particularly promising that well-designed integration policies may produce internal transformation as a natural side effect, this poses a serious problem in the contemporary United States, in which many Black Americans still find themselves living in conditions of hypersegregation and many White Americans still inhabit essentially separate social spheres. For integration of the most socially distant Blacks and Whites will require dramatic and radical policies of the sort discussed earlier—restitution for the history of housing discrimination, the dismantling of mass incarceration, the deliberate construction of spaces and institutions designed to foster sustained interracial contact, etc. But support for such policies requires the very feelings of mutuality, empathy, and solidarity that appear to emerge from sustained interracial contact. To put it simply: integration may well produce interracial solidarity, but we also need interracial solidarity to support pro-integration policies. The effect must become the cause.

Furthermore, it is a dramatic leap from the modest results of contact hypothesis experiments in improving general feelings and dispositions toward another group to supporting radically transformative policies. While more positive affective dispositions toward racial others are commendable in themselves and can meaningfully contribute to a more integrated society by effecting significant internal transformations, they are clearly not sufficient to tackle the deep structural inequalities between Blacks and Whites. In their criticism of the contact hypothesis, Mary Jackman and Marie Crane (1986) point out that "whites' affective and social dispositions toward blacks change with greater ease than their beliefs about blacks, or, more dramatically, their racial policy views" (p. 479). For policy views to change, the conditions of contact likely must be even more stringent and carefully controlled than for mere dispositions and feelings to improve. In his original formulation of the contact hypothesis, Gordon Allport (1954) identified five essential conditions for contact to have the desired effect: it must be sustained, based on the pursuit of shared goals, institutionally reinforced, and must take place between participants of equal status (Anderson 2010). Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) find in their review of the literature that these conditions are not absolutely necessary to prejudice reduction, although they do dramatically intensify its effect (p. 761). This intensification suggests that these conditions may be especially crucial if we are looking for contact to yield a particularly strong sense of mutual commitment and solidarity, sufficient to overcome White resistance to radically transformative policies. Yet once again we encounter the temporal problem of integration. For it is precisely those radically transformative policies that can secure the necessary conditions, especially the egalitarian requirement that contact take place between participants of equal status.

How can we break this stalemate? For Anderson (2010), everybody must participate in the work of social transformation, and self-transformation is a crucial part of this project: "For Blacks to achieve racial equality, Blacks need to change, Whites need to change, and we need to change" (p. 186). But there is something altogether too even-handed about this formulation. To ask for "changes" from everyone is to imply that the project of integration has suffered equally from the reluctance of members of all racial groups to pursue it earnestly. Instead, we might consider Allen's (2006) dictum that "the weak have been incorporated into the democratic polity only when they are in an equal position to request sacrifice from others" (p. 110). Following this dictum, the remarkable power of White supremacy to endure formal desegregation indicates that Whites have thus far proven unwilling or unable to make their own sacrifices even as Blacks have willingly served as integration pioneers, confronting hostile White parents at the entrance to schools, suspicious White neighbors in middle-class neighborhoods, and racially insensitive White co-workers and bosses in the workplace. This is why Sheryll Cashin (2005) appeals specifically to Whites to "view integrated or majority-minority neighborhoods or schools as viable options" (p. 194). It is reasonable, then, and not simply an objectionable retreat from the moral obligation to integrate, for Blacks to await more promising signs that White America is ready to sacrifice as well for the sake of integration. Otherwise, their efforts at integration run the risk of producing only a pseudo-integration that isolates them without significant power in majority-White spaces and institutions that do not treat them with respect.

This may seem a pessimistic conclusion. I prefer to consider it simply modest. The history of Black subordination in the United States has left deep, entrenched, and sometimes invisible marks on virtually every political, social, and economic institution in the country. Like Cashin, I believe that the prospects for achieving a worthwhile form of integration depend crucially on the choices of White Americans, at least in the near future, and these choices in turn inevitably constrain the possibilities of meaningful integration even for those Black Americans absolutely committed to its achievement. For some, this realization leads to integration exhaustion or pessimism, and a search for alternatives, such as Roy Brooks's (1996) proposal for limited separation, defined as "voluntary racial isolation that serves to support and nurture individuals within the group without unnecessarily trammeling the interests of other individuals or groups" (p. 190). For others, we must strengthen our pursuit of integration by dismantling the myth of White innocence, rendering invisible White privilege visible, and demanding the sacrifice of this unearned privilege (Baldwin 1993; Balfour 1999). I am not sure that we can prescribe one of these alternatives as the "correct" one from the vantage point of our still-segregated present. Both are realistic and reasonable responses to the radically transformative demands of integration.

Corresponding author: Sharon Stanley, Department of Political Science, University of Memphis, 437 Clement Hall, Memphis, TN 38152. E-mail: sastanly@memphis.edu

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