Week 7 journal

Why, in your opinion, does segregation remain an enduring characteristic for most American cities, despite efforts to address it?

How can visualization of segregation (and its consequences) make a difference?

What can segregation measures capture well? What aspects of segregation are more challenging to measure?

I think that segregation remains an enduring characteristic for most America cities because the root of the problem has not been solved. More specifically, segregation at its core continues to be about race, generational wealth, and capitalism. At its core, integration is nearly impossible if that means that families of specific races or ethnicity need to sacrifice specific social safety nets, savings, or their community in order to be part of an integrated community. Of course, these can be addressed through funding and support from local organizations and local governments. The wealth gap between black and white families continues to remain large which is an issue within itself. Despite efforts to reduce segregation, cities in America have remained that way because historical issues have not been adequately addressed at the education or institutional level. Segregation is not just about segregation, its also about the racial wealth gap, the education gap, generational wealth, lack of housing, and lack of resources (to name a few).

The visualization of segregation and its consequences can make a difference because people are then able to show that it very much continues to exist. Unfortunately, there are people who believe that segregation is no longer an issue and use terms such as self-segregation, calling people lazy, or use stereotypes to justify specific patterns within particular ethnic enclaves. However, if we are able to visualize these consequences and that segregation exists, people may be more empathetic to the situation and how it has or has not changed over a period of time. I think that this can even show how segregation can have dire consequences to the people living within those communities. We can visualize the consequences of segregation by showing neighborhood decline may increase crime rates, lower home values, decrease availability of quality education, and other distressful things associate with segregation. Visualizing these things can help find better ways to support communities through policy, planning, and other initiatives such as housing.

Segregation measures can capture how many people would need to move into or out of a community to create a more integrated place. For starters it can show how homogenous particular communities can be which can show the groups most affected in a particular community. These measures can also show how particular communities have improved or declined over time. However, there are more aspects to segregation that cannot quite be measured through segregation measures such as how moving may put them at risk of social safety nets that they have in their current communities. These measures should only be used as a tool to inform people, but not tell the full story. These measures cannot always ways the historical context of a particular place or the people as the place, thus, they should be used to tell the full story, rather they should be used to help tell the story.