

A Publication of Lindenwood University Press
Fall/Winter 2014
Vol. 6, No. 1
Twelve Dollars

the Confluence®





COVER IMAGE

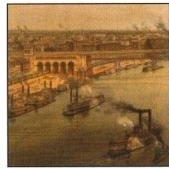
The most striking stained glass window at St. Mark's features bayonets of three soldiers with Hitler mustaches slice through a money bag. This window reflected man's modern betrayal with "his lust for power as portrayed by soldiers blindly following." The money bag symbolized the lust for self-interest and wealth. Robert Harmon designed a divided vine that ran up the window. The vine grows crossbones, bullets and a skull, with bolts of lightning to illustrate the price of the hunger for power and for riches, born of self-love.

While Harmon separated the imagery of the soldiers representing man's lust for power and the moneybag representing man's self-interest, the slicing bayonets paired the sins together. This image captured the feeling of betrayal many Americans felt after WWI. Shortly before the St. Mark's project began, congressional investigations under the Nye Commission reported on the massive earning of manufacturers during the Great War and their influence over Woodrow Wilson's decision to go to war.

During the 1930s Bishop William Scarlett and Rector Charles Wilson sounded the alarm over the growing Nazi threat and encouraged an "intensive campaign for peace." Their warnings are reflected in the images and emotions that fill St. Mark's windows. As Robert Harman designed the windows, Scarlett preached the Nazis were driving a wedge into the human race with their attacks against Jews. "But the Christian should be warned that in this conflict the interests of Jew and Christian are one and that both are threatened."

Just a few months after dedicating St. Mark's, Scarlett preached that for leaders in authoritarian states, "The church should not be counted upon again to march in the van of the war movement and plead the case for War in the name of God." He cited Sir Walter Moberly, who believed mankind was faced with three alternatives: "the collapse of present day civilization, the gradual return to paganism or the revival of Christianity on a scale and at an intensity far beyond anything we have achieved today." (Image: Don Adams)

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The stained glass windows of St. Mark's Episcopal Church became a controversy among St. Louisans in the 1930s with their politically charged depictions, which were the brainchild of one man, Bishop William Scarlett. Windows depicting all-too-familiar scenes are paralleled with contemporary ones, but they may not be the ones you would expect.



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The Confluence is a regional studies journal published by Lindenwood University and dedicated to the diversity of ideas and disciplines of a liberal arts university. It is committed to the intersection of history, art and architecture, design, science, social science, and public policy. Its articles are diverse by design.

Creative Destruction in the Antebellum Marketplace:

*St. Louis Merchants and the
Railroad Boom of the 1850s*



BY MIKE SNODGRASS

The riverfront was the center of a thriving economy in antebellum St. Louis. Investors saw it as an exchange point for goods, financing, and transportation. St. Louis businessmen were interested in building rail connections as early as the railroad convention in 1849—a vision finally realized with the completion of the Eads Bridge in 1874. (Image: Library of Congress)



In early January 1855, rumors circulated among the St. Louis business community that the banking house of Page, Bacon and Company was in financial trouble, caused when a local sugar refinery defaulted on bonds issued to finance its expansion. Page and Bacon had guaranteed the bonds, but because they were overextended the bank was unable to meet its obligations to its clients. On Saturday, January 13, the bank did not open for business as it should have, and the public response was near panic as people with deposits in one of the city's banks raced to save their

money. To restore calm in the marketplace, eight of the city's leading merchant-bankers publicly pledged their fortunes to guarantee deposits. Henry Bacon, the managing partner, closed the doors, and began working to save the bank. He secured loans in New York, called in outstanding loans to local businessmen, and began liquidating holdings in commercial real estate. Bacon also made it known that he would honor the bank's other financial commitments, but despite his work over the next two months, the bank, closed its doors for good by the end of April 1855.¹

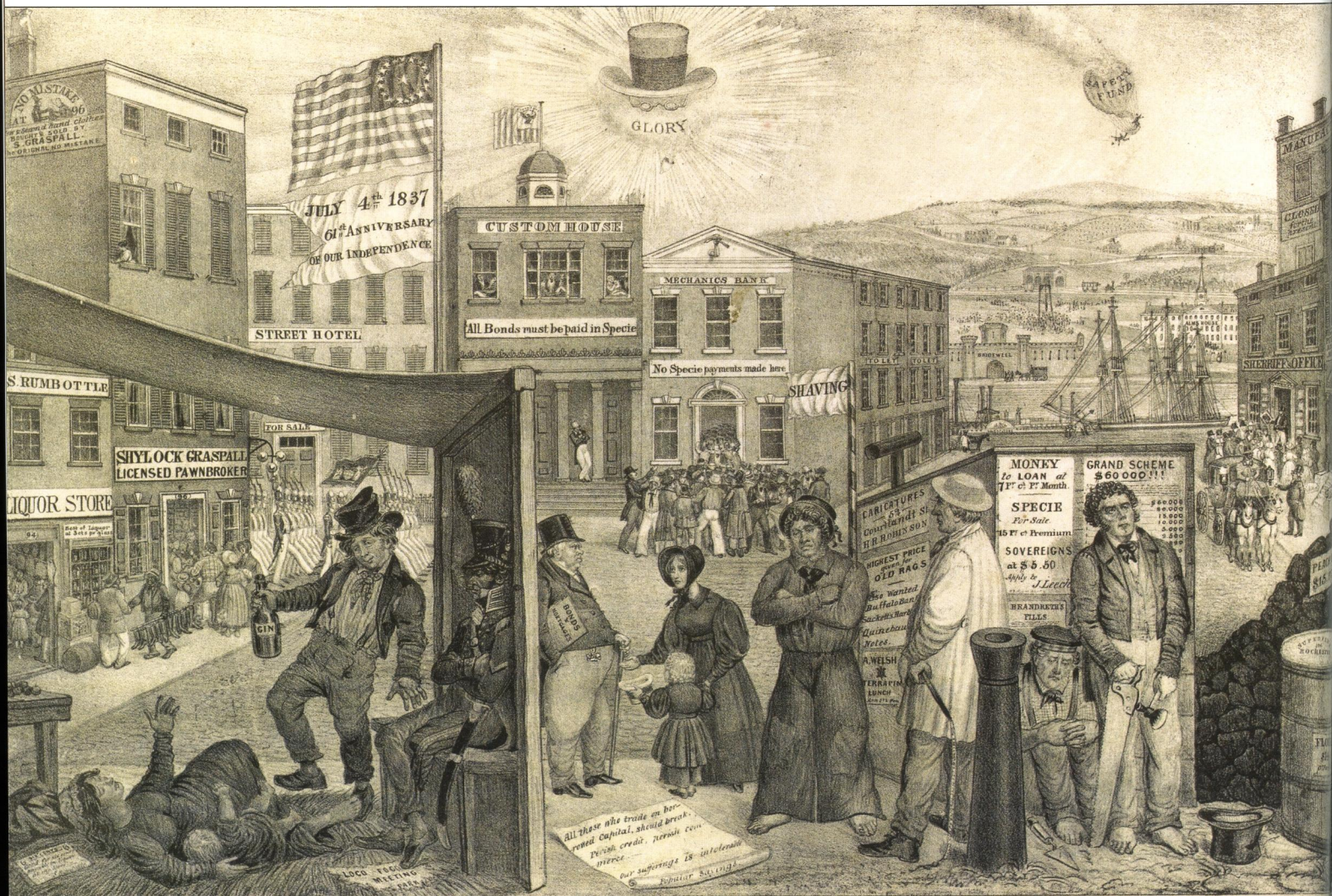
The failure of Page and Bacon illustrates the challenges confronting St. Louis merchants in the 1850s. The end of the Mexican War brought renewed migration and prosperity, while the telegraph and railroads promised to connect the distant markets faster than ever before. However, technology also brought increased competition. New men and money arrived from the East, and the city of Chicago rose to challenge St. Louis for the commerce of the Great West. Prosperity could still be interrupted by bank failures, and events in distant cities effected everyone in the marketplace faster than ever before. St. Louis merchants and bankers used commercial organizations to rationalize and lend stability to the marketplace, but despite modernization and greater organization, merchants were reminded that, like their hard-money opponents in the legislature, they were also unable to control the marketplace.²

Following the Panic of 1819, two competing ideas about how to maintain order in the marketplace emerged and became more sharply divided during Missouri's

struggle to charter a state bank. Debates over relief laws, banking, currency, and government intervention were the beginning of a national debate in which different views of the market economy emerged. Neither camp had a clear vision of what lay ahead, but instead responded to events and changes based upon their experience and an imperfect knowledge of the events which they confronted.

Bank failures following the panics of 1819 and 1837 hardened anti-banking sentiment in Missouri, codified in constitution and law, leaving merchants in St. Louis to rely on private banking as they faced challenges to their trade routes after the Erie Canal opened in 1825. A branch of the Bank of the United States opened in 1829 but closed in 1836. The creation of a state bank in 1837 provided little in the way of needed credit or currency because of restrictions set by the state legislature, which was controlled by the hard-money faction of the Democratic Party. Those who tried to restrict banking and paper money were working to take control of the marketplace as a means of restraint. Others, whom I am calling merchants,

A shortage of specie—gold and silver—and money shortages marked the Panic of 1837, as the signs on the banks in this cartoon suggest. Differing views on the Panic are seen here—drunken “Locofoco” members, laborers out of work, wealthy investors giving alms to a woman with a child. In St. Louis, larger specie deposits from the Santa Fe trade initially reduced the impact of the Panic. (Image: Library of Congress)





The aftermath of the *White Cloud* steamboat fire in May 1849 and its destruction of some nine city blocks and 400 buildings provided St. Louis an opportunity to create a new physical environment to reflect its changing business priorities at mid-century. Among those was construction of the new Merchants Exchange on Third Street at Chestnut. Having such an Exchange was part of a broader effort by St. Louis businessmen to transform St. Louis into a major metropolitan area. (Image: Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper)

had a better, though imperfect, understanding that the market could not be restrained and worked to continue its operation, to maintain order within the marketplace. Each side in this contest was working to impose its ill-defined vision of order in the marketplace.

Merchants were pressed as hard by the market economy as any small farmer or laborer might have been. Even local business was competitive, but, it was hampered by political opponents who worked to restrict banking and by transportation developments which made it easier to participate in the market economy, but also brought a new inter-city competition with rival merchants in Chicago. The organizations they created contributed to a more orderly marketplace, but as they responded to the approach of railroads from the east, merchants built a new order that displaced the old.³

The return of prosperity in the late 1840s and rebuilding after a massive fire in 1849 helped to consolidate existing commercial organizations. The Chamber of Commerce, the St. Louis Exchange, and the Miller's Exchange merged into one, calling itself the St. Louis Merchants Exchange. Unlike the city-owned marketplaces or small shops where vendors sold their wares directly to consumers, the new

Exchange was instead a place for larger scale merchants engaged in the wholesale business.⁴

From the 1850s on, the Exchange took on a greater utility, and city merchants showed a greater interest in its operation. The permanent advent of the Merchants Exchange, with its constitution adopted in January 1850, was a structural separation in the local marketplace that created a two-tiered organization where one level was political and the other solely for conducting business. Membership in the Exchange conveyed the privilege of doing business on the trading floor, but governance and leadership were restricted to members of the Chamber of Commerce, who served on committees and voted for officers and on the admission of new members. By 1860 there were over 600 members in the Exchange and 200 members in the Chamber who were able to participate in its government.⁵

The Constitution with Rules and By-Laws established an arbitration process that was faster and more efficient than the state court system, and fellow businessmen ruled on the case rather than a randomly selected jury drawn from the community at large. Merchants could still take their chances in court; however, surviving records show that

merchants used the Arbitration and Appeals committees repeatedly to resolve disputes arising in business.⁶

Merchants were unable to control entry to the marketplace but instead used the organization to collectively judge behavior and expel those whose business practices were considered inappropriate. One surviving account of the politics within the Chamber and the Exchange indicates that it was a place of relative amity, and the elections for committees and officers suggest that control of the organization rotated every few years among factions within the merchant community, which assured that anyone could be assured of a fair hearing, and that no one person or group could take control of the organization.⁷

Information helped to rationalize the marketplace, which was made easier to obtain by the telegraph, improved transportation, and steam-driven press. By the mid 1850s city merchants were apprised daily of local, national, and international market conditions. National publications kept merchants apprised of conditions in other cities, but merchants also needed information on local and regional developments. The Exchange collected information on local developments such as the arrival of steamboats and their cargoes. They also published a *Price Current* and allowed representatives from city newspapers access, thus ensuring wider publication on events in the market.⁸

Although merchants created an alternate governing structure for the marketplace, they did not see the market economy as separate from society. What was good for business, an 1852 annual report claimed, was good for the city. Personal profit was their goal but also the “growth, wealth, and permanent prosperity of our city.” Trade, commerce, and manufacturing were so “intricately interwoven” into the life of the city, the writer claimed, that it was impossible to separate them.⁹

A third level appeared in the local marketplace in 1856 when a group of merchants and bankers chartered a private corporation and erected a modern building which they leased to the Exchange and Chamber of Commerce. All of the stockholders and directors of the company were at the top of the city’s business community and could be classified as financiers and capitalists. Although they were of different political beliefs, they set politics aside in order to do business and were united in defense of their city against northern and eastern rivals. These same men took the lead in bringing railroads to St. Louis as they worked to stay ahead of their rising northern rival, Chicago.¹⁰

Organization helped to rationalize the marketplace and to make the market economy function more smoothly, but business still needed the credit and money issued by banks over which the hard-money Democrats exercised control, or thought they did. As state banking and currency laws became more restrictive, merchant-bankers in St. Louis adapted first by relying on local insurance companies to issue paper money, until the legislature threatened to revoke their charters. Private banks then issued checks drawn on their specie reserves, known as “promises to pay,” and later invested in note-issuing banks located in neighboring Illinois. As long as their notes

remained convertible to specie, they were legal tender, and Missouri’s legislature had no power to prohibit their circulation. That fact left private bankers relatively free to conduct business and kept the marketplace operating, but this freedom to trade and issue currency brought its own problems.¹¹

The capital business was ruthlessly competitive as local bankers raided each other’s specie reserves by collecting outstanding banknotes and presenting them for payment. The combination of domestic legislative hostility, out-of-state banking, and fierce competition created a financial system that was both inadequate and unstable. Although the hard-money Democrats prided themselves on a state bank that issued little paper money and maintained high specie reserves, by the 1850s the economy was too far advanced to depend on hard-money alone. Railroads required greater pools of capital than steamboats or canals ever had, and for St. Louis to protect its place in the West it would have to become the railroad hub of the Mississippi Valley. In order for that to happen the city required more than an ad hoc financial system.¹²

In June 1852, a group of private bankers formed the St. Louis Board of Bankers and Exchange Dealers, which attempted to bring order to the local financial market. The Board was first suggested by Daniel D. Page who, with his son-in-law Henry D. Bacon, opened a St. Louis bank in 1848, then in 1850 opened a branch in San Francisco. By 1852 Page, Bacon and Company was the “most powerful and conspicuous” private bank in each of the two cities. Although stopping specie raids was not listed in the articles, it was likely that goal may have been the primary reason for the group’s creation.¹³

The Board established interest and exchange rates and rather than use the power of the state to prohibit unreliable paper money, the bankers relied on the logic of the market to determine safe currency. Available information made it possible for local bankers to reject those notes which were unreliable, and merchants, shopkeepers, and employers would be forced to follow suit, eventually driving them from circulation. In protecting themselves from the worthless banknotes, the Board protected everyone engaged in the marketplace, and all who were subject to the market economy.¹⁴

In a rapidly growing city, bankers and merchants both faced a problem of reliability in selecting those with whom they did business or extended credit. By 1850, over half of St. Louis residents had been there less than two years, and long-time merchants, according to one newspaper, were “surrounded by thousands of strangers whose character was unfamiliar.”¹⁵ Kinship and personal acquaintance were not always the best means of judging sound decision making or success in business.¹⁶ William Tecumseh Sherman was induced to leave the army and manage the San Francisco branch for a St. Louis banking partnership entirely on the word of a mutual acquaintance. Sherman proved to be worth his salt, but when Daniel Page sent his son to San Francisco to manage a branch bank there, the young man proved to be weak and indecisive. Two local partners conspired against the younger man, and Sherman



Streets in the business district of cities like St. Louis looked much like this, with a mix of wagons and horses, small wooden business structures, and newer three-story buildings. (Image: State Historical Society)

described one as “too fond of lager beer to be trusted with so large a business.”¹⁷

The Bankers Association established a rating system to determine who among the merchant community was worthy, but despite this and other advantages, the Board of Bankers and Exchange Dealers was short lived, lasting less than a year. In August 1852, only two months after its inception, Henry Bacon withdrew his bank, citing disagreements over commission rates on financial instruments. The Board continued meeting sporadically but finally disbanded in February 1853 and had been no more successful at controlling banking than its hard-money opponents in the state legislature.¹⁸ The 11 members of the Board controlled entry into the group; however, there is no record that anyone applied for membership after its founding, and there was no rule of exclusivity between members. St. Louis bankers and exchange dealers were trying to control the city’s financial market at a time when capital was becoming concentrated in New York and beyond the control of a regional commercial city.¹⁹

Henry Bacon and Daniel Page were, however, not forthcoming about their reasons for leaving the organization. The timing coincides with their announcement of taking a contract to build a section of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad, extending from St. Louis to Cincinnati. Bacon was also the leader in a group of St. Louis investors building a short railroad connecting the city to coal mines in Illinois some 20 miles away. In September 1852, he took on the additional burden of extending the railroad across the state to meet the O & M, which would give St. Louis a rail connection to the east coast via Cincinnati and challenge the links existing to Chicago. In taking the contract, Bacon over-extended

his bank; minutes from the Bankers Association indicate that he was beginning to experience financial problems two and a half years before his bank finally went under. The evidence indicates that Henry Bacon was doing all he could to maintain high cash flows, which went into the railroad.²⁰

Bacon’s problems were made worse by events in San Francisco. He constantly pressed his branch there to send gold to his bank in New York which allowed him to maintain credit and “gave him a good name,” but it was a circular system of money transfer from the California gold fields to New York, then to St. Louis. From there Bacon paid the contractors on the railroad until they went bankrupt, and he had to buy materials and pay the workers directly to continue progress. A collapse in the San Francisco speculative bubble caused by large-scale fraud committed by a city businessman weakened his western branch. By late 1854, Bacon’s desperate need for capital was a barely kept secret, and when the collapse came in January 1855, William Sherman claimed that they had all finally reached “the Niagara [Falls]” that no one had foreseen when he entered the banking business two years prior.²¹

The failure of Page and Bacon in 1855 showed that more information, improved transportation, and organization made the market operate more efficiently, but they also bound everyone in the marketplace more tightly together. Bacon’s position as the leading banker in two cities made many others dependent on him to continue their own businesses. Mechanics and tradesmen lost whatever wages they were owed. As Sherman observed in San Francisco, “the most noisy and clamorous were men and women who held small certificates [of deposit]” in his bank.

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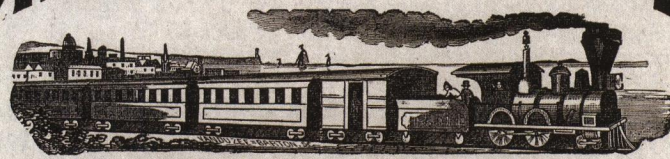
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St. Louis businessmen were no different than those in other cities with strong manufacturing and merchant economies in that they actively promoted railroads to connect them to markets more efficiently. The Ohio and Mississippi Railroad spanned eastward from St. Louis to reach the Ohio River faster and cheaper than steamboats. (Images: Library of Congress and <http://www.spellerweb.net/rhindex/USRH/BOmap1876.jpg>)

Organizations helped to establish order for those who were engaged in the marketplace, but they could not calm a restless crowd of people who feared losing everything they had because of events over which they had no control.²²

Routine, day-to-day transactions in the marketplace were increasingly impersonal, and familiarity with others in the marketplace was less common, but reputation was at times still important. The public pledge of financial safety worked once in St. Louis, but as Sherman observed, the same thing failed in San Francisco. People who came to his bank after the news of Page and Bacon's failure wanted to touch their money to be sure it was safe. Perhaps comparing the experiences of the two cities reflects on the volatility of the marketplace. The gold rush environment of San Francisco might have made any assurances impossible, while St. Louis was more settled in terms of its market relations; therefore, people were willing to be reassured.²³

Why did some business organizations succeed and others fail when they had similar methods—membership in the group, rate structures, and penalties for violations? Surviving records of the Chamber of Commerce indicate that members were willing to follow the findings of the Arbitration and Appeals Committees, while the Bankers' Association minutes show that from the beginning, member bankers violated the rules setting exchange rates. There was no incentive to go along with the organization's rules when non-members could undercut their competitors.

It may come down to the size of the organization. By 1860 the Merchants Exchange had over 600 separate businesses. The Bankers' Association never had more than 11, and it operated in a regional commercial center. Such a small group could not successfully bring order to

its level of the marketplace when there were many more in the banking business who were willing to undercut its attempts at control.

The Merchants Exchange provided familiarity and a means of ascertaining character in the impersonal marketplace as it came to be the place to conduct business for merchants operating on the middle level. It was an imperfect system, but the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce and Merchants Exchange helped to establish order in the marketplace of one city. When connected to similar organizations in other cities, they began to establish order in the wider marketplace.

Success or failure also depended on the separation into different levels in the marketplace. If a merchant in the Exchange failed, the repercussions were relatively mild. An individual merchant or partnership was part of a network involving others, but if one failed, the entire marketplace did not cease to function. However, the upper-tier capital became concentrated in New York throughout the 1850s, making it impossible for a local organization to exercise control. As the local panics that beset St. Louis and San Francisco in 1855 showed, both involving Page and Bacon, bank failures had a far greater impact and the public responded accordingly. Disruptions in the upper level of the marketplace had ramifications in distant cities. The emerging capitalists were at the top, but their product, capital, was at the bottom, supporting everything else. Merchants created organizations that made the marketplace more orderly, but it could always be overturned. The logic of the marketplace forced them to respond to competitors in other cities, and in doing so, they created a new order in the marketplace.²⁴

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- the *State of Missouri* (Cable's chapters 14 and 15 cover private banking in Missouri); *State of Missouri v. Daniel D. Page and Henry D. Bacon*, St. Louis County Circuit Court, Sept. 1852, Folder 3, Box 326, Missouri Supreme Court Case Files, MSA.
- ¹² Hogan, *Thoughts About the City of St. Louis*; Minute Book, St. Louis Bankers and Exchange Dealers Association, June 23, 1852; Sherman, *Recollections of California*, 88; Cable, *Bank of Missouri* (chapters 14 and 15 also cover private banking in St. Louis and the need for capital for economic development in the 1850s).
- ¹³ *Record of Organization, Constitution and By-Laws of the Bankers and Exchange Dealers of the City of St. Louis*, July 23, 1852; Minute Book, St. Louis Bankers and Exchange Dealers Association, 1852–1853, June 23, 1852; Records of the St. Louis Bankers and Exchange Dealers Association, 1852–1854, St. Louis Mercantile Library, University of Missouri-St. Louis; Edwards and Hopewell, *Great West*, 132–35; Hyde and Conard, *Encyclopedia of St. Louis*, Vol. I, p 78–79, Vol. III, 1688; Sherman, *Recollections of California*, 93; Maximilian Reichard, "Urban Politics in Jacksonian St. Louis: Traditional Values in Change and Conflict," *Missouri Historical Review* (April 1976): 260–62; John Ray Cable, "Some Early Missouri Bankers," *Missouri Historical Review* (January 1932): 124–25; Deed of Conveyance, Henry D. Bacon to Joshua H. Alexander, July 20, 1846, Edward Chase Papers, MHS; Edwards and Hopewell, *Great West*, 132–35; Sherman, *Recollections of California*, 93; Stevens, *St. Louis: The Fourth City*, 305–7.
- ¹⁴ Minute Book, St. Louis Bankers and Exchange Dealers Association, Feb. 5, 1853.
- ¹⁵ *Missouri Republican*, Sept. 24, 1848; "The Trade and Commerce of St. Louis in 1850," *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review*, 24, no. 3 (March 1851): 298–316.
- ¹⁶ Peter G. Camden, St. Louis, to Marbel Camden, Manchester, Miss., Jan. 24, 1839, Case Family Papers, MHS; William Carr Lane to Mary E. Lane, June 24, July 4, 1842, William Carr Lane Collection, MHS; George Collier to James T. Sweringen, Aug. 3, 1846; Sweringen to Collier, Aug. 4, 1846, Sweringen Papers, MHS.
- ¹⁷ Naomi Lamoreaux, *Insider Lending: Banks, Personal Connections and Economic Development in Industrial New England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Lamoreaux argues that the absence of reliable credit reporting and lack of wide experience in industrial development made it difficult to determine the creditworthiness of a prospective debtor and the feasibility of a given project. Rather than corruption, favoring family and kin in lending was a means of protecting the bank's investment. James D. Norris, *R.G. Dun & Co., 1841–1900* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978). Norris covers the rise of an organized credit rating system from Arthur Tappan's first successful mercantile agency in 1841. It took Tappan and others years to gain acceptance, and the agencies were often denounced for being secretive and able to unfairly influence business. Mary B. Rose, *Firms, Networks and Business Values: The British and American Cotton Industries Since 1750* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Rose compares the British and American cotton industries, including their use of kinship networks to minimize risk. Rose also looks at kinship networks in early private banking which traded in bills of exchange, which were subject to abuse and fraud; Clarke, *William Tecumseh Sherman: Gold Rush Banker*, 420–22; Sherman, *Recollections of California*, 78–79, 93–94.
- ¹⁸ Minute Book, St. Louis Bankers and Exchange Dealers Association, Aug. 21–26, 1852, Feb. 5, 1853, St. Louis Mercantile Library, University of Missouri-St. Louis.
- ¹⁹ Minute Book, St. Louis Bankers and Exchange Dealers Association, July 21, Aug. 5, 10, 11, 14, 20, 1852, St. Louis Mercantile Library, University of Missouri-St. Louis; Adler, *Yankee Merchants*, 88–90; Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 299–305.
- ²⁰ "Railroads," *Jefferson City Inquirer*, September 4, 1852; Henry Papin, St. Louis to Sen. John F. Darby, Washington, D.C., Jan. 12, 1853; Nathan Paschall, St. Louis, to Darby, Jan. 12, 1855; Darby Papers, MHS; *State of Missouri v. Daniel D. Page and Henry D. Bacon*, Box 326, folder 3, Supreme Court Records, MSA; *Missouri Republican*, "Pacific Railroad," Jan. 29, Feb. 5, 1850; Sherman, *Recollections of California*, 93–94; Scharf, *History of St. Louis*, Vol. I, 1149–50; Stevens, *St. Louis: The Fourth City*, 302–6, 476–77; John W. Million, *State Aid to Railways in Missouri* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1896), 88–89; George R. Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815–1860* (New York: Rinehart and Company, 1958), 85, 346–47.
- ²¹ Sherman, *Recollections of California*, 88–98; Clarke, *William Tecumseh Sherman*, 107, 380, n. 2.
- ²² Sherman, *Recollections of California*, 98.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 93–100.
- ²⁴ Chandler, *The Visible Hand*, 89–94.



Where We Stand

BY JOHN POSEY AND MARY RICCHIO

Where We Stand tracks the health of the St. Louis region compared to 34 peer MSAs.¹ The peer regions are our domestic competition and provide a consistent yardstick to gauge “Where We Stand.”

This update builds on the data included in the WWS sixth edition, providing updated and new data on segregation and racial disparity in the St. Louis region.

Racial Segregation and Disparity

Disparities between blacks and whites are prevalent and persistent. Nationally, a black student is twice as likely to drop out of school, a black worker is more than twice as likely to be unemployed, and a black family is half as likely to own a home. The infant mortality rate for blacks is more than twice the white rate, and a study by the Pew Research Center found that the median wealth of white families is 20 times that of black families.² The disparity of outcomes between black and white individuals and families presents a moral challenge for the St. Louis region and for the nation.

This update provides facts on the level of segregation in metropolitan areas over the past 30 years and the degree of racial disparity in St. Louis and its peer regions.³ The story is one that is familiar to most but also one that is often forgotten, overshadowed, or downplayed.

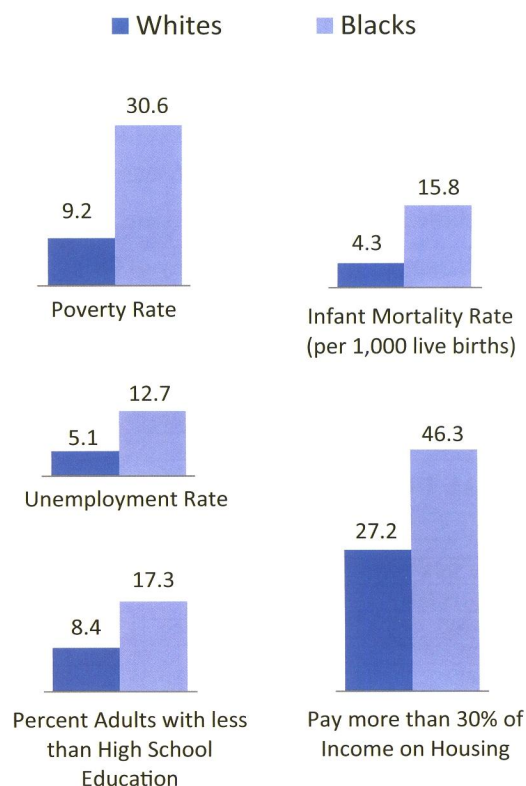
Among its peer regions, St. Louis is the sixth most segregated and tends to have a wider gap between whites and blacks than many of the peer regions on a range of social, economic, and health indicators. In this update, data are presented on the gaps between whites and blacks on variables for education, health, labor market, and wealth.

The challenge is not unique to the St. Louis region, nor is it a new one. Indicators of racial disparity have been part of *Where We Stand* since its inception in 1992. Over the 20-year period, the story has been the same—across the country on all indicators, black individuals and families do not enjoy the same advantages as their white counterparts.

Although no consensus exists regarding solutions, these tables substantiate the need for action and policy changes to address inequity.

Racial Disparity

St. Louis Region, 2012



1 MSAs (Metropolitan Statistical Areas) are geographic entities delineated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). MSAs are areas with "at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties."

2 Kochhar, R. et al., Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs between Whites, Blacks, Hispanics: Twenty to one. Pew Research in Social and Demographic Trends. <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/07/26/wealth-gaps-rise-to-record-highs-between-whites-blacks-hispanics/>

3 *Where We Stand* usually includes Salt Lake City as a peer region but the MSA is not included on the tables of racial disparity due to low African American sample size.

Racial Composition of Regions

Together, African Americans and non-Hispanic whites make up 93 percent of the region's population. Neighboring regions in the Midwest and South are similar. Other races and ethnicities make up less than ten percent of the population in Detroit, Cleveland, Memphis, Louisville, and Cincinnati. Regions in other parts of the country have a higher percentage of other races and ethnicities, particularly Hispanics and Asians. Together, Asians and Hispanics make up a majority of the population in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Antonio. In New York, Denver, and Chicago, more than a quarter of the population is either Hispanic or Asian.

Since the St. Louis region is largely bi-racial, this update focuses on the disparities between black and white people. Research indicates that similar disparities exist for other minorities throughout the country as well, particularly in those regions that have higher concentrations of an individual minority group.

The more populated regions tend to have the largest black populations, but blacks comprise larger portions of the populations in the Southeast and Midwest regions. St. Louis ranks toward the middle of the peers on both of these variables with the 13th largest black population and the 10th largest black proportion of its total population.

TOTAL POPULATION 2012

1	New York	19,048,167
2	Los Angeles	12,947,334
3	Chicago	9,496,587
4	Dallas	6,519,849
5	Houston	6,085,873
6	Philadelphia	5,996,101
7	Washington DC	5,710,843
8	Miami	5,677,408
9	Atlanta	5,361,152
10	Boston	4,602,669
11	San Francisco	4,399,211
12	Detroit	4,290,618
13	Phoenix	4,263,663
Average		4,114,008
14	Seattle	3,499,632
15	Minneapolis	3,320,190
16	San Diego	3,139,726
17	St. Louis	2,818,187
18	Baltimore	2,734,138
19	Denver	2,599,275
20	Pittsburgh	2,359,225
21	Portland	2,261,148
22	San Antonio	2,192,939
23	Cincinnati	2,138,136
24	Cleveland	2,069,316
25	Kansas City	2,051,795
26	Columbus	1,859,697
27	Charlotte	1,796,759
28	Austin	1,780,890
29	Indianapolis	1,779,439
30	Nashville	1,618,819
31	Milwaukee	1,561,707
32	Memphis	1,325,160
33	Louisville	1,293,831
34	Oklahoma City	1,276,771

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

BLACK POPULATION 2012

1	New York	3,074,017
2	Atlanta	1,724,632
3	Chicago	1,608,329
4	Washington DC	1,437,544
5	Philadelphia	1,211,025
6	Miami	1,128,867
7	Houston	1,026,043
8	Detroit	968,326
9	Dallas	960,588
10	Los Angeles	849,886
11	Baltimore	775,704
Average		607,906
12	Memphis	602,966
13	St. Louis	511,448
14	Charlotte	423,057
15	Cleveland	408,009
16	San Francisco	347,049
17	Boston	319,826
18	Columbus	272,525
19	Indianapolis	263,066
20	Cincinnati	256,856
21	Milwaukee	255,128
22	Kansas City	251,814
23	Nashville	248,143
24	Minneapolis	243,424
25	Phoenix	206,011
26	Pittsburgh	191,742
27	Seattle	188,524
28	Louisville	174,593
29	San Diego	149,210
30	Denver	139,473
31	San Antonio	133,544
32	Oklahoma City	127,177
33	Austin	126,839
34	Portland	63,404

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

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BLACK POPULATION
Percent of total, 2012

1	Memphis	45.5
2	Atlanta	32.2
3	Baltimore	28.4
4	Washington DC	25.2
5	Charlotte	23.5
6	Detroit	22.6
7	Philadelphia	20.2
8	Miami	19.9
9	Cleveland	19.7
10	St. Louis	18.1
11	Chicago	16.9
12	Houston	16.9
13	Milwaukee	16.3
14	New York	16.1
15	Nashville	15.3
16	Indianapolis	14.8
Average		14.8
17	Dallas	14.7
18	Columbus	14.7
19	Louisville	13.5
20	Kansas City	12.3
21	Cincinnati	12.0
22	Oklahoma City	10.0
23	Pittsburgh	8.1
24	San Francisco	7.9
25	Minneapolis	7.3
26	Austin	7.1
27	Boston	6.9
28	Los Angeles	6.6
29	San Antonio	6.1
30	Seattle	5.4
31	Denver	5.4
32	Phoenix	4.8
33	San Diego	4.8
34	Portland	2.8

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

HISPANIC POPULATION
Percent of total, 2012

1	San Antonio	54.3
2	Los Angeles	44.7
3	Miami	41.9
4	Houston	35.7
5	San Diego	32.4
6	Austin	31.7
7	Phoenix	29.7
8	Dallas	27.8
9	New York	23.3
10	Denver	22.7
11	San Francisco	21.8
12	Chicago	21.0
Average		15.9
13	Washington DC	14.2
14	Oklahoma City	11.7
15	Portland	11.0
16	Atlanta	10.5
17	Charlotte	10.0
18	Milwaukee	9.7
19	Boston	9.3
20	Seattle	9.2
21	Kansas City	8.3
22	Philadelphia	8.1
23	Nashville	6.7
24	Indianapolis	6.3
25	Minneapolis	5.5
26	Memphis	5.1
27	Cleveland	4.9
28	Baltimore	4.8
29	Louisville	4.1
30	Detroit	4.0
31	Columbus	3.7
32	Cincinnati	2.7
33	St. Louis	2.6
34	Pittsburgh	1.4

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

ASIAN POPULATION
Percent of total, 2012

1	San Francisco	23.3
2	Los Angeles	14.7
3	Seattle	11.5
4	San Diego	10.9
5	New York	10.1
6	Washington DC	9.3
7	Boston	6.7
8	Houston	6.6
9	Portland	5.8
10	Minneapolis	5.8
11	Chicago	5.7
12	Dallas	5.5
Average		5.3
13	Philadelphia	5.1
14	Atlanta	5.0
15	Austin	4.8
16	Baltimore	4.7
17	Denver	3.6
18	Detroit	3.4
19	Phoenix	3.3
20	Charlotte	3.3
21	Columbus	3.2
22	Milwaukee	2.9
23	Oklahoma City	2.8
24	Kansas City	2.3
25	Nashville	2.3
26	Miami	2.3
27	Indianapolis	2.2
28	St. Louis	2.1
29	San Antonio	2.0
30	Cleveland	2.0
31	Cincinnati	2.0
32	Memphis	1.9
33	Pittsburgh	1.8
34	Louisville	1.6

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

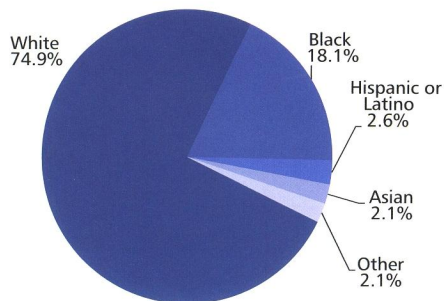
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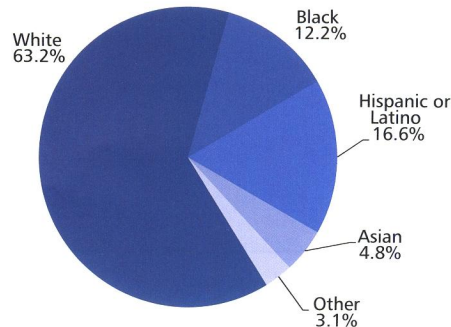
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Racial and Ethnic Composition

St. Louis MSA, 2012



United States, 2012



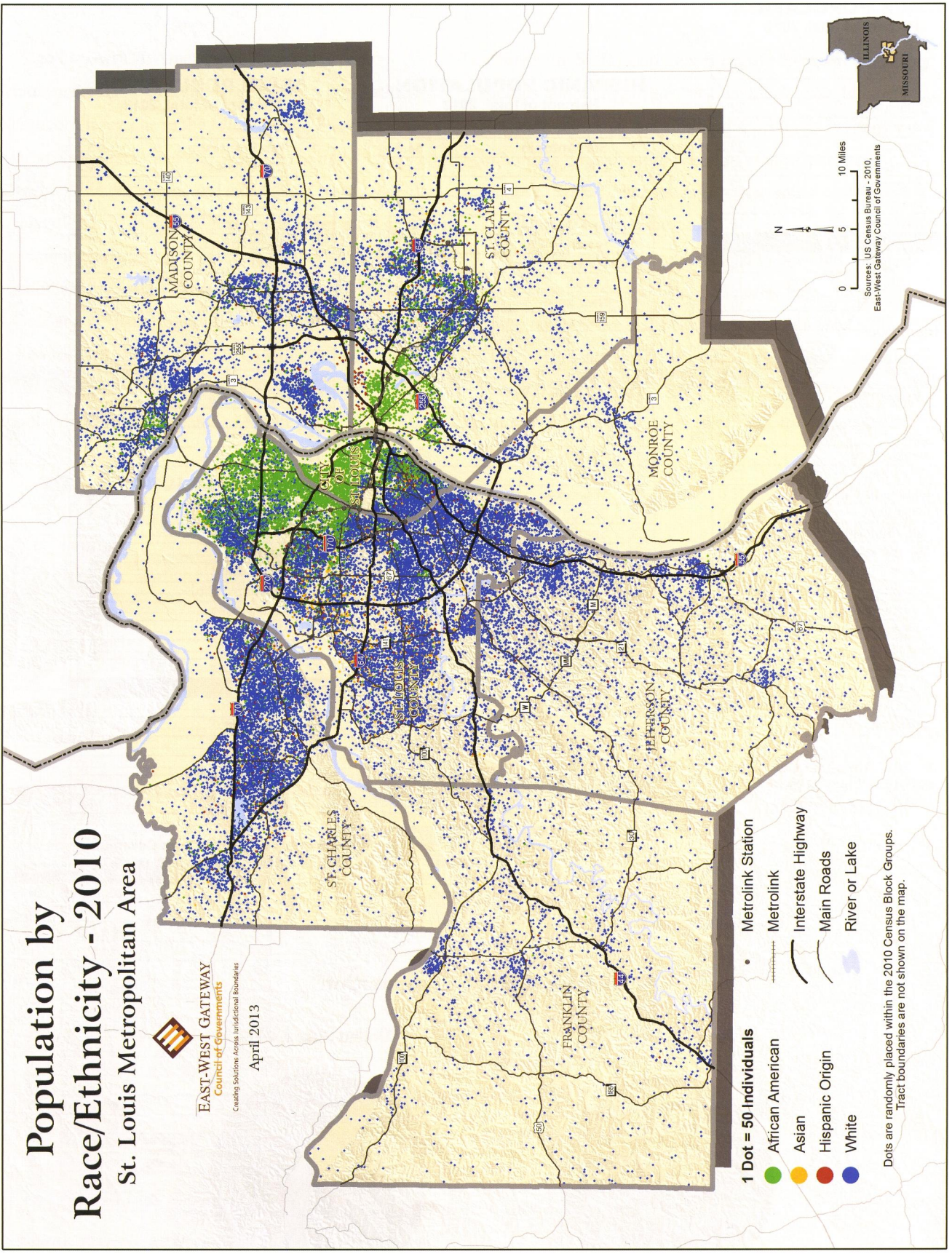
Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Population by Race/Ethnicity - 2010

St. Louis Metropolitan Area



EAST-WEST GATEWAY
Council of Governments
 Creating Solutions Across Jurisdictional Boundaries
 April 2013



- 1 Dot = 50 Individuals**
- African American
- Asian
- Hispanic Origin
- White
- Metrolink Station
- Metrolink
- Interstate Highway
- Main Roads
- River or Lake

Dots are randomly placed within the 2010 Census Block Groups.
 Tract boundaries are not shown on the map.

0 5 10 Miles

Source: US Census Bureau - 2010
 East-West Gateway Council of Governments

Segregation

People of all races and ethnicities tend to live in somewhat segregated communities. As the population of the United States becomes more diverse, there is increased integration in communities across the country, but segregation continues, particularly for African Americans.⁴

The dissimilarity index is a standard measure of segregation that expresses the degree to which two groups of people are evenly spread among census tracts in a given region based on the racial composition of the entire region. Values can range from 0 to 100 on the index. A score of 0 would mean the community is completely integrated and a score of 100 would mean the community is completely segregated.

The average level of black-white segregation in U.S. metro areas has declined considerably from the average index score of 79 in 1960 and 1970 to a low of 59 in 2010.⁵

The St. Louis MSA has seen small decreases in segregation over each of the last three decades. In 1980, St. Louis had a score of 81.6, 77.2 in 1990, 73.4 in 2000, and 70.6 in 2010. By this measure, St. Louis is one of the most segregated metropolitan areas among its peers.

From 1980 to 2010, segregation decreased in all of the 35 peer regions, but not to the same degree. The average decrease for the peer regions was 14 points on the dissimilarity index. St. Louis experienced the 11th lowest change with an 11 point decrease.

Many of the regions that are considered highly segregated are in the Northeast and the Rust Belt. These regions also have some of the largest black populations—New York and Chicago—or the largest proportions of black population—Cleveland and St. Louis. Most of the regions that experienced the largest declines in segregation over the time period were those that were the least segregated at the beginning of the time period and have smaller black populations.

SEGREGATION: DISSIMILARITY INDEX 1980 and 2010

White-black segregation scores on the dissimilarity index. Scores range from 0 to 100 with “0” indicating complete integration and “100” indicating complete segregation.

	2010 Segregation	1980 Segregation	Change from 1980 to 2010
1 Milwaukee	79.6	83.9	-4.3
2 New York	76.9	81.3	-4.5
3 Chicago	75.2	88.1	-13.0
4 Detroit	74.0	87.6	-13.6
5 Cleveland	72.6	85.8	-13.2
6 St. Louis	70.7	81.6	-11.0
7 Philadelphia	67.0	77.2	-10.2
8 Cincinnati	66.9	78.2	-11.3
9 Los Angeles	65.2	81.0	-15.8
10 Indianapolis	64.5	78.8	-14.3
11 Baltimore	64.3	74.4	-10.1
12 Miami	64.0	82.1	-18.1
13 Pittsburgh	63.1	73.3	-10.3
14 Memphis	62.2	68.8	-6.5
15 Boston	61.5	74.6	-13.1
16 Washington DC	61.0	69.7	-8.7
17 Houston	60.6	73.7	-13.1
18 Columbus	60.0	72.9	-13.0
19 Denver	59.4	69.1	-9.8
20 San Francisco	59.3	72.0	-12.7
Average	59.1	73.1	-13.9
21 Kansas City	58.6	77.7	-19.0
22 Atlanta	58.4	76.9	-18.6
23 Louisville	56.2	73.6	-17.4
24 Dallas	55.5	78.2	-22.7
25 Nashville	55.0	65.2	-10.2
26 Charlotte	53.1	58.0	-4.9
27 Minneapolis	50.2	67.7	-17.5
28 Oklahoma City	49.0	71.6	-22.6
29 Austin	48.4	64.8	-16.4
30 San Diego	48.4	64.4	-16.0
31 San Antonio	47.7	61.4	-13.7
32 Seattle	45.7	64.8	-19.2
33 Phoenix	41.3	61.4	-20.1
34 Portland	40.9	68.7	-27.8
35 Salt Lake City	34.0	48.3	-14.3

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Source: US2010, the American Communities Project

4 Logan, John R. and Brian J. Stults, *The Persistence of Segregation in the Metropolis: New Findings from the 2010 Census*; US2010 Project, 24 March 2011; <http://www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/Data/Report/report2.pdf>

5 Logan and Stults, 2011.

Segregated communities have been shown to provide unequal opportunities. In regions with higher levels of segregation, minorities are more likely to live in neighborhoods with underperforming schools, environmental problems, and lack of access to basic services. On average, black and Hispanic families in the U.S. live in poorer communities with fewer resources, even when they have higher incomes.⁶

Disparity: Education

On two measures of educational attainment, the St. Louis region ranks about average among the peers. For disparity in adults with less than a high school diploma, the region ranks 18th with black adults being twice as likely to not have a high school education. Blacks are about half as

likely as whites in the region to have a bachelor's degree or higher; 17 percent of black adults are college graduates, compared to 33 percent of white adults.

A recent study, *For the Sake of All*, makes the case that closing this gap in educational attainment is not only good for individuals but also for the region as a whole. The research estimates that for every 1,000 additional high school graduates, the region could expect to see \$21 million more spent on homes, the gross regional product to increase by \$15 million and the collection of an additional \$1.1 million in state and local taxes.⁷

If the same proportion of black adults had high school diplomas as whites in the St. Louis MSA, 45,000 more adults would be contributing to the region's economy in these ways.

Access to Opportunity in the St. Louis Region: Findings from the Fair Housing Equity Assessment

In 2013 the Metropolitan Equal Housing and Opportunity Council conducted a Fair Housing Equity Assessment (FHEA) for the eight-county St. Louis region. The research documents the history of segregation and discrimination in the region, identifies areas of racially concentrated poverty, identifies areas of opportunity, and offers recommendations for addressing inequities in the region.

The FHEA supports the larger body of research, finding that black people have less access to opportunities than whites. The research measured access on six dimensions of opportunity: poverty, school proficiency, labor market engagement, job access, transit access, and health hazards exposure. The results show high disparity between whites and blacks in the region on three of the dimensions of opportunity—blacks are significantly more likely to live in high poverty and high unemployment neighborhoods and to live in underperforming school districts. The disparities are less for job access and health hazards exposure. Black households have more access to transit than whites, but a limitation of this measure is that it does not capture the lack of access blacks have to some areas of the region. Furthermore, black households are 4.5 times more likely than white households to lack access to a vehicle.

See the FHEA at onestl.org for the report, including maps, on the opportunity indicators.

⁶ Logan, John R., *Separate and Unequal: The Neighborhood Gap for Blacks, Hispanics and Asians in Metropolitan America*; US2010 Project, July 2011.

⁷ Tate, William F., "How Does Health Influence School Dropout?," *For the Sake of All*; September 2013; accessed at forthesakeofall.org

DISPARITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Adults age 25 years or older with
a bachelor's degree or higher, 2012

DISPARITY IN EDUCATION

Adults age 25 years or older with less
than a high school diploma or equivalent, 2012

		WHITE	BLACK	
		Percent	Percent	
Ratio black to white adults		of white	of black	
		adults	adults	
1	Minneapolis	4.8	3.9	18.6
2	Milwaukee	3.5	5.7	19.8
3	Austin	3.4	3.2	10.9
4	Miami	3.4	6.4	21.5
5	San Francisco	2.9	3.7	10.8
6	Boston	2.9	5.9	17.2
7	Denver	2.7	4.0	10.9
8	Washington DC	2.7	3.9	10.4
9	Chicago	2.5	6.2	15.5
10	New York	2.4	7.0	16.7
11	Seattle	2.3	5.2	12.2
12	Memphis	2.3	8.1	18.5
13	Kansas City	2.2	6.5	14.6
Average		2.2	6.9	14.5
14	Portland	2.2	6.0	13.2
15	Philadelphia	2.2	7.4	16.2
16	Cleveland	2.2	8.7	19.0
17	San Diego	2.1	4.8	10.0
18	St. Louis	2.1	8.4	17.3
19	Baltimore	2.0	8.2	16.4
20	Los Angeles	2.0	5.7	11.3
21	Houston	1.9	6.4	12.2
22	Dallas	1.8	6.3	11.5
23	Indianapolis	1.8	8.7	15.8
24	Detroit	1.8	9.5	16.8
25	Phoenix	1.8	5.8	10.2
26	San Antonio	1.8	6.0	10.5
27	Pittsburgh	1.7	7.7	13.3
28	Charlotte	1.7	8.6	14.7
29	Cincinnati	1.7	10.1	17.2
30	Columbus	1.7	8.4	14.1
31	Nashville	1.5	10.4	15.8
32	Louisville	1.5	11.3	16.8
33	Oklahoma City	1.4	8.4	11.8
34	Atlanta	1.4	8.6	11.7

Source: 2012 American Community Survey
3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

		WHITE	BLACK	
		Percent	Percent	
Ratio white to black adults		of white	of black	
		adults	adults	
1	Milwaukee	3.1	37.2	12.0
2	San Francisco	2.3	55.3	23.7
3	Cleveland	2.3	31.2	13.4
4	Miami	2.3	38.7	17.0
5	Philadelphia	2.2	38.0	17.3
6	Austin	2.2	50.0	22.9
7	Chicago	2.1	41.7	19.8
8	New York	2.1	45.8	22.1
9	Minneapolis	2.1	41.0	19.8
10	Memphis	2.1	33.6	16.3
11	Kansas City	2.1	36.2	17.6
12	Indianapolis	2.0	34.0	17.2
13	Seattle	2.0	39.5	20.0
14	Boston	2.0	46.0	23.3
15	Cincinnati	2.0	30.6	15.5
16	San Diego	2.0	42.6	21.6
17	St. Louis	1.9	32.7	16.8
18	Washington DC	1.9	59.0	30.5
Average		1.9	38.8	20.4
19	Pittsburgh	1.9	30.1	15.8
20	Los Angeles	1.9	45.5	24.0
21	Denver	1.9	46.3	24.5
22	Baltimore	1.9	40.3	21.6
23	Columbus	1.8	34.9	18.9
24	Detroit	1.8	30.0	16.5
25	Charlotte	1.8	38.1	21.7
26	Dallas	1.7	39.5	23.0
27	Houston	1.7	39.1	23.3
28	San Antonio	1.6	39.0	23.8
29	Louisville	1.6	27.1	17.0
30	Oklahoma City	1.6	31.3	19.8
31	Portland	1.6	35.9	22.9
32	Phoenix	1.5	34.1	22.3
33	Atlanta	1.5	40.3	27.0
34	Nashville	1.4	32.9	23.7

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Source: 2012 American Community Survey
3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Disparity: Labor Market

In St. Louis black adults are slightly less likely than white adults to be in the labor force (62.6 and 66.9 percent, respectively) but are more than twice as likely to be unemployed.⁸ The disparity in unemployment between blacks and whites in the St. Louis region is high, ranking fourth among the peer regions, with blacks being 2.5 times more likely to be unemployed than whites. Blacks comprise 17 percent of the population in the labor force but about twice that, 34 percent, of those unemployed.

The disparity in unemployment rates is high for all of the regions. On average for the 34 regions, blacks are twice as likely to be unemployed. In the regions with the lowest levels of disparity, the black unemployment rate is still 3.5 to 4.8 percentage points higher than that of whites.

DISPARITY IN UNEMPLOYMENT

Percent of labor force unemployed, 2012

		WHITE	BLACK
		Percent of white labor force	Percent of black labor force
Ratio of black to white			
1	Milwaukee	2.9	13.5
2	Minneapolis	2.7	12.8
3	Washington DC	2.7	8.8
4	St. Louis	2.5	12.7
5	Cleveland	2.4	12.7
6	Indianapolis	2.4	12.4
7	Kansas City	2.4	11.2
8	Columbus	2.4	11.3
9	Miami	2.3	12.9
10	Cincinnati	2.3	12.2
11	Memphis	2.3	11.0
12	Baltimore	2.3	9.9
13	Chicago	2.2	13.4
14	Boston	2.2	11.3
15	San Francisco	2.2	11.4
16	Pittsburgh	2.2	9.7
17	Denver	2.2	11.4
Average		2.1	11.0
18	Detroit	2.1	15.4
19	Houston	2.1	9.4
20	Atlanta	2.1	12.7
21	Dallas	2.1	9.7
22	Louisville	2.0	11.6
23	Oklahoma City	2.0	7.3
24	Phoenix	2.0	10.6
25	Philadelphia	2.0	10.8
26	Charlotte	2.0	12.7
27	New York	1.9	9.9
28	San Antonio	1.9	7.6
29	Austin	1.7	8.2
30	Seattle	1.7	10.1
31	Nashville	1.7	9.2
32	Portland	1.7	11.7
33	San Diego	1.7	9.3
34	Los Angeles	1.7	10.4

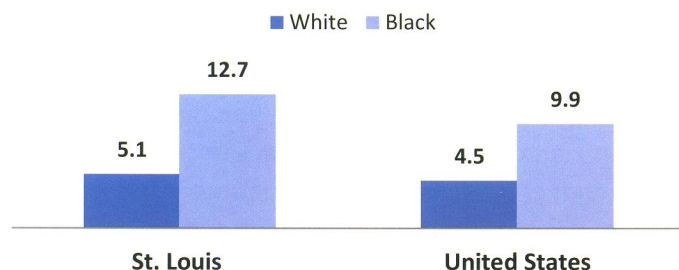
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Disparity in Unemployment

Unemployment rate, 2012



Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

⁸ An individual is considered a labor force participant if he/she is either employed or unemployed and looking for work. An individual that is neither employed nor looking for work is considered to be unemployed.

Disparity: Income and Poverty

In 2012, the median household income for white households in the St. Louis region was \$59,000. For black households it was about half that amount, \$30,500. This gap between blacks and whites puts the region in the top 10 of the 34 regions on this measure of disparity. On average, the income gap has grown over the last 20 years for the 34 peer regions. Between 1990 and 2012, the median income of white households in the St. Louis region grew by 2 percent while it decreased 5 percent for black households.

On average for the peer regions, black families are 3.2 times more likely to be in poverty than white families. The difference in poverty rates between whites and blacks is one of the largest gaps among those reviewed in this report. In the St. Louis region, 9 percent of white families have income below the poverty level while about one-third of black families have income below the poverty threshold.⁹

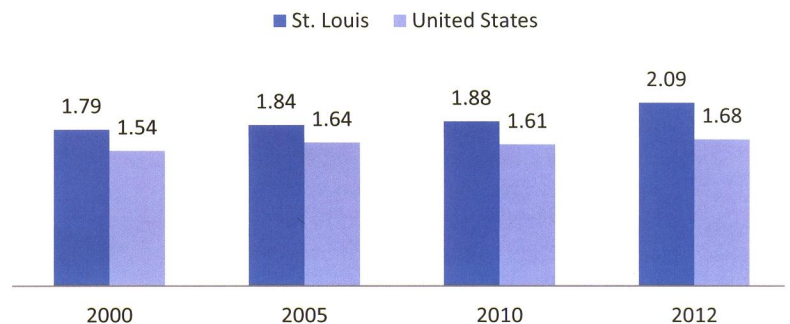
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, ST. LOUIS AND 34 PEER REGION AVERAGE: 1990, 2000, AND 2012

	St. Louis MSA	Peer Average
1990		
White Median Income	\$57,786	\$61,892
Black Median Income	\$32,274	\$36,307
White to Black Ratio	1.8	1.7
Difference White-Black	\$25,513	\$25,585
2000		
White Median Income	\$63,884	\$70,426
Black Median Income	\$36,731	\$42,499
White to Black Ratio	1.7	1.7
Difference White-Black	\$27,153	\$27,927
2012		
White Median Income	\$59,041	\$66,531
Black Median Income	\$30,479	\$36,631
White to Black Ratio	1.9	1.8
Difference White-Black	\$28,562	\$29,900

Note: All dollars adjusted to 2012 dollars
Source: US2010 Project and 2012 ACS 3-Year US Census Bureau

Racial Disparity in Income

Ratio of white to black median household income
St. Louis and United States



Note: In this chart, 2012 data is based on American Community Survey 1-year data to allow for comparison over time while the WWS table is based on American Community Survey 3-year data to allow for comparison with the peer MSAs.
Sources: U.S. Census and American Community Survey, United States Census Bureau

⁹ In 2012, the poverty threshold for a family of four was \$23,492.

DISPARITY IN INCOME

Household income, 2012

Ratio of white to black		WHITE Median income (dollars)	BLACK Median income (dollars)	
1	Minneapolis	2.4	70,721	29,522
2	Milwaukee	2.3	61,617	26,381
3	San Francisco	2.2	89,789	41,276
4	Cleveland	2.1	55,572	26,403
5	Cincinnati	2.1	57,721	27,486
6	Chicago	2.0	70,881	35,274
7	Philadelphia	2.0	71,672	35,982
8	St. Louis	1.9	59,041	30,479
9	Pittsburgh	1.9	52,129	27,052
10	Detroit	1.9	57,463	30,021
11	Kansas City	1.9	61,225	32,105
12	Houston	1.9	75,494	40,403
13	Memphis	1.9	61,839	33,131
14	Indianapolis	1.9	57,960	31,224
15	Columbus	1.9	59,536	32,083
Average		1.8	66,531	36,631
16	New York	1.8	81,669	44,546
17	Louisville	1.8	52,441	28,882
18	Los Angeles	1.8	74,690	41,195
19	Boston	1.8	77,864	43,171
20	Portland	1.8	58,670	32,892
21	Dallas	1.8	70,733	39,927
22	Denver	1.8	69,041	38,980
23	Baltimore	1.8	80,164	45,349
24	Seattle	1.7	70,077	40,586
25	Oklahoma City	1.7	53,556	31,106
26	Charlotte	1.7	62,355	36,388
27	Austin	1.7	68,467	40,490
28	Washington DC	1.7	107,413	63,995
29	Atlanta	1.6	67,525	41,528
30	Nashville	1.6	55,632	34,645
31	Miami	1.6	57,701	36,286
32	San Antonio	1.6	64,760	41,356
33	Phoenix	1.6	58,025	37,366
34	San Diego	1.4	68,614	47,952

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

DISPARITY IN POVERTY RATES

Families in poverty, 2012

Ratio of black to white		WHITE Percent of white families	BLACK Percent of black families	
1	Minneapolis	5.4	6.7	36.2
2	Milwaukee	5.1	7.6	39.1
3	Chicago	4.1	7.2	29.4
4	Denver	3.8	7.4	28.3
5	Memphis	3.6	8.1	29.2
6	Philadelphia	3.6	7.1	25.5
7	Cleveland	3.6	9.4	33.4
8	Baltimore	3.4	6.2	21.1
9	Kansas City	3.3	8.5	28.4
10	St. Louis	3.3	9.2	30.6
11	Cincinnati	3.3	10.6	34.8
12	San Francisco	3.3	7.2	23.6
Average		3.2	8.8	27.2
13	Portland	3.1	11.2	34.8
14	Detroit	3.1	11.1	34.2
15	Houston	3.1	7.4	22.7
16	Dallas	3.1	7.6	23.3
17	Pittsburgh	3.1	10.0	30.6
18	Seattle	3.1	8.5	26.0
19	Washington DC	3.0	4.4	13.4
20	Boston	3.0	7.0	21.2
21	Louisville	2.9	11.4	33.0
22	Columbus	2.9	11.3	32.6
23	Miami	2.9	9.6	27.4
24	Austin	2.8	8.6	24.3
25	Indianapolis	2.8	9.8	27.1
26	New York	2.7	7.5	20.6
27	San Antonio	2.7	8.0	21.3
28	Oklahoma City	2.7	11.3	30.0
29	Charlotte	2.6	9.2	24.3
30	Los Angeles	2.6	9.1	23.6
31	Atlanta	2.5	9.0	22.5
32	Phoenix	2.5	10.1	25.0
33	Nashville	2.5	10.7	26.3
34	San Diego	2.0	11.0	21.7

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Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

DISPARITY IN HOMEOWNERSHIP

Owner-occupied housing units, 2012

		WHITE	BLACK
	Ratio of white to black	Percent of white households	Percent of black households
1	Minneapolis	3.2	76.7
2	Milwaukee	2.2	69.6
3	Cincinnati	2.2	73.9
4	Boston	2.1	68.4
5	Phoenix	2.1	69.7
6	San Diego	2.1	61.2
7	New York	2.0	66.7
8	Portland	2.0	64.6
9	Seattle	2.0	65.0
10	Pittsburgh	2.0	73.7
11	Columbus	2.0	68.5
12	Louisville	2.0	74.2
13	Cleveland	1.9	75.4
14	Indianapolis	1.9	73.3
15	Chicago	1.9	76.1
Average		1.9	71.4
16	San Francisco	1.8	60.5
17	St. Louis	1.8	77.6
18	Kansas City	1.8	72.8
19	Dallas	1.7	70.4
20	Detroit	1.7	78.8
21	Denver	1.7	69.5
22	Oklahoma City	1.7	71.2
23	Nashville	1.7	72.4
24	Los Angeles	1.7	59.4
25	Baltimore	1.7	77.0
26	Charlotte	1.6	75.8
27	San Antonio	1.6	71.4
28	Houston	1.6	72.9
29	Austin	1.5	64.2
30	Memphis	1.5	76.1
31	Atlanta	1.5	77.1
32	Miami	1.5	74.4
33	Philadelphia	1.5	76.0
34	Washington DC	1.4	72.6

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Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Disparity: Wealth

By one estimate, the racial wealth gap in the U.S. (total assets minus total liabilities divided by debt) is three times larger than the racial income gap¹⁰. While data are not available at the regional level for an overall measure of wealth, the following tables provide some indication of the disparities in wealth in the peer regions.

A primary means of gaining wealth is through homeownership. In the St. Louis region, 43 percent of black householders and 78 percent of white householders own their homes while the remaining householders rent their homes.

Where We Stand: Social Mobility

A recent *Where We Stand Update* on social mobility demonstrates the difficulty African Americans have in moving up the economic ladder, particularly in St. Louis and similar metropolitan regions. The Update and the larger body of research that it is based on, the Equality of Opportunity Project at Harvard University, found a relationship between social mobility and a number of factors, including residential segregation, income inequality, and the size of the African American population in a region.

The St. Louis region was found to have lower social mobility than many of its peers on three indicators of how likely a person born into a low-income family is to move up the economic ladder and achieve a higher standard of living as an adult. In St. Louis this low level of mobility affects black people to a greater extent since 30 percent of black individuals are in poverty (compared to nine percent of whites), black household incomes are half that of whites, and blacks have substantially less wealth than whites.

To view the update visit <http://www.ewgateway.org/wws/wws.htm>

10 McKernan, Signe-Mary and Caroline Ratcliffe, *Less than Equal: Wealth Building among White, Black and Hispanic Families*, Urban Institute; 29 April 2013; <http://blog.metrotrends.org/2013/04/equal-wealth-building-white-black-hispanic-families/>

DISPARITY IN RENTAL HOUSING COSTS

Households paying over 30 percent of income on rent, 2012

DISPARITY IN HOME VALUE

Median value of owned-homes, 2012

		WHITE	BLACK
Ratio of black to white		Median value (dollars)	Median value (dollars)
1	Detroit	2.2	134,400
2	Milwaukee	2.1	210,800
3	Philadelphia	2.0	260,700
4	San Francisco	1.9	631,500
5	Memphis	1.8	162,400
6	Cleveland	1.8	151,300
7	St. Louis	1.8	164,300
8	Pittsburgh	1.7	126,400
9	Kansas City	1.7	163,400
10	Chicago	1.6	241,400
11	Baltimore	1.6	301,200
12	Los Angeles	1.6	537,100
13	Miami	1.6	211,900
Average		1.5	240,165
14	Houston	1.5	164,100
15	Columbus	1.5	164,400
16	Charlotte	1.5	182,200
17	Atlanta	1.4	188,800
18	Washington DC	1.4	407,800
19	Louisville	1.4	151,100
20	Austin	1.4	211,000
21	Indianapolis	1.4	148,500
22	Dallas	1.4	166,100
23	Cincinnati	1.4	155,400
24	San Diego	1.4	429,100
25	San Antonio	1.4	166,000
26	Denver	1.3	258,800
27	Oklahoma City	1.3	136,600
28	Phoenix	1.3	174,200
29	Nashville	1.3	178,200
30	Minneapolis	1.3	216,500
31	Boston	1.3	364,000
32	New York	1.2	425,700
33	Seattle	1.2	317,400
34	Portland	1.0	262,900

Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

The racial gap in the median value of homes and amount of income spent on housing further demonstrates the differences between whites and blacks in building wealth and attaining economic stability. The median housing value for blacks who own their homes is just over half that of whites (\$93,800 compared to \$164,300). Despite having lower value homes, black homeowners are 1.7 times more likely than white homeowners to spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing.

		WHITE	BLACK
Ratio of black to white		Percent of white rental households	Percent of black rental households
1	Milwaukee	1.4	47.4
2	Houston	1.4	41.2
3	St. Louis	1.4	45.6
4	Memphis	1.4	46.7
5	Charlotte	1.3	44.2
6	San Francisco	1.3	46.6
7	Kansas City	1.3	45.1
8	Portland	1.3	51.1
9	Atlanta	1.3	45.8
10	Minneapolis	1.3	47.1
11	Dallas	1.3	42.7
12	Chicago	1.3	47.5
13	San Antonio	1.3	42.4
14	Denver	1.3	46.8
15	Washington DC	1.3	42.6
16	Cleveland	1.3	47.8
Average		1.3	47.6
17	Detroit	1.3	51.0
18	Indianapolis	1.3	47.9
19	Columbus	1.2	46.7
20	Cincinnati	1.2	48.7
21	Miami	1.2	55.5
22	Seattle	1.2	47.5
23	Oklahoma City	1.2	48.5
24	Phoenix	1.2	48.7
25	Austin	1.2	47.4
26	Boston	1.2	47.6
27	Pittsburgh	1.2	44.5
28	Los Angeles	1.2	54.7
29	Baltimore	1.2	48.0
30	Nashville	1.2	48.6
31	Philadelphia	1.2	51.5
32	Louisville	1.2	46.4
33	New York	1.1	49.8
34	San Diego	1.1	56.0

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Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Notably, the median gross rent spent by those in the St. Louis region who rent their homes is about the same for black and white households: \$756 and \$783 per month, respectively. Yet, since the income of black households is lower, blacks are 1.4 times more likely to pay more than what is considered affordable for rental housing (30 percent of income).

Disparity: Health

Research indicates that while disparities in health have decreased in some areas, it has grown in others. Two indicators of health disparity are provided here along with additional data on health disparities in the St. Louis region.

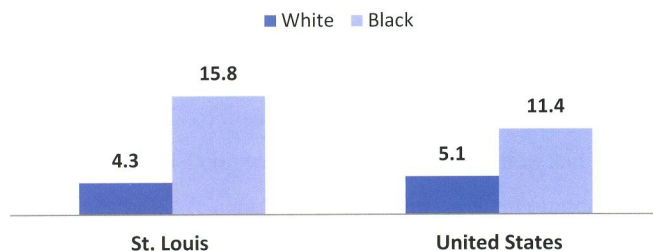
Infant mortality rates are often used as an indicator of health and well-being in a community because factors that effect the health of the entire population also effect infant mortality, including maternal health, quality and access to medical care, socioeconomic conditions, and public health practices.

For 2011, the infant mortality rate for the U.S. was 6.1 infant deaths (less than one year old) per 1,000 live births. This is a slight decline from 6.9 in 2000. The infant mortality rates for both blacks and whites improved but there was only a slight decrease in the gap. In 2011, the rate for black infants was 2.2 times greater than that of whites, 11.4 and 5.1 deaths per 1,000 births respectively.¹¹ In 2000, blacks were 2.4 times more likely to die during infancy than whites, 13.6 and 5.7 deaths respectively.¹²

The average disparity in infant mortality for the 34 peer regions is slightly higher than for the U.S. as a whole, at 2.7 deaths. St. Louis has one of the highest infant mortality gaps with blacks being 3.6 times more likely than whites to die during infancy.

Disparity in Infant Mortality

Infant deaths (less than one year old) per 1,000 live births, St. Louis (2007-2009) and United States (2011)



Source: United States Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS), Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

¹¹ National Center for Health Statistics, *National Vital Statistics Reports*, Volume 61, Number 6; 10 October 2012; Deaths: Preliminary Data for 2011; accessed on 13 January 2014 http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr61/nvsr61_06.pdf

¹² MacDorman MF, Mathews TJ. *Recent Trends in Infant Mortality in the United States*, NCHS data brief, no 9. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2008. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db09.htm>

DISPARITY IN INFANT MORTALITY

Infant deaths (less than one year old)
per 1,000 live births, 2007 to 2009

		WHITE Deaths per 1,000 white births	BLACK Deaths per 1,000 black births
	Ratio of black to white		
1	Charlotte	3.9	11.6
2	Portland	3.7	16.6
3	St. Louis	3.6	15.8
4	Memphis	3.5	17.5
5	Washington DC	3.4	13.4
6	Pittsburgh	3.3	15.8
7	New York	3.2	10.3
8	Philadelphia	2.9	13.7
9	Cleveland	2.8	15.9
10	Boston	2.8	10.2
11	Los Angeles	2.7	10.3
12	Chicago	2.7	13.7
13	Baltimore	2.7	14.4
14	San Francisco	2.7	9.0
	Average	2.7	12.9
15	Austin	2.6	11.9
16	San Antonio	2.6	10.5
17	Cincinnati	2.6	17.6
18	Phoenix	2.6	14.7
19	Detroit	2.6	14.9
20	Atlanta	2.6	11.3
21	Miami	2.5	9.7
22	Denver	2.4	13.4
23	Dallas	2.4	12.9
24	Minneapolis	2.4	11.5
25	Indianapolis	2.3	17.3
26	Seattle	2.3	8.7
27	Milwaukee	2.3	14.1
28	Nashville	2.3	11.5
29	Oklahoma City	2.2	15.5
30	San Diego	2.1	8.9
31	Columbus	2.1	13.6
32	Louisville	2.0	9.6
33	Houston	1.9	10.5
34	Kansas City	1.8	12.5

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Note: Rates included for counties with over 250,000 population and those for which CDC reported mortality rates for both races for a given year. Data is combined for 2007, 2008 and 2009.

Source: United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

For the Sake of All: A Report on the Health and Well-Being of African Americans in St. Louis

Researchers from Washington University and St. Louis University recently completed a study on the health and well-being of African Americans in St. Louis. The series of publications discusses the connection between a lack of opportunity for African Americans in the St. Louis area and the health of individuals as well as the health and vitality of the entire region.

The study documents how disparities in access, education, and economic factors in the region play an important role in the health and well-being of African Americans and why it matters to everyone. For example, the final report points out that African Americans experience chronic diseases at a higher rate than other groups. The study estimates that \$65 million a year could be saved in the city of St. Louis and St. Louis County if the disparity between whites and blacks in treatment of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes was addressed. Some of the ways identified for closing this gap are increasing employment opportunities to provide access to health insurance and workplace wellness programs and increasing access to services and amenities.

The report concludes with recommendations that stress the importance of addressing disparities in jobs, education and housing in order to improve individual health outcomes and regional prosperity outcomes. In July 2014 the program received a grant to begin implementation of the study's recommendations.

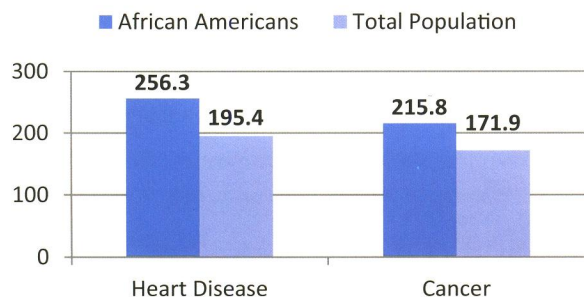
For the Sake of All recommendations:

- Invest in quality early childhood development for all children.
- Help low-to-moderate income families create economic opportunities.
- Invest in coordinated school health programs for all students.
- Invest in mental health awareness, screening, treatment, and surveillance.
- Invest in quality neighborhoods for all in St. Louis.
- Coordinate and expand chronic and infectious disease prevention and management.

To view the report, go to forthesakeofall.org.

Disparity in Heart Disease and Cancer

St. Louis City and County, age-adjusted deaths per 100,000, 2009-2010



Source: *For the Sake of All*, 2013

In 2012, on average for the 34 peer regions, black individuals were 1.8 times more likely than whites to lack health insurance coverage. The St. Louis region has the fourth highest gap on this indicator, with 8.6 percent of white individuals having no insurance compared to 18.9 percent of blacks.

Although the gap between blacks and whites on infant mortality has improved, research indicates that the cancer mortality gap has increased since 1981. According to the National Cancer Institute, the cancer mortality rate in 2010 for black women with breast cancer was 8.8 deaths more per 100,000 women than whites (30.9 for blacks compared to 22.1 for whites). The gap has steadily increased since 1981 when the rate for both black and white women was 32.0 deaths per 100,000 women.¹³

Conclusion

The statistics presented in this report document the substantial level of racial disparity that is part of the lives of people in the St. Louis region and across the country. Despite the passage of the Civil Rights Act 50 years ago and the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision 60 years ago, there are large disparities between the well-being of white and black people on a range of factors, including income, employment, health, housing, and education.

The gaps between white and black people are longstanding and difficult to close. For the most part, areas of the country that were the most segregated 30 years ago remain the most segregated today. These same regions have high levels of disparity between whites and blacks, which suggests a connection between segregation and the inequities that African American individuals encounter.

The challenge is one that deserves attention. Aside from alleviating disadvantages faced by African Americans, closing racial gaps could also enhance the

DISPARITY IN HEALTH CARE COVERAGE

Percent of population with no health insurance coverage, 2012

		WHITE	BLACK
		Percent of white population	Percent of black population
Ratio of black to white			
1	Minneapolis	2.6	6.0
2	Milwaukee	2.4	5.9
3	Miami	2.3	13.2
4	St. Louis	2.2	8.6
5	Kansas City	2.2	9.4
6	Chicago	2.2	8.3
7	Washington DC	2.1	5.4
8	New York	2.1	6.8
9	Philadelphia	2.0	6.7
10	San Francisco	1.9	6.8
11	Baltimore	1.9	6.1
12	Boston	1.9	3.7
13	Columbus	1.8	9.6
Average		1.8	9.6
14	Cincinnati	1.8	9.6
15	Atlanta	1.8	11.8
16	Cleveland	1.8	9.2
17	Seattle	1.7	10.3
18	Denver	1.7	10.1
19	Pittsburgh	1.7	7.5
20	Memphis	1.7	10.5
21	Louisville	1.7	10.7
22	Dallas	1.7	12.8
23	Houston	1.7	12.3
24	Charlotte	1.6	11.3
25	Detroit	1.6	10.5
26	Los Angeles	1.6	10.8
27	Phoenix	1.5	10.7
28	Oklahoma City	1.5	12.9
29	Indianapolis	1.5	11.3
30	San Diego	1.5	10.7
31	Austin	1.4	11.8
32	San Antonio	1.4	11.8
33	Nashville	1.4	10.8
34	Portland	1.4	12.0

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Source: 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

competitiveness of the region. There are many different interpretations for the reasons behind these disparities, and there are many possible policy proposals. It is our hope that this report will contribute to the discussion by providing facts about the challenges facing our region.

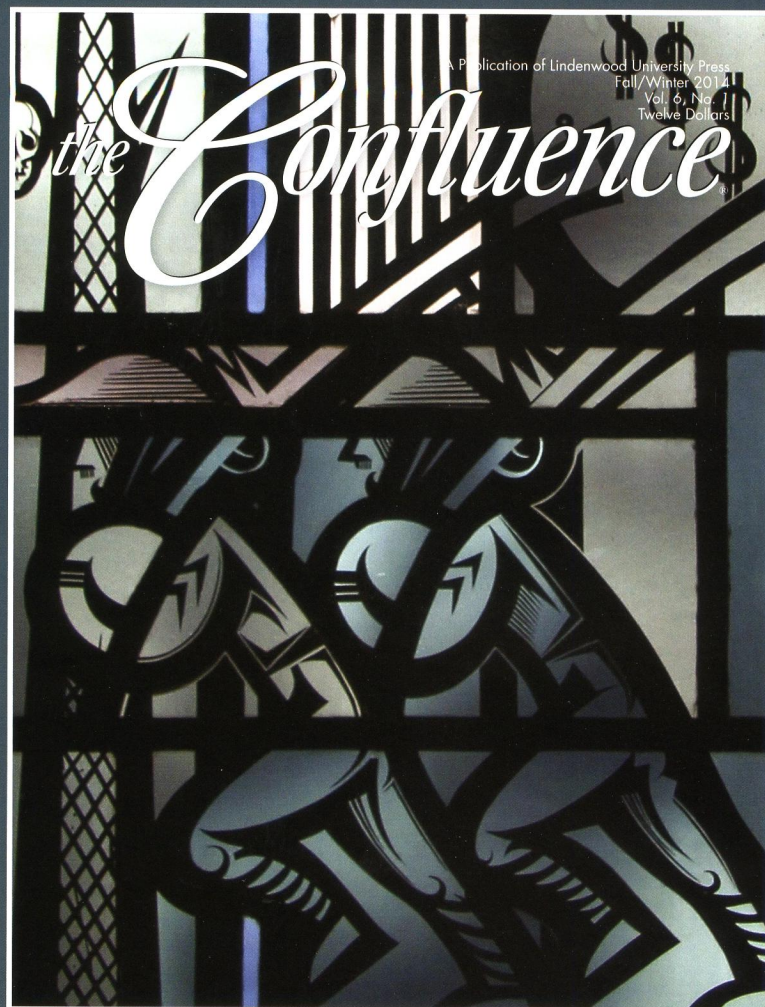
¹³ National Cancer Institute, "A Stark Gap in Breast Cancer Deaths," *New York Times*, accessed on 15 January 2014 at <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/12/20/health/a-racial-gap-in-breast-cancer-deaths.html>

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Grant Funding Sources:

The work that provided the basis of this publication was supported by a combination of local funds, state funds provided under awards from the Missouri Department of Transportation and the Illinois Department of Transportation, federal funds provided under an award from the U.S. Department of Transportation through the Missouri Department of Transportation and the Illinois Department of Transportation. The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, or the Federal Transit Administration.



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Reflecting an Era:

*Social Justice in the
Windows of St. Mark's
Episcopal Church*

BY KRIS RUNBERG SMITH

Christ holds the sword of truth that cuts through falsehoods and prejudices in the window challenging America's social injustice. He is, according to Rector Charles Wilson, not "tolerant of injustice instead seeking to lift men above their own self-interests." Robert Harmon represents this struggle with a substantial vine that twines throughout the window with branches of men bitterly struggling with each other. A laboring black man confronts a well-dressed white man. A worker carrying a strike sign challenges "a feather-capped employer with a bloated face." The caricatures in window mock those in power and give dignity to those repressed. They convey that Christ will judge those "forces in our society that are oppressive," especially in the struggle for justice and quality. This window captured the lifelong ministry of Bishop William Scarlett who advocated for the laboring classes and for racial equality.



Bishop William Scarlett (far left) accepted the keys to St. Mark's from architects Charles Nagel and Frederick Dunn (center) in January 1939. Scarlett then passed them to Rector Charles C. Wilson (right). While many in the neighborhood dismissed the efforts of Nagel and Dunn, they received national acclaim for designing the first modern church in St. Louis. (*Image: St. Mark's Episcopal Church*)

Many St. Louisans expressed their disdain for the city's first modern church, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, when it opened in 1939. They found its simple design elements lacking, but it was the contemporary images in the church's stained glass windows that created outrage.¹ The windows, with marching soldiers and striking union members, poignantly reflected the fears and frustrations of the 1930s. They challenged the community about the role of Christianity in a country that was left cynical after World War I, reeling through a never-ending depression, and confused by the disturbing totalitarian movements in Europe, especially the increasingly the evil actions of Adolph Hitler.

Social justice made manifest at St. Mark's came from

the vision of Missouri Diocese Bishop William Scarlett and church's rector, Charles Wilson. Architects Frederick Dunn and Charles Nagel along with artists Robert Harmon and Emil Frei translated their visions into glass and mortar. These men, their ideas, and their craftsmanship created a building that challenged traditional ideas of what a Christian church should look like in the modern age. Their windows physically articulated the realities of changing national and community values that demanded a Christian response. According to Wilson, St. Mark's "has a real meaning, it tells a stirring story, it is a live and vibrant expression our day and it re-expresses the truths which are most fundamental in tradition."²



“The Red Tie Bishop”

“St. Mark’s is really Bishop Scarlett’s ‘baby,’” argued the rector.³ As Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri, Scarlett selected the church’s location in the developing St. Louis Hills neighborhood and oversaw the designs for the building and its windows. He used the project to make his Christian belief manifest. Since the 1920s, Scarlett joined other church leaders, most notably his friend and colleague Reinhold Niebuhr, to contest the assumptions of mainstream churches enamored by the values brought by American industrial progress with little regard to the social costs. Niebuhr, one of the most influential twentieth century American theologians, came to his convictions through his ministry with beleaguered autoworkers in Detroit during the 1920s.⁴ He decried the self-centered pride of Americans as embodied by Henry Ford, the most admired man of the time. Niebuhr argued that to fulfill the teachings of Jesus, Christians must cooperate rather than focus on individual achievements.

William Scarlett’s epiphany for social justice came as Dean of Trinity Cathedral in Phoenix, Arizona. Soon after his arrival in 1911, he established a reputation as a caring pastor willing to advocate for exploited workers. Eastern corporations with mining operations in the isolated Southwest recruited and then maltreated waves of immigrant workers. When conditions became unbearable in Bisbee, Arizona, in 1917, miners went on strike. In response owners herded 1,300 striking men onto railroad cattle cars and deported them out of state to New Mexico. Scarlett audaciously challenged these actions and, along with a handful of other clergy, demanded the United States Department of Justice investigate the travesty. The agency sent out a young Felix Frankfurter to scrutinize corporate actions. Scarlett assisted with the inquiries and the two became lifelong friends, even after Frankfurter’s

Stained glass designer Robert Harmon illustrated the Christian themes of unity and cooperation with two laborers who need each other to complete their tasks. Charles Wilson explained that it is the “area of work where men’s self-interest is dominant and therefore where cooperation is most essential and most difficult.” This cooperative approach to life’s work was made real in the building of St. Mark’s as architects Dunn and Nagel together designed the church and its furnishings. Harmon captured this spirit using them models, for his image of laborers. In a play on Nagel’s name, which means nail in German, one man holds a nail which the other welded the hammer. Embedded in the hammer head is Dunn’s name. Nagel and Dunn brought to the project the kind of cooperative spirit Bishop Scarlett celebrated by using their network of artists and craftsmen. Later, *St. Louis Post Dispatch* art critic Patricia Degener called St. Mark’s the finest collaboration of art and architecture in Dunn’s body of work. (Image: Don Adams)



Architects Frederick Dunn and Charles Nagel designed four pairs of long, narrow windows running down St. Mark's narthex. The north windows imagine St. Mark's growing relationship with Jesus. According to Charles Wilson, the contrasting southern windows "are an attempt to interpret for our benefit today the significance of the story." Designer Robert Harmon used repetitive elements to tie all the windows together including representations of Jesus along the top of each. Jesus wears a stole, an ancient symbol still worn by the clergy to symbolize the "yoke" of Christ. Each pair of windows shares different symbolic patterns running down the glass stole.

St. Mark's rector in the 1950s contrasted the traditional imagery of the north windows. "The difference is that the windows on the South Side ask the question – 'If you follow Jesus, so what?' Here is presented the cutting and demanding side of Christianity. These windows repel, or demand that you stand up and be counted." (*Image: Don Adams*)

appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court. In Arizona, the foundations of Scarlett's "future greatness in the field of social justice were laid."⁵

Scarlett moved to St. Louis in 1922 as dean of Christ Church Cathedral and became Bishop of Missouri a decade later. He put into practice his belief of cooperation as a foundation of faith. When Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman came in 1932, Scarlett reached out and together they formed a social justice commission that fulfilled a variety of functions, including mediating local labor disputes.⁶ Their efforts reduced tensions during strikes with streetcar workers and with miners in Illinois. Scarlett's vision of Christian cooperation also encompassed racial equality, and he helped found the Urban League. When he retired as the agency's president in 1948, he charged, "Racial segregation is the greatest foe of social, economic and educational freedom of opportunity in America."⁷

Throughout Scarlett's career, "His liberal approaches to social and church reform put him in constant tension with many of the fellow bishops."⁸ He hosted an

interdenominational celebration of Holy Communion with Presbyterians in 1932 and received sanctions from the Episcopalian Church leadership. Even in the 1930s, Scarlett pushed the Episcopal Church nationally to encourage more access to birth control education and to acknowledge divorce.⁹ He served on the national boards of the Urban League and the American Civil Liberties Union. Scarlett's social justice agenda, his avoidance of the clerical collar, and his colorful surname earned him a derisive nickname, the "Red Tie bisho"¹⁰

Impetuous Young Men

Bishop Scarlett applied his principles to his own life, his preaching, his writings, and his hiring practices. He recruited "aggressive, socially conscious, at times impetuous young men" as missionaries to spread the gospel call.¹¹ Charles Wilson was one of those men. A graduate of the New York School of Social Work, he ministered in the city's notorious Bowery while preaching



The new St. Mark's Episcopal Church was considered architecturally significant even when it was newly built in 1939. It was included in the Historic American Buildings Survey, which was usually reserved for documenting historical architecture rather than new buildings. (Image: *Historic American Building Survey*)

on the growing labor troubles around the country at elegant Gothic Revival Grace Church.¹² In the spring of 1935 Scarlett invited Wilson to come to St. Louis to be Missioner for the city's south side. Scarlett told area church leaders that, "he was sure he had the right man for us" in Charles Wilson.¹³

Scarlett hoped Wilson could be part of a response to the changing demographics in the region as inner-city parishes lost membership and interest in Christian education waned.¹⁴ He assigned Wilson to first focus on two languishing churches in the aging, predominately Catholic neighborhoods around Tower Grove Park.¹⁵ He also tasked Wilson with organizing a new church in the developing suburb of St. Louis Hills where he purchased lots earlier.¹⁶

When Wilson started his ministry, St. Louis Hills boasted 328 new homes with 1,400 people. The depression had slowed development, and one resident recalled that much of the area was "largely nothing more than streets, alleys and vacant lots."¹⁷ Developer Cyrus Crane Willmore promised prospective buyers that the "surroundings are beautiful, children are happy, neighbors are congenial and everyone is concerned about matters which constitute right living." Right living included attending church, but the Catholic St. Gabriel the Archangel offered neighbors the only option.¹⁸ Scarlett saw the area as "underchurched," presenting an opportunity to breathe new life into the Episcopal presence in the city with the help of the energetic Wilson.

Missioner Wilson sent all the Episcopalians living in the area a letter asserting that "this is the beginning of a hope which the Diocese has long held, that we might have a Church to serve the residents of St. Louis Hills."¹⁹ A small band of 30 met in Willmore's business office before

moving to the portable buildings of Nottingham School. Wilson stressed that his mission, known as St. Andrew's, endeavored to be known as a liberal community church concerned with the political and economic problems of society. He promised all were welcome regardless of denominational affiliation.

Wilson envisioned a church that "must seek to awaken men from the lethargy of an indifferent and selfishly individualistic life.... While never partisan, she must speak out against the evils and injustices in the community and nation."²⁰ In May 1937 Wilson and Scarlett found themselves with an opportunity to create a such a church, both spiritually and physically.²¹ John A. Watkins, a recluse bachelor living in a cold-water flat on Kingshighway, died, leaving the Diocese \$75,000. However, the loan operator mandated the money must be used to build a new church with his devoutly Episcopalian mother's name on it as a memorial.²²

Scarlett planned to bring together Wilson's three groups under a new roof announcing, "It would be possible for the Diocese to have one strong Church in a new and rapidly growing neighborhood."²³ He saw a unique opportunity to design a new church with little of the compromising and sanitizing that often comes with the building committee process. He served as the committee chair along with three others from the Council of Diocese, a handful of men representing the merging congregations, and Charles Wilson. One lay member remembered, "Wilson seemed to be MC at the meetings and the Bishop when there, which was often, just sat in on what took place, making such comment as he felt necessary."²⁴ The new church would be named St. Mark's.

Holy Symphony

Bishop Scarlett stacked the deck from the beginning to create a church physically expressing his vision of modern Christianity. He appointed Charles Nagel and Frederick Dunn as the project's architects.²⁵ The pair met at the Yale University architecture program. Nagel convinced Dunn to follow him back to St. Louis to open a practice specializing in modern design. The men joined a growing number of young artists and architects "struggling against St. Louis conservative tendencies." They formed the Paint and Potter Club, "where the local intelligentsia met to drink and to discuss art, design, and life."²⁶ The architects drew on several club members, including sculptor Shelia Burlingame, to contribute to the new church.

Dunn and Nagel designed St. Mark's as St. Louis' first church in a modern style. Their project drew national notice, and critics compared it to ecclesiastical efforts by other contemporary innovators, such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Eliel and Eero Saarinen.²⁷ Walter Tyler, writing for *Architectural Record*, admired St. Mark's simplicity and functionalism. He observed, "While there is hardly more than a trace of traditional ecclesiastical detail in this building, it is unmistakably a church."²⁸

Tyler marveled at St. Mark's "adventuresome spirit." He commented, "The ecclesiastical fields are to be found the most challenging occasions for creative design."²⁹ However, St. Mark's "spirit" was not honed by the lay members of the building committee. One member, when first viewing the revolutionary plans, exclaimed "Not that! Why that's just a paving brick covered with modeling clay, turned on its side with a dab for a steeple."³⁰ Another lay member recalled, "The church is a result of the thinking of the architects and that of Mr. Wilson. They built the church, [and] the building committee went along often."³¹ Some members said they "resented the way the

architecture was superimposed" upon them.³²

A story recalled by a lay member of the building committee illustrated the point well:

"At one meeting we were told we would pass on the windows for the church being designed by Emil Frei, Inc.... The building committee went along with his idea. We were told ... we could visit Mr. Frei's shop and watch him at work with the windows. In a day or two... I stopped in to take a look as to how the windows were coming along. Much to my surprise one of the windows, and they are very large, was already finished. ... Many of the committee thought that the architects and possibly Mr. Wilson had been advising Mr. Frei on the windows."³³

Fifteen years later, the rector speculated that "it might be safe to say that had the people of St. Mark's had much to say we would never have had this Holy Symphony in mortar, brick, wood, steel, and glass."³⁴

First of its Kind in the Country

If St. Mark's architecture marked a first in St. Louis, its stained glass windows were "the first of its kind in this country."³⁵ Scarlett and Wilson's commitment to social justice became writ large in the building's eight long, narrow windows. The four north windows examined the life of St. Mark, but the matching southern windows demanded attention over current social justice issues, focusing on the "ways men today were betraying Christ."³⁶ They filled the windows with bold designs that challenged viewers about their visions of the church.

Scarlett selected the Emil Frei studio to create St. Mark's windows. The company dated back to 1898 and gained national recognition at the 1904 World's Fair. Roman Catholic churches were its primary customers, but Scarlett invited the firm to make its first efforts for the Episcopal Church in St. Louis.³⁷ The timing was fortuitous because Frei had just hired designer Robert Harmon, a recent



William Scarlett served as Bishop of the Missouri Episcopal Diocese from 1933–52 and possessed a "willingness to interpret scripture according to modern perspectives." After World War II he served on the national Joint Commission on Social Reconstruction, which brought together influential Americans to highlight the need for civil rights and social justice. It is through this work he became a mentor and friend of Eleanor Roosevelt. Scarlett wrote in 1949 that Christianity is "either the Rock on which we build our civilization or else it is the Rock against which civilization will continue to pound itself to pieces." (*Image Episcopal Diocese of Missouri*)



Washington University School of Art graduate. Harmon would enjoy a long career noted for his massive window projects, but for his first assignment with St. Mark's he only had eight very tall, very narrow windows. The tight budget of the project forced him "to depart from the commonly used form of stained glass and the necessity of creating a richness of color and effect through the use of large rather than small pieces of glass."³⁸ Harmon took advantage of the financial restraints to move away from the studio's "Munich" style, which followed the realistic approach of the Renaissance. Instead, he used more abstract representations. Charles Wilson appreciated Harmon's contemporary, expressionistic style that evoked primitive art. In Harmon's stained glass, "traditional medieval symbols receive modern treatment."³⁹

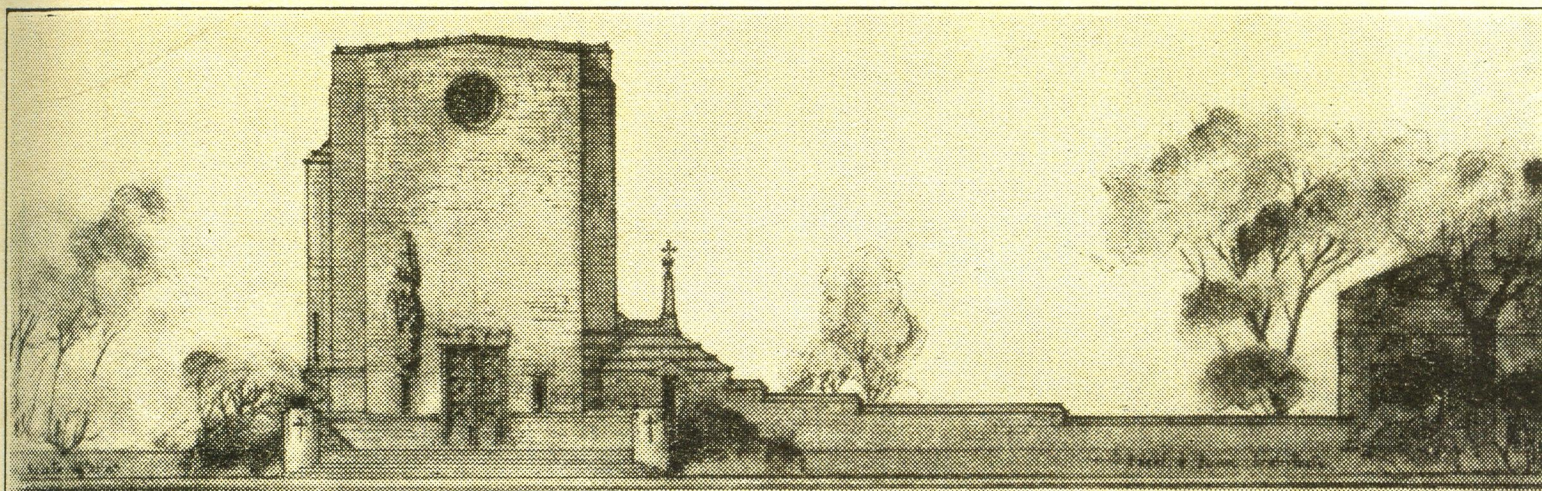
Stephen Frei, current head of the studios, posits that, "St. Mark's was perhaps the cutting edge of the very first of the style of contemporary windows that due to economic constraints, was to be the new wave of the future."⁴⁰ His father asserted that out of the hundreds of churches the studio has worked on over the decades, the windows of St. Mark's are "still perhaps his favorite of all."⁴¹

According to stained glass historian Ken Leubbering, "Harmon and the younger Frei wanted to get at the essence of the religious experience and depict it in such a way that people were challenged to think and to constantly look at the windows anew."⁴² Harmon drew on early Christian symbols to express the new Liberal Christian ideals that Wilson and Scarlett championed. Wilson compared the symbolism used by the underground movement of Christians under repressive Roman rule to the "partisans in Hitler-dominated Europe today."⁴³ The windows would serve as a symbol to the community, expressing visibly what Wilson hoped St. Mark's should become, a "live 'liberal' church."

Feet of Clay

When Scarlett dedicated St. Mark's in January 1939, "members of the congregation, at first resentful of anything so different, are already beginning to accept it, some even to like."⁴⁴ Neighbors were not as conciliatory. Congregational member Jane Carr recalled the derisive howls from the community; "How do they get by with building such a monstrosity in the neighborhood?" It

This window portrayed Jesus' saving power of religion which he revealed to both men and women. The woman is depicted independent from the man but bound together in the cloak of God which surrounds them. Rector Charles Wilson and designer Robert Harman drew on symbols of the early Christian church. The fish shown here not only represented Christ and communion but also the story of Jesus feeding the five thousands. Wilson interpreted the miracle of the loaves and the fishes as Christ's command for believers to share the world's natural resources. Critics of Wilson pointed to such interpretations as proof of his support for communism. (Image: Don Adams)



PROPOSED CHURCH OF SAINT ANDREW
SAINT LOUIS HILLS

NEW ADDITION TO THE DIOCESE THAT MAY RISE IN ST. LOUIS HILLS. THE REV. CHARLES E. WILSON IS THE RECTOR

This sketch by architects Nagel and Dunn was the original concept of the modern St. Mark's. (Image: St. Mark's Episcopal Church)

“don't look like a church, it looks like a Union Electric substation.”⁴⁵ Another exclaimed “gross, ugly, garish, not churchy.”⁴⁶ Carr ruefully added, “When the windows went in, it got worse.” Neighbors decried the stained windows that portrayed modern images of war, race, class, and labor.

Charles Wilson later reflected that the year he spent working on St. Mark's was the best in his life.⁴⁷ The year that followed might have been his worse. The call for social justice demanded by the church windows quickly became bound up with the political turmoil of a country on the edge of another world war. Even images illustrating Christian cooperation were rejected. The St. Mark's congregation in its new building languished under Wilson. Vestry, its governing board, was unable or unwilling to raise the funds to even cover their annual budget, and they laid the financial crisis at the feet of Wilson.⁴⁸ They became uncomfortable that Wilson was “emotionally cemented to his political and social views,” especially as organizations he supported became under government scrutiny.⁴⁹

Scarlett's and Wilson's views of cooperation, racial equality, and social justice smacked of communism to many. A conservative backlash grew in the late 1930s over many of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs. Critics began leveling allegations, and Republicans formed what would become the House Committee on Un-American Activities aimed at exposing communist connections. Committee chair Martin Dies, Jr., came to St. Louis in 1940 to hold hearings and to seize records of organizations that were “pro-Nazi, pro-Communists and pro-Japanese.”⁵⁰

Along with the Dies Committee presences in St. Louis, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) also

launched a regional investigation of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and its ties with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Wilson and Scarlett supported both unions. The Bishop had even tried to negotiate a strike by the CIO. The Bureau scrutinized the unions' connections with the local National Labor Relations Board that it claimed “is known to have radical tenancies leaning toward communism.”⁵¹ The Dies hearings and the FBI investigations stirred up local paranoia and resentment.⁵²

Out of the red-baiting came a complaint lodged with the FBI that St. Mark's rector Charles Wilson was a communist. The FBI maintained an agreement with the St. Louis Police Department (SLPD) to investigate local threats of communism. The SLPD established a “Red Squad” in the early 1930s “to monitor communist and socialist organizations,” and according to labor historian Rosemary Feurer, by the late 1930s it “targeted left-leaning unions, generating a lot of red baiting in the city.”⁵³

In November two plain-clothes policemen descended on St. Mark's Vestry members and their wives to investigate Rector Wilson's record. The men “asking leading and insinuating questions, succeeded in frightening some of the members of the Vestry, made them fearful they might be harboring someone guilty of subversive acts.”⁵⁴ Vestry responded by demanding Charles Wilson's resignation.

In the meantime, Scarlett visited the local FBI office hoping to find out the specific charges against Wilson. They told him only the offices of FBI Director Edgar J. Hoover or the U.S. Attorney General could release such information. Scarlett then wrote to Attorney General Robert Jackson, arguing that if Wilson “has been guilty of any subversive deeds, which I cannot believe, I, as the head of the Diocese, ought to know it so that we ourselves



An unexpected 1937 bequest provided enough money to construct St. Mark's Episcopal Church but not to build the rectory or parish hall, also designed by Nagel and Dunn. The congregation grew after the war as St. Louis Hills expanded with returning veterans. The rectory was built in 1950 and the parish hall in 1954. By St. Mark's twenty-fifth anniversary, the *Globe-Democrat* proclaimed, "St. Louis' architectural ugly duckling that became the whitest of swans." Today the church is listed on the National Register of Historical Places and continues to receive critical architectural attention. (Image: Charles Doyle)

can take whatever action may be necessary." Scarlett dismissed any credibility to the accusations: "Certainly he is not, as the questioners seem to insinuate, a Communist. I do not see how any minister of the Christian religion can be a Communist."⁵⁵

Scarlett asked that if the evidence amounted to nothing, to let him know so he could inform the Vestry to "help to relieve their minds, and save the young man from a gross injustice." He requested that if they did have any actual questions, would it be possible for Wilson to have a hearing and a "chance to clear himself of the suspicion which has settled upon him in the minds of some of his people?"⁵⁶ Scarlett expressed frustration at the injustice done to Wilson with innuendoes and feared such actions could create dissensions in other congregations throughout his diocese.

Scarlett went to Washington, D.C., where the FBI told him no recommendation concerning Wilson had been made or would be made, by any one officially connected with them. They blamed the SLPD, who it asked to explore allegations that "appear to be purely local in nature."⁵⁷ Scarlett responded, "I shall ask the local FBI chiefs, who have been most considerate, if they cannot persuade the local police department to be somewhat more subtle in their conduct."⁵⁸ He also visited his old friend Felix Frankfurter, now a Supreme Court justice, and asked for his help. Frankfurter talked with the Attorney General and wrote Scarlett that he thought Jackson "felt

about these things as you do and will be alert against any nonsense."⁵⁹

Scarlett's efforts all the way to the Supreme Court did not save Wilson's position at St. Mark's. He left and became rector at Trinity Episcopal Church in Kirksville, Missouri. Eventually Wilson came back to St. Louis where he spent ten years as head of the Grace Hill Settlement House. There he continued to advocate for the disadvantaged, applying the theology he embedded in St. Mark's windows. His successor at St. Mark's distanced himself from the social justice messages in the windows, claiming they were "designed to admit much light while figuratively telling a part of the Christian story."⁶⁰

As America plunged into World War II, Bishop Scarlett organized a national, ecumenical dialogue to ensure the same mistakes following the Great War were not repeated. He preached, he published, and he organized national committees that addressed moral issues raised by the war and the atomic bomb that ended it. Scarlett, along with Eleanor Roosevelt, also led a growing movement for racial equality. He spoke out against McCarthyism and again and again made a clear distinction between social justice and communism.⁶¹ Many believed Scarlett would have been head of the American Episcopal Church had he not been "a man ahead of his time." Or as a friend succinctly put it, "but for his left-leaning ways."⁶²

After the war, St. Mark's new rector Murray Kenney led a growing congregation. The church became able to

build the rectory and then the parish hall designed years earlier by Dunn and Nagel. Kenney once again claimed the power of the stained glass windows, reminding members, "The vigorous social concern of Bishop Scarlett, Charles Wilson, the architects Nagel and Dunn, the artists Frei and Harmon is poured into these windows."⁶³

For Scarlett and Wilson, the messages in the St. Mark's windows were not just for the congregation or the middle-class, white, St. Louis Hills families, but a visible symbol of what this new Christianity should look like in the face of a modern world wounded by the Great Depression and threatened by fascism. These windows captured the spirit of social justice preached by Bishop Scarlett when in the 1930s he argued, "Through the ages this has been a basic principle of religion, the unity of all mankind in God, a unity based not on our race or color or class but on our common humanity."⁶⁴

These windows that were designed to demand a response to the pressing political and social issues of the 1930s sadly remain fresh and applicable today. Seventy years after its cornerstone was laid, the St. Mark's congregation still reflects the call demanded by their very building. Member Joleen Shelton, a union leader with the National Educational Association, recalled her fascination with the windows: "This was the world I lived in on this side. . . . It was the reality of how religion is part of this world, part of American history, it wasn't just what was passed down to us." Another member contended that the windows provide the "faith and world connect that is so alive for us at St. Mark's."



The stained glass window advocating cooperation includes two men engaged in a tug of war, which "is evidence of the difficulties that the Christian pilgrim's encounter." This image is countered by twin pine trees in a circle, a symbol adopted by the growing cooperative movement in America in 1922. The Great Depression intensified Bishop Scarlett's conviction of the need for cooperative efforts in all areas of life. He joined Reinhold Niebuhr as a trustee for the Delta and Providence Cooperative Farms in Mississippi. Niebuhr labeled this missionary effort, "the most significant experiment in social Christianity now being conducted in America." Scarlett and Charles served together on the board of directors for the Delmo Homes, a New Deal farm cooperative that supported striking sharecroppers in the Missouri Bootheel. Wilson later headed St. Louis' Grace Hill Settlement House, which advocated for cooperative approaches. (Image: Don Adams)

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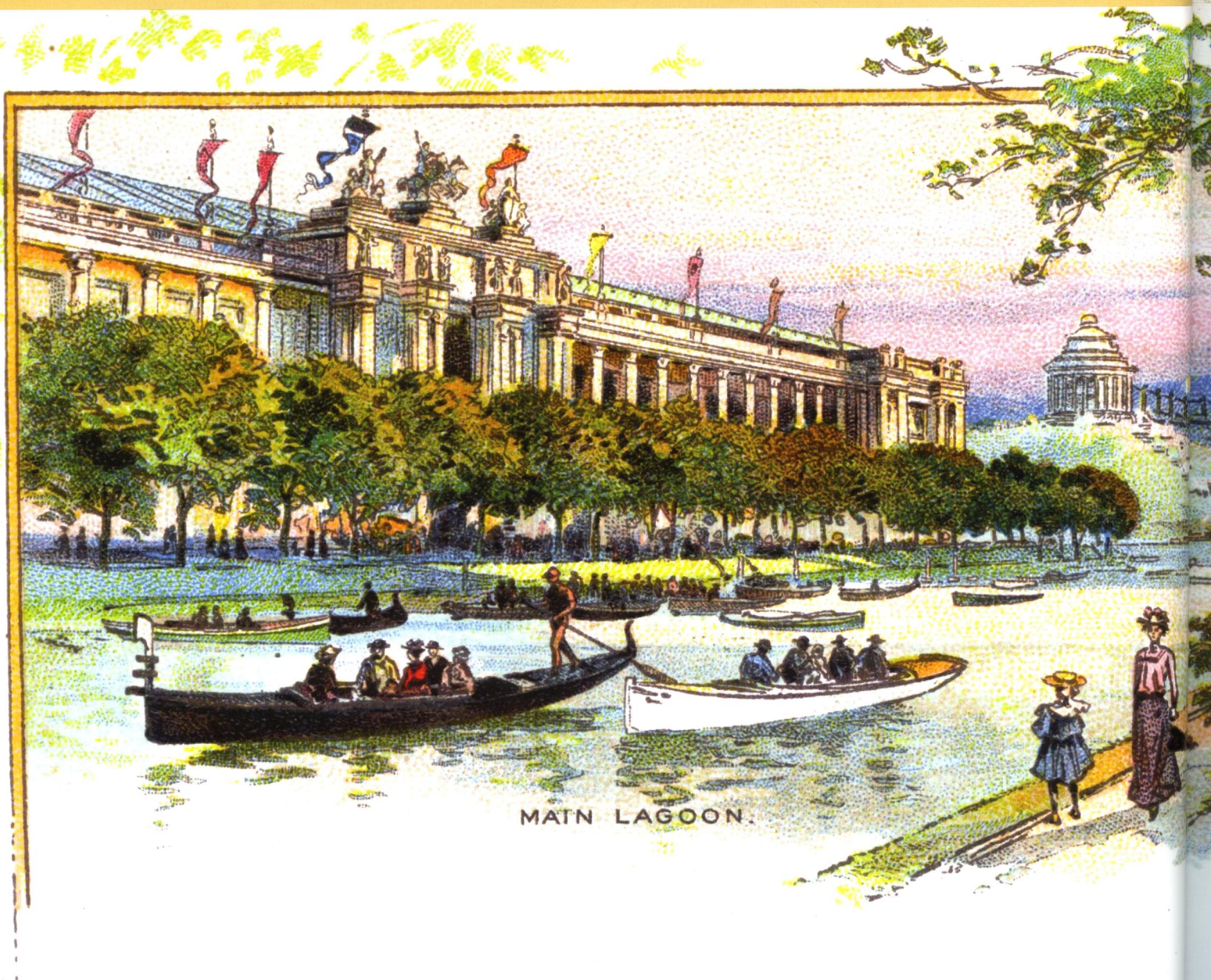
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THE WORLD'S FAIR, PRUITT-IGOE, AND THE MYTHS OF MODERNISM

BY TIMOTHY J. FOX



MAIN LAGOON.



Missouri State Building.



Above — The Missouri Building at the Fair featured the sort of clean lines that Progressives envisioned as improving order in chaotic Gilded Age cities. Such buildings at the fair were designed to convey modernity and good taste. (Image: Missouri History Museum)

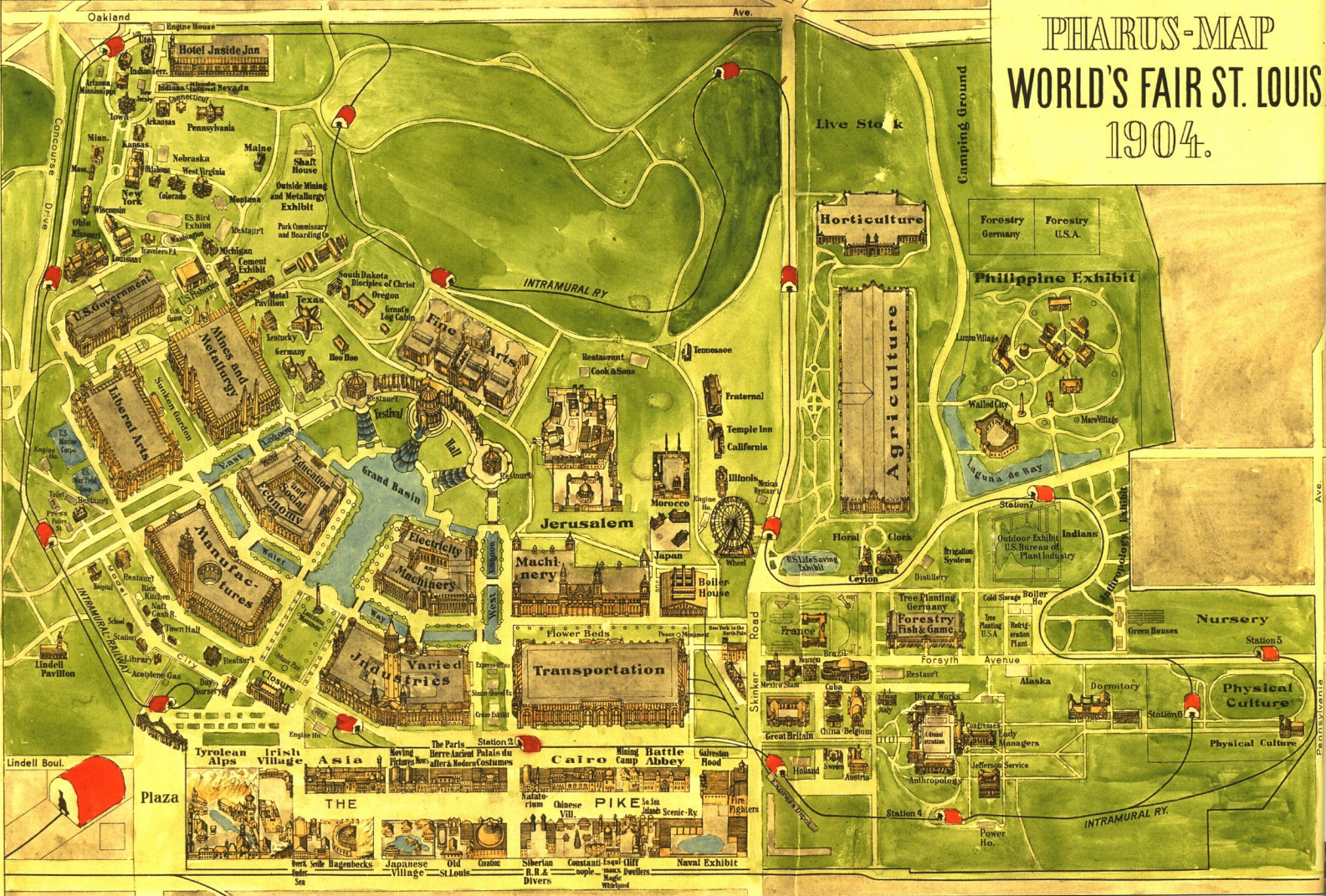
Left — The lagoon was part of a series of massive water features. World's Fair president David Francis' insistence on clean water in the fountains and features like this one compelled Mayor Rolla Wells to push efforts for a water purification system for the city of St. Louis. (Image: Missouri History Museum)

On April 30, 1904, about 200,000 people streamed into St. Louis's Forest Park to experience the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, or the 1904 World's Fair. There, they saw the latest of everything, from farm equipment to the decorative arts. Just 50 years later, a bold experiment in public housing called Pruitt-Igoe was completed near downtown St. Louis. It promised hope to the city's poor, many of whom were about to be displaced by the clearance of the Mill Creek Valley and other urban renewal efforts.

Neither event is as unique to the city as St. Louisans would like to hope, or fear. Many American cities have hosted world's fairs, and many American cities have experienced the failure of high-rise public housing. Some, like St. Louis and Chicago, have experienced both. Nevertheless, these two events hold very powerful positions in St. Louisans' civic consciousness, the one representing the city at its best, and the other the city at its worst. What does it mean that these antipodal events occurred in the same city only fifty years apart?

The 1904 World's Fair filled 1,271 acres of the park at the city's western limits and on land leased just across the city limits in St. Louis County. Intended to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the signing of the

PHARUS-MAP WORLD'S FAIR ST. LOUIS 1904.



The design of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition displayed the thinking of emerging urban planners with its curvilinear streets, panoramas, and visual features. It was the inspiration for the St. Louis City Plan of 1907. (Image: Library of Congress)

Louisiana Purchase (a one-year delay prevented hitting what would have been the actual centenary, 1903), the fair featured a “Main Picture” consisting of nine massive exhibit palaces, water displays, and statuary; an entertainment district called the Pike; and a large section devoted to the “rest of the world”—most notably, the forty-seven-acre Philippine Reservation.

The Pruitt-Igoe public housing complex was the result of St. Louis’s long efforts to accommodate its poor. Building on the ideas of the Swiss architect Charles Edward Jeanneret le Corbusier, St. Louis architects Hellmuth, Yamasaki and Leinweber designed the complex of thirty-three high-rise buildings that would occupy a fifty-nine acre site bordered by Cass, Twentieth Street, Carr, and Jefferson.

To save money, the design utilized elevators that stopped at only every third floor, a plan intended to provide opportunities for play and social interaction as residents traveled up or down stairs to reach their elevators. In reality, however, it mainly provided opportunities for crime. In addition, and in keeping with le Corbusier’s notion of the “City in a Garden,” a ring of greenspace, meant to serve as a recreation and aesthetic

area, separated the buildings from the remainder of the city. The first project, Pruitt, was intended for African American residents, while the second phase, Igoe, was intended for whites. Eventually, both projects would be almost entirely African American. The buildings, which could accommodate 12,000 people but never did, were demolished just twenty years after their opening, an abject failure that has been blamed variously on the architects, the government, the city, and the residents themselves.¹

Architecturally, both the 1904 World’s Fair and Pruitt-Igoe were attempts to create public spheres that embodied the ideals of their planners. At the fair, for example, from the moment visitors entered the fairgrounds at Lindell Boulevard, they encountered what Robert Rydell terms a “symbolic universe” that represented a deliberately ambiguous past.² The buildings borrowed from such a panoply of classical architectural styles that they could not be classified as belonging to any one time period or geographic region. But accurate representation, just like at today’s theme parks, was not the point. Instead, the buildings offered only a sense of being in some sort of past, even if that past was largely the creation of the fair’s architects and planners.

Inside the exhibit palaces, the façade abruptly dropped away to reveal strictly utilitarian spaces featuring the latest and greatest advancements in mining, transportation, communication, agriculture, manufacturing—in other words, everything the new, modern world had to offer. Even the buildings’ exteriors were a sham. Carefully constructed to *look* solid and imposing, they had to *be* temporary, and thus were built with a material called “staff,” a mixture of plaster of Paris and hemp fibers attached to the buildings’ wooden framework.³ Here, the pragmatism of the new world crashed into the idealized permanence and attention to craftsmanship of the old—a clash St. Louisans now echo in the phrase, “They don’t build ’em like they used to,” used, ironically, to refer to the city’s abundant World’s Fair-era middle- and upper-class housing stock.

The fair’s buildings thus established a quasi-history that overwhelmed fairgoers, softening them up for the fair’s real agenda: the selling of a mythical modernist future that promised unlimited technological Progress and urban growth, unrestrained western advance, and unabated subjugation of the Others who were placed on display in St. Louis that summer.⁴

On the other hand, the Pruitt-Igoe buildings, with their

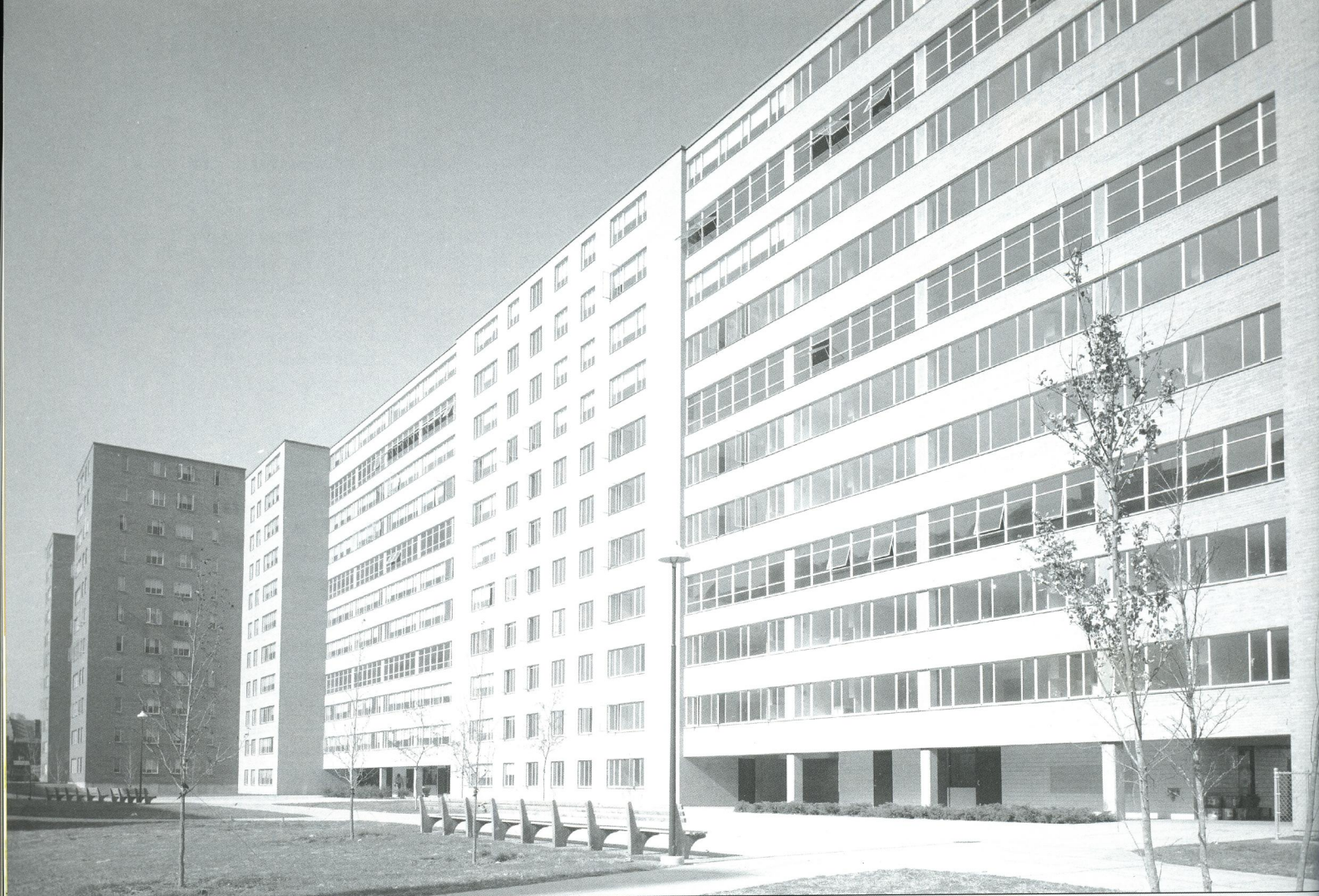
sleek surfaces, concrete slab construction, and skip-stop elevators, wore modernity on their sleeves. Rather than creating an imagined past, they created an image of a future scraped clean of any sort of past, a future as full of possibilities as the fair visitors must have thought theirs was. “Modern Architecture,” architecture critic Charles Jencks famously wrote in his 1977 book, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, “died in St. Louis, Missouri, on July 15, 1972 at 3:32 m. (or thereabouts) when the infamous Pruitt-Igoe scheme . . . were given the final coup de grace by dynamite.”

But it was not just “modern architecture” that died with Pruitt-Igoe, Jencks explained, but a whole modernist worldview that fed it: “Its Purist style, its clean, salubrious hospital metaphor, was meant to instill, by good example, corresponding virtues in the inhabitants,” he writes, a goal he attributed to the “philosophic doctrines of Rationalism, Behaviourism and Pragmatism.”⁵ “Social idealism,” he had written earlier, led quickly to “social catastrophe,” with the results “undercut[ting] the ideology of Modernism.”⁶

Jencks’s comingling of “modern architecture” with “modernism” suggests a parallel to the great fair and Pruitt-Igoe. As evidence of St. Louisans’ allegiance to the fair, consider that in June, July, and August of 1996, after

The first families moved into the Pruitt-Igoe complex in 1954; it was completed two years later. It was comprised of 33 buildings, each 11 stories tall. Originally lauded as a new approach to urban subsidized housing, Pruitt-Igoe began to decline before the end of the decade. (Image: Missouri History Museum)





Pruitt-Igoe cleared 57 acres of slum and stood at the southeast corner of N. Jefferson and Cass avenues in St. Louis. Today, the area is empty. (Image: Missouri History Museum)

the exhibit *Memory, History, and the 1904 World's Fair* opened at the Missouri Historical Museum, attendance increased by 92 percent over the same period of the previous year. Meanwhile, a major civic endeavor, St. Louis 2004, identified goals for the city to reach in time for the centenary of the fair in all areas of urban life, from sprawl and race relations to environment and culture. Of course, no one suggested that 2004 also marked the golden anniversary of the completion of Pruitt-Igoe.

The fair remains fascinating to St. Louisans because the public sphere it presented created an ambiguous, artificial past into which a fantastic future could be (literally) placed. Though these buildings functioned on one level to overawe visitors into a state of acquiescent acceptance of modernity, the buildings' contents served as a negation of the European past they were meant to evoke, not a validation of it. Meanwhile, juxtaposed against these massive palaces with their technological marvels were the foreign exhibits displaying the "hierarchy of man" and W. J. McGee's Phillipine Reservation, located, symbolically enough, on the fair's western margins.

With the narrative of European supremacy debunked, the fair planners quickly provided new narratives to supplant

it, narratives of inevitable technology and inescapable imperialism. The fair represents an interstitial cultural moment, with one toe dipped in the past of the Filipinos, Ainu, and Eskimos, one toe dipped in the shaken belief in European narrative, and a fist thrust firmly in the imagined future and holding on for dear life.

Of course, when the fair was over, many people mourned the passing of the large buildings and the stunning vistas, but few were upset that the National Cash Register Company's display, for example, would be gone for good. This sense of loss continues even today, but the fair's impermanence was its most defining feature. If the buildings were still in the park today, we might not have the fantastic, romantic notion of the 1904 World's Fair and the time that produced it. Instead, we might argue over how to use the massive structures, who should pay for their maintenance, how to route light-rail trains around them, and so forth. The fair, rather than being St. Louis's most powerful image of the best the city can be, would likely be an albatross around our necks.

Instead, the image of Pruitt-Igoe coming down is our albatross. Urban historian Dennis Judd writes, "In addition to the [Gateway] Arch, probably the most



Miroru Yamasaki, who designed Pruitt-Igoe, also designed both the World Trade Center and the St. Louis Lambert Airport. The housing complex was a response to terrible living conditions in St. Louis slums. In 1951, the St. Louis mayor said, “We must rebuild, open up and clean up the hearts of our cities. The fact that slums were created with all the intrinsic evils was everybody’s fault. Now it is everybody’s responsibility to repair the damage” in his call for new public housing. (Image: Missouri History Museum)

famous and enduring symbol of St. Louis is the photo of the Pruitt-Igoe complex imploding into the dust.”⁷ The failure of the buildings, as Jencks had noted, shook modernist assumptions to their core—another narrative rejected.

Unlike those of the fair, Pruitt-Igoe’s buildings were intended to be permanent. They represented a modernist, government-sponsored solution to the problems of poverty and urban blight. By setting the (mostly) African American poor adrift on their own urban island, separated from the rest of the city and even the most basic amenities by a “moat” of greenspace, planners hoped to contain the buildings’ residents. The architectural community thought it was a great idea. *Architectural Forum*, for example, praised the plan in 1951 as one that “saves not only people but money” by providing “vertical neighborhoods for poor people.” The economy, according to the *Forum*, was partly a result of the skip-stop elevators that allowed “neighborhoods” (that is, additional floors) to be simply added to the stack, like pancakes, rather than “enlarged.”⁸

The design, of course, failed. The planners’ modernist faith in what David Harvey has called the “Enlightenment Project” of “linear progress, absolute truths, and rational planning of ideal social orders” did not account for underlying problems of racial and class-based inequities.⁹ However, it was exactly these ideals—Harvey’s “linear progress, absolute truths, and rational planning of ideal social orders,” Jencks’s “Rationalism, Behaviourism and Pragmatism”—that had been displayed so carefully at the fair.

The fair thus serves as a literal example of “planned obsolescence”—built at great expense to be consumed and torn down in only seven months. Pruitt-Igoe, on the other hand, was built to be permanent, but no one treated it that way. It is best described by the subtitle of Eugene Meehan’s book about the project, “programmed failure.”¹⁰ When it came to Pruitt-Igoe, the careful monitoring of funds revealed in David R. Francis’s Universal Exposition were played out on a perverted scale;¹¹ with its poor construction throughout, Pruitt-Igoe, only fifty years after



The Philippine village at the World's Fair was designed to display different levels of "civilization" of the Philippine tribes. It was a stark statement about the goals of American and European imperialism and its sense of superiority, as these images suggest. (Images: Library of Congress)

the fair, took the fair's Model Street—a feature of the fair's Department of Social Economy designed to be a “practical, suggestive exhibit of street equipment and city arrangement, in which every feature is to be planned with reference to its relation to the community, its fitness and its beauty”¹²—and turned it completely on its head.

In an article about Pruitt-Igoe, Katharine Bristol has written about the “myth” of the project. The myth of Pruitt-Igoe, Bristol writes, is that it failed because of bad design. Instead, she argues, it failed because of fiscal mismanagement and crisis among the St. Louis housing authorities—the architects were, to use her word, “passive,” hamstrung by penny-pinching, shortsighted bureaucrats. The result is that we have been blaming the wrong people for Pruitt-Igoe's failure, and we have not been looking at the broader social causes that produced it: racism, classism, economic inequality.¹³

More recently, Joseph Heathcott has taken this line of thinking one step further by writing that Pruitt-Igoe represents an even larger myth than the buildings' design failures or poor funding. “Pruitt-Igoe had been conceived and built for an overcrowded city, where future growth in population and industrial employment was assumed,” he writes. “Unfortunately, by the time the first tenants moved into the project, that imagined city of the future was already beginning to unravel.” As jobs and capital flowed westward away from the city in the second half of the 20th century, Pruitt-Igoe became “a canary in a coal mine,” predicting the failure of not just public housing but of the city writ large.¹⁴ In other words, the fair's imagined, mythical future of inevitable urban growth and progress was already in decline as the Pruitt-Igoe buildings rose over downtown St. Louis.

The myth of the fair, which has been developed by Rydell and others, is similar. Yes, putting Filipinos and other ethnic peoples on display was awful. Yes, when the marathon runner Thomas Hicks was forced to compete

in 95 degree heat while drinking egg whites, strychnine, and brandy, Harvey's “linear progress, absolute truths, and rational planning of ideal social orders” had gone too far.¹⁵ When Rydell writes, “World's fairs performed a hegemonic function precisely because they propagated the ideas and values of the country's political, financial, corporate, and intellectual leaders and offered these ideas as the proper interpretation of social reality,” it is tempting to read such a statement and think, “Thank goodness we know better now!”¹⁶

Unfortunately, our public sphere today is not “free” of the modernist sensibility of “Progress” and racial hierarchy that overwhelmed the 1904 World's Fair and informed, if not inspired, the funding, design, and demolition of Pruitt-Igoe. Evidence of this sensibility can still be seen in theme parks, television, and news magazines, while the clinical detachment with which we study both events reveals that we are still working in a modernist mode. We have turned the fair into an artifact that, while morally repugnant, is distanced from us, just as the Filipinos, the Japanese, the Chinese, the Ainu, the Patagonian Giants, and the Pygmies were distanced from fairgoers, or the impoverished residents of Pruitt-Igoe were distanced from the city. We want to blame the fair's treatment of Others on the fair's planners, just as Bristol argues we have been tempted to blame Pruitt-Igoe on architects rather than people not unlike ourselves; people motivated by and working within powerful cultural forces.

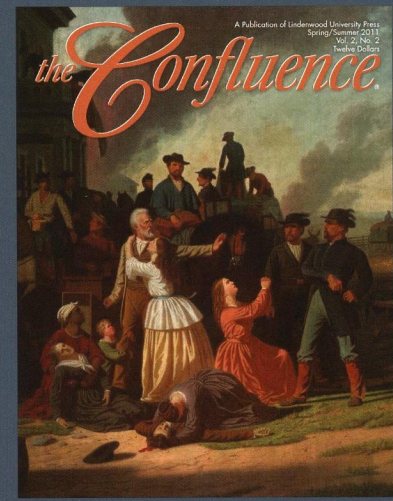
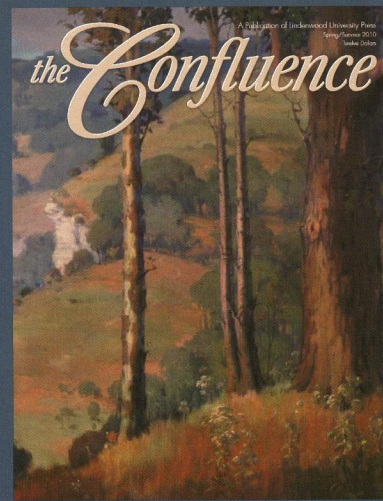
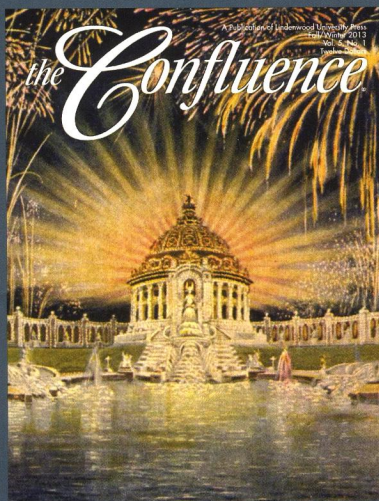
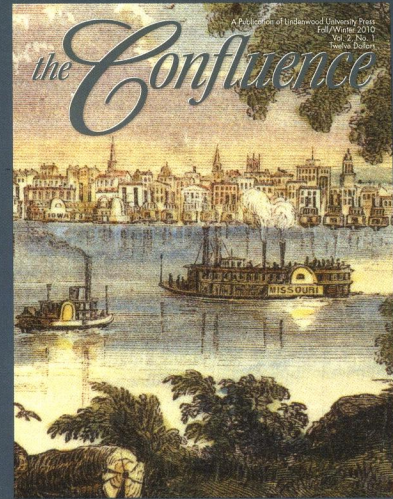
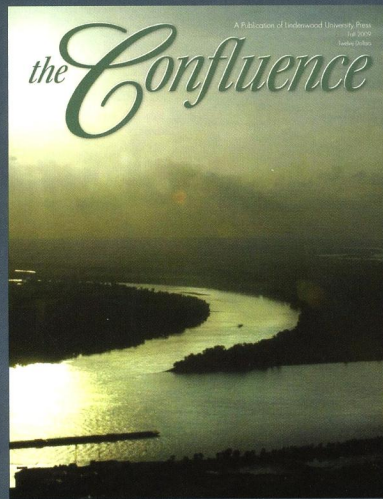
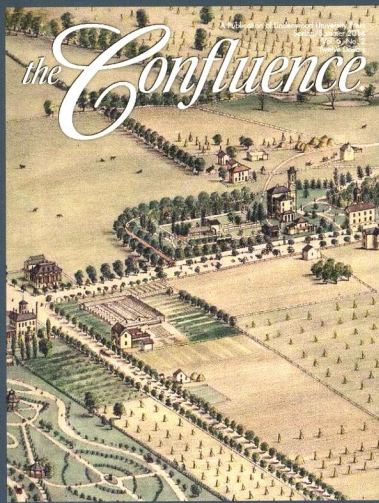
“In order to survive,” Umberto Eco has written, “a culture must be able to recognize and criticize itself.”¹⁷ The same holds for the culture of criticism. As people attempting to make sense of the *meaning* of past events, not just narrate their facts, we should be willing to make value judgments secure in the knowledge that we are doing so, and with a willingness to see shadows of ourselves in the actions we find most abhorrent.



By the late 1960s, Pruitt-Igoe had become a symbol of violence and decay in high-density public housing. The federal government authorized razing the complex in 1971; the buildings were imploded starting in 1972, with destruction completed in 1976. (Image: Missouri History Museum)

ENDNOTES

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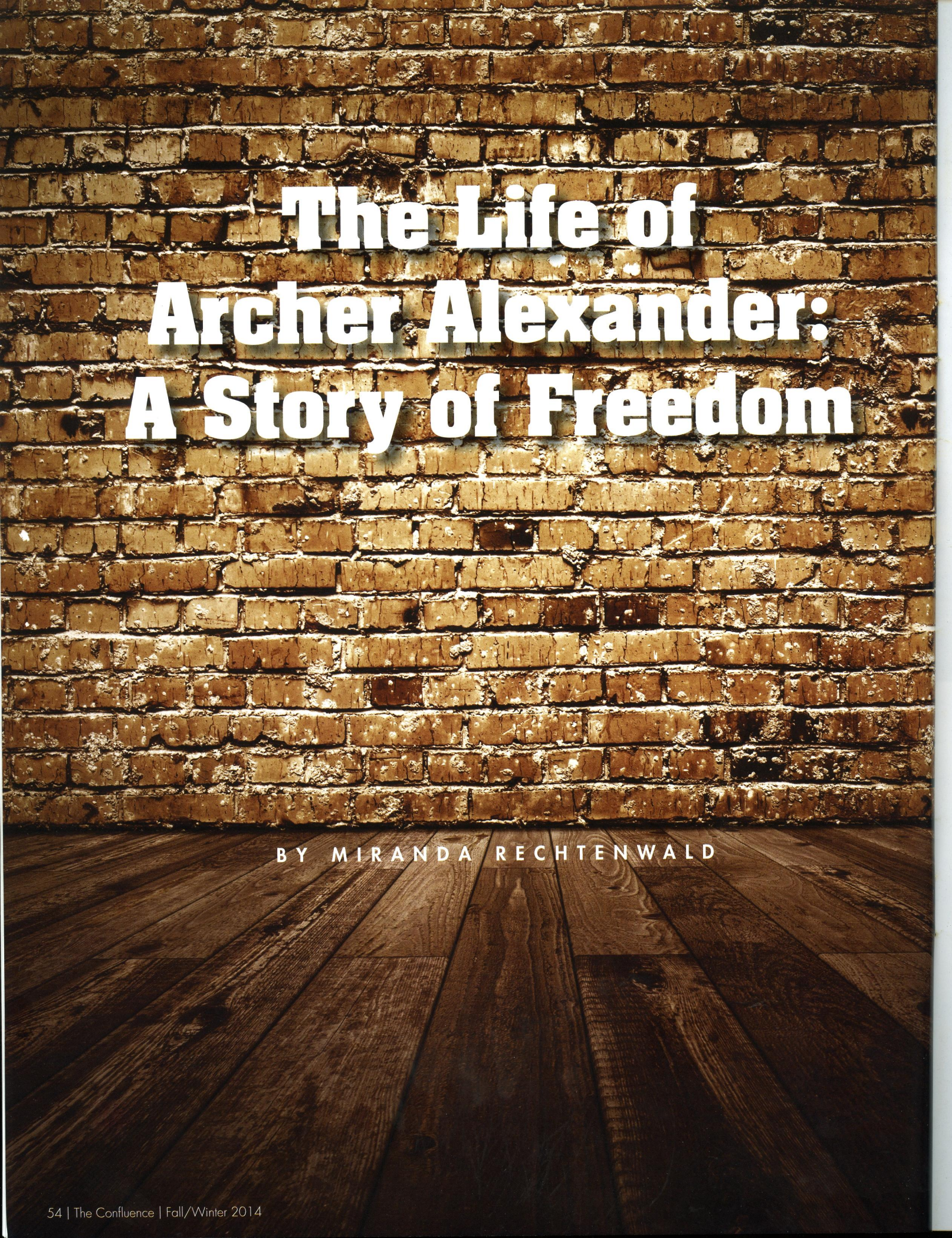
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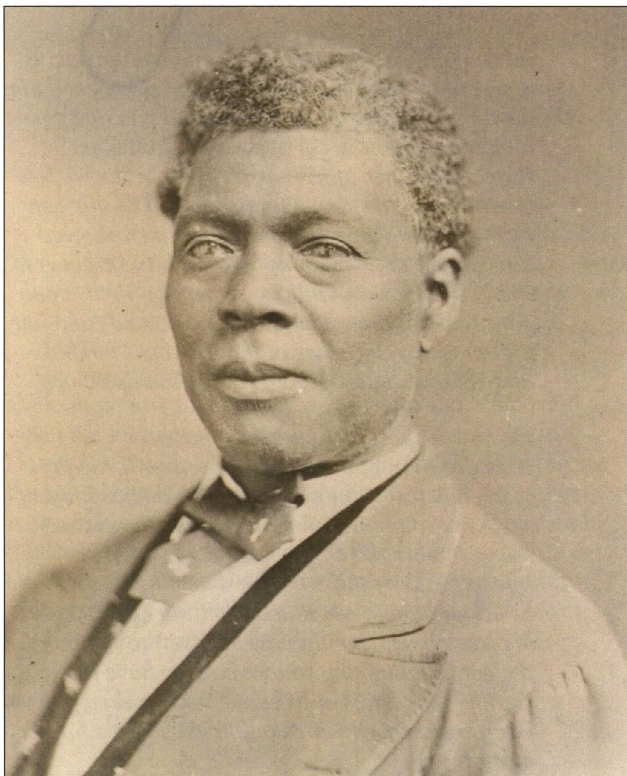
BY MIRANDA RECHTENWALD

Written on yellow lined paper, this brief statement was the start of one man's journey from enslavement to freedom:

The colored man named Archie Alexander, supposed to be the Slave of a Rebel master, is hereby permitted to remain in the service of W. G. Eliot, until legal right to his services shall be established by such party (if any) as may claim them. Not to succeed thirty days unless further extended. St. Louis, Feb. 20, 1863. F. A. Dick, Lt. Col. Provost Marshall General (Verbally renewed until revoked. March 18, 1863.)

President Lincoln's January 1863 Emancipation Proclamation did not apply to states in the Union or, therefore, the slave state of Missouri. Here, slavery remained legal, if only for those loyal to the Union. However, in December 1862, historian Diane Mutti Burke explains, "General Samuel Curtis, the new commanding officer of the Department of the Missouri, issued an order that authorized the provost marshals to grant freedom papers to the slaves of secessionist slaveholders who came within military lines."¹ Soon after, in early 1863, Archer (Archie) Alexander left his home in St. Charles County. That Alexander had some knowledge of this military order, or at least some awareness, seems quite likely. His wife lived and worked on the farm serving as Cottleville's town post office, so news would have been easily overheard and passed along. Alexander's trek would start a chain

Archer Alexander, c. 1870. (Image: Washington University Archive)



of events leading him to St. Louis, where he would meet abolitionist Rev. William Greenleaf Eliot, and where he would ultimately secure the freedom of himself and of his family.

In 1885, an elderly Rev. Eliot published a small book he called *The Story of Archer Alexander*. Through recollections and earnestly told stories Eliot tells of the man he met and befriended named Archer Alexander. The meandering tale, published approximately four years after Alexander's death, reads a bit like family stories repeated by your grandfather at family dinners. On many details the story is vague or incorrect. Yet, Eliot's purpose – to ensure that future generations knew the exceptional story of a man who became free in the midst of chaos – was, in its way, accomplished. This article takes a deeper look at some of the existing records and documents to examine the history and the story of a man named Archer Alexander.

Of African descent, Archer Alexander was born into slavery in Virginia. By Eliot's remembrance, Alexander was brought to St. Louis around 1831 by the family claiming ownership over him, the Delaneys. In the mid-1830s, Alexander was sold to the Holloman family near the St. Charles and Warren County line. The accuracy of these details is unclear. However, based on existing records, we know that by 1855 Archer Alexander was enslaved to the Pitman family, and by 1861 Louisa Alexander was owned by a neighbor, James Naylor. Married in the 1830s, the couple would have lived separately on the farms of their owners. This situation of "abroad marriage" was quite common in Missouri where, compared to the plantations of the Deep South, most farms were small with only a few enslaved workers on each.² For nearly 30 years Archer and Louisa Alexander lived and labored in St. Charles County, raising several children, and dealt with the daily reality of slavery before the opportunity of freedom came with the Civil War.

Arriving in St. Louis in February 1863, Alexander was hired by Abigail Eliot. She was looking for a man to garden and tend the four-acre lot around her family's home located on Locust Street. Abigail's husband was Unitarian minister and abolitionist William Greenleaf Eliot. Since moving to St. Louis in 1834, Rev. W. G. Eliot had preached against slavery, emancipated numerous men and women by purchasing their freedom, and with the outbreak of war helped organize the Western Sanitary Commission relief agency. After meeting and talking with Alexander, Eliot offered employment, housing, and attempted (unsuccessfully) to purchase Alexander's freedom.

Alexander's testimony to the Provost Marshal explains how he came to St. Louis, and what transpired while working on the Eliots' land:

St. Louis. April 15th, 1863.

To the Provost Marshal General, Department of the Missouri.

Archer Alexander, a fugitive slave, respectfully



The Eliots' "Beaumont Home" in St. Louis, c. 1855. (Image: William G. Eliot Papers, Series 7, Washington University Archives.)



The home of Captain Campbell, on Boons Lick Road, three miles west of Cottleville, St. Charles County, Missouri. This image was taken in 1936 as part of the Historic American Buildings Survey. (Image: Library of Congress)

represents: That he has been for Eight years past the slave of Richard H. Pitman of St. Charles County, near Naylor's Store, having previously belonged to David Pitman, Richard's father. That since the breaking out of the present rebellion his master has been a disloyal man, a secessionist, and has so expressed himself very freely. For the proof of this and for his reputation as an active sympathizer with the "Southern Confederacy," reference is made to Honorable Barton Bates, Fred Hatcher, Esq. and other Union men in the neighborhood.

That on one occasion his master took directly from under his care a roan horse (named Prince) and gave him to a young man, the son of a Circuit Preacher of Warrenton (now deceased). This young man was named George _ , and had boarded in Pitman's family. He was at the point of leaving for the rebel service, and for this purpose the horse was given to him. Subsequently his master gave a gun and outfit of clothing to another man in the rebel service. This man was soon after taken prisoner & is now in the Enrolled State militia. (His name is Howard Taylor). These facts can be proved by the white neighbors of Pitman, and were well known in his family, & to his servants.

That in or near the month of December last, he (Archer) and another black man named Peter, gave information to the Home Guard of St. Charles, (to Lieutenant Jn. Bailey) of a small lot of arms concealed by the Rebels in the Icehouse of Captain Campbell, in St. Charles Co., and in consequence of such information said arms were seized by military force. That this fact was discovered by the parties concerned, and they have openly threatened to take

summary vengeance on the informers. Partly in consequence of such threats, he (Archer), being in fear for his life, ran away, and he would now be afraid, under any circumstances, to return to that neighborhood.

That immediately on coming to St. Louis, two months ago, he went to the office of the Provost Marshal & asked protection, which was given to him in writing on the 20th February. That under this protection he hired himself to W. G. Eliot, corner of Beaumont & Locust Streets. That on the 27th day of March at 11 a.m. while at work plowing, he was suddenly & violently assailed by three men, who threatened his life with pistols & daggers, cruelly beat him with clubs, knocked him down, stamped upon & handcuffed him, dragged him, to a wagon & carried him to jail. John Pitman (brother of his master) was in the wagon & witnessed the above treatment. All of this can be proved by white witnesses. The men showed no warrant and would not permit him (Archer) to speak. He had his military protection in his coat pocket at the time. That he was released from jail, the same day, by order of the Provost Marshal, and is now under military protection as before.

He now respectfully petitions that in consideration of the known & active disloyalty of his master, of the service which he has himself rendered to the Union cause, of the threatened danger to his life by those against whom he informed, as of the cruel treatment he received, as above stated, when under military protection, his free papers should now be given to him: under the confiscation act, so that he may have the rightful privileges of freedom, and be exempt from interference or violence on the part of his former master.



OLD JAIL, FORMERLY AT THE CORNER OF SIXTH AND CHESTNUT STREETS,
TO WHICH ARCHER WAS TAKEN.—Page 61.

Myrtle Street Jail, St. Louis (Image: The Story of Archer Alexander)

Archer Alexander X his mark

Witness, W.G. Eliot.

The above statements have been written for the man Archer at his request. I know nothing of their truth, except since he has been in my service. I am willing, and have offered to his master to pay a full price for his freedom. — W.G. Eliot

The order of protection signed by Lt. Colonel Franklin Dick on yellow lined paper was in Alexander's pocket when the kidnapers forced him to the Myrtle Street Prison. This yellow paper resulted in Alexander's release the same day. It also resulted in the arrest of the kidnapers who violated those military orders. We are left to wonder the look on other men's faces as Alexander walked free and they were imprisoned in a building, which until the year previous, had been used as the city's largest slave-holding pen.

*Office of the Provost Marshal General,
Department of the Missouri.*

Saint Louis, Mo., March 27, 1863.

My dear Sir, I return "Archer" to your charge, and under herewith additional protection paper, as I do now clearly understand that you have written protection per Col. Dick. It is but to be safer.

Archer's case will receive attention, as will that of his abductors now in Myrtle Street Prison.

Very Truly, Your Ob[ediant] S[ervant], James F. Dwight, Capt. & Provost Ec.

Head Quarter Department of the Missouri, Office of the Provost Marshal General

St. Louis, March 27, 1863

The black man "Archer" 47 years old, 5 foot 8 [inches] claimed as a slave by [Richard] Hickman Pitman of St. Charles County, is declared under protection of the military



The Pitmans' house, built c. 1840, in Cottleville, St. Charles County, Missouri. This image was taken in 1938 as part of the Historic American Buildings Survey. (Image: Library of Congress).

authorities until the question of the loyalty or disloyalty of Hickman Pitman is established, & until further orders from the Headquarters. All persons are forbid interfering with said "Archer," who is resident with and servant of Rev. William Eliot of St. Louis County. By Command Major General Curtis, James F. Dwight, Captain & Provost Marshal General. (State Seal).

The Provost Marshal's Office did investigate these crimes and sent men to inquire of Pitman's loyalty. The military file records that Pitman "is well known in the neighborhood as Secessionist" and that Louisa [Archer's wife] "belongs to Naylor, who is a noted Secessionist. Every Saturday 30 or 40 Secessionist farmers, etc. are accustomed to meet at Naylor's Store."

In Eliot's published recollections he never mentions the name Pitman. This choice seems quite deliberate, since Eliot does include passages from his letter to Pitman, a letter that Eliot would have consulted in order to transcribe it for the publication. In print, the letter's heading is only given as "Mr. --." Why Eliot made this omission is unknown, but the most obvious motive would be to avoid any charges of libel or tarnished reputations. When the book was published in 1885, Richard H. Pitman was principal of Woodlawn Female Seminary, a girls' school in O'Fallon, Missouri, and a noted community member.

Naturally concerned for his wife and children who remained enslaved, Archer sent word to Louisa that he was safe and in St. Louis. Edited portions from her reply were reprinted in Eliot's Story; the full text of her letter reads:

Naylor's Store, Nov 16. 1863

My Dear Husband - I received your letter yesterday and lost no time in asking Jim if he would sell me and what he could take for me [...] he flew at me and said I would never get free only at the point of the Bayonet. and there is no use in my ever speaking to him any more about it I don't see how I can ever get away except you send soldiers to take me from the house as he is watching me night and day. Lucinda lives 4 miles beyond this side of Troy. I have her little boy Jimmy with me. I heard from M. Anne about 2 weeks ago she is in Washington both well and doing well she has all her Children with her but the oldest one and he is expecting to go to her every day. If I can get away I will but the people here are all afraid to take me away — he is always abusing Lincoln and Calls him an old Rascall he is the greatest rebel under heaven it is a sin to have him loose he says if he had hold of Lincoln he would chop him up into Mincemeat I had good courage all along until now but now I am almost heartbroken.

Dear Archy I have said all that is nessessary [sic] now only give my Love to Aunt Mary and Judy, and I send yourself my best Love. I am your afft [affectionate] Wife

Louisa Alexander

Answer this letter as soon as possible. Sam told me that you were Doctor Buckners last Saturday night. they are always telling some lies about you.

By the second of December, Louisa, daughter Ellen, age 10, and son James, age 4, were reunited with Archer. Eliot contacted the Provost Marshal's office the next day, asking for written protection, such as Archer had been granted:

Headquarters St. Louis District [...] December 5, 1863

The mulatto woman, Louisa Alexander, 50 years old, claimed as a slave by James Naylor, of St. Charles Co., and her children Ellen and James, are declared under protection of the Military Authority until the Ownership & Loyalty of James Naylor has been established, or until further orders from these Headquarters. All persons are forbidden to interfere with said woman & children, who are residents with, & servants of the Rev. WG Eliot, of St. Louis County.

Clinton B. Fisk, Brigadier-General.

These written protections would remain in place until January 11, 1865, when Missouri passed statewide emancipation orders. After the war, Archer Alexander remained in Missouri and continued working as a farmer.

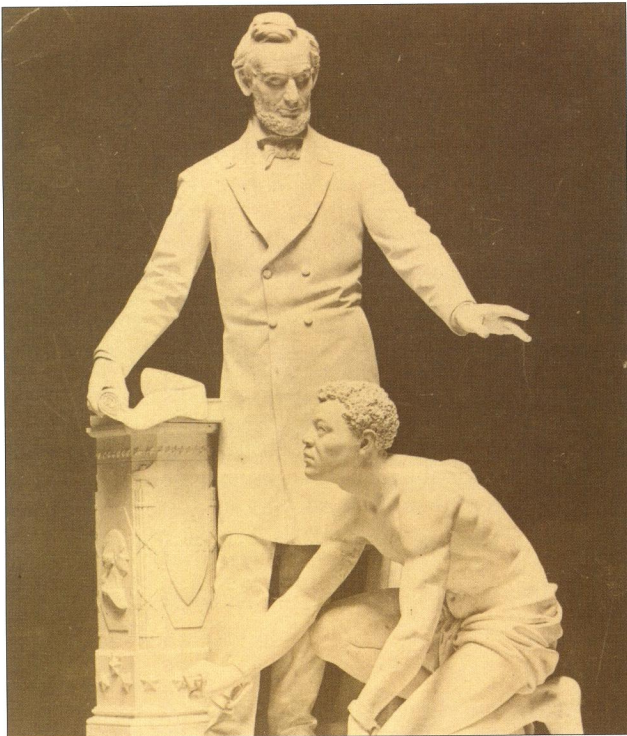
In 1865 or early 1866, he learned that an older son, separated from the family years earlier, had joined the United States Colored Troops and died in battle. Eliot left word for Alexander about this matter—

Dear Thom [Eliot's son],

Please ask Mr. [Seth] Ranlett if he knows how to get at Archer, (who keeps his accounts at the Provincial Savings [and Loan]) & if he does send word to him that Mr. Topping wants to see him. If not, Please find out the address of Col. Madison Miller, who is somewhere below Carondelet and on whose farm Archer is working. Probably General Chester Harding or John McNeil could tell you. Possibly he is in the directory. If you can find it, address a note to him requesting him to let Archer know that "important business about his son's Bounty" requires his attention at Mr. Topping's office. I forgot all about it before I left.

...

The name Archer Alexander was mentioned at the opening ceremony, but Alexander himself would never see more than a photograph of the monument. (Image: Washington University Archives)



In Eliot's recollection, he states that Louisa returned to Cottleville to retrieve belongings and there fell ill and died under unusual circumstances. While no other documents seem to confirm these circumstances, Archer had remarried by 1870. The census recorded in June 1870 indicates that Archer worked as a farmer, and his wife, Julia, kept house on property near Hillsboro, Missouri. Their real estate was valued at \$1,200, and they reported an additional \$620 in personal wealth. Ellen and John were still living at home, along with two other children: 12-year-old Dora White and eight-year-old Alfred White, who were either adopted, or perhaps Julia's children from an earlier marriage.

At some point in 1870 or 1871, Eliot arranged for his friend Alexander to be photographed in the Scholten Studios, on the corner of 5th and Olive in St. Louis. A set of these images were mailed to Italy, where artist Thomas Ball was sculpting a monument to President Lincoln and emancipation. Ball formed a kneeling slave in Archer Alexander's likeness, representative of all the men and women of America now freed, with the standing figure of Lincoln, arm outstretched. Neither Eliot nor Alexander attended the monument's dedication in Washington, D.C., on April 14, 1876. The name Archer Alexander was mentioned at the opening ceremony, but Alexander himself would never see more than a photograph of the monument. And yet, in a way, the life he lived—as a husband, a father, a farmer—is perhaps a more fitting monument to freedom.

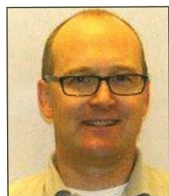
At some point in 1870 or 1871, Eliot arranged for his friend Alexander to be photographed in the Scholten Studios, on the corner of 5th and Olive, in St. Louis. (Image: Washington University Archives)



ENDNOTES

- ¹ Diane Mutti Burke, *On Slavery's Border : Missouri's Small-slaveholding Households, 1815-1865* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 201.
- ² Burke, *On Slavery's Border*, 285.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Timothy J. Fox is a St. Louis writer, editor, and teacher. He is the author (with Duane R. Sneddeker) of *From the Palaces to the Pike: Visions of the 1904 World's Fair* (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1997) and editor of *Where We Live: A Guide to St. Louis Communities* (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1995). His articles and reviews have appeared in various publications, including the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Gateway Heritage Magazine*, *Washington University Law Magazine*, and *Jung Journal: Psyche and Culture*. He lives in St. Louis's Southampton neighborhood with his wife and two daughters.



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Opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of their employers.



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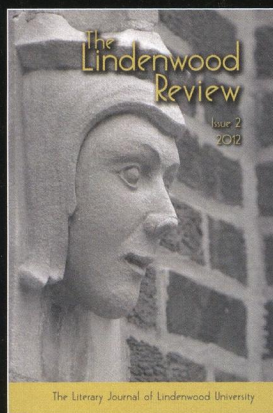
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