

- The response to those concerns is the swiftness to which their communities are being transformed
- The average neighborhood in Detroit would go from black to being all white to being all black in a period of 3 to 4 years
- That alacrity with which neighborhoods became predominantly black provoked a sense of urgency
- Particularly the role of real estate agents
 - They provoke fear in white neighborhoods that their homes are being taken over by African-Americans
- If you were living in a white community and you had [a formerly white neighborhood next to you that turned African-American, they would scare you]
- Leaflets were sent warning that African-Americans were taking over their neighborhood
- This community could become a ghetto, you've gotta get out
- Think about those working-class whites as we indicated on Tuesday who did not have the ability to move out to the periphery
 - For those whites, having to sell or having to relocate, albeit with negro resources
 - Remember up until the government gets involved they're unable to pursue their American dream of home ownership
- Desire to keep communities white superseded the way in which they are forced to sell their property
- White homeowners believed that African-Americans represented the grim prophecy of a deteriorating neighborhood
 - If you look at black communities throughout Detroit, those communities are in run-down districts such as you see in this picture during the early 1950s.
- You're going to get a lower-class village overrun with lower-class element
- Beyond predicting that African-Americans would transform white communities into slum villages, there's also the belief that wherever African-Americans go, so goes deterioration
- You can't blow your horn in Park Ridge – those particular ordinances have their genesis in this particular moment
 - White Americans feel that African-Americans are noisy, [they have loud parties]
- You not only want to keep out the slums but you want to keep out African-Americans because with the spread of [racial diversity] comes crime
- Their primary goal was to prevent racial mixing – particularly between black men and white women.
- You can think of the history of race in America as being premised on white womanhood.

- It is about preventing miscegenation, about preventing racial intermingling.
- That black penetration of white neighborhoods posed a [threat] to white identity
- You get this thing called a mulatto
- You get these racially mixed babies that challenge what it means to be white or to be black
- You begin to strip away at the white man's reserve. His relationship so to speak with white women.
- There's a politic of family housing in neighborhood that is paying particular attention to the risk that sort of intimacy can provide.
- A white gentleman Edward Brah decides he is going to sell not one but two homes on Detroit's West Side to white families
 - And this moment touches a deep nerve on onlookers who see [blacks moving into this neighborhood] as a threat to womanhood and certainly to this child
 - And to this home
- It is the issue of public housing – the most galvanizing issue that white homeowners are dealing with
 - Because we know that any African-American moving into a white neighborhood faces resistance
 - The focus on housing is a focus on poor blacks as well as poor whites
- If you think about those gainfully employed African-Americans they're not able to get a foothold in these communities as well.
- Most white Americans see African-Americans as poor and not having the ability to live in these white communities
 - So the problem becomes how to prevent socialized housing, how to prevent socialism
 - Especially government-sponsored developments for low-income blacks
 - Public housing then becomes the significant wedge issue between New Dealers and New Deal liberalism.
- I did a study as a senior paper in high-school.
- I think the most I found someone paying a month was something like 50 50-some odd dollars
 - I remember it was something like 53, 54 dollars
 - Part of it again is due to black displacement
 - Remember, black communities are being ravaged by urban renewal projects, by eminent domain
 - So as African-Americans are displaced, as they are faced with the challenges of housing shortages they need a place to live.

- Beginning with the Federal Housing Act of 1937 and culminating in the [Taft]-Wagner Act of 1937, ... and black migrants suffer the brunt of housing shortages so they become the group that benefits mostly from public housing. The problem is that inasmuch as city officials and federal officials (state/local) officials are trying to alleviate the housing crisis you still get white resistance.
- They see themselves as part of a New Deal rights group as part of a rights talk to express their political [conviction]
- Built in the New Deal is this notion of rights for Americans.
- The idea then is that just as the New Deal is looking to in a very inclusive way provide rights for people against the fundamental assaults from that unrestrained pursuit of capitalism that dominates or pervades the 1920s, they also believe then that they should have the same right when it comes to not only home ownership but again, who gets to reside in their particular communities. That ultimately their beliefs are sort of rooted in New Deal liberalism.
- This is a sort of irony that I can't overemphasize. In essence you have people who are using the New Deal to oppose the New Deal. That's the simplest way I can suggest it to you.
- That FDR in his many speeches, even when he addresses Congress, when he gives his State of the Union address (1944) and he's giving what he terms the second bill of rights, most of his emphasis is on the ability of Americans to become homeowners. Now, not only is he doing this through the use of speeches but he's doing it through legislation, he's doing this through actual policy.
 - So homeowners are not only dreaming of home ownership but they're becoming home owners for the first time. They're able to get loans from the federal government to buy or back mortgages and get negro homes in the city. With these government-backed mortgage loans they're then able to achieve their sense of the American dream.
 - They begin to see home ownership in the same way that FDR is espousing
 - What it means to be a citizen in America is the same as what it means to be a homeowner.
 - And what they are especially proud of, especially appreciative of is that the FHA and HOLC are insistent that mortgages and loans be restricted to racially homogenous neighborhoods which resonate then with white Detroiters
- They essentially become citizen homeowners.
- It did benefit African-American homeowners but it was racialized
- Lots of African-Americans find work through the civilian conservation corps.
- There's a good book by Iris Helk Nelson it's called When Affirmative Action was White
- Nelson also has another good book on the New Deal
- What he tries to explain is the way in which the New Deal while certainly bringing African-Americans into the fold, kept them marginalized.

- 55% of African-Americans are not able to benefit from unemployment insurance
- Because social security / unemployment does not benefit people who work in agriculture
- Other things like the G.I. Bill. In spite of what's taking place at the federal level, a lot of the benefits are distributed / doled out at the local level.
- Each time they put out a variety of grievances, they do so underscoring the fact that they are citizens of this country.
- It's home ownership for citizens. Not only is it a cornerstone of who they are as citizens but it also endows them with certain inalienable rights, the right to live in a neighborhood they choose
- And so they're not only pushing back against black invasion but they're also pushing back against those white New Dealers who are supporting policies that enable African-Americans to try to attempt to move into white neighborhoods.
- Again, this is a sort of way for those of you who are really trying to gain an understanding of anti-liberalism and what anti-liberalism entailed is it. Seeing federal officials as going overboard and trying to hasten interracial mingling [trying to erode their sense of citizenship]
- There's no explicit way of defining what homeowners' rights are
 - Sometimes it's economic interests, sometimes it's protecting their citizenship rights
 - They're trying to protect their rights as citizens shaped by the New Deal order.
 - They're also trying to protect their rights as wartime patriots
 - They're also trying to protect their sense of bootstrap agency
 - That this is not only about citizenship but it's about hard work, that what you get out of life is what you put in it (of course scholars who studied the Odyssey would disagree with this)
 - That this is the reward for sacrifice and duty
 - Not only is this the reward for sacrifice and duty but it's also drawing on this sort of idiosyncratic [bid] for independence in the Bill of Rights
- MALLEABLE CONCEPT
- They have a very rhetorical understanding of equality but they don't want to see equality in action
- They are taking tax money and helping African-Americans move into white neighborhoods and it is creating tremendous problems
 - Resources like housing, hospitalization are being taken
- Ultimately what you get from this is liberalism's demise.
- When he's first elected mayor in 1941 liberals love him, he shapes a large portion of the civil rights vote also in black communities

- He begins to refashion his racial politics. So in 1943, 1942 he says let these African-Americans move into the Sojourner Truth housing project
 - Richard Frankenstein
 - So he begins to combine race-baiting with red-baiting. And he's opposed, in post-1945 by Richard Frankenstein who you'll see in the next slide. And he makes a Frankenstein out of Frankenstein.
 - This person who is a bogeyman to white Detroit.
 - He wants to point to Frankenstein's organizational ties.
 - Not only am I going to talk about this guy as a Communist, I'm going to engage in race-baiting, I'm going to engage in red-baiting
 - A vote for Frankenstein is a vote for Negro housing
 - Negroes need to be your neighbors so that you do your duty on November 6th.
 - And Jeffrey's supporters of course sound the ominous alarm, you'll see what happens
- The bloody guy, that's Frankenstein
- But you could think of Frankenstein as being left bloodied by this political race against Jeffries.
- And so the electoral choice become essentially very stark.
- In particular they praise the Detroit housing commission for its own policy of segregation and housing and for declaring that the majority of the city of Detroit do not want their neighborhoods challenged or changed by the presence of African-Americans.
- They try to say that this is a race about economic populism.
- They try to do their own thing. Whereas white neighborhood groups are saying this is Communism you have different groups of unionists saying this is fascism.
- They live in Birmingham, they live in [Burn] Hills
- Communism, it's un-American.
- Milenga tells me this I get an hour or two of sleep a night, but it is what it is
- So you get Jeffries who ultimately wins right, then in 1949 you get political tensions over housing sort of reintroduced, come to a head in the mayoral election of 1949.
- So you get Edwin against this guy George Edwards
- Edwards is the liberal common counsel member backed by the CIO
- You get Albert Cohol who is a conservative republican
- Edwards is a UAW activist, Cobo is a corporate executive, a real estate investor, someone who exclusively focuses his campaign on issues of race and public housing

- So he's on with the endorsements of white neighborhood improvement associations
- He sweeps the largely white precinct where voters are largely concerned about the threat of public housing
- Cobo adamantly opposed Negro invasions
- Edwards constantly championed the rights of blacks to housing in New York City
- So liberal leaders, what they decide to do is meet. Cobo wins, Cobo keeps winning and they're baffled.
- They're baffled because they're trying to figure out again how the conservative Cobo beat Edwards.
- They're completely thrown off by this development, is because they had put significant money into funding his campaign, into sending out fliers to 1.2 million Detroiters
- Because you have a lot of unionists saying oh we won't vote for Edwards, then they went to vote for Cobo by a large margin
- What they're able to come to a conclusion is that
- They also have these sound cars and sound trucks that they send all around Detroit and share pro-Edwards messages and of course anti-Cobo messages, none of it works. Just to show you how bad it was for Edwards.
- He won 82% of African-American vote. He won 59% of whites in public housing.
 - The other group that he won surprisingly was southern hillbillies who had migrated. Probably because they're poor too. And his message is very economically populist.
 - The politics of home and the politics of work.
- White working-class New Dealers were willing to put work first only when it benefitted them but only when it expanded this inclusion of the New Deal they were able to shape a sense of unity between the politics of home and the politics of work.
- The other thing is that it caused the UAW to retreat.
- The UAW realized in essence, we're not going to win this battle.
- The UAW's political action committee continued to support other candidates.
- They certainly did not spend the amount of money that they were accustomed to spending.
- They did not support Cobo's opponents the way they had supported others.
- Cobo won by advocating and defending homeowner rights
- He essentially brought the vast majority of Detroit whites into a bipartisan anti-liberal coalition. And ultimately dismantle or brought a sense of demise to labor liberalism.
- And a kind of liberalism that was inclusive and beneficial to all African-Americans.
- Single-handedly kills that sense of public housing as a controversial issue inside of Detroit

- Now, closing. The neighborhood association movement, this working-class grass-roots movement, the monopoly they had on Detroit is in some ways short-lived.
- During the 1950s huge numbers of white Detroiters flee the city
 - Just as the black population is experiencing an uptick
 - Blacks are becoming an increasingly large political block of Detroit
- Homeowners' Rights Ordinance – the ordinance is to maintain segregated housing.
- The timing of New Deal insurgency gives credence to the idea that by ignoring the needs of white working class people [the New Deal succeeded]
- That the importance of politics and neighborhood in constraining social reform had its genesis in the 1950s last till the 1960s.
- And Ronald Reagan who was very familiar with candidates.
- They emerge from the rejection of white liberalism as Detroit went through these changes.
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