Making Colorblind and Colorful Colorado in Denver

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WELCOME TO COLORFUL COLORADO
• Colorado (and Denver) as Incomparable Color(blind) space

• Constructing “Colorful” Colorado & Denver

• Managing the Color Line in The Most Color-Blind of Ways

• Back to the Future
A few notes on terminology

Race
A social and historical construct based on ideas, attitudes, consciousness, identity, ideology, and most importantly, power.

Color
A legal and extra-legal category that is used to extend or deny countless resources, rewards, and benefits.
Color Consciousness

Understanding that many institutional settings—politics, schools, neighborhoods, and workplaces, are structured on the needs and experiences of dominant groups despite seeming inclusion of diverse racial groups.

Color Blindness

Ways of talking and thinking that affirm our belief in individualism without recognizing the many remaining barriers to equality. The end result is that it removes racism, past or present, as explanatory factors for disparities.
COLORADO (AND DENVER) AS INCOMPARABLE COLOR(BLIND) SPACE
"There is no better location in the U.S. than Colorado to try on the garment of self-government."

Fort Morgan Museum Collection
Member of the Klu Klux Klan at Overland Park in Denver

Burned cross outside the home and offices of a prominent African American Doctor

Images courtesy Western History Collection, Denver Public Library
Graffiti Painted on Northeast Denver Home, Denver Post, March 5, 2019
A State Forged out the Crucible of Racialized Wars
• **General Laws, Memorials and Private Acts Passed at the Third Session of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Colorado 83 (1864)**

  “all marriages between [N]egroes or mulattoes of either sex, and [W]hite persons are declared to be absolutely void.... nothing in this section shall be so construed as to prevent the people living in that portion of the state acquired from Mexico from marrying according to the custom of that country.”

• **General Laws, Memorials and Private Acts Passed at the Fifth Session of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Colorado 83 (1866)**

  “The secretary shall keep a separate list of all colored persons in the district, between the ages of five (5) and twenty-one (21) years, . . . and shall report the same to the president, who shall issue warrants on the treasurer in favor of such colored persons . . . for educational purposes.”
Robert Lindneaux Painting of the Sand Creek Massacre – Courtesy, History Colorado
1876 Colorado Constitution, In German (and Spanish)

Courtesy History Colorado
Article 22

• Section 26. *Slavery prohibited.* There shall never be in this state either slavery or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.

• Section 27. *Property rights of aliens.* Aliens, who are or may hereafter become bona fide residents of this state, may acquire, inherit, possess, enjoy and dispose of property, real and personal, as native born citizens.
CONSTRUCTING DENVER’S COLOR LINES
It is the public policy of the State of Colorado to recognize that “a person who owns a tract of land . . . may prefer to have as neighbors persons of the [W]hite, or Caucasian race.”

-Chandler v. Ziegler et al, 291 P. 822 (Colo. 1930)
Only persons of the Caucasian race shall own, use, or occupy any dwelling or residence erected upon said lots or tracts, provided, however, that occupancy by persons of another race who are employed as domestic servants by the occupying owner or occupying tenant shall not constitute a violation of the protective covenant.

-Burns Brentwood Subdivision Filing No. 2, 1949
McCulloch, Clayton, Berger and Ashley, Crestmoor, Bonnie Brae, Chaffe Park, Illiff’s University Additions, Regis Heights, Clingers Gardens, Burns Brentwood in Harvey Park as late as the early 1950s.
Neighborhoods with highest concentration of African Americans, Mexican Americans, Japanese Americans, and American Indians
“All marriages between [N]egroes or mulattoes of either sex, and [W]hite persons are declared to be absolutely void.... nothing in this section shall be so construed as to prevent the people living in that portion of the state acquired from Mexico from marrying according to the custom of that country.”
Interracial Marriage in Colorado

1881 – Lee Chin, Chinese, marries Mary Lee, Mexican; marriage held legal because statute didn’t apply to couple

1884 - Black man and White woman charged with violation of marriage statute; marriage held legal because he was a Quadroon

1885 - Judge marries Black man and White woman to escape prosecution for illegal cohabitation

1913 – Woman stands trial to prove she is Black so she can marry her partner
Lydia Brethauer, a White woman, and James Jackson, a Black man, become common law spouses in 1939.

In 1941, Police enter the Jackson home (in the Five Points) at midnight and arrest the couple for "vagrancy" (illegal cohabitation).

The judge finds the couple’s marriage is invalid under Colorado’s anti-miscegenation statute. He convicts and fines them $300 each.
Supreme Court Upholds Marriage Ban

• Colorado’s marriage ban is not unconstitutional because ban applies equally to black & white persons
• Jurisdictional exception to statute is legal because states may create special legal jurisdictions
• Statute is not vague or ambiguous because couple testified unequivocally about their race
Persons Arrested by DPD

- "White"
- "Negro"
- "Indian"
- "Yellow/ Oriental"
- "Mexican/ Spanish American"
“Discernable Neighborhoods of Minority Groups in Denver”
MANAGING COLOR IN THE MOST COLOR(BLIND) OF WAYS
The “Great and Growing City”

What the Project Means to Metropolitan Denver

Realization that no human ingenuity could enable Denver to grow without a reasonable water supply makes it apparent that the project is well worth the cost. Through Government grants and cooperation, the City gains a $9,000,000 project at a cost of $5,400,000. Denver’s water problem is being solved because the necessary greater supply now is in sight. Future development may be planned from this time forward with absolute water security. The pioneer spirit lives and leads on to new achievements.

The water that comes from the Western Slope is soft water, much softer than that from the South Platte River. It is clear, clean and cold. It will eliminate high level pumping in the Ashland district. Next year, the remaining half of the present transmountain diversion will be complete, with an added supply of purified water of first quality flowing into City faucets. The mountain barriers which brought death and destruction to many who sought to subdue them, will bring life-giving water to Denver and the arid eastern plains.

Denver now ranks high by every standard of water value—unusual purity, crystal clarity, refreshing coolness, priceless healthfulness, and now a more abundant supply. All these make Denver a better place in which to live, to invest, to make one’s home. They enhance business and enrich life.

Good water truly is a wonderful asset!

Your Cooperation Is Appreciated and Necessary.
Water System of the Denver Water Board
An independent agency of the City and County of Denver.

Supported by user charges and directed by a Board appointed to six-year terms by Denver’s Mayor.

Largest supplier of water in the Metropolitan area.
Water Delivery System in Denver Metropolitan Area
Water Conduits and Water Mains size 10” and larger.

Source: Preliminary Report, Sites for Low-Cost Housing Projects
Denver Planning Commission (1949)
Land Use and Valuation Map

Source: Preliminary Report, Sites for Low-Cost Housing Projects

Denver Planning Commission (1949)
Neighborhoods with highest concentration of African Americans, Mexican Americans, Japanese Americans, and American Indians
REDLINING “GUIDE MAP TO DENVER AND SUBURBS”
HOME OWNERS LOAN CORP (1938),
DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY DIGITAL COLLECTION
THE DENVER WATER BOARD “BLUE” AND “BROWN” LINE CIRCA 1950

Source: Urbanized Denver and the Metropolitan Area: A Basis For Our Policy Decision on our Utilities, Major Streets, and Annexation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Usage/Gallons</th>
<th>Inside City</th>
<th>Outside City</th>
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<td>5,000</td>
<td>$1.51</td>
<td>$2.35</td>
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<tr>
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Rates for Metered Water Service Inside and Outside Corporate Limits of City and County of Denver, 1952-1958
Black and Veatch, Consulting Engineers, Report on Water Rates for the Denver Board of Water Commissioners (1958)
Nick Pohlit, sanitarian for the Adams county tri-county health department, said that a bucket of "water" from the Kramer irrigation ditch tested 99.9 pct. refined gasoline.

"There are three or four refineries, a storage tank farm and a filling station in a five-mile radius in that area," J. D. Torrey, industrial hygienist for the state health department, pointed out. "And there is underground contamination of the water supply by both gasoline and petroleum."

Pohlit said his office received its first complaint of gas in well water "approximately three years ago."

Numerous meetings have been held—and are still being held—with farmers of the area and engineers from the petroleum industries, he said.

"We don't think the first recourse is court," Pohlit explained. "We've tried an educational approach.

"If a large company loses 10 to 20 gallons of gas or petroleum a day—well, it's hardly worth bothering to record.

"But it could ruin the water strata in the whole area."

Bill Miller, ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS, Nov. 10, 1959, at 6.

BOOK CITED
Arsenal Cited As Key Source Of Pollution
By BILL MILLER
Rocky Mountain News Writer

DENVER Post, Nov. 13, 1959, at 1.

Water Crisis Strikes Fear Among Residents

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS, Nov. 12, 1959, at 5.
70 residents attend 'non-meeting' on water problems

Henry Raybuck Jr., president of the Town and Country Water Board, put it in no uncertain terms. "This is not a meeting," he told about 70 residents of Commerce City gathered in the municipal building to discuss their water problems.

Although the residents came bent on discussing means to clear up the long-term problem, Raybuck made it clear at the start that he was unhappy with how the "meeting" was turning out.

He first demanded that all nonstockholders leave (All residents in the subdivision hold stock in the water district). Despite protest from stockholders, he demanded that a News reporter leave the room and asked for police assistance in the face of refusal.

Following the protest of Tim Medina, who said, "We have nothing to hide and all want to work together for the same purpose," the meeting was opened to the public.

"And apparently the board had heard that advice many times before. This is the third time we've been through it," said Loren Woods, board maintenance head. "Every time we get a few new residents, we have to go through it again."

No one denies the water problem. It's just a question of solving it. In the end, it always comes down to the high cost of digging a deeper well or hooking up with another water system, such as Denver or South Adams County.

"If you don't like the water, you have the privilege of moving out," said Woods. "We also have the privilege of trying to change things," a resident countered.

Keyes v. School Board No. 1 (1969) and the “Tri-Ethnic” or Multiracial Order
“[T]HIS IS A SUBTLE TYPE OF DISCRIMINATION THAT IS DIFFICULT TO PUT YOUR FIGNER ON, BUT WE KNOW IT EXISTS”

Sam Menin. Lawyer for the Local Chapter of the NAACP and ACLU

“IT SOON BECAME APPARENT THAT THE MAIN ACTORS IN THE ‘DRAMA’ WERE NOT THE HUMAN WITNESSES BUT THE SILENT TESTIMONY OF SOME 200 MAPS, CHARTS, OVERLAYS, PRINTOUTS AND OTHER MATERIAL INTRODUCED BY THE PLAINTIFFS.”

Frederick D. Watson, *Removing the Barricades from the Northern Schoolhouse Door*, Ph.D. Dissertation (1993)
CONCENTRATION OF NEGRO POPULATION
BY ENUMERATION DISTRICT - CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER - 1950

SOURCE: ENUMERATION DISTRICT TABULATIONS, U.S. CENSUS 1950

25% or more Negro
5-24% Negro

2A
MAP IV

SUBSTANDARD DWELLING UNITS IN DENVER, 1949

PROPORTION SUBSTANDARD

- UNDER 20%
- 20% AND UNDER 40%
- 40% AND UNDER 60%
- 60% OR MORE

Golf Links
Niwel Park
Park Hill Golf Course
Municipal Airport
Sloan's Lake Park
W 83rd Ave
W 93rd Ave
C challenge
Country Club
W 70th Ave
W 67th Ave
W 63rd Ave
W 61st Ave
W 59th Ave
W 57th Ave
W 55th Ave
W 53rd Ave
W 51st Ave
W 49th Ave
W 47th Ave
W 45th Ave
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W 5th Ave
W 3rd Ave
W 1st Ave
W Alameda Ave
W California Ave
W Colorado Ave
W Delaware Ave
W Euclid Ave
W Fillmore Ave
W Grant Ave
W Harvard Ave
W Jackson Ave
W Kentucky Ave
W Kansas Ave
W Massachusetts Ave
W Madison Ave
W Michigan Ave
W Colorado Blvd
W Nevada Ave
W Missouri Ave
W Missouri Blvd
W Nebraska Ave
W Nebraska Blvd
W Nevada Blvd
W New Hampshire Ave
W New Hampshire Blvd
W New Mexico Ave
W New Mexico Blvd
W New York Ave
W New York Blvd
W Ohio Ave
W Ohio Blvd
W Pennsylvania Ave
W Pennsylvania Blvd
W Platte Ave
W Platte Blvd
W Quincy Ave
W Quincy Blvd
W Rhoda Ave
W Rhoda Blvd
W Race Ave
W Race Blvd
W Washington Ave
W Washington Blvd
W Wyoming Ave
W Wyoming Blvd

5500 BCC St
5500 N Craig Blvd
5500 W Bowles Ave
5500 W Bayard Ave
5500 W Chicago Ave
5500 W Colorado Blvd
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5500 W Euclid Ave
5500 W Fillmore Ave
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5500 W Harvard Ave
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5500 W Pennsylvania Ave
5500 W Pennsylvania Blvd
5500 W Platte Ave
5500 W Platte Blvd
5500 W Quincy Ave
5500 W Quincy Blvd
5500 W Rhoda Ave
5500 W Rhoda Blvd
5500 W Race Ave
5500 W Race Blvd
5500 W Washington Ave
5500 W Washington Blvd
5500 W Wyoming Ave
5500 W Wyoming Blvd
CONCENTRATION OF NEGRO POPULATION
BY ENUMERATION DISTRICT - CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER - 1960

SOURCE: ENUMERATION DISTRICT TABULATIONS, U.S. CENSUS 1960

25% or more Negro
5-24% Negro
“Here could lie a potentially great city!”

Memo to Industries-Denver Business and Industrial Community

From Denver Chamber of Commerce (undated)

Anti-Defamation League Collection, University of Denver Archives
Box 17, FF 9
Areas Considered for Annexation by the City and County of Denver during school integration litigation (1969-1973).
The Poundstone “Amendment”

- An act to amend Articles XIV and XX of the Constitution of the State of Colorado, concerning the annexation of property by a County or City and County, and prohibiting the striking off of any territory from a County without first submitting the question to a vote of the qualified electors of the County and without an affirmative vote of the majority of those electors.
“It is, I think, right to suppose that the primary reason for the easy passage of the Poundstone Amendment was the suburbs fear of busing. If, in other words, there is to be a ghetto, and busing is to relieve the pressures and injustice of the ghetto, let it all be within the City and County—and school district—of Denver.”

- John Bromley, Denver Post, November 18, 1974
BACK TO THE FUTURE
Demographic change in Colorado 1980-2050

Source: PolicyLink
Percent change in population: Colorado, 2000-2010

- All: 16.9%
- White: 9.9%
- Black: 19.2%
- Latino: 41.2%
- Asian or Pacific Islander: 45.4%
- Native American: 7.8%
- Mixed/other: 38.7%

National Equity Atlas
http://nationalequityatlas.org/data-summaries/Colorado/
Denver’s northern neighborhoods have become more white since 2000, while the southern and far eastern areas have become more diverse.

2000: Census; 2016: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates; NA: Not available
Gentrification Trends in 2016

The map below shows the areas in 2016 that were gentrifying and vulnerable to gentrification, as well as the racial and ethnic plurality of those areas. The 1938 redlining is also shown for historical context. This map shows the continued spread of gentrification to suburban areas. While gentrification in 2000 was more of an urban issue—concentrated in redlined areas with dense Hispanic and African-American populations—it has evolved into a regional issue, outside redline boundaries.

[Map of Denver showing gentrification trends]

Denver Coffee Shop Sparks Fury,
The Guardian, Nov 23, 2017
“In a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist.”

ANGELA Y. DAVIS
Homeownership while black
The devaluation of assets in black neighborhoods

In U.S. metropolitan areas, 10 percent of neighborhoods are majority black

50% LESS

Homes in majority-black neighborhoods are undervalued compared to homes in neighborhoods with no black residents

Majority-black neighborhoods at a glance:
- 37% of the U.S. black population live in these communities
- $609 billion in owner-occupied housing assets
- 10,000 public schools
- 3 million businesses

Differences in home and neighborhood quality do not fully explain the devaluation of homes in majority-black neighborhoods

$48,000 average loss in home market value

Amounting to $156 billion in cumulative losses

Homes of similar quality in neighborhoods with similar amenities are worth 23% less in majority-black neighborhoods

Metropolitan areas with greater devaluation of black neighborhoods are more segregated

Black children who grow up in those communities have less upward mobility

Source: “The devaluation of assets in black neighborhoods: The case of residential property.” The Brookings Institution, November of 2018
Economic benefit of addressing racial equity in Colorado

GDP gains with racial equity ➤ Colorado

Breakdown:
Actual GDP and estimated GDP with racial equity in income (billions): Colorado vs. CO, 2015

![Chart showing GDP gains with racial equity in Colorado](chart.png)

PolicyLink
“La Memoria de Nuestra Tierra: Colorado”
by Judith F. Baca. © 2000 10' x 55' Digital Mural on Aluminum Substrate. At one time located in the Central Terminal of the Denver International Airport.
Thank You!

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