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Urban development is a foundational field which has a direct impact on the quality of life for any individual inhabiting the area of development. Globally, there are many factors that are leveraged to weigh what constitutes just and equitable design, sustainability, and provides quality of life. Factors such as housing quality and affordability, educational quality, health care accessibility, transportation, and access to healthy food and quality water are some characteristics observed across the board. While what this looks like varies from country to country, the significance of how this is applied in the United States is important and should be critically analyzed to appropriately frame the conversation and define what constitutes livability for all people.

SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

CAPTURING BLACK VOICES FOR DESIGNING

AN APPROPRIATE LIVABILITY INDEX

FOR THE BLACK AMERICAN COMMUNITY

by

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to all the men and women who have courageously stood against injustice, strive to be a voice for the voiceless, consistently withstand oppression, and continue the press for the Black American community and our fight for the right to exist. Thank you for continuing to see the value in the work and enduring in this progression toward equity, just, and fair treatment.

This work is also dedicated to my wife, Samantha, who has stood in support of my various academic pursuits to position myself to impact the community. And to my children, who I hope to have the opportunities that many of my community did and do not because of the ethnic obstructions embedded in our society.

Above all, this work is dedicated to the One True Living God of Israel, Aha-yah (Exodus 3:14), who has graced me with the strength, wisdom, and endurance through His Holy Spirit and Christ, to do all that I am able as we are called to live lives of selfless sacrifice to empower the community through Him as representatives of Christ.

APPROVAL PAGE

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PREFACE

Urban development is a foundational field that has a direct impact on the quality of life for any individual inhabiting the area of development. Globally, many factors are leveraged to weigh what constitutes just and equitable design, sustainability, and provides quality of life. Factors such as housing quality and affordability, educational quality, health care accessibility, transportation, and access to healthy food and quality water are some characteristics observed across the board. While what this looks like varies from country to country, the significance of how this is applied in the United States is important and should be critically analyzed to appropriately frame the conversation and define what constitutes livability for all people. There has been discussion emerging in the mid-1900s about social sustainability and urban planning, however, it appears to have lacked significant perspective or understanding of the importance and value of livability factors specific to the Black American community as a core concept of urban planning and design. This in part may possibly be due to both intentional and unintentional omission of the historical aspects of how urban design and social considerations have existed in this nation regarding racist practices which have disenfranchised, displaced, and disadvantaged many Black Americans. Within the United States of America, this is particularly important due to the historical components of how many neighborhoods were developed in correlation to the racial climate of the nation such as redlining practices that precluded Black Americans from moving to predominately White neighborhoods, unfair lending practices which prevented Black Americans from obtaining loans to purchase homes in more 'upscale' areas, as well as prejudicial zoning ordinances which subjected many minorities to environmentally hazardous living arrangements, just to name a few.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

Often when a thing lacks definition, it subsequently lacks clarity, structure, bounds and is ultimately up for interpretation, all of which are unacceptable when discussing anything that directly impacts the quality of life and overall design of social constructs, communities, and environments. When you think of livability, the most common thought that probably comes to mind is how "livable" a thing is. Or perhaps more along the lines of the quality of life, or even the ability to live somewhere. However, within the urban development and public affairs realm, there seems to be an ambiguous uncertainty with this term livability and precisely what it means for the Black American community. There must be a focus on the racist history of Urban Planning and Development to appropriately understand how this should be defined and entail to accurately include the Black experience. This ambiguity and lack of consideration pose a problem (Fitz et al., 2015; Foster et al., 2016).

In the past, livability was typically constrained to geographical topics of sustainability within the natural terrestrial environment, transportation, land use, air quality, and some justice issues as Gough expresses stating:

> "Planners working on this frontier of livability and sustainability practice still operate without consensus on conceptual connections and methods to navigate the messy terrain of tensions between these sometimes competing visions for urban planning. There is increased interest across disciplines of community planning, environmental management, and transportation in examining relationships between livability and sustainability. . .while consensus on definitions of livability and sustainability is important to advance theory and practice perhaps even more valuable are the linkages between concepts, identifying areas of potential conflict and complementarity. . .Given the limitations of current conceptualizations of livability and its relationship with sustainability, ways to reconcile these concepts must be examined to anticipate challenges and formulate strategies for implementing livable and sustainable land use policies" (Gough, 2015).

In 2009 the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) established The Partnership for Sustainable Communities between the US Department of Transportation (DOT) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), developing 6 principles of

livability. These principles are: 1.) Provide more transportation choices, 2.) Promote equitable, affordable housing, 3.) enhance economic competitiveness, 4.) Support existing communities, 5.) Coordinate policies and leverage investment, and 6.) Value communities and neighborhoods. This was done because, "Not only are increasing numbers of Americans struggling to find an affordable place to live, work, and raise their families, but the combined cost of housing and transportation now consumes more than half of the average household's budget" (HUD.gov, 2021). While these livability initiatives provide insight and guidance, we still see a lack in consideration of the Black experience as many of these initiatives often lead to skewed investments or investments and tax credits intercepted by the private sector who engage in the urban revitalization that ultimately gentrifies and displaces the residents the funding initiatives are intended to benefit (Clark et al., 2008; McCabe, 2018; Anne et al., 2015).

More recently, however, the American Association of Retired People (AARP) is an organization that is concerned with the interests of the American populace, aged 50 years and older. Understanding that the aging population has specific needs, interests, and desires for quality of life and overall well-being during retirement, they developed a livability index to help aging seniors either in retirement or preparing for retirement locate their ideal community to live in. Over time, the AARP Public Policy Institute (PPI) emerged which, "promotes the development of sound, creative policies to address our common need for economic security, health care, and quality of life". Through this, the AARP PPI Livability Index expanded to provide livability ratings for many communities in the United States using categories such as: 1.) Housing which measures accessibility, availability, affordability, and cost burden; 2.) Neighborhood, measuring access to parks, grocery stores, libraries, jobs by public transit, mixed-use areas, density, crime rate, and vacancy rate; 3.) Transportation, which measures the frequency of transit, accessibility, options, congestion, household transportation costs, speed limits, and crash rates; 4.) Environment, measuring drinking water quality, air quality, roadway pollution, and industrial pollution; 5.) Health, measuring rates of smoking, obesity, and preventable hospitalization, as well as patient satisfaction, access to exercise opportunities, and healthcare professional shortages; 6.) Engagement, measuring broadband access and speed, civic involvement opportunities, voting rates, social involvement, and cultural, arts, and entertainment institutions; and 7.) Opportunity, which measures income inequality, jobs per worker, high school graduation

rates, and age diversity (HUD.gov, 2021). It should be noted that some of the observances of accessibility and other metrics are assessed regarding the aging population.

Demographic data within the AARP model is limited, to the elderly population while the HUD livability principles are inclusive to a degree, yet seemingly biased in their interpretation by urban planners (Ewing, 2015). Additionally, many indices are traditionally established upon the perceived needs as defined by White American community desires and cultural considerations which lack appropriate consideration of critical links between the social, environmental, and economic aspects of sustainability and livability from the Black American perspective (Fitz, 2019; Howley, 2009; Craig, 2018). These links that are missing are those which examine the racist policies and practices which directly and systemically contributed to many of the poor livable conditions many Black American communities occupy to date. This means they primarily focus on practices of the built environment that are not fully considerate of the environment's social dynamic regarding ethnicity (Opp, 2017; Brand et al., 2020). We must acknowledge the reality that many neighborhoods and communities throughout the United States have been developed under systemic racism and are the direct result of racially oppressive practices, practices such as redlining, environmental injustice, diverted resources, and potential social experiments concerning public housing which perpetuated damage to the Black American community (DuBois, 1998; Clegg, 2015; Baptist, 2016; Hutson, 2013; McCann, 2007; Rothstein, 2018).

Many livability indices lack appropriate consideration of these critical links between the social, environmental, and economic aspects of sustainability and livability regarding systemic racism and classism (Rothstein, 2018). Additionally, they do not adequately reflect the interests and needs of the Black American community and, when considering current data sets with livability indices, there are several knowledge gaps of specific demographic and qualitative information that should accompany most exploratory research that aims to define impacts anticipated or presupposed on persons (Brand et al., 2020). These lapses lead to poverty, poor quality of life, disparate health, stigmatization, and displacement (Fainstein, 2010). This problem can and will only be solved by reversing these adverse, perpetual effects and the design and implementation of a livability index or inclusion of metrics, specific to the Black American community can

contribute to reversing the longstanding effects of systemic oppression and racial bias, correcting the overlooked history and subsequent impacts of this history in this discipline.

1.2   Purpose of Study and Research Questions

This project aims to fill knowledge gaps by offering a relational analysis of concepts through analysis and presentation of both quantitative and qualitative data with respondent feedback to establish a more appropriate context for understanding real concerns impacting thriving livability and quality of life for Black Americans. Additionally, the research aims to identify applicable metrics for designing a useful livability index for the Black American community with consideration of the Black American community's interest. A definition which transcends silo-thought definitions limited by implicit boundaries of disciplines. This project will achieve this through the analysis of current knowledge and research that braids together the history of livability and its theories, behavioral theories, social sustainability theories, and relevant aspects of the built environment. Concepts such as mixed-used design, racist urban planning policies and practices, and historical patterns of discrimination and classism, and other historically oppressive sociological factors continue to impede livability for Black American communities to date. The aim is to stimulate conversation and analysis for the implementation of effective solutions while drawing the appropriate attention to how the concepts of racism and classism need to be recognized for consideration of urban planning and development, specifically for the Black American community.

The following research questions and premises will be investigated in this thesis:

i. How livable are Black Communities?

ii. What biases exist in current livability index metrics and what additional considerations are needed for indices to be inclusive of livability for Black Americans?

iii. How do Black communities understand livability, and how do these understandings differ from established definitions?

iv. What considerations must be addressed to design a livability index that is inclusive to Black Americans?

This project will investigate these phenomena to affirm the premises and establish a foundation for further study. The survey questions answered by respondents are can be found in Appendix A with the methodology expounded in the Methodology section.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The concept of urban design and land use is rooted in the desire to create a natural balance of distribution and equity across the use of space and resources. Over time, globally, how this has been employed has changed and evolved to parallel technological changes, population shifts, and governmental influence (Meade, 2013). Within the United States of America, operating as a nation initially established under Manifest Destiny, patterns of displacement and oppression, slavery, armed conflict, and racial tensions that not only erupted in the Civil War, but was also perpetuated through acts of domestic terrorism and racist legislation against Black Americans are historically present yet often unaddressed, or unadmitted (Shabazz, 2015; Shaw, 2016) (Rothstein, 2018). Discussions of socially sustainable urban development must include metrics that accurately capture the voices of the Black American community and correctly articulate the present challenges to equitable development practices that bear the residual effects of racial history often suppressed (DuBois, 1998; Craig, 2018; Brand et al., 2020). In light of these factors, this study is intended to draw these racial considerations to the forefront to examine the very real impacts of racist policies that are inherently imbedded in urban development and city planning, examine the implicit biases built into current livability metrics, and highlight the requirement for specific consideration of Black American interests and needs during the design and implementation of urban planning and development.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Overview

As we progress through the discussion and establish the framework for this thesis, we must examine some of the critical debates surrounding the diverse considerations of the topic as this work is a combination of relational analysis which seeks to identify the intersecting nodes between various disciplines and concrete thoughts that various academics have proffered to shed light on critical aspects of livability and add substance to the overall conceptualization of a more integrated, interdisciplinary approach. To assist readers with processing the analyses, the review will be structured as follows: 1) Current Knowledge and the Concept of Livability, 2) Racially Historical Considerations of United States Urban Planning and Development, 3) Social Sustainability, and 4) Design, Social Sustainability, and Livability.

2.2   Current Knowledge and Concept of Livability

> "[C]ommunities that are 'safe, attractive, socially cohesive and inclusive, and environmentally sustainable; with affordable and diverse housing linked by convenient public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure to employment, education, public open space, local shops, health and community services, and leisure and cultural opportunities'. . . [A] definition [which] reflects the social determinants of health and wellbeing", Brian McCabe, 2018 *Protecting Neighborhoods or Priming Them for Gentrification? Historic Preservation, Housing, and Neighborhood Change*.

The concept of livability is relatively young, having emerged in the 1950s. It is an idea that had conceptually existed for nearly 40 years before its definition was revisited and expanded upon Eizenberg & Jabareen (2017), who articulate that this idea of social sustainability was not introduced until later in the context of livability in the typical development discussions, yet present within more human focused disciplines such as anthropology, urban planning and studies, geography and the social sciences. It is their understanding that the three-pillar model which intertwines ecology, economy, and sociology, is needed to properly develop social sustainability methods. Noting this, there has been more attention from the scholarly perspective that seeks to adequately process what livability is in the context of social sustainability,

expanding to include key social factors as Eizenberg and Jabareen (2017) express the difficulties which emerge from the introduction of the social processes in these planning and policy aspects. Prior to this, however, scholars such as such as Susan Fainstein (2010), Henri Lefebvre, (1968) and Jim Capraro (2013), and Meghan Gough have taken a more comprehensive examination of the social justice considerations of livability for more inclusive and equitable applications of these social considerations in planning. As Gough explains, many urban planners have a focus on financial growth and local economic stimulation to improve inclusion and equity, an opinion in which Robert Giloth (2015) agrees. Both Gough and Giloth cite the importance of expanding the context of urban development through creation of social equity through a collaborative front consisting of municipal authorities.

These aspects of justice have become more prevalent as attention to the often-overlooked elements of race and class are not fully weighed in the discussions around livability. As a result, we see patterns of development which begin to emerge under concept Bruce Katz terms "Back to the City" movements and "Urban Revitalization" in attempts to thrust forward a concept of "New Localism" where the emphasis of development becomes more geared toward the local economy, job creation, and overall revival of local cities. These practices ultimately perpetuate displacement, disenfranchisement, appropriation, and translocation of Black Americans from their communities, better known as gentrification, as expressed and agreed upon by Kantor and Turok, as well as the Neighborhood Defenders, a coalition of grassroots activists working to mitigate and reverse gentrification. Richard Rothstein draws on the foundations of gentrification by calling attention to the presence of racist laws embedded in United States policy making. Rothstein highlights the components or redlining where banks mapped out areas in which applicants would be denied housing or funding opportunities. Beyond this, we see Henri Lefebvre begin to raise issues regarding the "Right to the City". Lefebvre examines who owns the right to the city coining the concept of a "cry and demand" from diverse voices and this jarring debate around just *who* has the right to a city. Though a Marxist, Lefebvre understood the subtle connections of development through his ability to process things through a historical lens.

It is these thoughts that potentially influenced Susan Fanstein's interpretation of the lack of contextualization and definition that surfaced from these terms and questions that began circulating as the need for something concrete. From Right to the City we see Fainstein introduce

that concept of a "Just City". Taking it a step further than Lefebvre, we see Fainstein begin to investigate what makes a city just? How do we analyze the social justice components of urban planning and ensure that there is balance to wat is being implemented? This led to the establishment.

As a result, we see the emergence of livability metrics such as those within the AARP model that reflect the interests of their target population more prominently, the aging American of 50 plus years in age. There are some overlaps in the core principles of what is essential for community development, yet their specific focus on the interests of the elderly population implies that, categorically, different demographics have different needs, which should be appropriately articulated. With this, we see there are varying thoughts and opinions. Therefore, we must establish boundaries to the topic in itself, particularly concerning the Black community. An analysis on framing livability conducted by the University of Oregon addressed the reality that livability is important yet vastly misunderstood, stating:

> ". . . the concept of livability has several definitions. Attempts to define the term
> have produced a wide range of themes and properties. However, most invocations
> of livability are not attempts to define the term. Rather, clues on implicit
> definitions emerge from the term's usage."(Herman & Lewis, 2017).

This statement alone highlights the remarkable yet difficult to understand, complexity underscoring livability and expresses the distinctions of interpretation that complicate discourse and uniformity on the topic as many authors and thought leaders may fail to define their expression of ideas into comprehensible frameworks that can be properly digested and investigated. Consequently, most urban planning and land use did not and to date still does not include the interests of these marginalized populations, specifically the Black American Community.

One of the early scholars to take on this task was Donald Appleyard and Allan Jacob (1982). Through his Urban Design Manifesto, we see the framework for the problems embedded within urban design practices and proposes potential solutions through six goals that are "essential for the future of a good urban environment"1. The eight problems discussed in his Manifesto are: 1) Poor Living Environments, 2) Giantism and Loss of Control, 3) Large-scale Privatization and the loss of Public Life, 4) Centrifugal Fragmentation, 5) Destruction of Valued Places, 6)

Placelessness, 7) Injustice, and 8) Rootless Professionalism1. Aspects of each category are emergent in subsequent literature as we see thematic discourse withing urban planning and design that appears to address concepts of Appleyard's identified problems, yet individualistically. Scholars such as Robert Giloth who, as mentioned earlier, discuss achieving equity through strategic, explicit investments that create economic opportunity through job creation and wealth creation, often termed place-based development strategies. These separate approaches to address complex problems in the urban planning and design theatre have led to imbalanced development, divestment, displacement, and other forms of urban decay and design flaw.

Through this we see many scholars exploring critical approaches such as Henri Lefebvre's '*Right to the City*', one of these scholars being Susan Fainstein (2010) who argues that diversity, democracy, and equity are three principles that govern the urban field, more specifically in the aspect of justice. Fainstein engages the topic of spatial justice through exploring methods that alleviate marginalization and oppression, or repression, to produce democratically diverse cities which are inclusive of residents and instigate authentic growth and equity. Additionally, as Jim Capraro (2013) notes, communities are complex, necessitating the need for comprehensive development practices if they are to be successful. He extends his argument further with the suggestion that, not only are communities complex, but they are "environments where interdependencies are critical", highlighting the collective, interdisciplinary solution (Capraro, 2013). To take this further, we see examples in communities in which the population is obligated to be in court or maintain certain appointments via court order yet lack transportation. A solution that has been often implemented is a partnership with local transit service to provide rider passes for such individuals to overcome barriers due to lack of transportation access.

On the same note, there is an element of tension regarding this concept as many inter-dependencies typically generate a supposed need for an organization to take lead. It is here where Jim Capraro also argues that a lead agency must organize, plan, and coordinate, a method which has often shown to disrupt successful development that is both livable and inclusive, circling back to Feinstein's argument on the democratic components necessary for just development. In support of this thought, we see this played out today through the US Department of Housing's (HUD) interagency partnership where HUD is the lead agency in efforts to achieve sustainable

communities and improve the quality of life for residents (hud.gov, 2021). As of current, concepts of livability and inclusivity tend to focus on economic equity and do not appropriately account for racism and the subsequent impacts thereof.

The general consensus on livability originally tended to measure the quality of life based on gross domestic product (GDP) as a key metric and shifted in response to the mid-century planning which often focused on financial prosperity at the expense of social and environmental sustainability, resulting in various instances of environmentally racist actions, and further social stratification (Fainstein, 2010). This is evident when we see many indices of livability tailored around economic development as a cure for urban design that is both equal and equitable as evidenced in arguments raised by many scholars such as Katz (2018), Kantor et al, (2012), Clark and Christopherson (2008), and several others. These authors provide thematic overviews and in-depth explanations that directly challenge current urban development practices which denigrate the social considerations adequately and ultimately cripple cities. With this however, there still remains a gap in consideration of the true impacts of racism and how these inconsiderate styles of urban planning and design impact Black American communities. Thus, we see the emergence of Black scholars with the intent to vocalize that proper livability and urban planning and design must be inclusive of other factors encapsulated in the political constructs of the US. They expound on concepts both Appleyard and Fainstein expressed, showing that collectively more attention needs to be placed on more than just economic investment which tends to skew development (Fainstein, 2010; Appleyard, 2015; Clark & Christopherson, 2008; Bullard, 2008)

2.3   Race, Racism, and the History of Urban Planning, Design, and Policy

Though there is much literature that one can read to expand further on this topic of the history of land use in the United States, it is important to gain a general insight as to the foundation of our nation's overall history. Thus, this section is included for the non-academic to receive a general understanding of these historical aspects for proper orientation to the topic at hand, particularly with consideration to how property laws in the United States were established, as well as the understanding that Black Americans were once counted as property rather than citizens. According to *Land Use and Society: Geography, Law, and Public Policy*, urban planning and design has existed across the span of time and continent (Platt, 2004). Conceptually, it deals with

the regulation and government of land use and distribution, resource management, and as a method of creating a balance among the populace and managing the population, or undesirables (Platt, 2004). To maintain balance and a form of sustainability, historically the 'custom' "amounted to a state of legal equilibrium in which all parties—commoners and nobility alike— were bound by social understanding as to the use of manorial resources" (Platt, 2004). Platt states:

> "Concepts of property rights and land use law in the United States owe much to the legal systems of the countries of origin of settlers in various regions. The English common law, based heavily on prior judicial decisions, or precedent, was implanted in New England and mid-Atlantic settlements. Elements of civil law, based on administrative codes like the Napoleonic Code, were imported to settlements by migrants from France and Spain, as in Florida, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California" (Platt, 2004, Chapter 3, p. 67-68).

As colonists continued to immigrate to and settle in and across North America, there appears to have been a pattern of feudalism and self-governance with regard to land use and property rights throughout the early emergence of communities. Over time, however, the aspect of balance between 'nobility and commoners' became less apparent as the advent of slavery and social polarization became a prominent factor in the history of the United States and the aspect of nobility and commoner did not apply to Indigenous people and Black American slaves who were viewed as uncivilized and or property (Clegg, 2015). Considering this, it must be acknowledged that the core of urban planning, land use, and property management are inherently racist as many policies and practices were developed without care or consideration for the non-Whites, as expressed by Rutherford Platt who expressed the true power of how land use and management is relegated to the states, who intern allow policy and zoning to be managed by local municipalities, by the federal government- which is key. Consequently, we see a key aspect lacking in current and past livability conversations is how the racism embedded within modern design principles (Rothstein, 2015), whether explicitly or implicitly, are impacting the Black American community (Ralph, 2019; Baptist, 2016).

Understanding this, over the past several decades many Black scholars and otherwise prominent voices from within the Black community are observed to have held discourse to call attention to these biases in practice and policy adversely impacting Black America, however these discussions often seem to be excluded from inclusion in a variety of key disciplines, relegated to

areas which limit exposure. One such well known voice is W.E.B. DuBois who offers in-depth analysis of the plight of Black America and our journey to rise from the ashes of slavery. DuBois does a phenomenal job communicating the many vices and nuances that plague Black Americans, while expressing the complex socio-political, and psycho-social considerations that are weighed daily by many Black Americans (DuBois, 1998). Expanding on these aspects, we see literature that discusses the impacts of racism and prejudice as individuals such as John Clegg explains in Capitalism and Slavery, supporting key points made by DuBois and the deficit that Black Americans carry as a result of the capitalism that was launched off their shoulders (DuBois, 1998). Key historical data also emanating in Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism and Racial Capitalism. DuBois and subsequent authors are primary sources that begin to speak to the Black American experience and express the challenges faced daily by Black Americans, challenges which many may struggle to properly grasp. This study in itself is a continuation of this style of work aiming to bring the Black American experience to the forefront in ways that matter and instigate progressive action.

In *The Disproportionate Minority Contact Mandate: An Examination of Its Impacts on Juvenile Justice*, *Intersectionality and Criminology: Disrupting and Revolutionizing Studies of Crime*, and *Spatializing Blackness: Architectures of Confinement and Black Masculinity in Chicago*, we see discussion on the implications of how design and policy impacts Black Americans historically. These publications display a two-pronged aspect of how the tangible, built environment and the intangible environment shaped by policy has on directing the lives of Black Americans. The authors expose how racist policies and projections of Black Americans established instances of hyper-criminalization, inequitable sentencing and punishment for similar crimes committed by other races, the development of the school-to-prison pipeline, and how the overall structures of the living environments pre-dispose and condition Black Americans to aspects of poverty and incarceration. Support for this theoretical outlook is found in Power, Politics, and Community Development and Black Skin, White Masks in which Frantz Fanon, 1952, articulates parallels to DuBois's double consciousness, where ultimately Black Americans have a dichotomy of self-identity that fluctuates based upon conceptualizations and interpretations of Blackness, or Black American culture, by predominately white society. All of which continue the stance on the uphill battles faced by many Black Americans, specifically due

to the avoidant approach toward the critical theories, 1989, of race relations and the very real historical trauma passed down generationally.

These principles are particularly observed in the structure of the Black Panther Self-Defense Party, as well as many Black American gangs in the United States as found in Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020. Beyond Black America, many immigrant Americans also developed gangs in various cities, and all for the same reason – self-protection and preservation considering feeling police officers were not there to support and serve them, rather to contain and control them. Immigrants and Black Americans were often harassed and victimized by White Americans and developed a method of self-protection (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020). Though these were not the sole origins of all gangs, it is the predominate origin for immigrant and Black American gangs. These grassroot community organizations were established on a principle observed in John Locke's theory of the Law of Nature, an observation that this natural desire of individuals to preserve self ultimately builds to war conflict which in turn retreats from conflict after the conflict further brings the realization of self-preservation as explained by Hesiod, 2020. Understanding this, it must be noted that Black American gangs are the result of deep-seated racism, racist politics, segregation and resource deprivation, police brutality, and domestic white-supremist terrorism (Howell and Moore, 2010; Hagedorn, 2006). It Is these factors which highlight the severe significance of Travis Hirschi's multiple Social theories, i.e., Social Bond Theory, Social Control Theory, and Social Deviance Theory as they each explain what is necessary for a sustainable community development that positively impacts the populace. Hirschi's theories explain the levels of social interaction which shape, mold and hold accountable, the actions and interactions of individuals in society. These range from deviance to positive contributions, to healthy family structures, and overall sustainable communities (Schroeder, 2015). In fact, the very aspects highlighted by Hirschi are often found lacking in regarding the Black experience and its inclusion in Urban Planning and Development, further perpetuating community dysfunction.

Indirectly braiding these thoughts together, Richard Rothstein confirms these themes through *The Color of Law: A forgotten history of how Our Government Segregated America* (Rothstein, 2015). While many overlook how deeply embedded racism is embedded in the history of the US politically, Rothstein directly examines case study after case study and calls out how the

assumption that perpetual racist practices were the sole result of private corporations and single individuals with prejudicial views. The Color of Law dismantles this falsehood and explains how the laws developed to govern our nation both encouraged and empowered such racist practices. These conclusions articulated on an academic level are echoed in Rashad Shabazz's Spatializing Blackness in which he provides a relational analysis that offers the look into how these generational impacts of racists laws and practices have impacted the Black American community physically, mentally, emotionally, and many other levels. As mentioned earlier, the solution is more social than judicial.

Considering this, behavioral theories of human geography and sociology need to be addressed as they fill gaps in the urban development discipline regarding sociological considerations that examine the condition of Black Americans and the conditions of their community. Thus, the phenomenological implications of behavioral theory - the analysis of human behavior as well as how through the socially theoretical lens it is intertwined with the overall discussion is necessary. A relational analysis provides foundational understanding to identify underlying interdisciplinary threads. This is intended to provide a comprehensive view of livability and social sustainability that evaluates important areas regarding functionality of the human being and our need for specific community assets to ensure proper development. Assets like environments that are conducive to positive social interaction and social integration, increasing the capacity of the human family to nurture one another. It provides meaningful considerations relevant for discussion of information essential for scrutiny regarding the needs of humans for positive and sustainable social development as initially expressed by Travis Hirschi's Social Theories (1969), and Rashad Shabazz's (2015) work.

Many Black American communities are stigmatized and mislabeled disparagingly because of the manifestation of under-resourced, improperly designed communities and impacts community relations with organizations perceived as representative of the attempts to control communities rather than build them as indicated in Blueprint to Police Relations and Successful Community Planning and Development which calls attention to friction between Black Americans and law enforcement as the manifestation of tension between oppressive systems and those suffering beneath them. Jones expresses how law enforcement is often the upholder of oppressive policies by the nature of their occupation and purpose, thus they are inevitably the tangible point of

contact engaging the community. Often, we see the individual residents blamed for the condition of their community and typically, there is disregard for the academic discourse which examines the impacts the built environments have on the sociological and behavioral composition of many communities and their inhabitants. Acknowledging this, the built environment such as transportation, quality public spaces, natural spaces and recreation, accessible mixed-used zones, and proximity to hazardous constructs such as highways, factories, and other environmentally harmful constructs, must be deemed inseparable from livability and social sustainability among the Black American community. The concept is typically disconnected in urban development when conversations of social sustainability are not present. This leads to urban planning and design which either perpetuates systemic community dysfunction and displacement, often observed during urban revitalization attempts which ultimately result in gentrification.

Concepts such as these are subsequently captured in Edward Said's Orientalism (2019) expressing how the dominant colonial culture homogenizes and labels a populace and imposes a classist structure of relating with that population, while positioning itself in a manner to dominate that culture through learning it (Said, 2019). This concept is one we see discussed in our modern century under the term appropriation, particularly with respect to how urban revitalization absorbs the micro economy of an unwanted population for gain, dominating the population, and then discarding those of the population deemed less desirable or indomitable. Further expanding this, Martin Heidegger's Being and Time (2013) proffer insight into the sociological principles for relational analysis to draw out core connections of what many Black Americans are voicing, aspects also echoed in Social Bond Theory (Schroeder, 2015). More specifically, Heidegger explores how individuals, i.e., beings, interact with the world around them. The literature discusses the concepts of how people define themselves and highlights key points that speak to how some micro-societies identify based upon what the dominate culture has influenced them to identify as – a key consideration when discussing the long term sociological and psychological implications of generationally oppressive racist practices against Black Americans in the United States. In other words, if the dominate society says this is who or what you are, you will identify and operate as such. Considering these various texts' arguments, it becomes clear the theme articulated, a theme that desires to draw attention to what is often neglected and invalidated. Many Black authors and scholars continue to express how each of

these pertinent factors is often omitted from key discussions, limiting the beneficial effects for the Black American community which can result from the inclusion of these key considerations.

Regarding the interconnectedness of the significance of the racial and historical contributions, a recent, much needed article *Tomorrow I'll Be at the Table: Black Geographies and Urban Planning a Review of the Literature* authors Anna Brand and Charles Miller (2020) and calls for and investigated the lack of contribution to these discussions from Black Geographers and the topics of race. These discussions and contributions are imperative to the urban planning and design discipline as the sociological impacts are inseparable. Their article analyses chief claims to expand understanding of the connection between the social and physical worlds. The authors assert that key aspects of racial difference and experience are missing from the discussion and calls for more inclusion and diversity to develop stronger practices in the urban planning field and call emergence and inclusion of more Black geographers in these discussions of livability and social sustainability, fields where Black professionals are scarce (Brand et al, 2020).

These sociological considerations must be made to improve all facets of the Black American community. Understanding This, Community Design and Crime: The Impact of Housing and the Built Environment the examination of crime patterns and how city design can mitigate opportunities rather than criminalization and over policing is an important aspect due to the racist zoning and urban design practices (MacDonald, 2015). This is important because it displays that the responsibility of how a community's disposition is does not solely rest upon the individuals within that community, rather its design has a significant role in the outcome of several factors. While crime is not the only consideration of effective urban design, it is a priority consideration as many Black Americans are cognizant of over-policing, over criminalization, and the devastating impacts these practices have on the community. The realization that urban design is a solution rather than more policing must be realized and acknowledged.

Furthermore, to properly examine the impacts of land use, urban design, and the impact of racially oppressive governance as indicated above, it is important to understand the weight of influence that government has in "influencing the course of urbanization" through local ordinances, policy development and enforcement, and management of public-private relations and partnerships (MacDonald, 2015). Many scholars such as Paul Kantor (2012) as well as John

Logan and Harvey Luskin (2007) agree that local governance is a driving factor in urban revitalization and policy development regarding city planning and structure, as well as distribution of resources, which are important facts regarding the historical implications of prejudicial governing practices and the current, residual impacts that these practices have had on the quality of life, equity, mobility, and livability of many Black Americans. According to current data, the United States' (US) current population is 328.46 Million (Census.gov). White Americans, regardless of their specific cultural background, amount to 250.52 Million people, or more than 70% of the total U.S. population, while Black Americans comprise 44.08 Million, or 18% of the total population (Figure 2). Considering this, White Americans make up 7.3% of those living below the poverty line whereas Black Americans make up nearly 20 percent, according to the US Census Bureau, 2020. This equates to a disproportionate poverty rate of 1 in 5 Black Americans compared to 1 in 12 for White Americans (Census.gov).

This matters as many texts discuss the aspect of race and politics in disjointed ways that conceal the truth of the degradation such practices have had on our nation and inaccurately convey the current impacts that are still prevalent. According to Wyly et al.'s A Top 10 Things to Know About American Cities, we see that changing conditions of inner-city neighborhoods and income inequality are prevalent and active, although these practices were formally outlawed, the article states that:

> "Racial segregation remains as deleterious as it was in the 1960s . . . racial segregation interacts with income segregation – both of which are deeply embedded in urban housing markets" (Wyly et al., 1999).

An example of this phenomenon exists in the examination of Postwar Detroit. Thomas Sugrue (2014) examines how many civic organizations emerged that reflected White American ideologies, though labeled as the result of the emigration of Southern Whites to the area, were in truth home grown and their influence on local policy and public officials to protect themselves, their investments, and housing values from the "colored situation", thus intertwining the protection of their way of life with policies that perpetuated and facilitated legalized segregation. As Sugrue highlights, many local officials and individuals holding leadership, or decision-making positions, are related and directly connected to family and friends who carry patterns of thinking which view Black American presence, activity, and livelihood as problematic (Sugrue,

2014). It is the reality of practices and real influences such as this historically that must be properly introduced into the planning to appropriately frame the implementation of urban design and policy to include the Black American experience holistically as expressed by McCabe (2018).

Considering this, it is proper to re-emphasize the Critical Race Theory (CRT) as it is designed to examine how law intersects with race and social issues. Because of the impacts of Critical Race Theory on how we think about things such as Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC), which is the disparate incarceration of Black Americans typically due to racist policies and over-policing, when looking into effective community design practices for the Black American community crime and patterns of disproportionate minority contact (DMC) must be included. Many racially biased practices in housing and policing, as well as adjudication of offenses within the Black American community are the result of poor local politics, racially charged oppressive tactics observed historically, most of which are the result of stigmatization. To strengthen this, there are relational observations of how "racial dynamics of American society [which] show how space and place influenced identity formation" (Donnelly, 2017), which again reemphasize the considerations offered in Shabazz's work.

Strengthening Shabazz's relational analysis of spatialized Blackness, Neal Kaytal (2002), discusses in *Architecture as Crime Control and Danger Zone: Land Use and the Geography of Crime* the concepts of Shabazz, discussing how building design and city planning have significant capacity to offset criminal patterns, which is key for sustainable design and improved livability, foundational elements of Travis Hirschi's (1969) Social Bond Theories. The key caveat here is that cities must include the Black American experience and emplace policies that impede displacement and gentrification when developing areas to improve quality of life. These social considerations are becoming more prevalent in urban planning literature such as *Social Sustainability: A New Conceptual Model, Sustainability versus Livability: An investigation of Neighbourhood Satisfaction*, and *Social sustainability – society at the intersection of development and maintenance*. These articles argue the social considerations must accompany discussions of livability and adequate city planning and community development to overcome barriers and see real results, re-emphasizing the social considerations omitted or forgotten.

2.4   Design, Social Sustainability, and Livability

Regarding the understanding of design, sustainability – both environmentally and socially, and overall livability. These literature pieces are important within the discussion as social sustainability, like environmental sustainability, is important for quality of live and proper measurement of livability as Susan Opp outlines in *The Forgotten Pillar: A Definition for the Measurement of Social Sustainability in American Cities*.

> "Currently, no clear and measurable definition of social equity in sustainability
> exists making assessing cities on this dimension of sustainability difficult. If we
> are to accept that being sustainable requires attention to "the distribution of
> resources, of services and of opportunities and to '… the need to ensure a better
> quality of life for all, now, and into the future', then the social equity dimension
> of sustainability must be considered in the emerging and growing research on
> American cities. Even more important, perhaps, will be the need to find ways to
> accomplish these goals if we believe them to be foundational to a sustainable
> future. However, before we can search for solutions, we must first have a
> measurable way to understand, to define, and to assess this aspect of sustainability
> in American cities. Unfortunately, even with the widespread acknowledgement of
> the importance of social equity, it is a concept that remains chaotic, understudied,
> and even outright neglected in the growing sustainable cities literature" (Opp,
> 2017).

As seen above, there needs to be an emphasis on social equity and identifying clear measurables to assess adequate quality of life and social sustainability. This lapse in data for general sustainability research is even more indicative that similar consideration is definitely necessary in the Black American community. In *Social Sustainability – Society at the Intersection of Development and Maintenance*, by Henrik Åhman (2013), and *Opp's* writings, the necessity for a more structured and live, unified meaning of social sustainability is expressed as they reiterate the fact that, though substantial strides have been made around livability and social sustainability, there still is no concrete, singular definition that has been established, which is necessary.

Considering these thoughts embedded in the literature references within this thesis, we see consistent, thematic discussions emerging which intend to address inclinations of neglect toward three vital areas of social sustainability: recognition, redistribution, and public involvement. These compositions expand on what desired outcomes should be regarding socially sustainable

development, overlapping with Susan Feinstein's (2010) ideas of a "just city" which include pillars of equity, democracy, and diversity. Theoretically social sustainability aims to position social considerations at the forefront of urban planning. Fainstein argues that city planners must shift their focus to reformulate approaches to city planning and urban development in manners that are more diverse and participatory to facilitate stronger social structures able to provide quality of life in a global capitalist economy. This cannot be achieved without appropriate evaluation of all agents at work, agents such as racism and the legal oppression and discriminatory practices that severely disadvantaged and traumatized Black American communities collectively as expressed by Moss et al. in 2010.

Tolerance within Community: Does Social Capital Affect Tolerance? fosters examination of the community development component through the social capital theory with the understanding that positive civic engagement increases tolerance, which is key for social sustainability (Wise and Driskell, 2012). Arguing along similar thoughts is *Learning to Make Livable Cities, Community Leadership through Conversations and Coordination, Building Shared Visions for Sustainable Communities* we see the call for inclusive planning and design (Moss et al, 2010). These articles indirectly speak to principles regarding appropriate livability measures along with concepts of gentrification of importance as well, voiced by scholars Joanne Binette, Paul Kantor and Ivan Turok, Eugene McCann, and Brian McCabe express in their arguments as to what makes cities livable.

Seeking to connect these considerations, other articles for consideration which speak to aspects of socially sustainable design, exploring public fears and challenging current thoughts of development. Blowing it up and knocking it down: the local and city-wide effects of demolishing high concentration public housing on crime, covers a case study into the demolition of Chicago, Illinois' high-rise public housing. Many had fears that crime would spread because of the displaced population being dispersed throughout the city. While some may argue the results encourage displacement, it appears the intent is to display that Black Americans are not savage criminals as portrayed as dislocated individuals did not induce crime waves as feared (Aliprantis and Hartley, 2015). Building on this, The Nature versus Nurture Biosocial Debate in Criminology is a text that explores criminology. These examine social considerations and influences of criminal behavior, as well as the impacts of the environment holistically, such as

job discrimination, housing discrimination, neglect of maintenance, among other things, on said behaviors (Beaver et al, 2014). This information is relevant to the discussion as it helps to contextualize and humanize the Black Americans often misrepresented in public presentation, resulting in mitigation suppositions of over-policing and funding for judicial processes rather than adequate social design.

As we tie these final literature pieces together, we see conversational themes which display the importance of proper housing. Whether it be population density considerations and potential implications as to quality of life, affordable housing debates and gentrification, or explorations of what type of community considerations. This matters because these factors intersect directly with key concerns of many Black Americans depending on the area of the US they occupy and the overall disposition of the populace. Considerations which are deeper than analyzing crime rate data and employment v. unemployment rates, it is an intricate consideration and very real concern that must confront the probability of being criminalized for being in a certain area or excluded from certain economic opportunities due to implicit racial bias, availability of childcare and family support, faith considerations, and unbiased healthcare. Factors such as these should be measured locally for proper livability metrics to be designed, the emerging consensus is that many policies and past practices have damaged communities more than benefit them, again, creating distrust in the Black American community. Considering these current discussions, it can be determined that more research and practical application of proposed solutions is employed. Livability is more than what it has been understood to be in the past and this necessitates an intersectional approach, as defined by Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge as intersectionality covers key principles of race and class which are non-exclusive to feminism and sexuality, to designing an appropriate livability index for the Black American community that is inclusive of key historical facts, politics, and overall urban design practices that have shaped how things are structured today (Bullard, 2008).

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

3.1   Overview

A web-based survey was conducted to gather both quantitative and qualitative data to address the research questions. While the current Coronavirus pandemic created limitations to physical interactions and interviews, the web-based survey generated opportunities to achieve efficacy through technologically innovative methods, potentially extending the survey to the geographically diverse populations' reach and increasing sample size. The initial desire was to achieve a sample size of at least one thousand (1,000) respondents representing an array of communities, ethnicities, and income levels. The online survey was distributed through personal and professional networks.

To validate the premise and examine qualitative data around the proposed research queries, a series of questions were drafted to capture both qualitative and quantitative feedback from respondents that proffer preliminary data for further study (See Appendix A). In transparency, the limitation of this data is the small sample set in comparison to the population. The goal was to recruit at least one thousand (1,000) participants at the time of this thesis' completion, however, time limitations, technical difficulties, a conversion rate of 32 percent of survey viewers, and distribution challenges resulted in 410 responses at the time of this analysis. Regardless of these limitations, the data harvested was rich and facilitated ample enough analysis for this discussion to stimulate subsequent investigation for expansion upon the presented research to further define the topic. Considering the interest expressed by participants regarding the survey and topic in general, the intent is to allow the survey to remain active and gain more participants to determine the strength of the arguments in this thesis more adequately.

3.2   Data Collection and Analysis

The survey was live for at least 30 days at the time of this thesis' composition and consisted of mixed methods regarding the questionnaire. The intent was to gather quantitative feedback for analysis and modeling, while also allowing space for qualitative feedback via the respondents. The structure of the questions was established after two initial pilots to assess the strength of the

questions, accessibility of the survey, readability, confirmation bias, and risk of abandonment from potential respondents. Upon the first pilot, respondents suggested more definitive questions as the initial queries lacked full detail in attempts to avoid the appearance of leading respondents or displaying bias. Upon the second iteration and pilot, respondents reported that the questions were sufficient and thought-provoking enough to generate quality data. During the survey pilots, the abandonment, or incompletion rate, was more than 80%. Upon completion of the pilots, the completion rate jumped from less than 20% to nearly 40 %. The survey questions were piloted on a sample set of non-academics, terminal degree holders, and graduate-level scholars who affirmed the structure of the questions as sufficient for the intended target population and expressed curiosity to the overall results of the study.

The average time for respondent completion was around nineteen (19) minutes, which may have been a factor as to why nearly 60% of potential respondents abandoned the survey. The structure of some of the questions were such that it stimulated the proper thoughts around the desired topics and underlying components of the premises being investigated within this thesis. Questions that were not well defined, or lacked the appearance of leading, resulted in incomplete surveys, high abandonment rates, and confusion from respondents. Because of these results, along with the desire for the survey to generate as much data as possible from diverse respondents, the questions were restructured in a way that could be observed as leading, however, this structure produced the highest completion rates and harvested the most qualitative feedback from respondents. All collected responses were aggregated and unidentifiable to the respondent and, as all submissions were done virtually either through mobile devices or desktop computer, IP addresses were stripped to further maintain anonymity. Interestingly enough, iPhone users and smartphone users with larger screens were the most responsive in terms of completion rates. Although the target number of responses was not achieved, the number of responses for the short duration of the survey's life suggests that the longer duration of the study will yield more results as the data is more continuous than discrete. Additional analysis shows confidence intervals for quantitative responses which indicate that larger sample sizes will generate similar results.

The data measured is random and unidentified yet allows evaluation of the critical metrics such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, income, location, family size, opinions of current

livability categories, as well as uncommon indicators such as racial disparities, incidents of police discrimination and thoughts toward policing, gentrification, and other aspects that concern the Black American community. Education was not asked as the principal investigator elected to omit this as a necessary demographic for this initial data set to focus on gaining a generalization of base data to affirm or disaffirm the proposed premises of this thesis. The preferred metric in place of education is income level to determine baseline parameters for further study as education level does not always correlate with income level and may not be the most sufficient metric for this initial data set. Should further examination be conducted, as time and resources allow interviews with individuals from various professional disciplines will be conducted to gain more insight and more targeted qualitative feedback to better understand potential, additional livability indicators for consideration.

For this research, the methodology employed for data collection was a mixed methodology survey deployed through JotForm. The survey consisted of quantitative and qualitative responses for analysis. To analyze and synthesize data, I used PolicyMap to produce the spatial maps and Stata was used as the tool of choice to analyze data. The methods of analysis utilized were Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), Frequency, and Hypothesis Testing. Frequencies were measured first to properly assign categories and sort data for further examination. Following this, ANOVA and MANOVA were conducted to measure variance and correlation between independent variables such as Income, Ethnicity, Age, Relationship Status, Number of Children, and Gender, with subsequent dependent variables. This was to measure the strength of correlation between classes and variables to assess statistical significances of tabulated results. Furthermore, ANOVA was conducted between key dependent variables to assess if there were correlations among the data subsets. Cross tabulation was conducted by hand and calculator in conjunction with Microsoft Excel, as well as through Stata. These aggregate data sets consist of quantitative and qualitative responses from which thematic and theoretical patterns will be identified, extracted, and translated into measurable indicators as appropriate. Once evaluated, these indicators can be applied to better understand relevant indicators for developing a livability index that accurately reflects the interests and needs of the Black American community. Considering the limited sample size, hypothesis testing was conducted to assess the likelihood that a larger sample set would reveal the same, or similar, results.
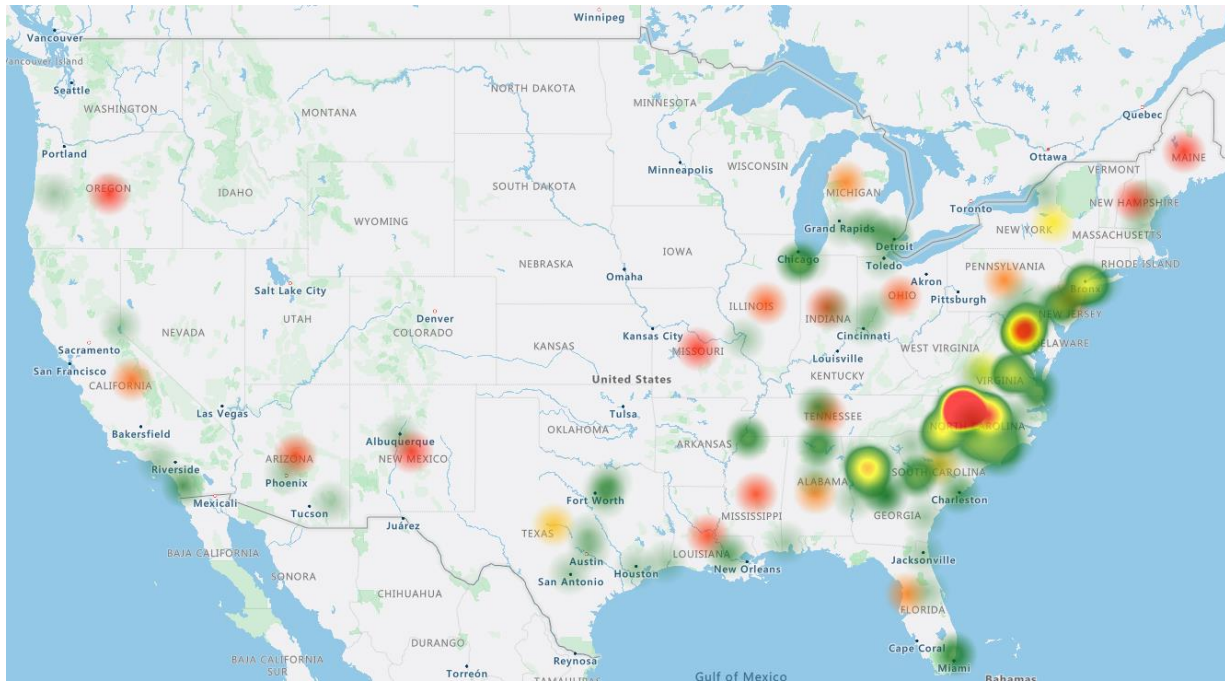
Figure 1: The heat map displaying respondent states and the percentage of responses from each respondent state of the United States of America. The colors range from green through red – the highest percentage of respondents correlatively more concentrated.

3.3 Geographic Representation of Respondents

To better orient the reader to the context of the above map's representation (Figure 1), it reveals the location and concentration of respondents. This is significant to note as in the following map (Figure 2) you will see that the respondents are from locations that have a significant population of Black and African American residents. This leads to the hypothesis that, though the initial sample size of respondents may not be as large as initially desired, should the survey continue and further analysis be conducted, it would most likely produce similar trends in responses at a confidence interval of at least ninety percent (90%). This is important as it helps to validate the findings and strengthen the opinions and data gathered from respondents.
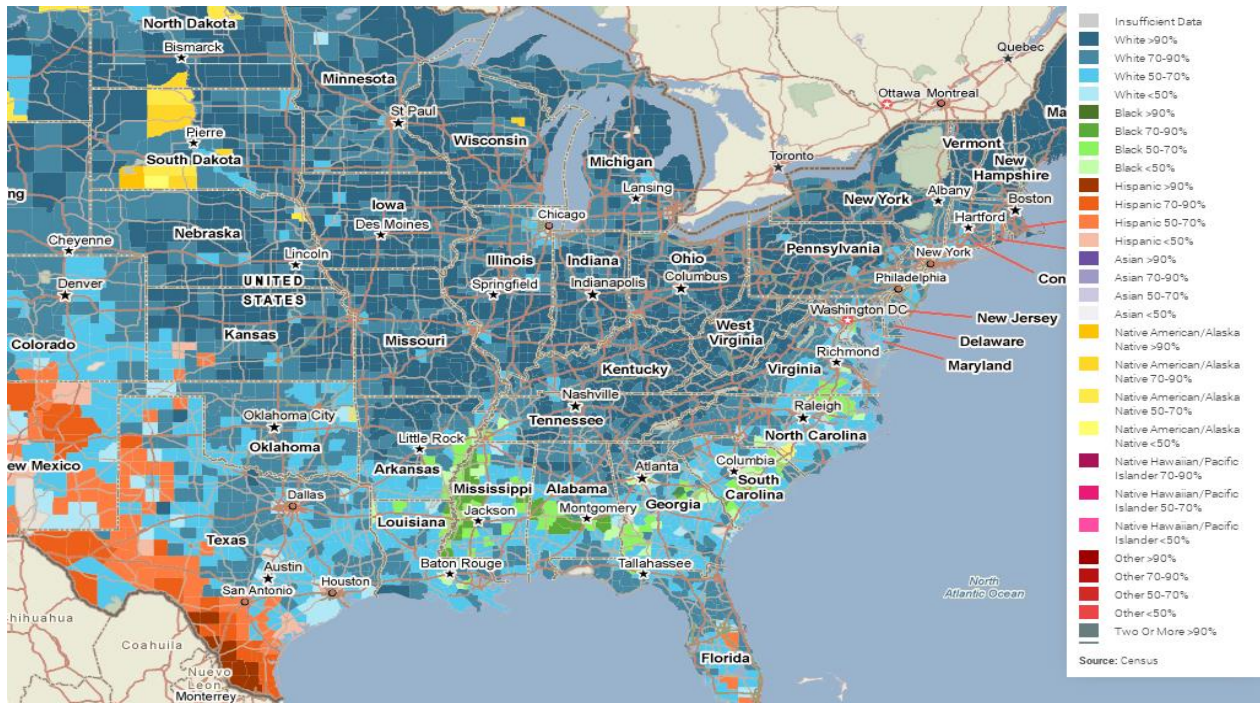
Figure 2: Spatial Demographic Distribution of All Races in 2017.
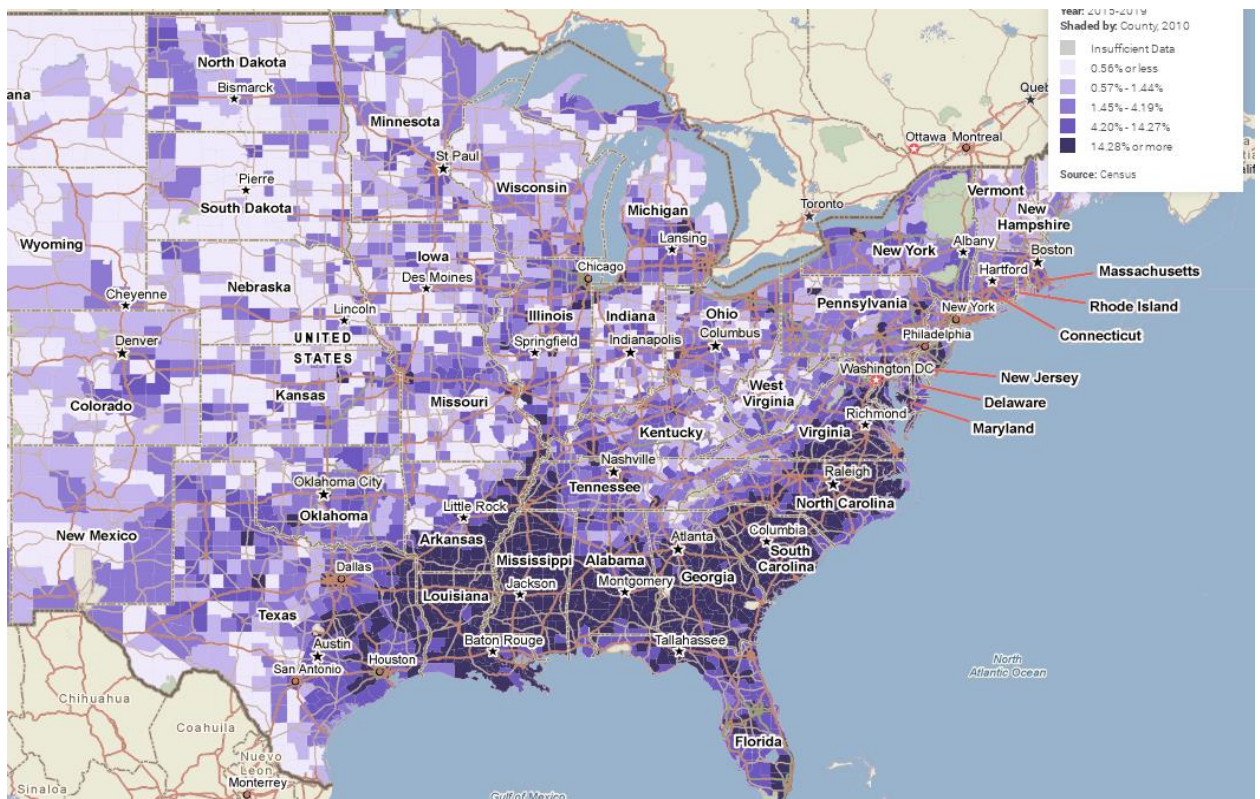
Figure 3: Spatial Population Distribution of Black Americans in 2019.
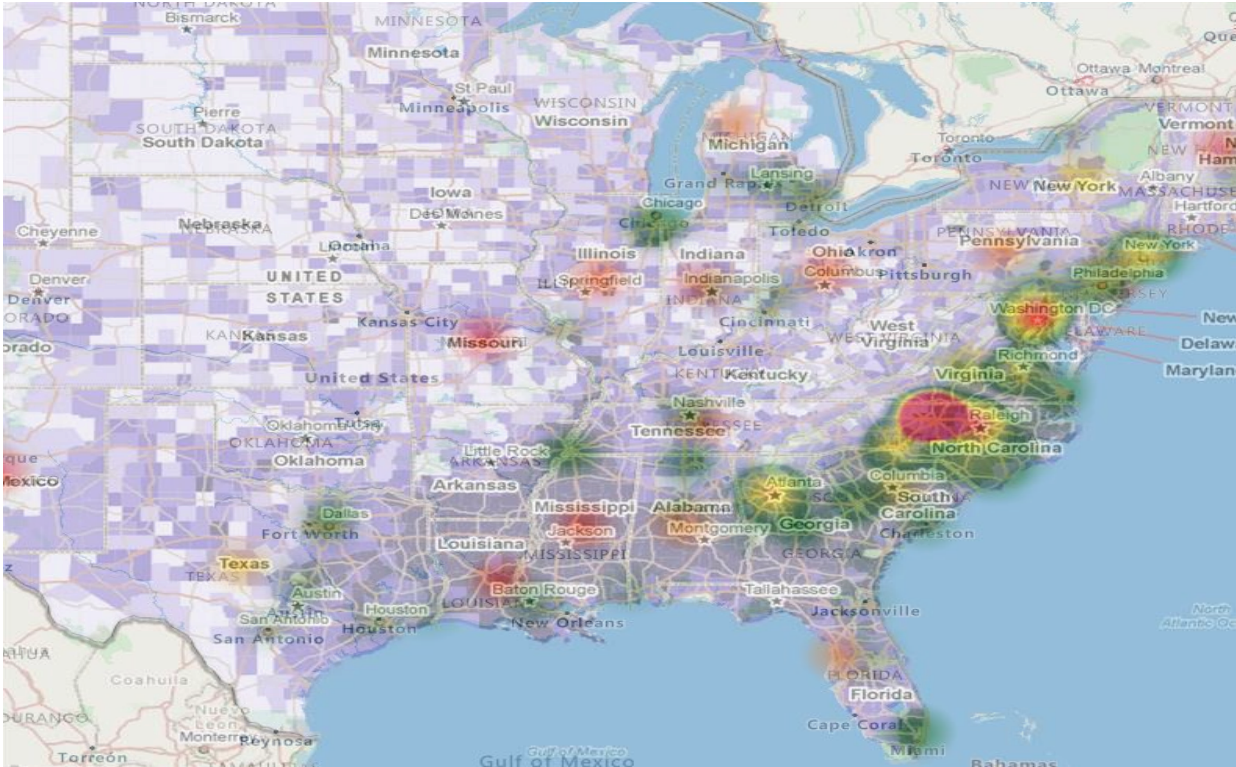
Figure 4: Spatial Map Overlay of Respondent and Ethnic Concentrations

Table 1: High Density Respondent Geographic Locations.

State	% of Respondents	Region
NC	49%	SE
MD	8%	NE
GA	7%	SE

The survey harvested respondents from twenty-five (25) states in the United States of America (USA). The top three numbers of respondents originated from North Carolina with forty-nine percent (49%) of the respondents residing in the state, 7% originating from Georgia, and 8% percent from Maryland (Table 1), with the rest being spread between Alabama, Arizona,

California, the District of Columbia (D.C.), Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, with less than 1% in outlier locations of Canada and India (Figure 1). This is a diverse range of respondents which are advantageous in the sense that they allow the preliminary examination of Black American thoughts and beliefs regarding livability, community, and important considerations in different locations. Additional demographic data included in the survey are: 1) Ethnicity, 2) Sexual Orientation, 3) Gender, 4) Age, 5) Income, 6) Relationship Status, and 7) Number of Children.

As the research is examining how livable Black American communities are, the biases which exist in current livability index metrics and what additional considerations are needed for indices to be inclusive of livability for Black Americans, how the Black American community understands livability, as well as how these understandings differ from established definitions, and what considerations must be addressed to design a livability index that is inclusive to Black Americans, we can identify an introductory analysis to determine if there is a correlation, even if small, to what is being communicated from the Black American Community regardless of variance in factors. Additionally, for better visualization, this analysis will also include images and distribution maps that display the prevalence of certain information that help contextualize the premises presented in this thesis.

3.4 Ethnicity
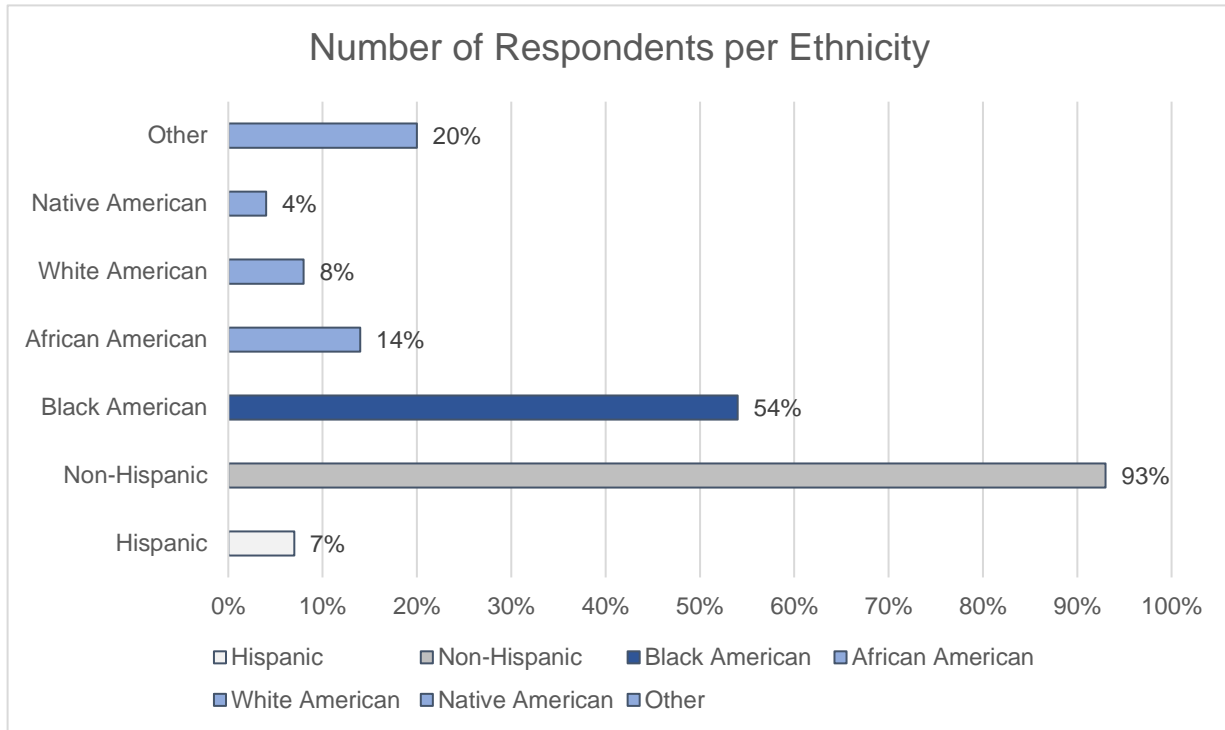
Figure 5: This figure is a bar chart that displays the total number of respondents for each ethnic category.

The ethnic categories included were designed to extend beyond the surface definitions of "White, Black, Latino, etcetera, and instead inquired of ancestral origin if known. This is due to the need to examine correlations and variances of thought culturally as immigrant African-Americans tend to have varying perspectives from Black-Americans descendent from the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade. An important note here, however, is many first-generation born African-Americans, or first-generation born descendent of any 'Black' skinned people have sympathetic, paralleling views with Black Americans to an extent (Russ, 2018). Noting this, many respondents (68%) are Black by common definition, fifty-four (54%) identifying as Black American, descendant of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, and the remaining fourteen percent (14%) identifying as African American (Figure 5). Of the remaining respondents, nineteen percent (19%) identified as other, 9% identified as White American, and 5% identified as Native American. Ninety-two percent (92%) reported they are Non-Hispanic, with the remaining 8% identifying as Hispanic. While all

ethic categories were included in the responses, the data analysis will focus specifically on Black and African American respondents (Figure 6).
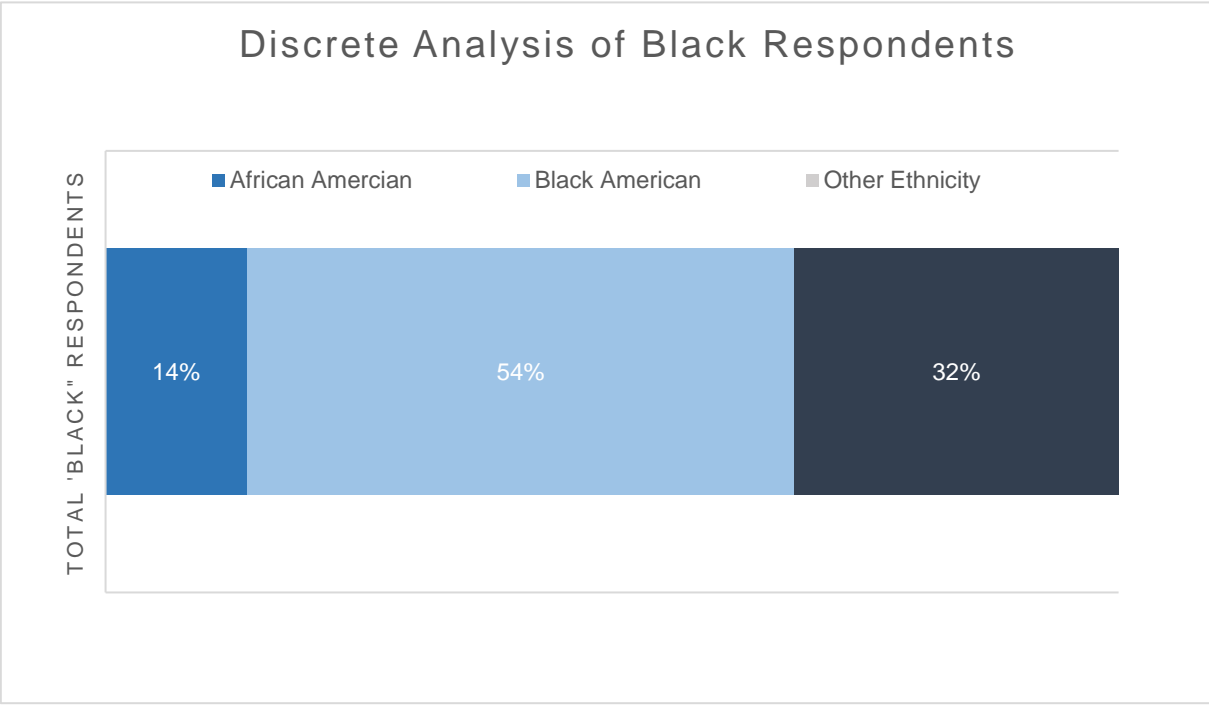
Figure 6: This figure is a stacked bar graph that displays the ethnic breakdown between 'Black' respondents.

3.5   Sexual Orientation and Gender

Consideration for gender identity and sexual orientation was also included in the survey to be holistic and inclusive in approach and again to determine the common threads among the Black community which exist beyond potential sub-categorization. Within gender and sexual orientation, respondents identified as sixty-eight percent (68%) female, thirty-one percent (31%) male, and less than 1% for both categories of trans-woman and non-binary. Other gender identities included for self-identification were trans-man, non-binary and other. Within the sexual orientation, the survey revealed greater fluctuation than gender identity. While most respondents (88%) identified as straight, or hetero-sexual, the remaining respondents identified as bi-sexual (7%), Lesbian (2%), with the rest selecting Gay, Homosexual, or Other.
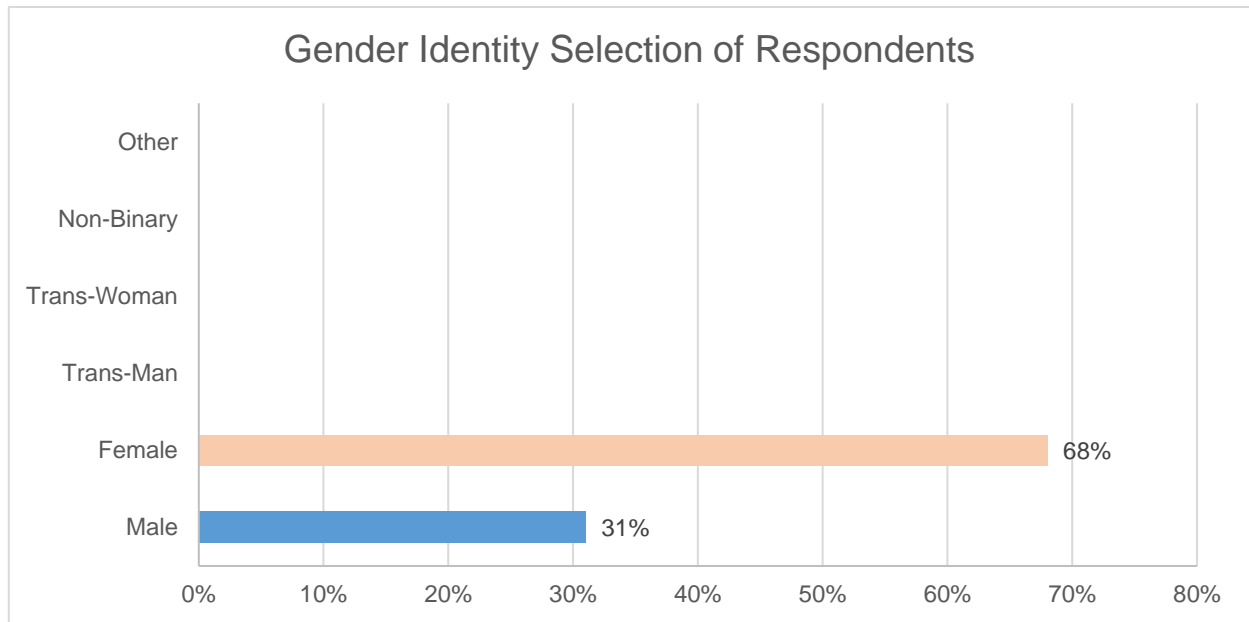
Figure 7: Gender Identity Selection of Respondents.

3.6 Age, Income Relationship Status, and Number of Children

These final demographic data points offer other factors to examine for trends across varying categories, however, a limitation with this portion is a small portion of respondents elected not to disclose their income, relationship status, or number of children. Notwithstanding, the data collected is still sufficient to identify patterns and examine on a more in-depth level.

3.7 Income

Income levels of respondents has a phenomenal, and somewhat balanced range in which respondents found themselves in. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of those surveyed earn less than $20,000 US dollars (USD) annually, twenty-one percent (21%) earn between $21,000 and $35,000 annually. Twenty percent (20%) earn between $46,000 and $75,000 annually, thirteen percent (13%) earn $36,000 to $45,000 annually, and ten percent (10%) earn more than $100,000 annually. Lastly, seven percent (7%) earn $75,000 and $100,000 per year (figure 5).
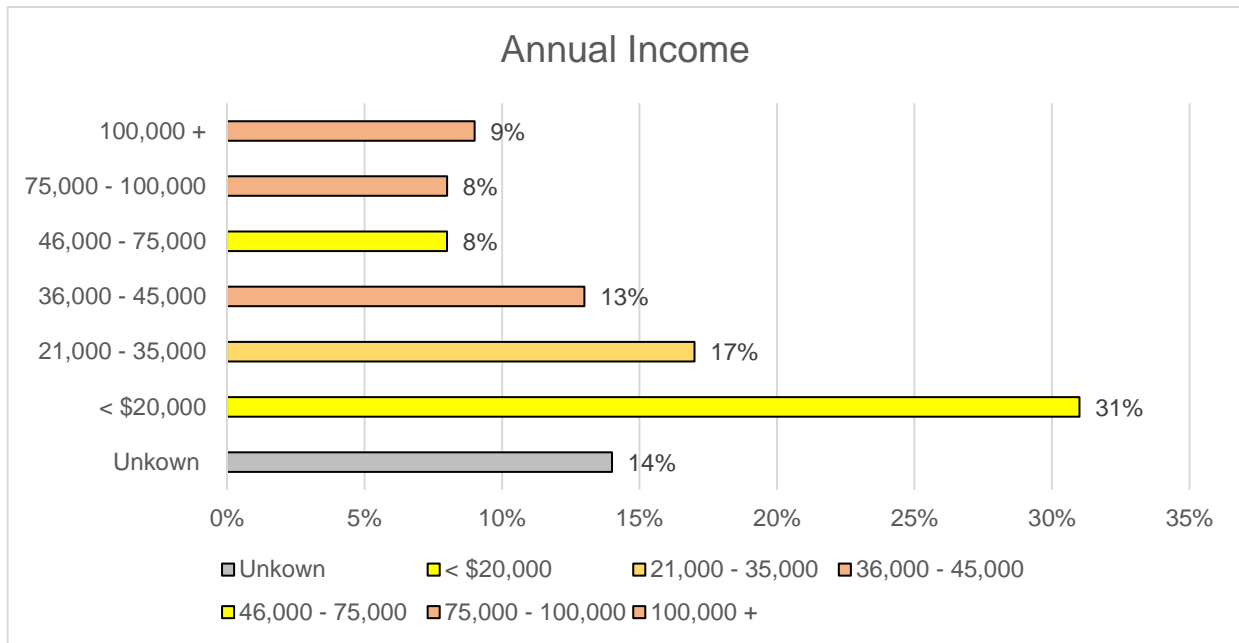
Figure 8: Bar graph of Respondent Annual Income Data.

3.8   Relationship Status and Children

Regarding relationship status and the number of children, it is assumed that respondents who skipped these questions did so not to not-disclose the information, rather because they fall into the categories in which these questions do not apply to them, for example, either single or having no children. This assumption is presumed in consideration of the fact that many respondents who skipped this question correlate with the younger age group of 18-25 years of age with a strong correlation with a relationship status of "Single". Regardless of this assumption, the data calculated is not inclusive of these assumptions to maintain the accuracy and the integrity of the study. For the number of children, respondents reported children they parent, whether in the home or without. For relationship status, many respondents (66%) report being single, twenty-four percent (24%) report being married, while the remaining percentages report domestic partnerships, divorced, or another subcategory. For the number children, eleven percent (11%) report 2 children, eleven percent (11%) report one 1 child, 4% report 4 or more children, with 6% reporting 3 children, and the rest reporting miscellaneous data such as step-children or pets (Figure 10).
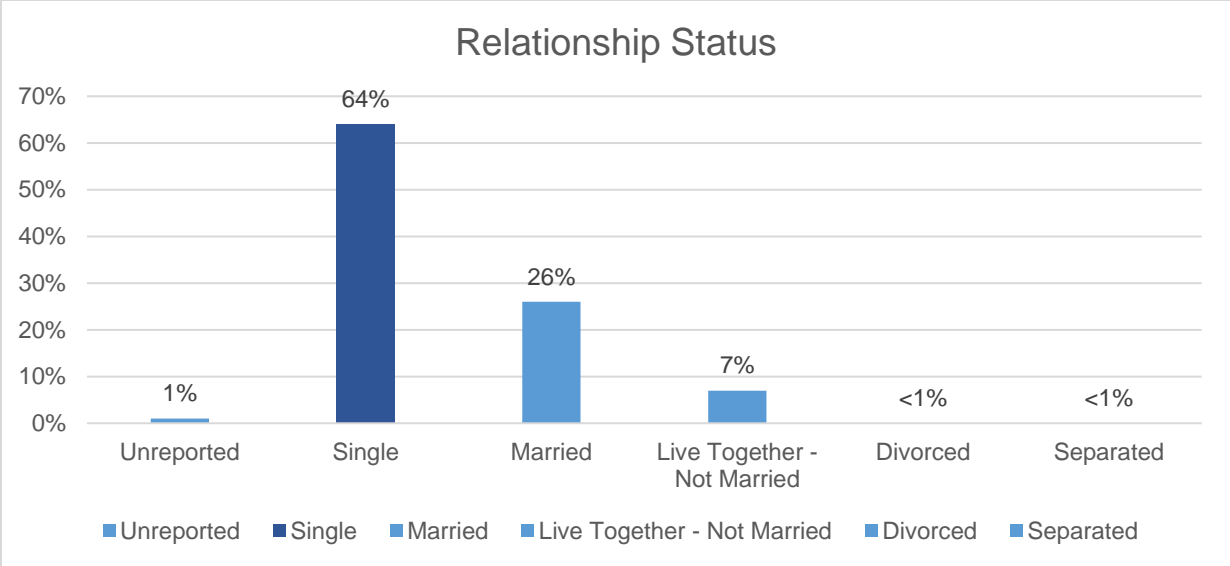
Figure 9: Bar graph displaying Relationship Status of Respondents.
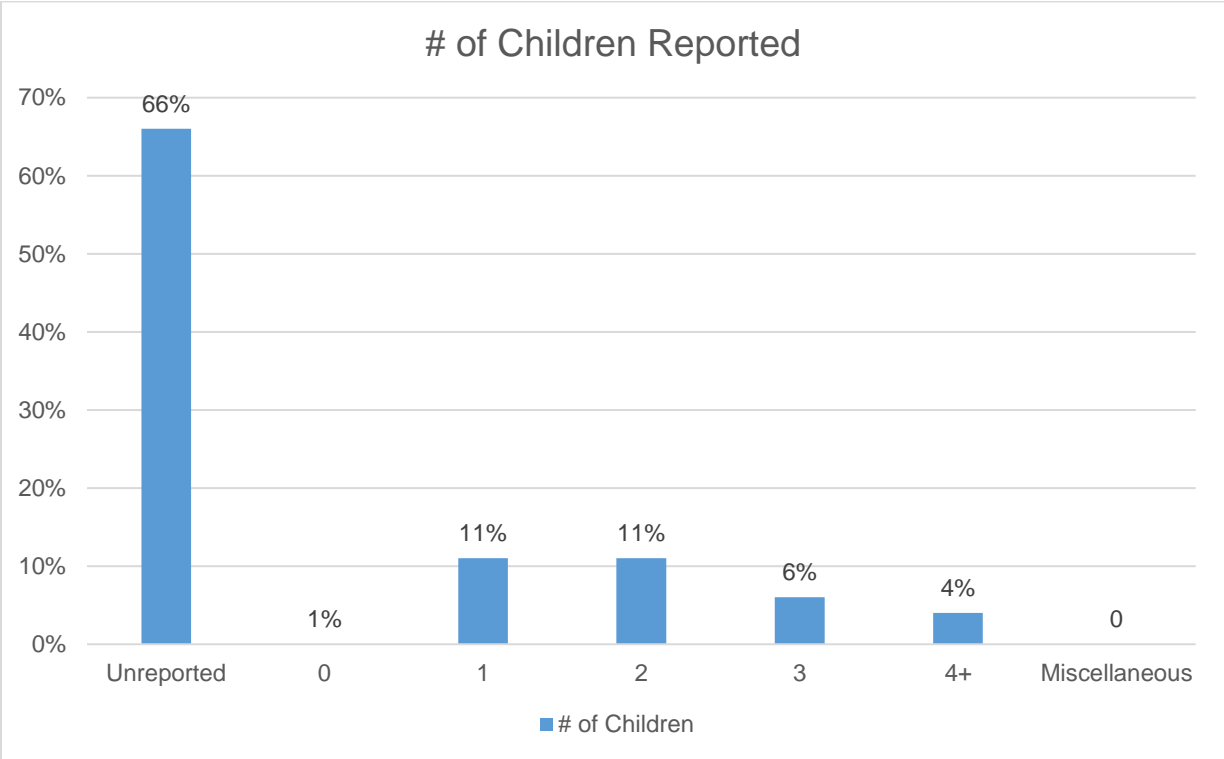
Figure 10: Bar graph displaying Number of Children of Respondents.

4.1   Are Livability Indices Inclusive of Black American Communities?

After collecting the demographic data, the second set of interrogative questions were centered around examining respondents' thoughts and feelings toward the quality of their city. The pattern of inquiry was formatted to gather quantitative feedback, followed by qualitative responses to expand on the reasoning for the provided ratings and discretionary data. The quantitative responses are discrete statistics while the qualitative, or opinion, data is continuous. Each set is the focus of analysis for this conversation. The categories assessed are aspects that have been discussed in various disciplines regarding sustainability, sociology, equality, and equity, as well as urban development and city planning. These categories are: 1) Safety, 2) Healthy Food Options, i.e., healthy fast food, market options, etcetera, 3) Water Quality, 4) Healthcare, and 5) the presence of Effective Police Officers. Using an emoticon scale of feeling, respondents rated each category from Completely Disagree to Completely Agree with the perception that their city contains each category, with the median option being indifferent, or neutral. Figure 8 below provides a visual of the recorded data. When examining the data, an important note is ratings of "indifferent" denotes a more negative leaning mark per respondent qualitative responses.
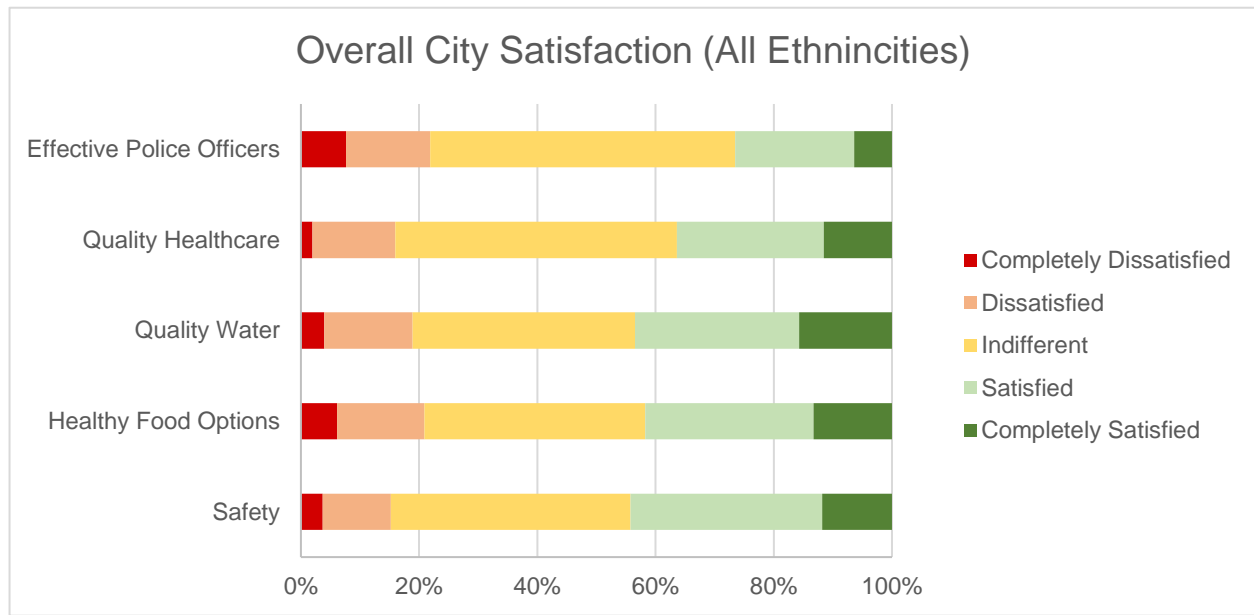
Figure 11: Bar Graph displaying respondent city satisfaction ratings.
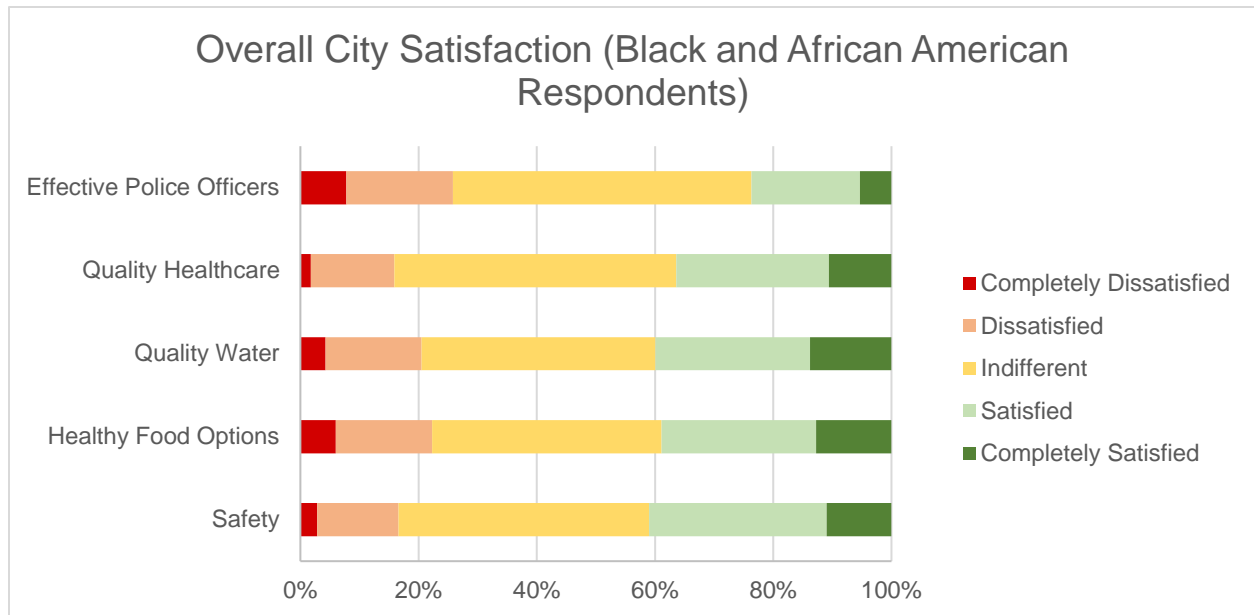
Figure 12: Overall City Satisfaction (Black and African American Respondents)

Each figure provides differentiation between overall survey participants and then focuses on the collective responses of both Black American and African American Respondents. The pattern of analysis throughout the remainder of this thesis will focus specifically on the latter.

4.2   Safety

Regarding safety, a vast majority (59%) of Black and African Americas felt indifferent or less than pleased regarding the safety of their city. To balance this, it is noted that nearly forty-one percent (41%) of respondents rated their city's safety as higher than neutral on the satisfaction rating. Upon further inspection of these initial summaries, when we disaggregate the data by gender, ethnicity, age, and income, we can explore variances and trends of thought between each category to accurately assess key points of emphasis concerning safety (Figure 8). An important note for analysis is there is a direct correlation between data points regarding ratings across categories. For example, respondents who responded with a rating of 'indifferent' or less tended to respond similarly in the remaining categories at least eighty percent (80%) of the time. It is also important to note that ratings of indifference generally carry a negative connotation rather than a positive.

$100K Salary Repondents with a Diminished View of Safety in Upscale Neighborhoods
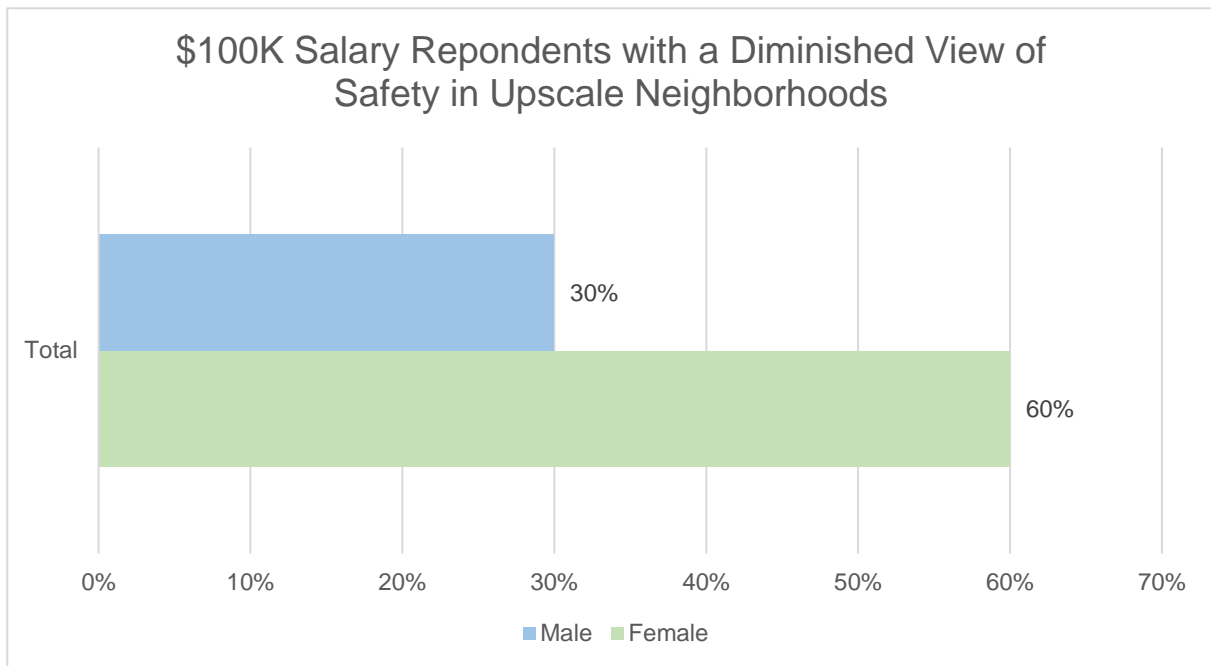
Figure 13: Analysis of $100K USD annual salary earners and views of safety.

4.2.1 SAFETY BY GENDER, INCOME, AGE, AND ETHNICITY

Moving forward, when examining data by income, Black and African American respondents making more than one-hundred thousand ($100,000) USD annually, half reported feelings of indifference or less than satisfied regarding safety and subsequent categories. Interestingly however, when comparing genders, it is revealed that more than half of female respondents (60%) in this income bracket rated safety as either indifferent or less than while only thirty percent (30%) of male respondents reported less than satisfied (Figure 12). Respondents reporting this typically referred to their area of residence as suburban, county lines, or gated communities. This observation is interesting as the majority of male respondents for all ethnicities are Black or African American which raises the question as to what specifically influences their perception of safety, and more specifically, within this income bracket. Qualitative analysis reveals that Black American respondents who gave a negative rating cited the lack of resources yet not for themselves, but for those in the communities they originate from, displaying a more community-focused approach. Whereas other individuals from non-Black ethnicities responded specifically as it relates to themselves, apart from Native American

and Latinx respondents. Similar trends were noticed among female respondents with lower ratings during qualitative analysis. One respondent reporting:

> "I recognize when adequate resources are limited and even restricted in an area, which typically impacts minorities at exponential rates versus other ethnic groups, it increase[s] the increase the likelihood for decreased safety, economic opportunities, and healthcare just to name a few."

Within subsequent income categories, we begin to see patterns of discomfort regarding livability and quality of life through the increased ratings of less than satisfactory. Across all income levels, there are paralleling ratings proffered regarding overall safety substantiated by overlapping qualitative reasons provided from respondents which reveal interconnected concerns of criminal activity, both over- and under policing, as well as overall less than the quality of life resulting from inadequate resources and neglect. To affirm this, the data reveals that sixty-eight percent (68%) of Black American respondents earning an annual income between seventy-five thousand ($75,000) USD and one-hundred thousand ($100,000) USD offered ratings of less than satisfactory. Among female respondents in this category, the response rate equates to ninety percent (90%) of less than satisfactory among Black American females compared to seventy-five percent (75%) less than satisfactory for females of all ethnicities and seventy percent (70%). Among Black American males in this income bracket, however, fifty-six percent (56%) agree that overall their city is safe (Figure 13) compared to an average of only twenty-five percent (25%) of Black and African American males across all other income brackets.
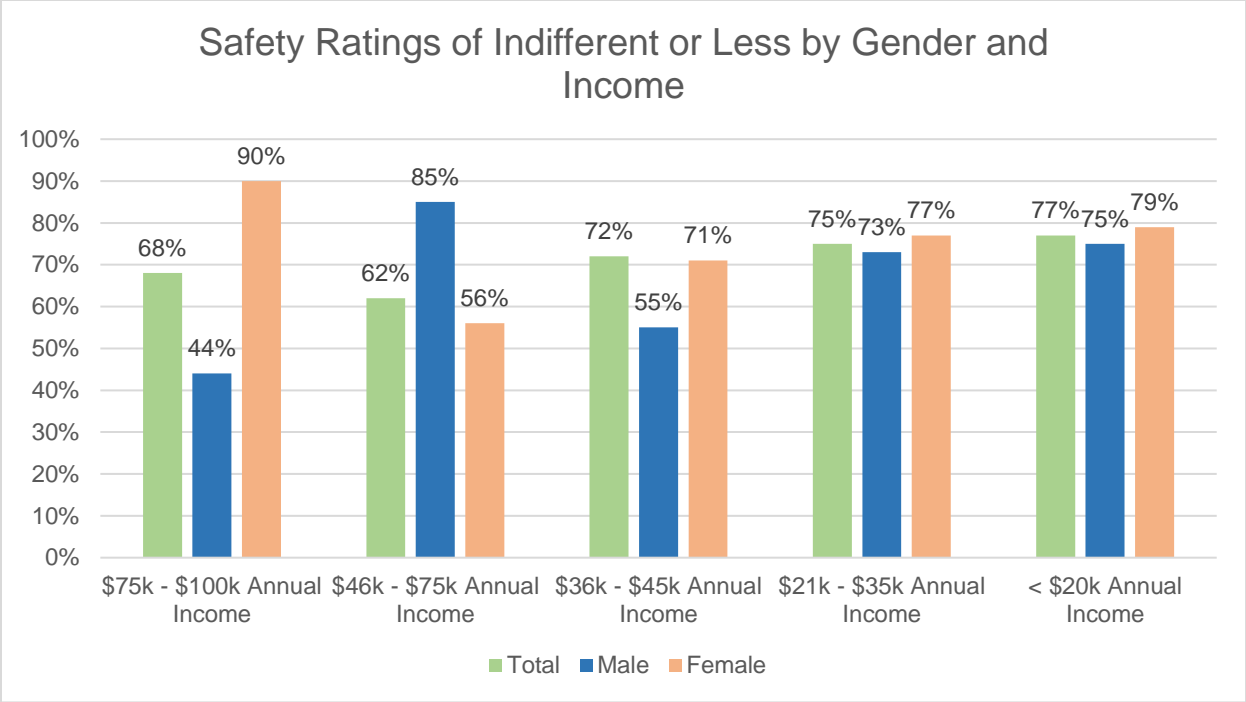
Figure 14: This bar graph displays the variances between safety ratings via the respondents categorically by gender, income, and collectively.

Additional qualitative data reveals that key points of safety and comfort among Black Americans, particularly in the higher income bracket centers not around neighborhood crime, but instead prejudice, as well as police harassment and misconduct. A key point regarding safety that consistently surfaced is a concern for policing practices. Respondents' unwavering, constant expressions of distrust and observation of the negative conduct of police officers and disproportionate negative interactions due to racial bias contribute directly to impeded feelings of safety among Black Americans specifically. Furthermore, when cross tabulating variance with the subcategory Relationship Status, there was no direct correlation (Figure 15). In other words, being married, single, or in a relationship had no observable impact on the decision of Black American respondents regarding feelings of safety. To help readers understand the data, Table 2 has columns of Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree, note the proportion of responses and totals for these columns per Relationship Status. If this data were placed on a bar graph or histogram, you would see a higher platykurtic peak that is slightly skewed left.

Table 2: Overall Safety Variance Analysis by Relationship Status, Frequency Weight by Income.

Relationship Status	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Unreported	0	0	2	9	0	11
Single	11	47	160	106	53	377
Married	3	23	82	88	23	219
Divorced/Widowed	4	3	11	2	4	24
Total	18	73	255	205	80	631

A significant finding when disaggregating the data between ethnicities and isolating out Black and African American respondents, there are higher feelings of lack of safety across the board for Black Americans. This is extremely important as it shows what many livability indices communicate, which is safety is important to all people. However, the analysis suggests that an appropriate investigation for a definition of what constitutes safety for the Black American community is needed as the data shows that Black Americans, in general, feel less safe than the average American.

Table 3: Higher Income Respondent Reports of Harassment in Suburban Areas.

Reported Incidents of Prejudice, Harassment, and Misconduct Among Higher Income Respondents: "What Are Some Things That Make Your Community Unsafe?"	
"Harassed by a White Man and followed to CVS"	$36K - $45K, Straight Male
"Racial Bias"	$46K - $75K, Straight Female
"Theft, racism, and sex offenders"	$76K - $100K, Straight Female

An interesting find though is significant shifts in ratings among the $46,000 - $75,000 Black American females in this income bracket, and the male respondents of both the $36,000 - $45,000 and $75,000 - $100,000 income brackets (Figure 14). Hypothetically, this could be the result of living in a more middle-class, suburban area with less crime and more opportunities. Qualitative data from these respondents indicate a greater focus on the opportunities and positive aspects of their community and disclose the communities in which these respondents inhabit are that of a suburban design. Many reports having high accessibility and perceived affordability for the essential components of an acceptable quality of life, particularly if they grew up in impoverished area as indicated in some responses. It could also be argued that similar aspects contribute to the positive Black American ratings in the subsequent bracket as examined in qualitative feedback. Respondent feedback revealed that more disadvantaged communities have an observable higher concern for crime, over-policing, and lack of accessibility to essential resources. Among female respondents (Table 2), primary concerns were being stereotyped by neighbors, feeling threatened by predominately white neighbors, and feeling unease and fear when police are present as one respondent stated:

> "Where I live is generally considered a "good" area, but that's by White people's standards. Living in a primarily white neighborhood as a Black person comes with some serious caveats".

However, even with these positive trends, it should be noted that these positives are only in comparison to the fact that other income groups (Figure 14) are nearly eighty percent (80%) dissatisfied each, with a collective average of seventy-four percent (74%), while this middle-income group is still nearly seventy percent (70%), averaging at sixty-seven percent (67%) indifferent or otherwise less than satisfied. The remaining respondents in the lower-income brackets echo similar concerns with the addition of inadequate housing and sub-standard policy that results in the neglect of dwellings that negatively impact the community and its residents holistically. It should be noted that the lower the income bracket was, the more explicit the indicators of dissatisfaction were expressed by respondents with less qualitative feedback while the middle to upper-class respondents expressed indifference more than complete dissatisfaction yet expressed their caveats with more qualitative feedback to explain the negative interpretation. In the following table 3, Black American voices were captured to express to the reader underlying considerations regarding the plight of Black Americans.

Table 4: Thoughts of Black Americans communicate the thoughts and emotions resulting from perpetuated cycles of racism and oppressive actions.

Thoughts of Black American Respondents for Reader Consideration
We are all human beings with basic needs. . . those need to be the main focus.
Leave us alone... in business, life, and anything to do with faith
Please consider that black communities are typically encountering racism from their workplace and other structures. They want to be able to buy houses and do everything white people do but due to lack of education and other factors they are limited structurally in addition to housing discrimination
We are all human beings with basic needs....those need to be the main focus.
Leave us alone... in business, life, and anything to do with faith
Please consider that black communities are typically encountering racism from their workplace and other structures. They want to be able to buy houses and do everything white people do but due to lack of education and other factors they are limited structurally in addition to housing discrimination

4.3   Police Presence and the Black American Community

Though the questions regarding police presence is after the culmination of this section, as many respondents mentioned police presence often as much of a concern as crime in their qualitative expansions for such ratings, it is fitting to analyze data regarding police presence in the Black American community. This data is essential as it highlights stark differences in perception of the police element between Black American communities and other ethnicities. Data analysis in from primary data gathered through the JotForm survey revealed that other ethnicities, such as Asian American, African American, and White American, are more inclined to view police presence as a deterrent of crime and an asset to enhance safety and the overall quality of the neighborhood. More than seventy-five percent (75%) of respondents, regardless of ethnicity, viewed an increased police presence as a positive. Fifty-four percent (54%) of African American respondents view police presence as a positive while, in the Black American community, there is a steep divide with sixty-two percent (62%) viewing police presence as a safety hazard for their community and thirty-eight percent (38%) viewing it as a safety enhancer (Figure 15).

Collectively, seventy percent (70%) of both African American and Black American survey participants report a higher police presence does not increase community safety and is a detriment to their community's quality of life (Figure 16). In fact, dozens of respondents reported in qualitative responses what could be classified as post-traumatic stress and anxiety, or vicarious trauma – a form of secondary trauma received through observing or hearing of the trauma experienced by another – due to the level of discomfort around police officers, referencing historical racism either experienced first-hand, secondary trauma from the experience of a loved one or community member, or negative media coverage over the past several years.
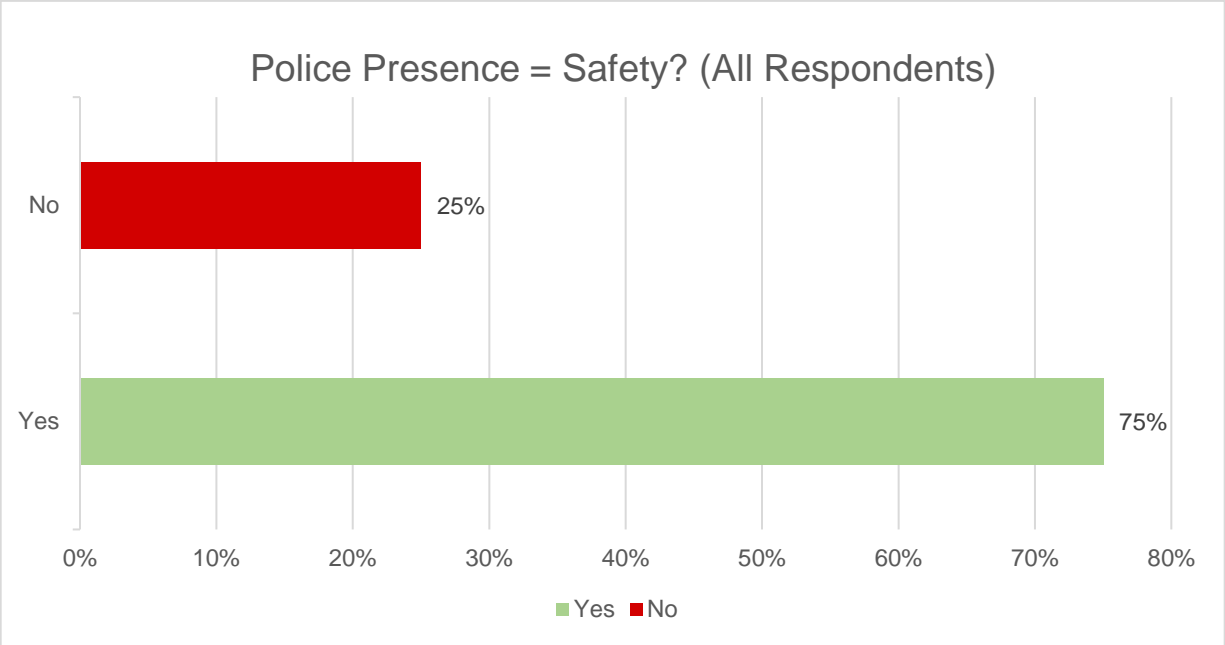
Figure 15: All Ethnicity Respondent opinions to increased police presence and safety.
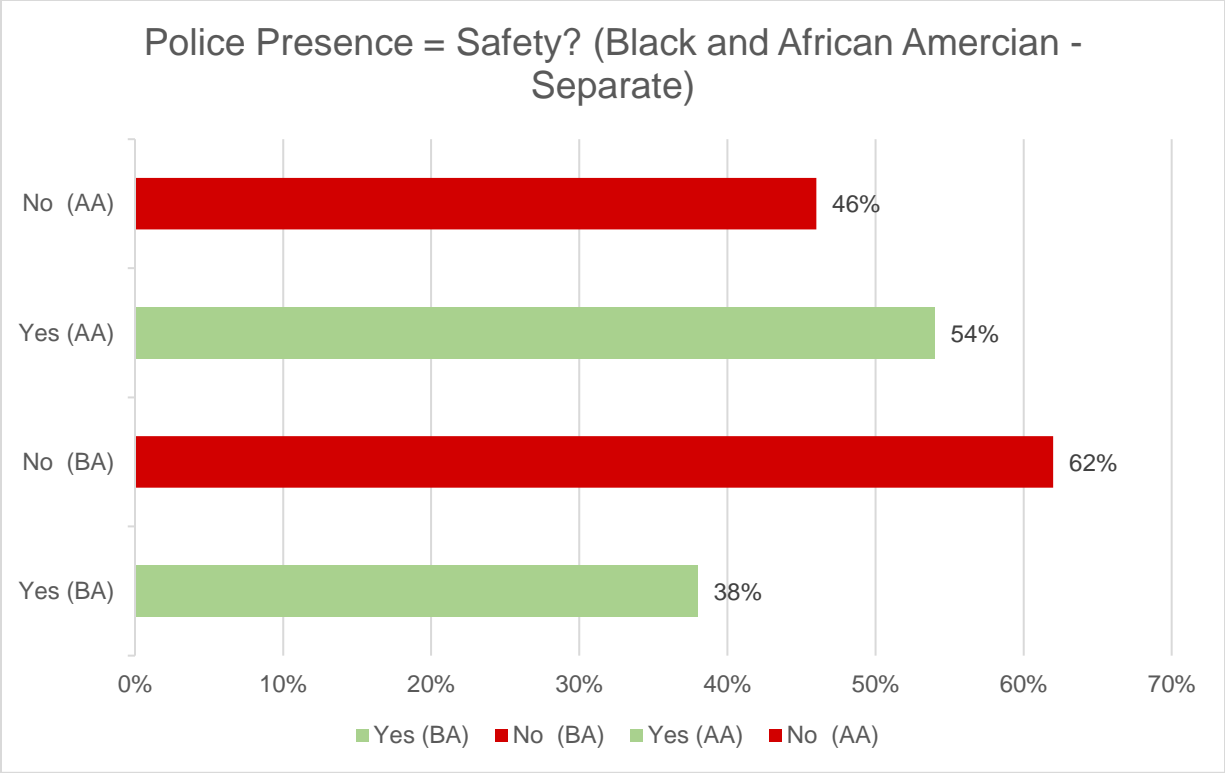
Figure 16: Black and African American Respondent opinions to increased police presence and safety, separate opinions.
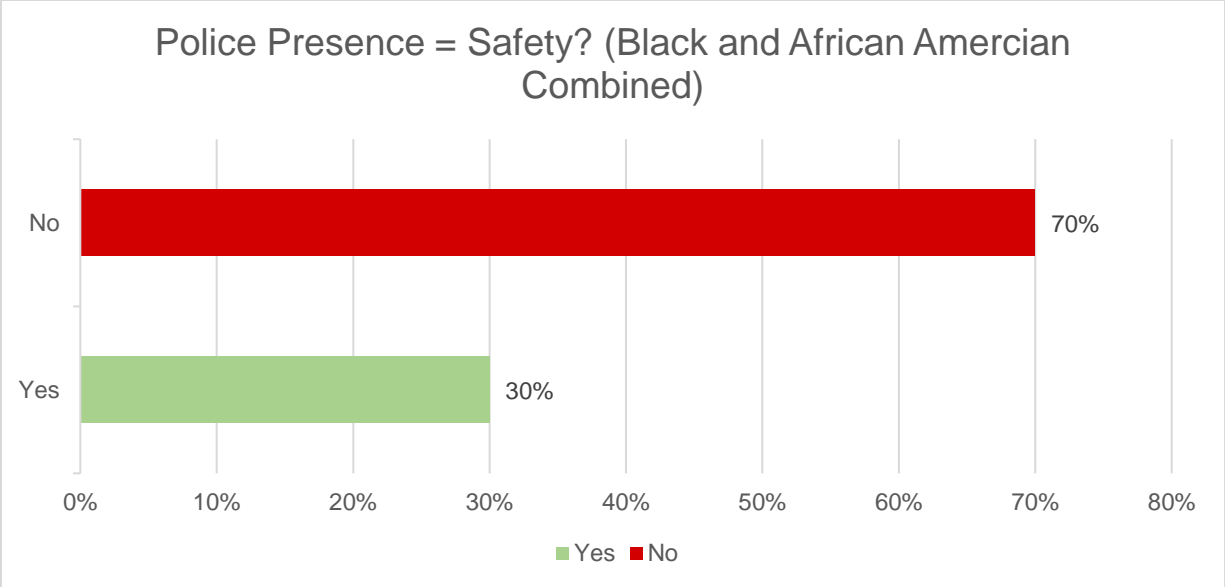
Figure 17: Black and African American Respondent opinions to increased police presence and safety.

Some of the qualitative responses recorded, which display the varying thoughts, are displayed in Table 4 below. These expressed concerns exist regardless of income, location, age, and gender identity for more than sixty percent (60%) of Black American respondents. To add additional visualization for the context of this analysis, there are spatial maps that display the disparities in incarceration rates between White and Black Americans from very low, low, and middle income levels which display aspects of Disproportionate Minority Contact (Donnelly, 2017).

Table 5: Opinions on police presence and activity in Black American communities.

NEGATIVE	POSITIVE
"It's causes frequent harassment on individuals that are not breaking the law because the police are too focused on people of color than stopping crime in areas that they know it is frequently committed. And yes [REDACTED] is mostly people of color but that is where the most shootings occur".	"Yes because, we need officers to enforce rules and regulations when needed. Not just to keep things structured but to also consider the benefit of everyone's wellbeing."
"Police don't necessarily "protect and keep the black community safe".	"In my neighborhood seeing an officer brings a sense of security."
"Police don't prevent crime they just respond to it and sometimes commit it"	"I feel more protected if police are present. Not consistently roaming but easily accessible. There aren't too many just stationed in my neighborhood but that's good because if there was I would be concerned about what is going on in the area."
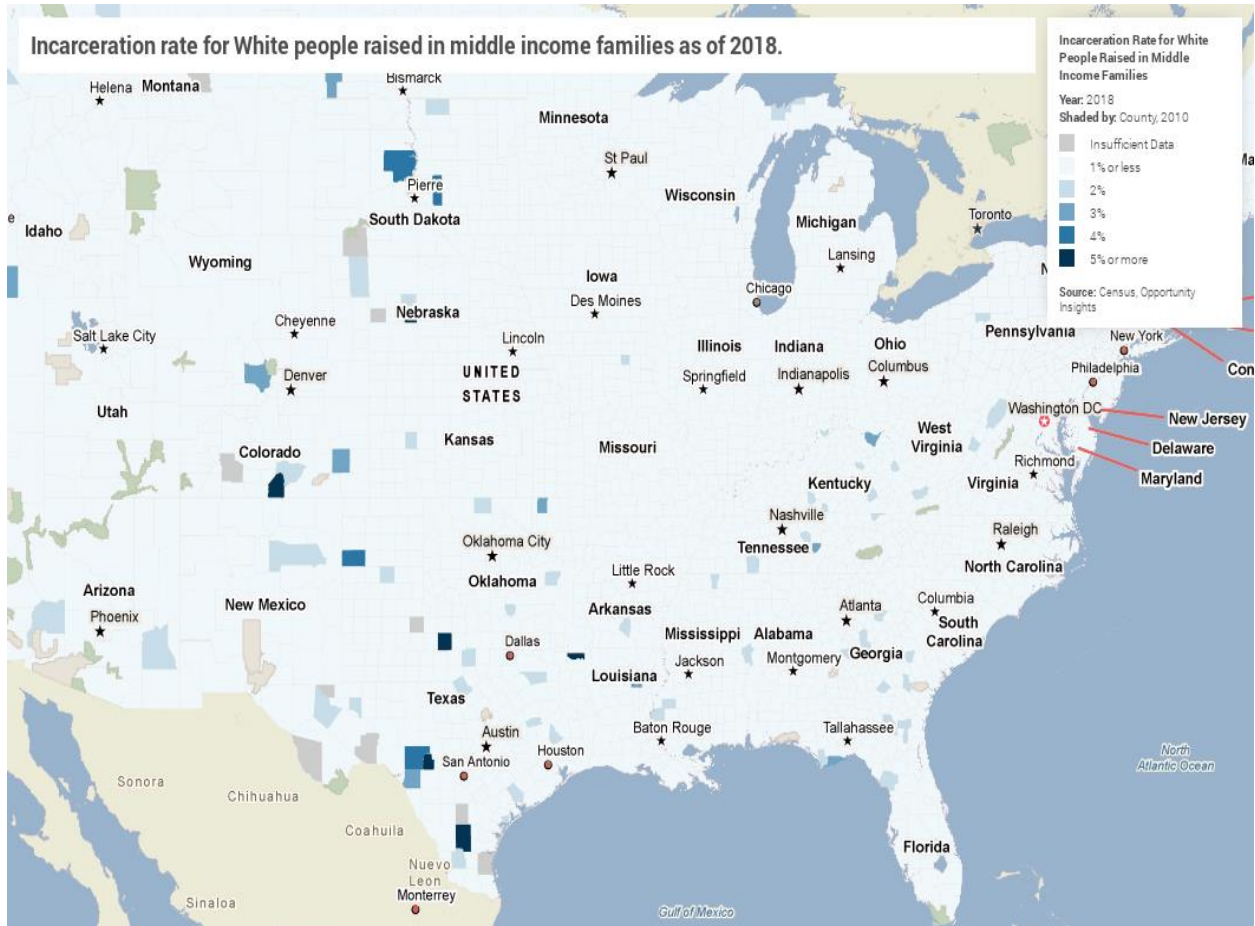
Figure 18: Incarceration Rates of White Americans in Middle Income Levels by County.
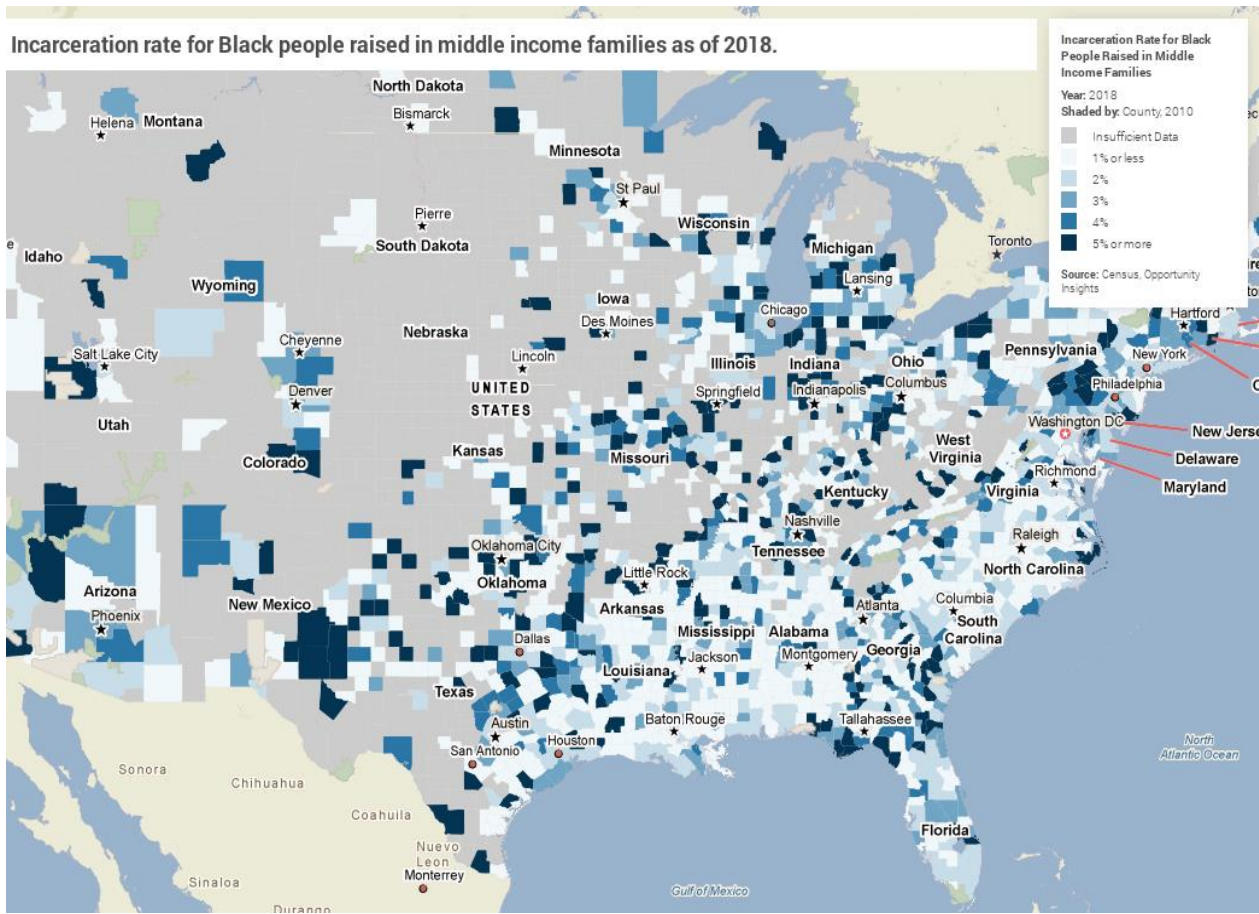
Figure 19: Incarceration Rates of Black Americans in Middle Income Levels by County.
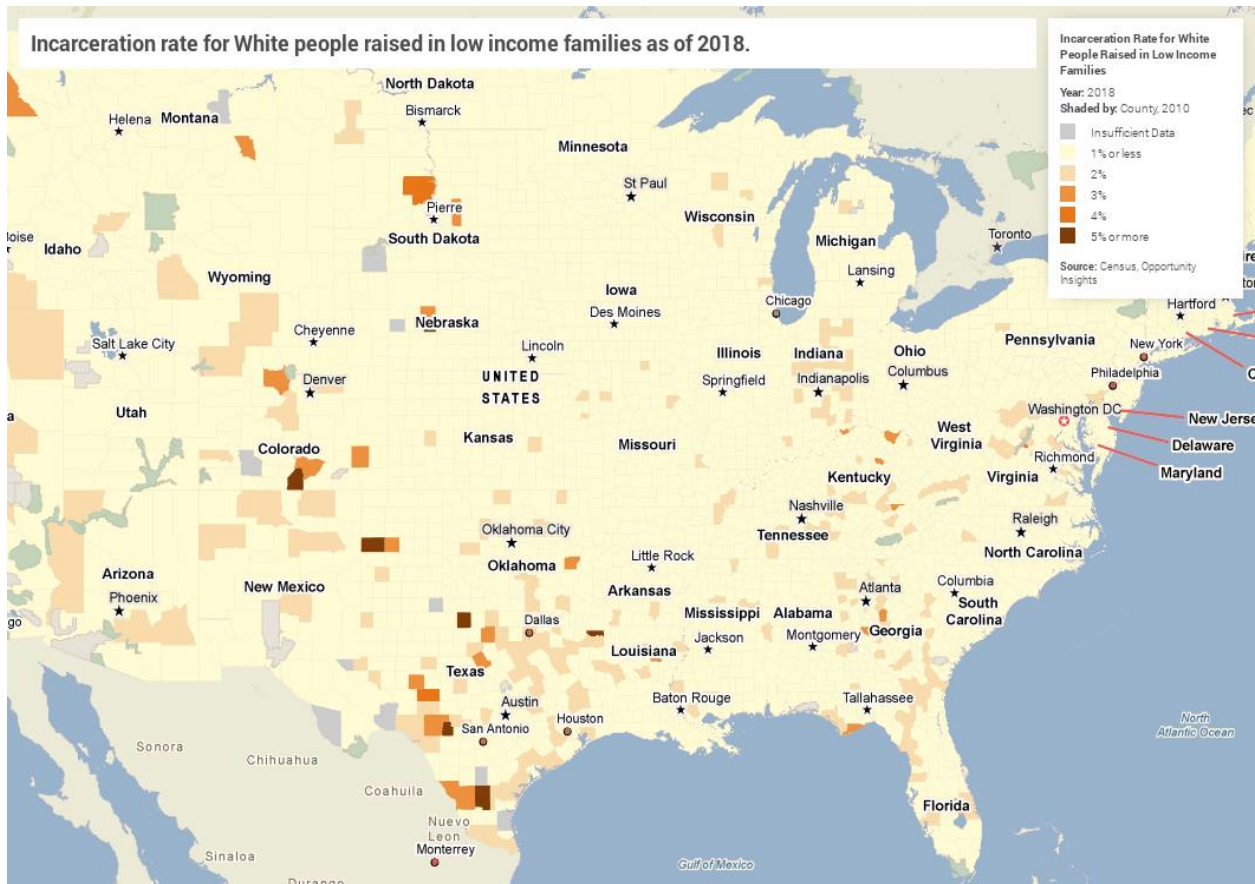
Figure 20: Incarceration Rates of White Americans in Low Income Levels by County.
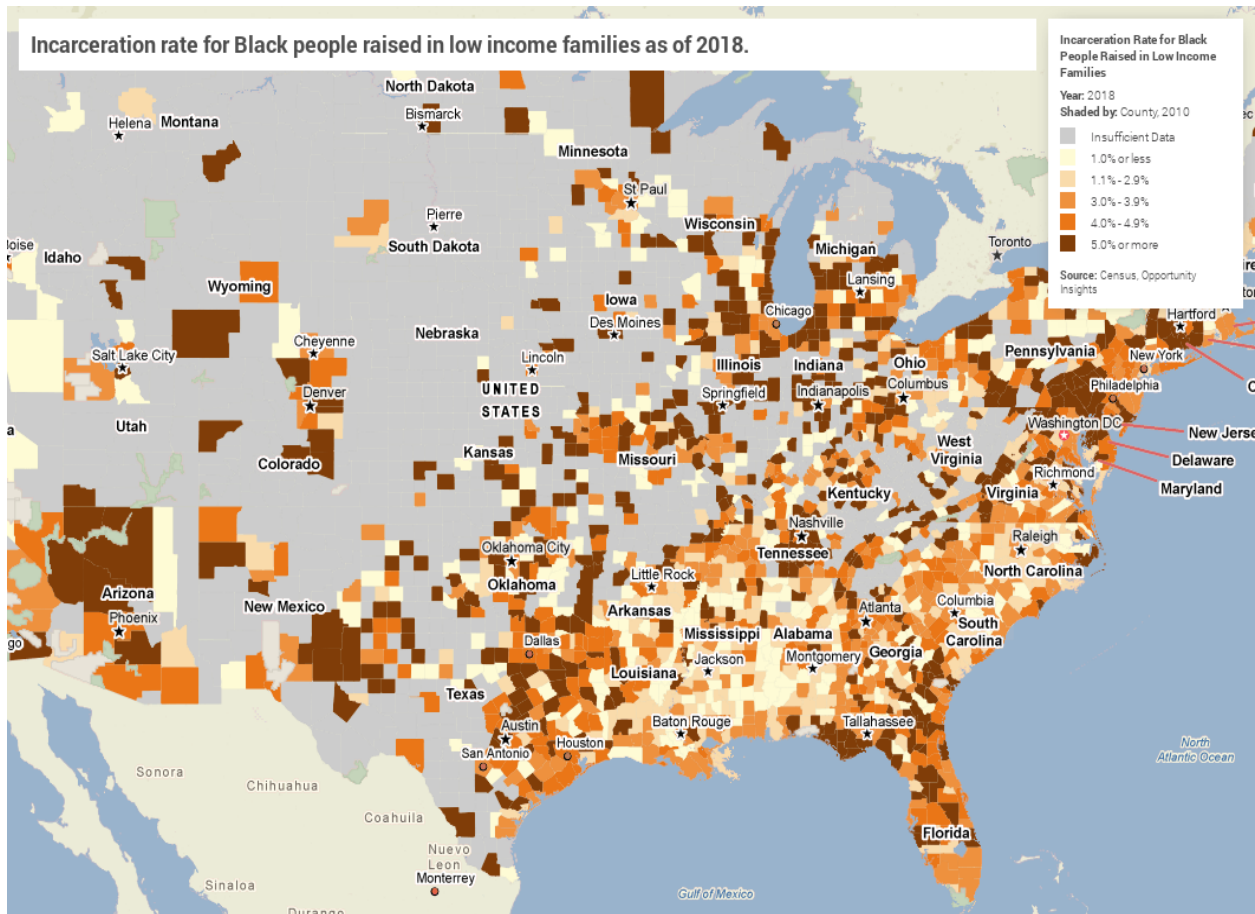
Figure 21: Incarceration Rates of Black Americans in Low Income Levels by County.
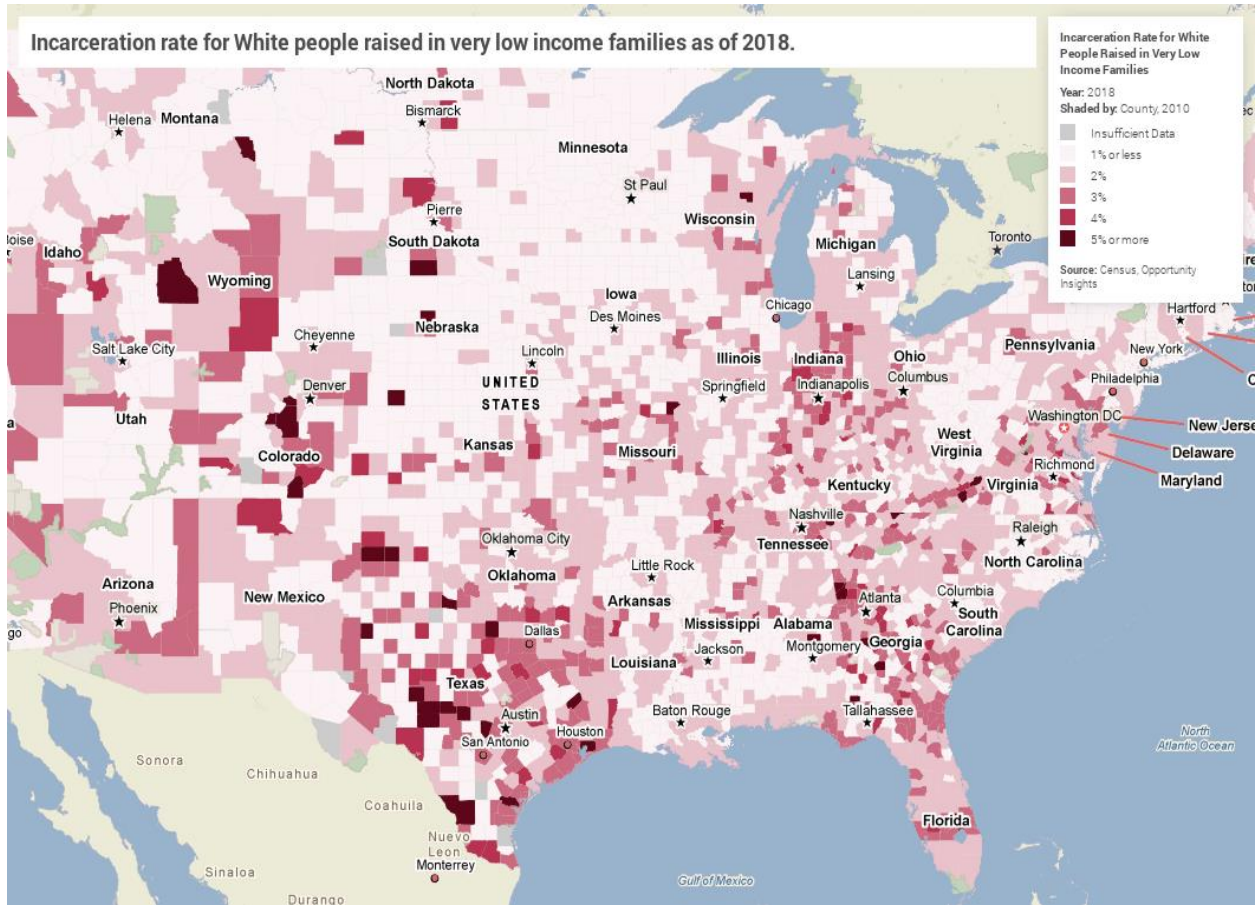
Figure 22: Incarceration Rates of White Americans in Very Low-Income Levels by County.
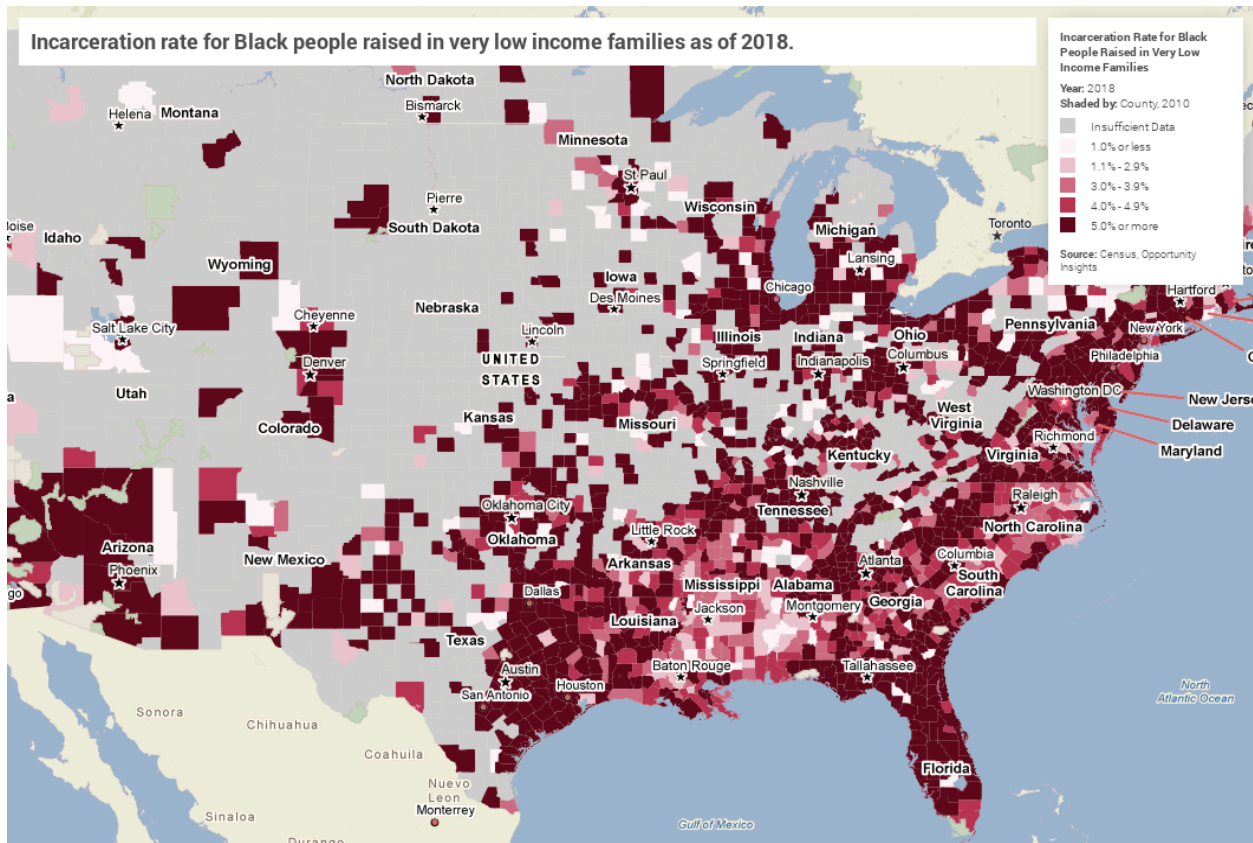
Figure 23: Incarceration Rates of Black Americans in Very Low-Income Levels by County.

4.4   Remaining City Quality

Transitioning beyond safety, we gain more insight into the more positive aspects of the data within this section of city quality. As mentioned prior, there is a strong correlation between negative views and indifference concerning the remaining categories, so the focus of this portion of the data analysis will not be to re-examine the negatives, but to investigate the positive trends and pull from the qualitative data as to what is the source of the positive responses reported from the remaining forty percent (40%) of respondents. For respondents who rated safety positively, the remaining categories were correlatively rated with similar marks. The qualitative data of these ratings disclose trends common to what is currently communicated in modern livability metrics with an emphasis found in walkability, accessibility, affordability, and healthy eating options such as farmers' markets or similar grocery chains known for their health options, often lacking in impoverished and disenfranchised communities.

As we continue to adequately encapsulate the interests of Black Americans with the following analysis, it is proper to display that there are hidden biases that remain against Black Americans as expressed in a qualitative statement as seen below:

> "I live in a predominantly white/other area and have access to stores in my neighborhood that are safe, but I live a bit uneasy not being surrounded by my "own." I only trust my surroundings to an extent because I am different".

An interesting trend that emerged in the analysis of qualitative responses displays that more than half of the respondents who are Black Americans and Latino Americans identify their neighborhood as a Predominately White Neighborhood (PWN) or suburban in their qualitative disclose feelings of being 'out-of-place. There is a sense of unease and slight mistrust which appear to be the result of microaggressions and implicit biases of White neighbors. Regardless of these feelings, however, Black Americans report a form of satisfaction with their community as long as key resources are available and accessible, displaying the degree that many Black Americans have unfortunately accepted a level of prejudice as a part of their life. These trends are unique to Black American respondents as other ethnicities do not report the same discomfort with their presence in PWNs. This is an important point as Black and African Americans often must consider the presence of potential hate crime victimization, apart from police victimization, concerning safety. The map below reveals the prevalence of hate crimes nationally (Figure 16), a caveat being that these are only the reported crimes.
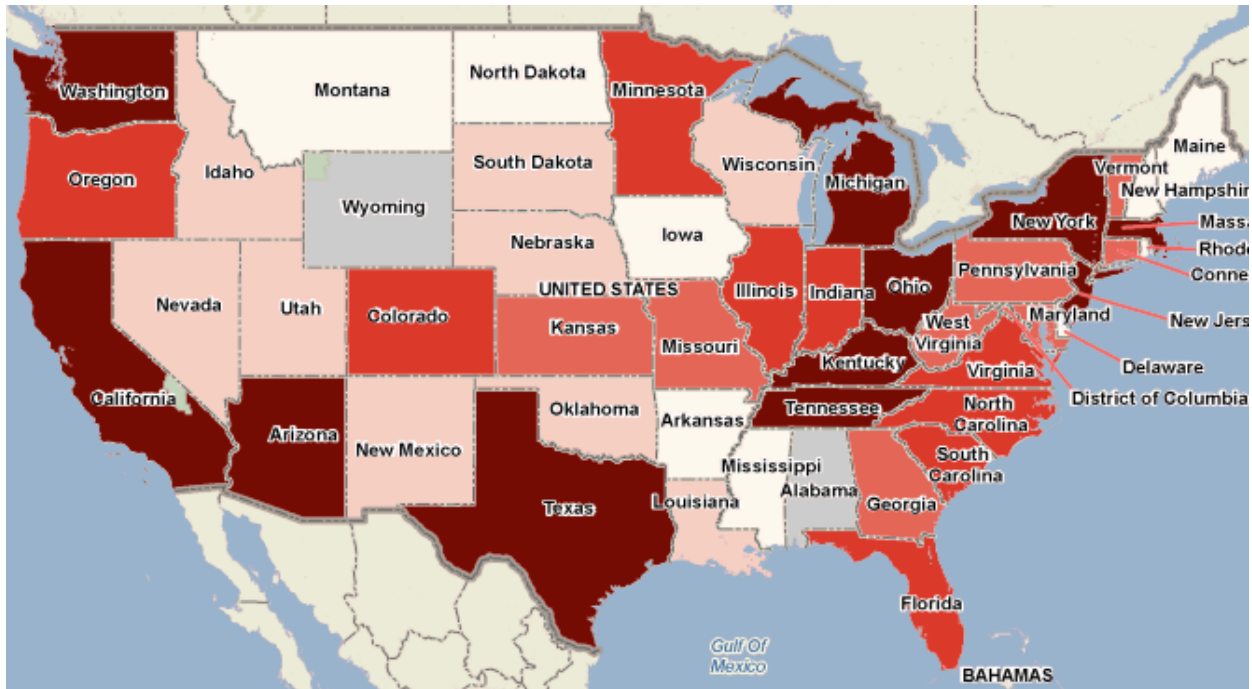
Figure 24: Map of Hate Crimes in the United States.

4.5   The Built Environment and Gentrification

When it comes to the physically built environment and discourse around gentrification, more than half of the total respondents (59%) report their neighborhoods, either where they live currently or where they grew up, are either being gentrified been fully gentrified already (Figure 17). An important observation is the variance between African American respondents and Black American respondents as there is a sixteen percent (16%) difference in affirmative observation. Interestingly, the qualitative responses display that how African Americans and Black Americans view gentrification is not necessarily the same. For example, many Black American respondents expressed the observation of ongoing gentrification through a lens of observing increased costs of living, renovations that displace community members, and disparate distribution of resources and community assets whereas African Americans tended to speak of gentrification from an indirect observation occurring toward Black and Latinx Americans, yet typically seemed to disassociate from the phenomena. Though many Black Americans are achieving socioeconomic mobility farther than prior generations, prejudicial treatment, and subtle forms of redlining, as outlined in *The Color of Law* still occur to date as observed in Figures 23 and 24. It should be

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noted that the disparity is amplified when you compare it to the spatial distribution and density of the Black American population contextually as seen in Figures 2 and 3.
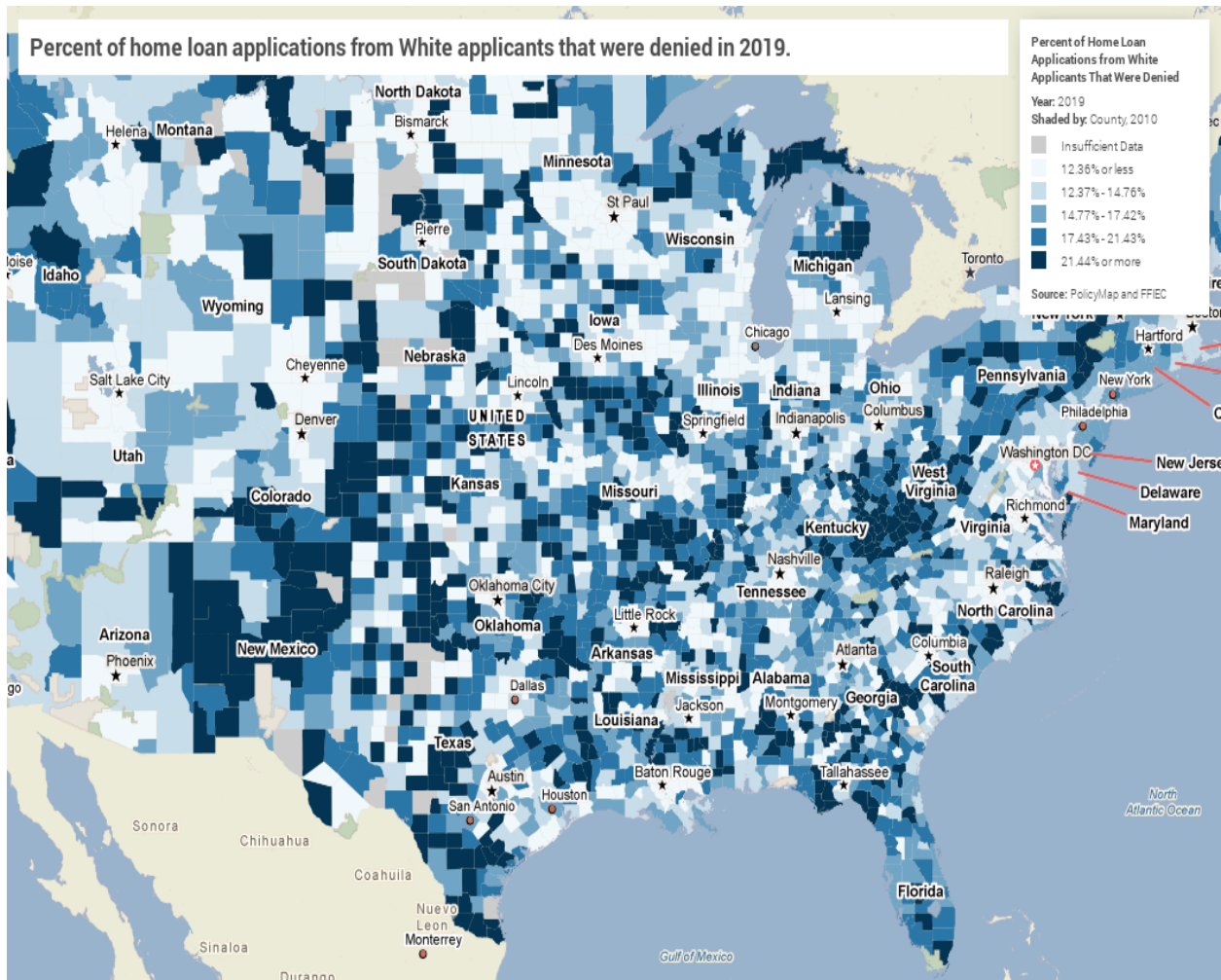
Figure 25: Rates of Mortgage Denials for White Americans.

From the proper interpretation of the comparison in Figures 23 and 24, the observation is not in the prevalence of mortgage denials on the map, instead the concentration of denial rates. For example, in Figure 23, we can see that mortgage denials happened across the entire United States while Figure 24 does not display the same. However, as observed in Figures 2 and 3, the key is the rate understanding how the rate and concentration align with the geographic distribution of Black and White Americans nationally.
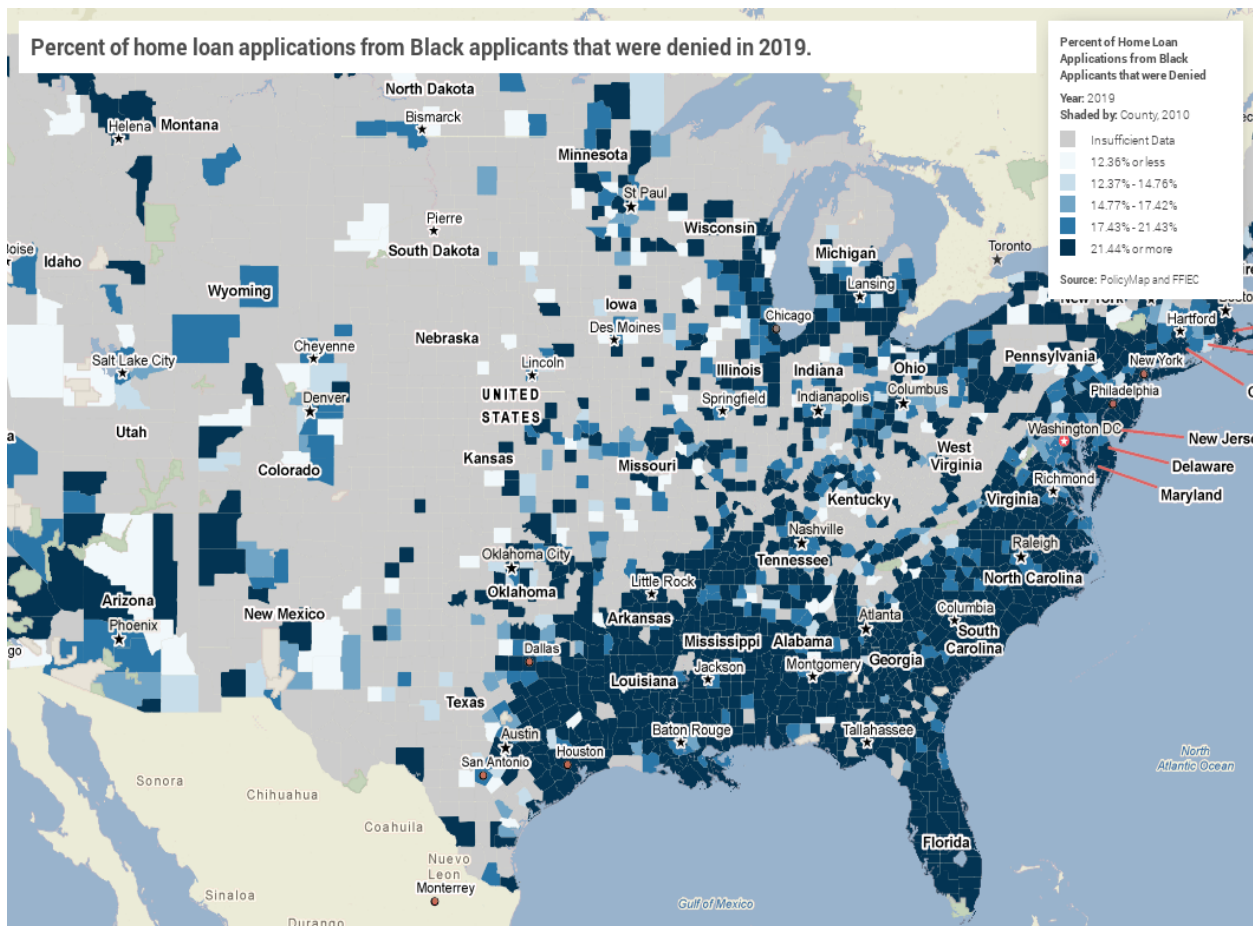
Figure 26: Rates of Mortgage Denials for Black Americans.

For respondents who say that gentrification is currently happening, sixty-one percent (61%) rate it to be occurring at a rate medium to high rate of speed (Figure 13). Seventy-six percent (76%) of African Americans report gentrification to be occurring at a slow to moderate pace, if at all while thirty percent (30%) of Black Americans report gentrification occurring at a slow pace, if at all, the remaining seventy percent (70%) expressing gentrification is happening at a moderate to rapid pace. Of that percentage, nearly forty percent (37%) report observing rapid to complete gentrification. A key note is, some respondents who reported their neighborhood is not being gentrified gave qualitative feedback that expressed the reason for their rating was due to their neighborhood either being already predominately white or that the gentrification process had already been completed. Also, it should be noted that this set of responses is not limited to

responses of the southeast region of the US where many respondents reside. Reports of significant gentrification through urban revitalization is reported in Harrisburg and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Charleston and Simpsonville, South Carolina; Nashville, Tennessee; Parts of Houston, Texas, California; Greensboro, Raleigh, Durham, High Point, and Charlotte, North Carolina; Macon, Atlanta, and Augusta, Georgia; Chesterfield and Richmond, Virginia; and parts of New Jersey. Another important consideration is that a low rating does not automatically equate to the absence of urban revitalization, many report the presence of, but at a significantly slower speed. These ratings are consistent across all ethnic categories. Some cities which indicated gentrification as prevalent were omitted due to the number of respondents and the need to maintain anonymity.
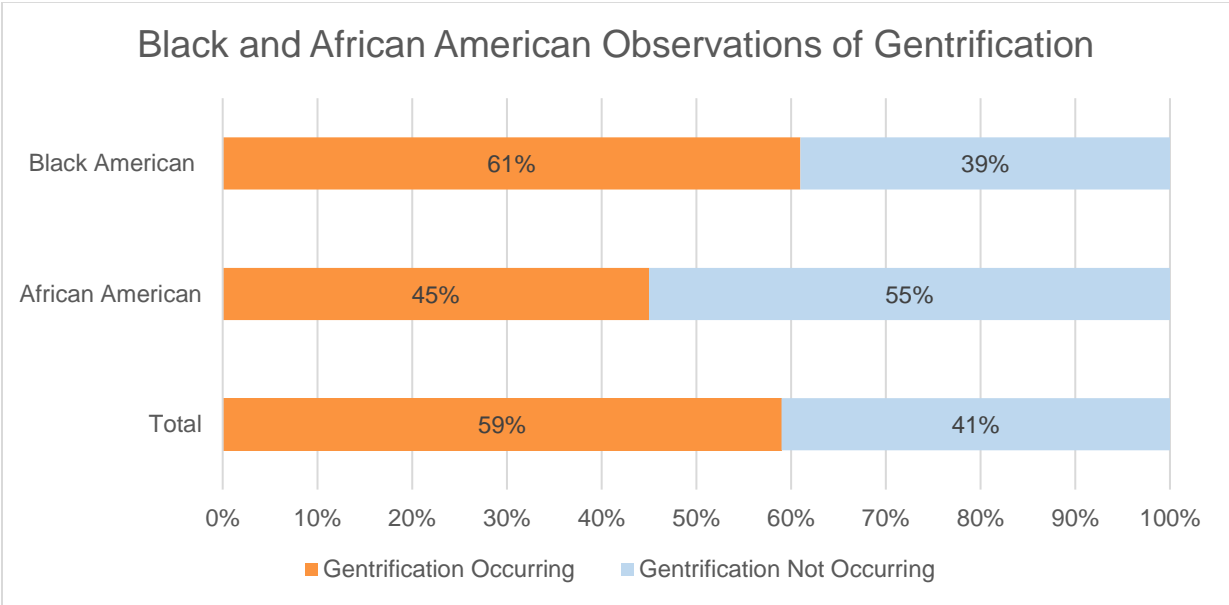
Figure 27: Respondent observations of ongoing gentrification.

While some may believe gentrification to be limited to explicit displays of population displacement, it typically occurs in stages in which slight renovations and improvements to the built environment occur, i.e. repaving roads, adding and improving sidewalks, street lights, and traffic signals, and the gradual increase in local housing costs to the degree where the local populous is displaced due to being priced out of their neighborhood (Benner et al, 2016; Benner & Manuel, 2016; Colenutt, 2020). As mortgage denial rates are high and rent is typically higher than the mortgage, Black American renters are ultimately forced to either struggle to maintain

desirable housing or relocate to a more affordable location which may come at the expense of an aspect, or aspects, of quality of life (Craig, 2018; Anne et al., 2015; McCabe, 2018).
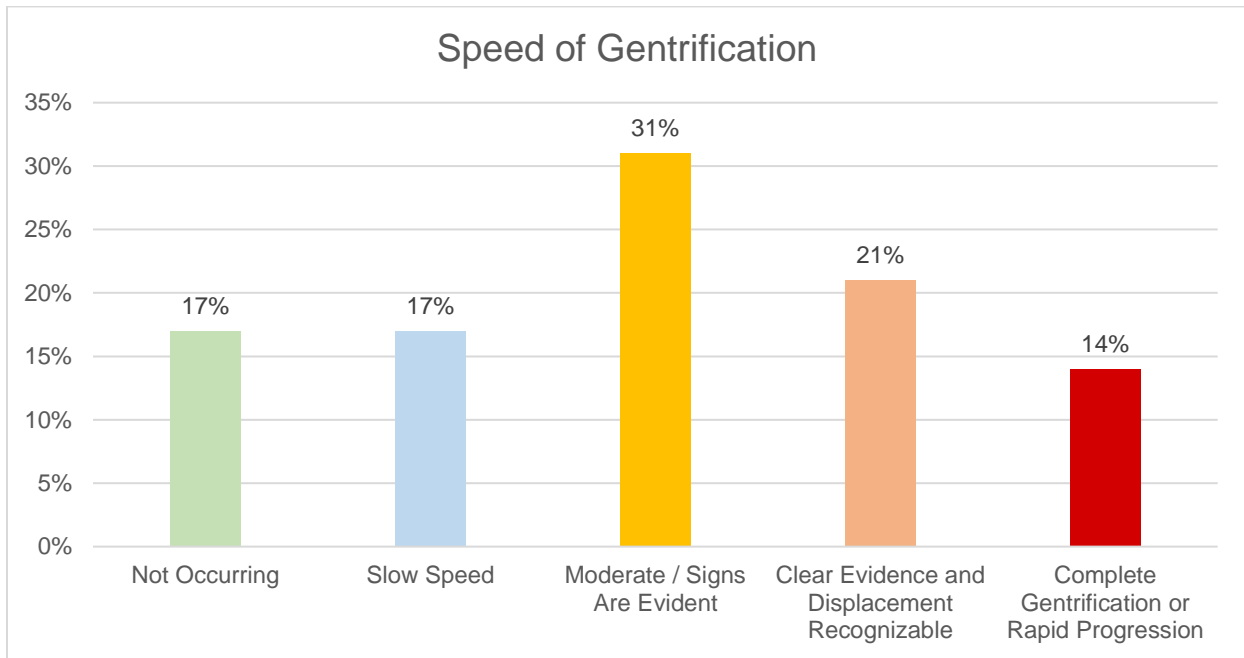
Figure 28: This graph displays respondent observations of the gentrification rate in current or former communities.

Beyond gentrification, more than 3 out of 4 respondents (77%) have observed that Black and Latino/a communities are not considered when plans for city development, improvement, and revitalization are made. Among all ethnicities, most White American respondents (62%) also believe most White American respondents (62%) also believe that Black and Latino/a communities are not considered when planning and redevelopment occurs. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of African American respondents believe the Black and Latinx communities are not considered during planning and seventy-seven percent (77%) of Black Americans believe the same. With this, however, it is worth noting that the qualitative analysis revealed some Black American respondents who answered 'Yes' on the survey indicated their response as unfavorable, i.e. the feeling that Black and Latinx communities are considered, but for nefarious purposes. The purposes cited were those such as oppressive targeted through practices of over-policing, redlining, educational segregation, and gentrification. There is a wealth of perspective within the qualitative data as the source of these perspectives, outline in the following tables.

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Table 6: Affirmative Black American qualitative responses for the survey question: *Do you believe the Black and Latino/a community is considered when plans for city improvements, development, and renovations are made?*

Are Black and Latino/a Communities Considered During Planning? Affirmative Black American Responses.
"They may be a line item, but these communities' actual needs are not being addressed at the same rate as white people".
"It may be that we don't participate when the planning occurs. To busy surviving".
"I don't think the city takes into account what will come of minority communities when conducting City planning".
"I don't think the effect of construction and new developments on different demographics is often something thought about. I think the focus most of the time is making money and about the area abs people in the area."
"I don't think the city thinks of minority populations when redesigning and remodeling cities. It's all about promoting the city and attracting tourism."
"Generally, there is less attention placed on the needs of black and brown individuals."
"I feel like plans are often made FOR the minority community without adequately considering the direct effect on those community members. Sometimes even when feedback is requested from minority communities, our voices are not incorporated into the planning; the bottom line/money is the driving decision-making factor."

Table 7: Non-Affirmative (Responses of 'No') White American qualitative responses for the survey question on consideration during planning.

Are Black and Latino/a Communities Considered During Planning? Non-Affirmative White American Responses
"Just look around ...if they were- why aren't there more public transportation routes at various times to help individuals with various schedules? Why are so many communities without ?"
"I believe those with minimal assets are the last to be considered if they're considered at all."
"I think the only consideration is the possibility of financial gain at any costs".
"I don't see the same advantages in their neighborhoods when they plan these new communities."
"The perception of this population is that most are probably lower class. When you build or make improvements but set the price that omits these classes, you are not thinking about this population."

Table 8: Affirmative (Responses of 'Yes') of both White and Black American qualitative responses for the survey question on consideration during planning.

Are Black and Latino/a Communities Considered During Planning? Affirmative White American Responses	Are Black and Latino/a Communities Considered During Planning? Affirmative Black American Responses
"They're equal to whites".	"We are almost the majority here so yes we are taken into consideration, but we do not change their preset plans."
"I do think diversity is considering by government in my town."	"They are considered.... maybe not favorably. It is important that they make sure they are considered."
"I do not think gentrification is meant to harm African American/ Latino community".	"I think more resources are added to help minorities."
"I feel like our city does a good job of being inclusive."	"These areas are considered to ensure they are either purchase for gentrification purposes or ways to acquire the black dollar through frivolous items that they recognize black and brown communities will waste their funds on."
"I don't know this to be true, but I am assuming that all communities should be taken into consideration so that the process is fair. Also, I believe most people want to be fair."	"They are considered yes, but that consideration is not always in the best interest of the minority group."
	"They plan to get rid of us and bring them in." *** *Though a negative explanation, this was included as the responded answered an affirmative "YES" to the initial question yet expressed this as <u>how</u> they perceive Black and Latino/a communities are included in planning.***

What is interesting about these responses (Tables 5, 6, 7) is they provide insight into the thinking patterns behind how aspects of planning and development unfold. While some White American respondents agree that Black American communities are not considered, based on survey data, those who believe they are considered to express qualitative reasoning that is indicative of the

type of planning that occurs (Table 7), which clearly is divergent from the reality expressed by many Black Americans. While the survey harvested a multitude of qualitative responses, the samples represented in this thesis in Tables 5, 6, and 7, are paralleled by more than half of the respondents indirectly. Even more interesting is the qualitative expressions of Black Americans who do believe that Black American communities are considered during planning. In fairness, however, not all Black American respondents share these ideologies. At least one in four respondents believe that fair and equitable inclusion is conducted on their community's behalf. The reasons cited for this are recent attention on the socioeconomic inequities and minority representatives occupying political positions of influence. Black Americans in states that are particularly progressive or diverse, such as Florida, Arizona, and New Mexico, express the belief that their community is adequately supported.

As previously stated, these positive respondents correlate with higher ratings of overall city quality and tend to be more comfortable with their current position in society. Additionally, these considerations factor in with respondents' thoughts on how the built environment shapes the core components of a community. There are inconclusive studies that speak to the physical composition of the built environment and how these elements impact the quality of life for inhabitants, such as the Pruitt-Igoe study. While some individuals may be skeptical of such studies, more than ninety percent (90%) of respondents to the question which inquired about the impact of the built environment on quality of life expressed personal, lived experience to the potential truth of this. A small number who disagreed made mention of feeling people will do what they want to do regardless of the neighborhood, however, many respondents who self-identified as having lived in various communities communicated the very real impact the upkeep, appearance, lighting, and spatialization of the community had on the overall quality of life. Through qualitative data responses, respondents acknowledged that areas with poor lighting felt more depressed and had higher degrees of behavioral health concerns. Black Americans equated poor neighborhood upkeep as directly correlative with the attitude and conduct of residents and indicate these areas see more crime due to the lack of holistic consideration of these aspects.

Table 9: Qualitative responses regarding the effect of the built environment on sociological and behavioral attributes of communities.

Qualitative Responses on Built Environment's Impact on Quality of Life
"As a member of the real estate community, I have had a direct impact on the esthetics of our community. Homes with desirable, yet affordable design helped to attract the caliber of neighbor that helps a community like [REDACTED]. An HOA that maintains the grounds has influenced homeowners to maintain their grounds. And, it's physical location has personally given me a sense of security and peace."
"Fortunately, I have not lived in what's considered "low-income" areas where these categories have high negative rates. However, I have been to areas that I would consider as "low-income" and honestly did not feel safe. I find that areas that have poor up-keeping are areas where people struggle, and it isn't always by choice. These issues are more often seen in Black communities: people struggle, and it affects their mental health, very little resources and access resulting in poor QOL, and need for survival and boredom increases crime rates. These areas are often policed, but I honestly don't think some of the police care and just "turn the other cheek" because it's not their people."
"I agree that the "look" of an area can impact various issues that are prevalent in said area. I grew up in the inner city and I have lived in pretty much most types of environments. That said, poorer areas tend to be a direct mirror to the crime and other issues that often plague these areas. Less money and resources going into an area typically translate into less opportunity, more crime, worsened educational systems, and poor mental health."
"I agree the physical components of a neighborhood's design can impact crime, mental health, and other qualities of life. I do see how these elements impact my current neighborhood. It is unfortunate because growing up, my neighborhood did not closely resemble anything like where I live now. I can see how the quality of the neighborhood had significant impact on my quality of life. I was truly sheltered and did not fully recognize the extent of opportunities outside of the neighborhood until I was an adult. We had no sidewalks, vandalism and poorly constructed properties were a constant. The roads were not fully maintained. Children were happy, but truly restricted for exposure to opportunities for life outside of the hood."

Table 10: Qualitative responses regarding the effect of the built environment on sociological and behavioral attributes of communities.

More Qualitative Responses on Built Environment's Impact on Quality of Life
"I believe this is true. The area in which I live has certain stores and restaurants that attract a certain type of people. I notice that in areas that aren't as aesthetically developed are prone to more crime and has a feeling of "gloom." I think the more care put into the physical appearance of a community helps with the feeling of comfort or safety."
I can attest to lower economic areas being depressed. Areas that have abandoned buildings nearby are likely to be considered lower income areas. In my experience with living in poor communities and being homeless, areas where people can get help or access to public services are usually a bit dirty and unkept. Be it abandoned buildings around the block or stray fences covered in tall grass and litter. Areas with more economic prosperity are generally nicer on the eye, have better roads, clean water, and city curb appeal.
"I understand mental and physical health, overall well-being being impacted by those conditions. I suffered from mental health and respiratory diseases, and relatives suffered from asthma and lead poisoning."
I am a designer and studied how strategic and thoughtful use of color, layout, lighting, etc. can have a tremendous effect on mood and behavior. I believe well-thought-out communities can absolutely have a positive effect on overall livability.

The results of the overall study reveal that current livability indices do not fully capture the Black American perspective regarding livability. Additionally, through the quantitative and qualitative data sets, we can see a demonstration of the negative impacts that have remained due to the lack of accurately including relevant factors of racism and racist urban planning and design practices in livability conversations, particularly for Black American communities. The data suggests that an interdisciplinary, comprehensive approach is necessary to provide a holistic solution and meet the specific needs of the Black American community. Throughout the data analysis, correlations of generational trauma from years of existing in subsequent systems of prejudice and oppressive practices were echoed by Black American respondents across income brackets, state lines, and gender.
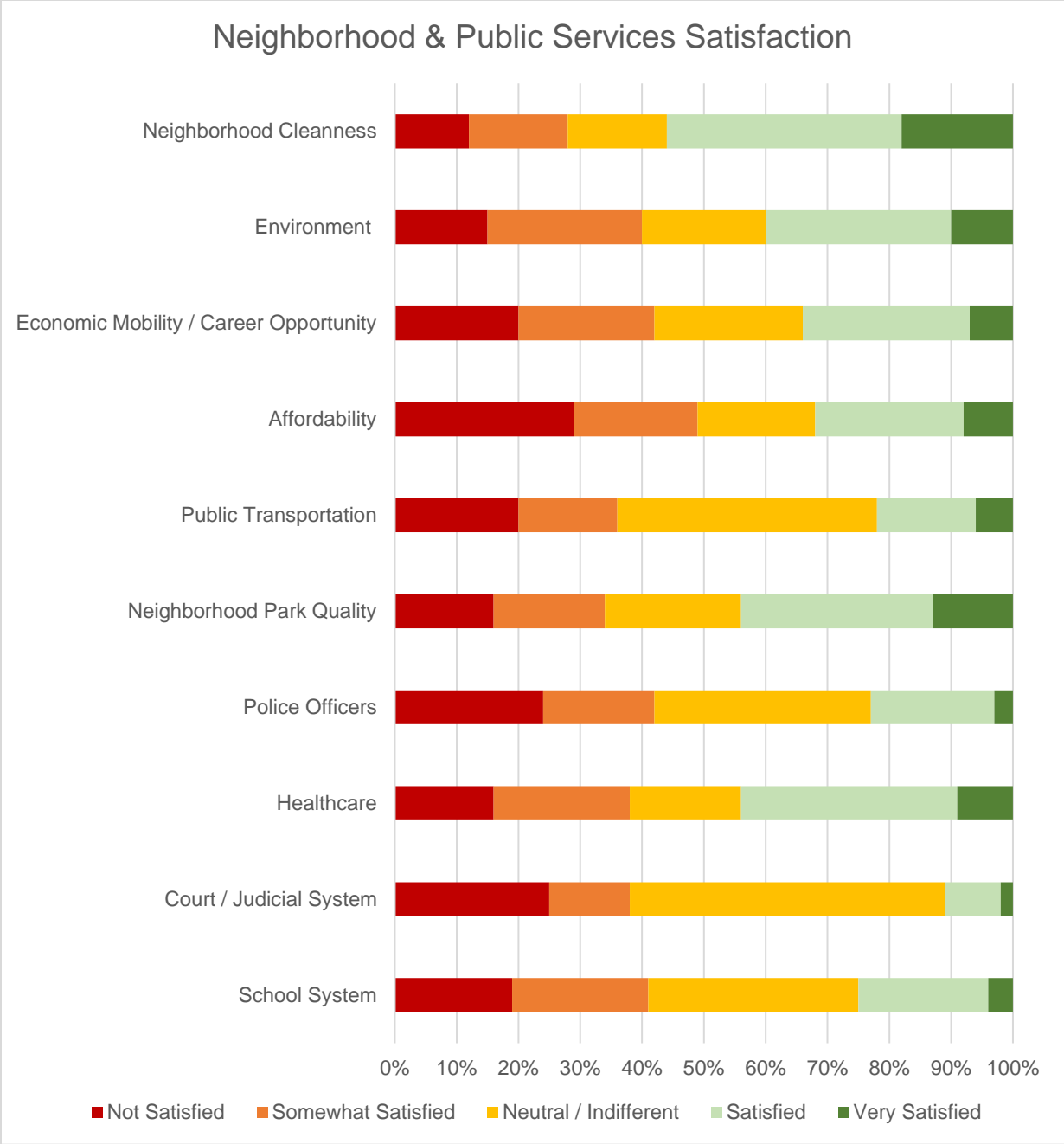
Figure 29: Bar graph representing respondent satisfaction with various community services.
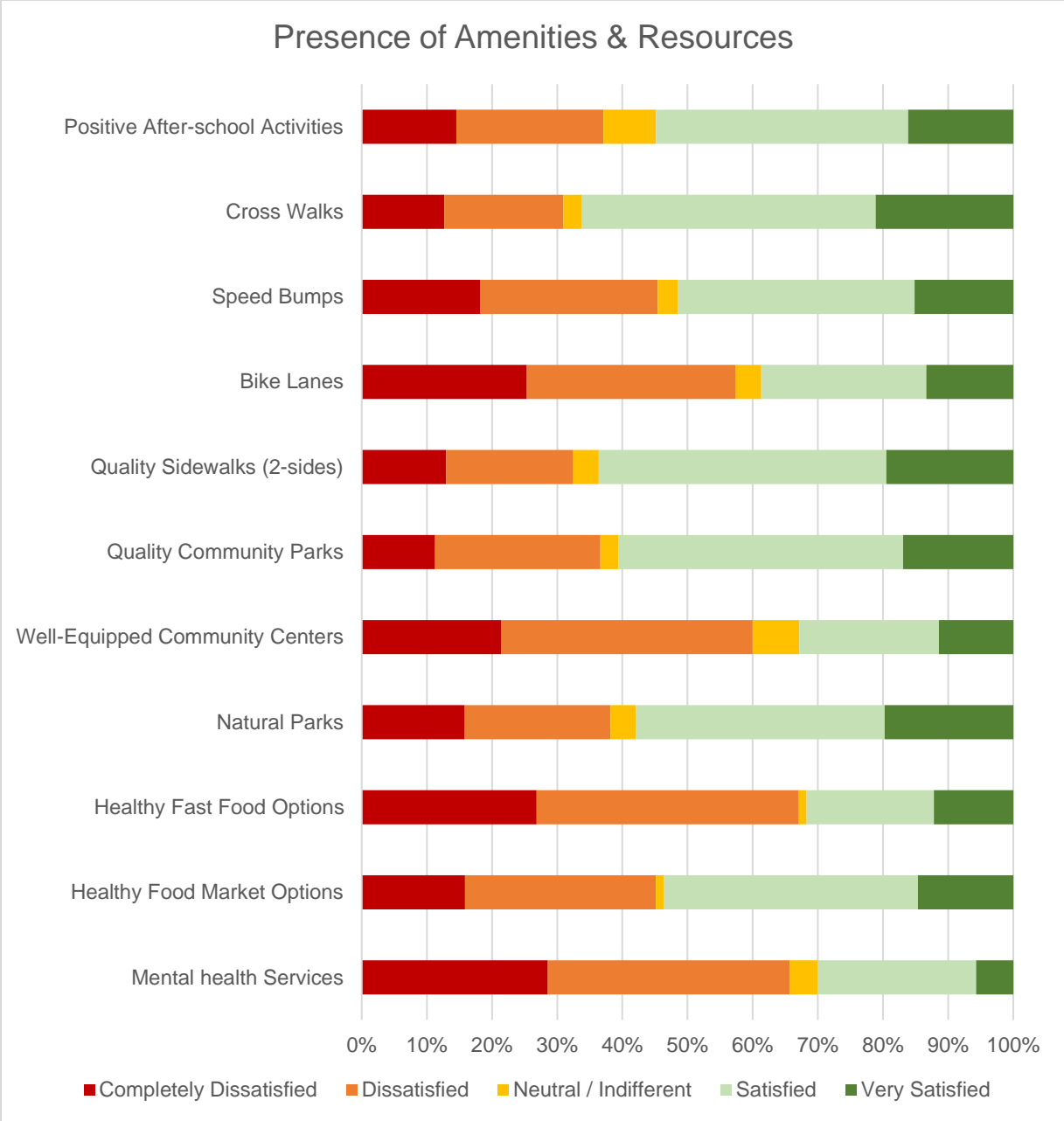
Figure 30: Bar graph representing respondent satisfaction with the presence of identified resources often found in PWNs.

Regarding the premise of this thesis, what the data affirms is the present ramifications of perpetual marginalization that can only be rectified by applying specific metrics to assess livability for Black Americans. As expressed by survey participants themselves, these metrics must be inclusive of the prevalent racism which still exists, yet manifests in different forms, either knowingly or non-admittingly in our nation, to dismantle the systems and reverse the

damage that has occurred. Concurrently, this is not something that can be explicitly done without the Black American community's involvement as preliminary data suggests, through White American and other ethnicities' responses, that there is too significant a knowledge gap in understanding the concerns of the Black community for the task to be spearheaded by any perspective that is outside of the Black American community (Ridzi and Prior, 2020; Shaw, 2016; Anne, 2015).

4.6   The Discussion

While it may seem trivial to some, the reality of these observations is critical and displays how deeply embedded racist bias exists, not only in policy, but the mindset of many Americans. As time progresses and many social movements develop and articulate the implications of the racist history that is often not discussed, there often surfaces a level of disbelief, shock and awe, or invalidation, or inability to accept the truth of what is presented. In the past there were sporadic attempts to bring attention to these issues from members of the Black American community, yet the voices were often stifled. The history of the United States shows patterns of oppression, push back against said oppression, and then subjugation, a cycle that plays out time after time with slight progress made each iteration (Baptist, 2016). To support these statements, look at the pattern of race relations in the United States. First, Black Americans were treated as property, not even viewed as human, and while there may be much literature on this aspect, no citation is needed as this is no secret. these aspects of race must remain inseparable from any discussion regarding the future of the United States.

The reality is Black Americans did not freely travel to the United States initially, they were kidnapped and shipped in chains. When it came to politics regarding the Electoral College and how populations would be used to assign congressional seats, there were debates on whether Black slaves should be counted as full humans and a compromise was made that counted them as three-fifths (3/5) of a whole human. Black Americans were auctioned and sold, families broken, male and female slaves treated as animals to breed other slaves, and overall no sense of autonomy was offered in truth (Baptist, 2016; DuBois, 1998). Black slaves were stripped of their identity, forbidden to read and write, raped and molested, children aborted, subjected to substandard heath and nutrition for more than 300 years, constantly victimized even after slavery

through domestic acts of terrorism from Ku Klux Klan and similar hate groups, and a host of other psychologically abusive practices. None of this can be ignored because there are statistical considerations attached to Black Americans that are not fully explained negatively impacting the overall livability of Black Americans.

In the past 5 years, biological researchers are drawing conclusive evidence which suggests that intergenerational trauma has genetic impacts (Steenwyk, 2020). More explicitly, there is emerging scientific evidence which suggests that the traumatic experiences of prior generations manifest symptoms in the generational offspring (Gapp et al., 2020). This means that the past 400 years of traumatic experiences of Black Americans is enacting their ramifications amongst the Black American population. Often, not many realize the truth that it has only been around sixty (60) years since the Civil Rights Movement began obtaining certain rights and freedoms for Black Americans, and even with that, as laws were passed it has only been within the last 40 to 50 years that those liberties have been more available to Black Americans to fully participate in. For years Jim Crow laws oppressed Black Americans and This is significant because it bears witness that much of what makes America what it is for its citizens was not designed with the Black American as a whole person in mind. These are sentiments we see expressed by DuBois, Shabazz, and Rothstein. Therefore a livability index specific to the Black American community must be designed, to reverse and offset the generational impacts of racism.

This understanding is necessary as many discussions, whether academic or not, often stalemate when the intricate complexities of these conversations are encountered. It is at these points of contention the concept of critical social theory emerges in significance based upon its ability to facilitate high-level inspection of the truths among the relations between human beings. Concepts such as how the human interacts with its environment, how the environment interacts with the human, as well as how each concurrently shape the other. As we are dealing with the concepts of racist practices historically which continue to impact the livelihood of entire communities today, these sociological considerations must become inseparable from the discussion. As mentioned earlier concerning *Orientalism* and many social theories, the human being is defined by its environment and learns who and what to be through the environment presented to it, learning, and conforming to what is emplaced about it (Beaver et al., 2014; Shabazz, 2015; Southworth, 2016). Simplistically, people shape their environment, and the

environment shapes its people, yet it is important to know the people conform to the shape of the existing environment first (Heidegger, 2013; Kaytal, 2002; MacDonald, 2015; Howell and Moore, 2010).

4.6.1 How Livable are Black American Communities?

To properly understand this aspect and sufficiently answer this question, one must ask, 'how does the social theory impact the development of appropriate livability standards and indicators that city managers and policy makers need be cognizant of to better structure our nations society?' With current calls to "defund the police" we see the urgency of effective discussion regarding this topic as may do not understand what is being expressed by the Black American community. On the surface it appears as the desire for anarchy, however, the aggression expressed toward the police is ultimately more than anger at the shooting of unarmed Black Americans; rather it is the manifestation of anger and disgust at what the police force represents to the Black American and non-White communities respectively - a series of oppressive systems and policies being imposed upon Black American and minority communities making them unlivable. Police officers are enforcers of policy thus, it is inevitable that if policies and legislation is designed in detrimental manners against a populace, anything perceived as a tangible extension of those policies will be deemed unsafe and threatening (Jones, 2018; Rothstein, 2015; Shabazz, 2015). If one observes current discourse adequately and separate the substance from the clutter, one will find many valid points of discussion, yet these ideas tend to be disjointed and at times sparse, especially when the political climates are heated up. That said, if one understood the underlying implications, the awareness would clarify that 'Defund the Police' in its rawest form translates to 'Refund our Community'; and not in the gentrifying manner we see nationally at the moment.

This is the result of the fact that the sad reality is that many Black American communities are not livable. In other words, they have people living in them yet are void of quality of life, opportunity, and the very things that the United States of America was founded upon. People seem to fail to realize the plight of Black Americans across the span of time from arriving on the coasts in slave ships until our modern day and age have simply been to live the same quality of life that White Americans enjoy. Often, however, due to biases in thought and design, and often

being seated in a posture of the privilege of not having to experience the life many Black Americans, which was established under systems of Jim Crow laws, other ethnicities approach the situation from a place that both invalidates and dismisses the Black American experience. This is severely erroneous as the average American city was not designed for Black Americans. As mentioned prior, it was not until the 1960s when the United States began to shift away from legalized racism which was enacted through policy and enforced through police (Rothstein, 2015; Jones, 2018). Knowing this, there is no way to effectively plan for Black American communities without taking this into account and designing an index that is devoid of the biases inherently embedded in the urban design system which has been operating in the United States.

4.6.2   OVERCOMING BIAS IN DESIGN AND ESTABLISHING AUTHENTIC BLACK AMERICAN LIVABILITY

So how does one proceed in the discussion from here? The right data creates a model that must be acknowledged, and these precedents implemented as the structure needed to protect communities from being cyclically subjugated to practices established upon inequity and racism. This is where components of social theory are key. It could be suggested that the social theory was slighted from the conversations because they inhibit the economic and political interests of cities aiming to achieve certain income, growth, and prestige (Gough, 2015). Practically speaking, some of the biases which exist are based upon fundamental differences in culture among Americans of differing races. Because the Black American race was established as inferior and less than civilized, it created a standard of discrimination and prejudice which existed in theory and on paper, legally (Baptist, 2016; DuBois, 1998; Fanon, 2020; Ralph and Singhal, 2019). This is the origin of the embedded biases as Black American culture was criminalized and severely resisted, since beginning of slavery through the 1990s when the War on Drugs emerged along with the 'Super Predator' theory that further engrained how Black Americans were viewed, like how early media did with Black Face misrepresentations of Black Americans and Black American culture. As a result, what Black Americans do as a way of life is hazardous to quality of life, liberty, and natural rights.

To offset these divestments which tend to serve a collective few, we must establish the truth of what livability is for the Black American community as the results reveal that what is socially

sustainable development within the Black American community is different than what we see in White American communities. We must remove implicitly and explicitly biased approaches that assume what works for one community, ethnically speaking, will automatically work for another while leveraging the power of social theory to ensure the human element is neither ignored nor bypassed in the interest of true equity. Inevitably, and unknowingly, human beings design their personal biases into their creation. We see this often in the tech space (Atanasoski, 2019) yet do not often acknowledge the reality of these human behavioral phenomena in other sectors in which humans are responsible for designing environments. There must be a livability index designed to not simply measure the quality of life for Black Americans but facilitates the proper planning of Black American communities in socially sustainable, inclusive ways that accommodate, not suppress, Black American culture and reverse the impacts of the intergenerational trauma and disadvantages experienced by the Black American community.

To exemplify this per the results of the study, we see clear distinctions between what Americans identify as safety. While It is apparent that on the human level all people desire security and general safety and comfort, how this unfolds is different between ethnicities. There is a present trauma in the Black American community that leads to somewhat contrasting indicators of livability concerning safety, particularly regarding police presence and interaction. Beyond this, Black Americans must consider numerous factors that many White Americans, along with other ethnicities, do not have to consider. As evidenced in the data, there is concern on inequity regarding criminalization and sentencing, educational opportunity, employment, and several other factors that other races often do not have to consider. City planners and urban developers must understand that livability is different for Black Americans who are still fighting to exist and be viewed as human beings.

For further clarity, these considerations are deeper than analyzing crime rate data and employment v. unemployment rates, it is an intricate consideration and very real concern that must confront the probability of being criminalized for being in a certain area or excluded from certain economic opportunities due to implicit racial bias (Shabazz, 2015; Jones, 2018). As an example, many White Americans may not realize the true concern that Black American soldiers face when being stationed at military installations in predominately white areas – concerns for personal and family safety, racial profiling, hate crime victimization, and other key

considerations. This sentiment extends beyond military personnel. Black Americans must consider aspects such as this in general, as well as factors such as if they will be denied loans or rent or overcharged in subtle attempts to price them out of a certain neighborhood. Black Americans must deal with concern for being harassed by neighbors through police in the sense that neighbors may be less tolerant of Black American culture and leverage the police force as an extension of their aggression and prejudice as evidenced in the very real past of this nation's history. We still see this unfold today in what is commonly termed 'Karen' (Andone, 2018; Midkiff, 2021; BBC News, 2018; Sheets, 2021). Beyond news that goes viral, locally Black Americans experience this often. Within the past month, a Black American acquaintance of mine bought a home and neighbors called the police as they were moving in, telling police responders that there was a burglary in progress. As confirmed in the qualitative data, this Black American female stated feeling unsafe in her new home because of the initial response from her neighbors and the fact that they used the police to blatantly harass her. This is significant as Black Americans make up a significantly less percentage than White Americans, yet incarceration rates are disproportionately higher, as are sentencing rates and lengths (Donnelly, 2017). People must confront the reality that law enforcement has a pattern of policing the Black American community which was developed as an extension of racism whether as slave catchers, or the entities which would be called to enforce segregation and oppression of Black Americans during the massive integration attempts nationally just 50 years ago.

Considering this, the overall research suggests accuracy within the premise that an appropriate livability index is necessary for the Black American community. How communities exist are different and what they deem as acceptable, a threat, and sustainable varies culturally. In truth, principles remain that will not change regardless of ethnicity simply because of human nature and base needs, but people deserve the right to enjoy the quality of life rather than just living to survive, which unfortunately is the experience of many Black Americans in the US. Many communities enjoy the quality of life, freedom from fear, freedom to explore and grow, enjoy the ups and downs of life while Black American communities are often neglected to substandard conditions as the result of racism and neglect (Wise and Driskell, 2016). This conversation matters because people are literally dying due to the biases which exist in current design practices. Practices of environmental racism, such as Flint, Michigan, in which an entire city of Black Americans was poisoned through extreme led levels in the water, or the Tuskegee

Experiment in which Black Americans were unknowing participants in a study regarding how untreated Syphilis would affect them – not to mention how many others may have been infected unknowingly through relations with them. Black Americans are subjected to disparate incarceration, disparate health, disparate family fratricide, and broken homes, disparate education, and disparate victimization. Is this the complete existence of all Black Americans? Certainly not, yet proportionately compared to other ethnicities in the US it is inequitable and needs attention. Many often wonder what considerations should be given or what for Black American communities need to establish livability, and the answer has been here for decades embedded in the very thing that legislation waged war against, the gangs and political groups which were dismantled through criminalization which corrupted their initial intent. These organizations initially began to establish livable conditions within the Black American community that was free from the bias, oppression, and other impacts of racism that plagued the community (PBS, 2011; Howell and Moore, 2010; Hagedorn, 2006; Encyclopedia Britannica, 2021; Craig, 2018). Looking through the Below are qualitative responses from the heart of respondents to help readers gain a more in-depth look at what Black Americans desire and are concerned about:

Table 11: Opinions of respondents for index considerations.

Additional Livability Considerations for Black Americans	
Access to sustainable & livable wages, social, cultural & community centered initiatives and programs, economic disparities, professional culture, prison reentry programs	Family structures, community interests, minority owned businesses, police inclusiveness and training and family stabilization
Daycare affordability	The biggest one should be family structure
Cultural differences that should be included are the religions different cultures often subscribe to, family structure, how many generations have been present within the country and/or community, and also the support system that is available to communities of different cultures.	

Faith and family. I think the city could do more for being more inclusive to all backgrounds	Faith Considerations and Cultural inclusion Churches, nonprofits, family support and fathering initiatives
Church events for black families have been a pillar to a lot of communities. Political figures in the past have had a large influence from the church on ideas and agendas. Leading starts with the church and can bridge gaps between government and community.	Faith, economics, culture, injustice and institutions of inequality that prey upon communities of colors such as banking, predatory lenders, education, red lining, voter suppression, felon disenfranchisement, predatory prosecuting, racial profiling, food insecurity and the much more
Health of minority owned businesses	Surveillance levels/ police over presence, presence of people of color, considerable and caring cultural memory in landscape
An area with outside markets and vendors. Hair braiding saloons and barber shops. Parks with fishing, trails, basketball courts, soccer fields, football fields, tennis, playgrounds, and shelters. Recreation centers with summer camps/activities, after school activities, and weekend activities. Restaurants with drive-thrus and outdoor seating, or a building with a bunch of Black-owned or Latino-owned restaurants. Places for us to see each other and bring our families, we like to connect and be with each other.	There should be more coverage of hate crimes and racial attacks in the area. As well as considering a registry for racial crimes just like sex offenders. The community needs to be protected against racial tension which has been bubbling over the years and I think that's a good step. Also having more events focused around businesses in our community would be what I consider public support. There should be more focus on the development of children in our communities more programs for mentor ships and education opportunities connected to these after school activities.
How much are the schools funded? What community programs are available? How much do the neighbors positively interact?	The likelihood of obtaining a job when black/Latino/a? How far of a drive is it to healthy options?

While there may be allies of the Black American community who can shed light to the plight of Black Americans through scholarship and applicable theoretical framework (Hutson, 2009; Ralph, 2019; Shaw, 2016), the results suggest there remain biases in the application of supposed solutions (Brand and Miller, 2020). It is these biases which respondents expressed perpetuate cycles of poverty, neglect, and oversight that cripple the Black American community and

stagnate its growth. Unfortunately, many see the progress which has been made and sees the great strides in the development of policy and attention on social justice and social sustainability, but what must be acknowledged is that in order to properly shift the livability imbalance, there must be an unequal focus on the interests of the Black American community. This is not preferential treatment and is not an act of racial superiority, it is an act of necessity. As the literature confirms, Black voices have been absent from many of these conversations too long. Some may argue that there are some Black Americans at the tables, which may be true, yet there must also be an acknowledgment that the few at the table cannot be the tokenization of inclusion while still operating in manners that are disenfranchising. There is a very real perspective of the Black American that is seemingly elusive to specific stakeholders which necessitate the full inclusion of the Black American community at the table to appropriately address livability concerns.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND FURTHER STUDY

5.1   Conclusion

The concept of urban development is one that appears to gain the interests of many political scientists, business analysts, and researchers. The conversations tend to dance around the elephant in the room, the impact many of these practices will have on the people within these areas of urban development. Local municipalities require coalition building, only with the caveat that not all coalitions have equal power. These strategic alliances are developed to cultivate a healthy community. These alliances must be inclusive. Many local, urban, disenfranchised communities have been in a perpetual outcry about the current and past conditions contributing to disparity are often invalidated. In response, many communities have developed methods of operating which allow them to survive in the oppressive conditions distressed communities are found to exist in. Yet as innovative, resilient, and sustainable as these methods may be, it is not sustainable and severely impedes the quality of life (Eizenberg and Jabareen, 2017; Kantor & Turok, 2012; Katz, 2018; Lowe et al., 2015).

With so many elements present when embarking on a journey to neighborhood revitalization, or community development, the strategic planning process can become quite cumbersome. The nuisance many developers appear to face on a consistent basis, no matter the location, is understanding what is necessary for successful community engagement. The task of community engagement is integral to the success of a plan for implementing community development in a manner that does not, in turn, exclude the residents of the community it is intending to help. Knowing this the question becomes, "How can community developers and other key stakeholders build the vision with the community to produce the most inclusive, well thought out strategic plan?" The challenge rests in identifying what does this look like for that specific community, a task that can only be achieved appropriately by including the community members at the table from the onset and exploring insight from researchers who have articulated a path, such as Fainstein. It is through these challenges that Fainstein engages in her exploration of creating the Just City. The concept at its core, and in its simplest form, is to bring the community to the table as equal stakeholders. This emphasizes Feinstein's call for a democratic process that

allows the inclusion of the diverse needs of various communities. Without this component, the capacity for proper urban development that is considered, sustainable and appropriate will be severely limited. This is the path to social justice within the Just City as outlined, a path which addressed core strategies within the social movement that instigates deliberate action (Fainstein 2010; Moss and Grunkemeyer, 2010; Ridzi and Prior, 2020).

For years, the people of the cities throughout the world have appeared to have known something that many elite class members have failed to grasp. This is evidenced through the appropriation of practice with the removal of the people, as indicated in Cities Within the City: Do-It-Yourself Urbanism and the Right to the City. Consistently, individuals seek to understand what cities do and who are they for. Almost humorously, the answer appears to rest within the condescendingly labeled 'insurgent groups' that are often overlooked and deemed as incredible or lacking expertise, yet their resilience and ability to adapt and operate within the shadow of capitalism displays a thread of hope that many outside looking in have trouble comprehending.41

As the research has undoubtedly uncovered some core challenges, it reveals an opportunity for growth. The organization of community members at grassroots levels, providing opportunities to achieve positions of significance provide a sense of authentic power and constitute a real voice at the table. This inclusion facilitates a shift in many operating procedures and allows the re-structuring of policies to support the expansion of best practices to appropriately develop community initiatives inclusive of the Black American community. It will take an interdisciplinary effort as, when the answer to a problem is not evidenced in the discipline of the problem, it is advisable to expand the vision and seek the answer in other disciplines. This breaks the rote activity that often occurs from silo-thought approaches that attempt to impose what we think is best as opposed to what the problem needs, the approach which has led to the disarray expressed in the qualitative data of the research. It overcomes bias and allows authentic progress to be made.

For continued progress to be achieved in this concept of developing an appropriate livability index for the Black American community is continued investigative research to articulate the unrecorded truths which Black Americans know is present, yet at times it seems as though others either ignore or invalidate as fabrications. Often it is difficult for intellectuals to grasp certain aspects beyond the silo of their specific discipline, especially when it comes to confronting or

accepting some truths that have not yet been harvested and converted into statistical data, but need to be included in these discussions as essentials. As much of the study participants reside in the southeast region of the US, an area that is growing faster than any other part of the country, this study could be expanded to investigate how these factors unfold in areas with more historical racism and current structures still operating based upon those structures. It also provides the opportunity to implement new policies and practices that apply learned principles of designing an appropriate livability index for the Black American community.

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Designing and Appropriate Livability Index for the Black American Community

1. I am 18 years of age or older and able to participate on my own.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary, and I can stop at any time. *

3. I understand that my answers will be anonymous, and my responses will be used in a large pool of data. (Your responses will not be able to be connected to you)

4. I consent to participate in this voluntary study to help improve the living conditions of Black American communities

5. Location
   a. Location Where You Grew Up (If Different from Current)

6. Ethnicity
   a. Black American (Descendant of the slave Trade)
   b. White American (List Ancestry in "Other" Box if Known - ex: Italian, German, etc.)
   c. Asian American (Please List Region in "Other" Box if Known - ex: India, China, Pakistan, etc.)
   d. Latino/a (Latino/List Region in "Other" Box if Known)
   e. Mexican American
   f. European (List Region in "Other" Box if Known)
   g. African American (List Tribe/Nation in "Other" Box if Known)
   h. Native American (List Tribe in "Other" Box if Known)
   i. Other

7. Hispanic?
   a. Yes
   b. No

8. Sexual Orientation
   a. Straight   d. Lesbian
   b. Bi-Sexual   e. Homosexual
   c. Gay   f. Other

9. Gender
   a. Male   d. Trans-Woman
   b. Female   e. Non-Binary
   c. Trans-man   f. Other

10. Age Range
    a. 18-25   d. 46-64
    b. 26-32   e. 65+
    c. 33-45

11. Annual Income/How Much You Make Per Year
    a. Less than $20K   d. $46K to $75K
    b. $21K to $35K   e. $75K to $100K
    c. $36K to $45K   f. More than $100K

12. Relationship Status
    a. Single
    b. Married
    c. Live Together but Not Married
    d. Other

13. Number of Children
    a. 0   d. 3
    b. 1   e. 4+
    c. 2   f. Other

14. Overall, I feel My City is…(See Appendix 1)
    a. Why did you give these ratings?

15. What are some things that make your community unsafe?

16. Does a Higher Police Presence Increase Safety for Your Community?
    a. Please Explain.

17. There have been studies that show how a neighborhood is physically designed can impact crime rates, mental health, and other qualities of life. Some disagree that these impacts are true. From your valuable experience, how have you seen this to be true or false in your community?

18. Please use the following section to express your feelings around the following services. (See Appendix 1)
    a. Why did you give these ratings?

19. The following list is of things that Caucasian communities usually have that many Black and Latino/a communities do not. Please use the following section to rate the presence of the following in your community. (See Appendix 1)

20. Do you feel your city is being gentrified? (Black and Latino communities being replaced by newer developments? *
    a. Using the scale below (1 through 5) how fast would you say it is happening?
    b. Why did you give this rating?

21. Do you believe the Black and Latino/a community is considered when plans for city improvements, development, and renovations are made?
   a. Please Explain.

22. Livability, in its simplest terms, means how a city/neighborhood is designed to create the people's quality of life? While there is currently no clear index designed or widely accepted definition of livability, the most accepted index created by the AARP for the aging/retired population measures the following areas listed. Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the use of the following categories to measure livability for your specific community. (See Appendix 1)

23. Do you believe the categories currently used are completely inclusive of ALL the specific needs unique to your community for a good quality of life?
   a. Please explain why or why not.

24. Research and history shows many Livability Indices are designed exclusive to Caucasian community interests and overlook the needs of other communities. What other categories should be added to be more inclusive of your community's needs?

25. Given the recent attention on the social injustices regarding Black and Latino communities, what additional aspects should be added to current livability models that are more inclusive of the Black and Latino/a communities? What are some cultural differences that should be captured in measuring livability and quality of life for your community? (Example: Faith Considerations, Family Structures, Public Supports, etc.)

Survey Questions
i.   Questions 1 through 4 address consent and legal disclaimer affirmations.
ii. Questions 5 through 12 gather the background demographic information of ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, relationship status, income, age, locale, and number of children.
iii. Questions 13 through 17 investigates respondents' thoughts toward their city overall regarding safety, design, and the impact of police presence.
iv. Questions 18 and 19 use a rating matrix to investigate respondent satisfaction on the presence of city aspects such as the quality of: a. Schools, Courts, Healthcare, Police Officers, Neighborhood parks, Public Transportation, Affordability, Employment, Environment, and Neighborhood Cleanness.
v. Question 20 uses a rating matrix to investigate respondent satisfaction with the presence of community essentials in comparison to their White counterparts. These include: a. Mental healthcare, Healthy Fast-Food options, Healthy Grocery, Natural Parks, Well-equipped community centers, quality community parks, sidewalks, bike lanes, speed bumps, crosswalks, and positive after-school activities.
v. Questions 21 through 23 address aspects of gentrification.
vi. The last set of questions deal specifically with livability and perspective toward current livability metrics outlined in the AARP model.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Nathaniel D. Jones was born in Virginia of the United States and raised in both Saint Louis, Missouri and Greensboro, North Carolina. After completing his coursework at The Academy of Ben L. Smith High School in June 2008, he entered North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University in Greensboro, North Carolina Spring 2012. Completing all prerequisites for a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, he forewent this degree to receive a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies with a focus in African American Studies in May 2018. Prior to graduation in August 2017, he launched a community development corporation, Bridging the Gaps Incorporated with the focus of building the Black American community through leadership and professional development programming for Black Community residents

In May 2018, Nathaniel entered Regis University's Ruekert-Huckerman College of Healthcare and launched a non-profit healthcare organization, Greater Carolina Health July 2018 to educate the Black American community. August 2019, he received his Master of Science in Health Services Administration with a 3.9 GPA and Graduate Honors.

Concurrently, in August 2018, Nathaniel had also begun a Post-baccalaureate Certificate program in Community and Economic Development at the University of North Carolina Greensboro and applied for military service through enrollment in the joint ARMY ROTC program hosted at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, receiving his Post-baccalaureate Certificate in December 2019. In Spring 2020 he was admitted to the Master of Arts program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and is scheduled to complete all coursework to Graduate May 2021 and commission as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army.