



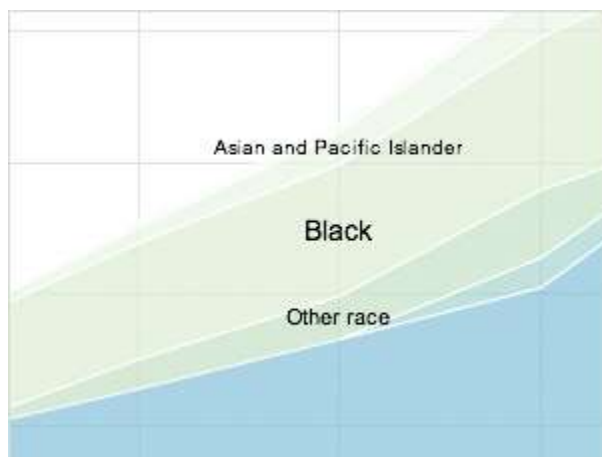
Cities In Transition: Some Shifts, Continued Flight

by Miranda Kennedy

February 15, 2011

The most recent U.S. Census data prove what many of us knew to be true: There is a general movement to the suburbs, and it isn't just whites.

Diversity is spreading out from the cities (the traditional immigration gateways) and into the South and the Sun Belt, which are relatively new centers for employment.



Both Hispanic and Asian populations have increased in the past decade. They have helped to create a phenomenon that demographer John Logan of Brown University calls "global neighborhoods" — areas pioneered by Hispanics and Asians, into which African-Americans are now also moving. Another well-known demographer, William H. Frey of the Brookings Institution, calls them the "melting pot suburbs."

And yet, even as many Americans are experiencing greater diversity in their neighborhoods, there is also lingering polarization.

Racial Segregation Today

Minority populations are growing and redistributing themselves around America, but racial segregation has improved only incrementally.

Many Hispanics and African-Americans continue to live in communities that are largely segregated from whites. White flight continues in most parts of the country, as whites continue to

leave neighborhoods that are getting browner, and to steer clear of established minority neighborhoods.

Traditionally, demographic, ethnic and racial shifts happen slowly over time, contrary to the hopes and expectations sparked by the civil rights movement of 50 years ago.

Census data from 1990-2000 finds that while African-American segregation continued to decline, its downward shift has slowed.

In fact, the decline in black-white segregation in that 10-year period was just a little less than 3.5 points on a scale of 100, according to Logan. That's even slower than the progress between the years 1980 and 1990, he says, when it declined 4.9 points. And Hispanic segregation has barely budged in the past decade.

The reasons for those shifts are complex, and vary from city to city, from suburb to suburb. That's why this week *Morning Edition* will be looking at how some American cities — and their outlying areas — have changed, and how they've stayed the same. We'll be finding stories inside these patterns of demographics and segregation to try to illuminate what they mean for people's lives.



D.C., Long 'Chocolate City,' Becoming More Vanilla

While other cities are getting browner, Washington is bucking the trend.

'Cities In Transition'

We'll start off in **Washington, D.C.**, which earned the nickname "Chocolate City" because for decades it was largely populated by African-Americans. But Chocolate City is looking a little more like fudge ripple these days. Whites are moving back to the District in large numbers, as are a small but growing number of Hispanics. NPR's **Alex Kellogg** spent some time in a neighborhood that was almost all black for years but is now starting to change — as black residents move out to the suburbs.



History Hinders Diversification Of Portland, Ore.

Experts say cities that don't have much diversity to start with struggle to attract it.

Progressive city planning and a reputation for "community" and "quality of life" have helped **Portland, Ore.**, outcompete other cities and attract young people with college degrees. But Portland remains one of the whitest large metro areas in the United States, and minorities there say it's an isolating place to live. Portland is becoming, perhaps, the ultimate example of Americans sorting themselves into like-minded communities where everyone looks the same. **Amelia Templeton** reports.



In Phoenix, Foreign-Born Workers Find Jobs Faster

Younger foreign-born workers willing to take any job are replacing aging native-born workers.

Jobs are the lagging element from the recession recovery. But one huge demographic group has been gaining back jobs faster than others: foreign-born workers. Nationally, their unemployment rate is a full percentage rate lower than native-born workers. NPR's **Ted Robbins** looks at **Phoenix**, where immigration issues are at the forefront, to find out why the foreign-born seem to be doing better.

Wrapping up our series on cities and demographics, NPR's **Steve Inskeep** talks to Brown University demographer John Logan about how little patterns of segregation have changed in the past decade in American cities — about 1 percent improvement nationwide. Logan is one of the country's pre-eminent demographers on race.