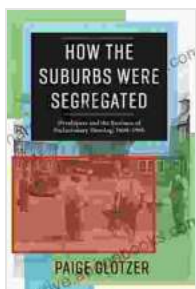


# Unveiling the Hidden History: How The Suburbs Were Segregated

The suburbs often conjure images of idyllic neighborhoods, single-family homes, and manicured lawns. However, beneath this picturesque façade lies a complex and often overlooked history of segregation. In "How The Suburbs Were Segregated," author and historian Kevin Kruse delves into the systemic policies and practices that shaped the racial makeup of suburban America.

## Antecedents of Segregation

Kruse traces the roots of suburban segregation to the early 20th century. Urban renewal projects and restrictive zoning laws in cities created pressure on African Americans to leave city centers and relocate to less desirable areas. Restrictive covenants, agreements between homeowners not to sell or rent to certain groups, further barred minorities from accessing housing in white neighborhoods.



## How the Suburbs Were Segregated: Developers and the Business of Exclusionary Housing, 1890–1960 (Columbia Studies in the History of U.S. Capitalism)

by Paige Glotzer

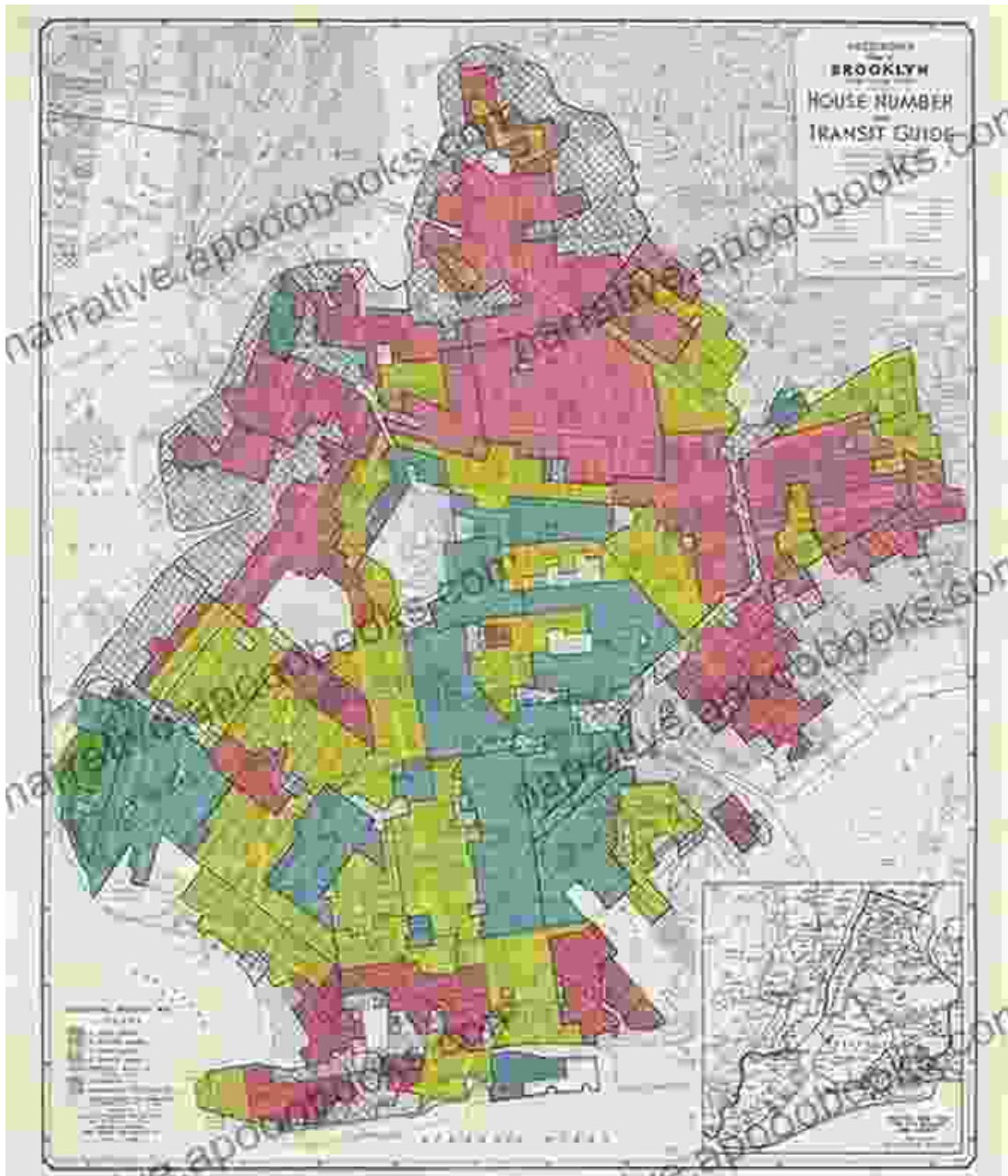
★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 316 pages



## **Redlining: The Foundation of Segregation**

Kruse argues that the federal government played a crucial role in suburban segregation through its redlining policies. The Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) created color-coded maps that graded neighborhoods based on their racial composition and economic stability. Redlined areas, typically those with large minority populations, were deemed "high risk" for investment and denied access to mortgages. This practice effectively walled off communities of color from suburban opportunities.



## **White Flight and the Rise of Suburbs**

After World War II, many white families left cities for the suburbs in a phenomenon known as "white flight." Fueled by fears of integration and racial unrest, white homeowners moved to new subdivisions financed by federally insured mortgages. Developers and real estate agents actively marketed these communities as exclusively white.

## **The Role of Government**

Kruse examines the complicity of government agencies in perpetuating suburban segregation. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) insured mortgages for homes in white-only suburbs, while the Veterans Administration (VA) provided loans to veterans for homes in segregated neighborhoods. These policies incentivized segregation and limited the ability of minorities to access housing in predominantly white areas.

## **Resisting Segregation**

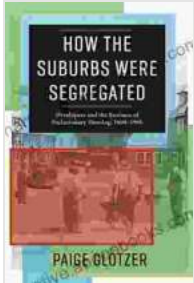
Despite the systemic barriers, African Americans and other marginalized groups fought against suburban segregation. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and other civil rights organizations challenged restrictive covenants in court and organized protests against discriminatory practices. In 1968, the Fair Housing Act outlawed discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

## **Legacy and Impact**

Kruse concludes by examining the enduring legacy of suburban segregation. While fair housing laws have made significant progress in dismantling legal barriers, residential segregation remains a persistent issue in the United States. Segregated suburbs often have lower-quality schools, higher crime rates, and limited access to economic opportunities, perpetuating a cycle of inequality.

"How The Suburbs Were Segregated" is a groundbreaking work that sheds light on the hidden history of racial segregation in suburban America. Kruse meticulously documents the policies and practices that created and

maintained segregated communities. By understanding this history, we can better address the ongoing challenges of racial inequality and work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society.

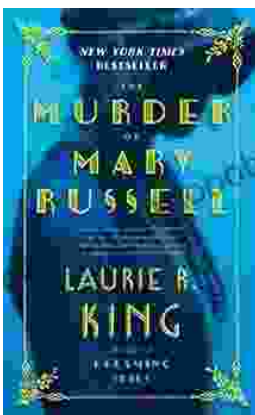


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