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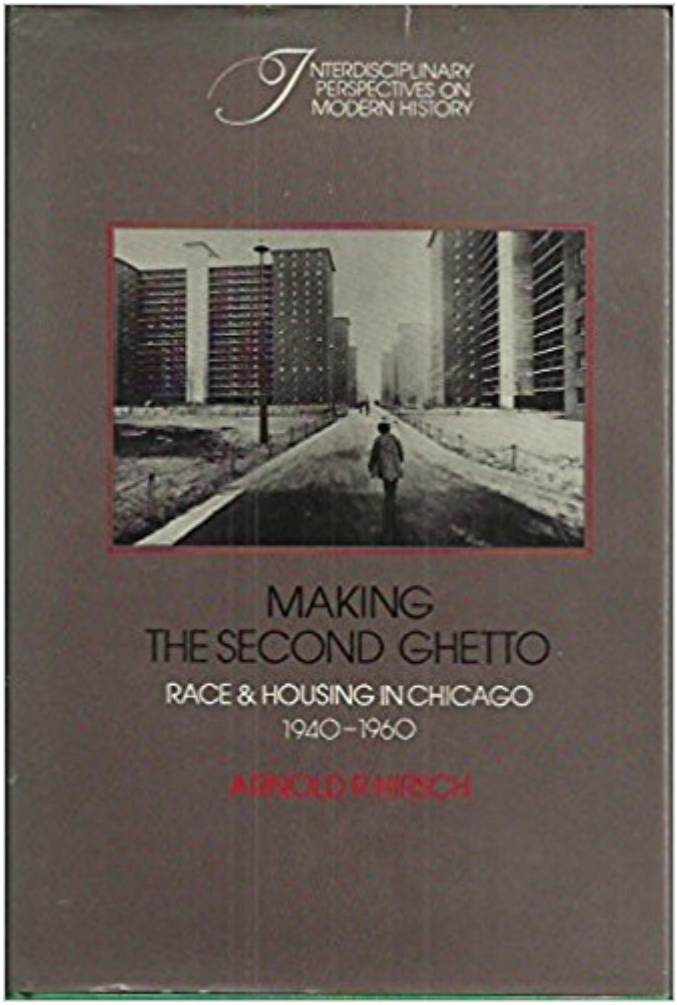
Making The Second Ghetto: Race And Housing In Chicago, 1940-1960 (Interdisciplinary Perspectives On Modern History)



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Synopsis

This book analyses the expansion of Chicago's Black Belt during the period immediately following World War II. Even as the civil rights movement swept the country, Chicago dealt with its rapidly growing black population not by abolishing the ghetto, but by expanding and reinforcing it. The city used a variety of means, ranging from riots to redevelopment, to prevent desegregation. The result was not only the persistence of racial segregation, but the evolution of legal concepts and tools which provided the foundation for the nation's subsequent urban renewal effort and the emergence of a ghetto now distinguished by government support and sanction. This book not only extends our knowledge of the evolution of race relations in urban America, but adds a new dimension to our perspective on the civil rights era - an age marked by the rise of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the explosion of northern cities in the wake of his assassination.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

' ... this excellent book . Hirsch has succeeded admirably in showing how racial conflict and government intervention recreated the black ghetto in postwar Chicago.' International Journal of Urban and Regional Research

This one is a tough, but important, read. It covers the astonishingly large number of conflicts as the black population of Chicago grew during and (mostly) after World War 2. The book mainly covers

the conflicts between 1945 and 1961. One of the most famous being the Cicero riot (more below).The most difficult part of this book is the extreme detail. Virtually every conflict, from smallest to largest, is covered. You can be overwhelmed by the detail very quickly. Unless you are seriously interested in the details, I suggest that you get a copy of this book from your local library, or inter-librery loan program, and peruse it before purchasing this item. Special note for those who live, or have lived in Chicago & its immediate suburbs: BUY THIS BOOK!The Cicero housing riot: This was caused when a white individual crossed the line from Chicago to Cicero (along Cicero Ave.) and rented an apartment. When it was discovered that it was a mixed race couple (the other member being black), all hell broke loose & the riot ensued with the intention of ejecting the family from their new apartment. The goal of the populace was to keep the line between Chicago & Cicero a hard demographic line between Black (Chicago) and White (Cicero).The book details the incremental growth of the ghetto on the West Side of Chicago as it grew from Black population pressure. It also details some of the initial attempts at Slum Clearance. (See also: Blueprint for Disaster: The Unraveling of Chicago Public Housing, for more details.) The problem here is that as the slums were either cleared (Slum Clearance), or re-created (the high rise Housing Projects), the city lost its tax base & many institutions that depended on paying customers began to fail. The best example of this (not covered in the book) is St. Ann's Hospital, which ran out of money to continue operations as it's clientele changed from paying & insurance covered customers to charity cases. Sadly, too much charity & not enough income doomed the hospital. The nuns gave up & closed the joint.

I am reading early chapters of the [Kindle edtion]and am riveted by the wealth of information and narrative which is done well enough to bring me on a visit in my mind's eye. Which overcomes the sparse amount of graphics and phtos and also well overcomes bits of Progressive [conventional] wisdom I take issue with.The subject strongly resonates with me because of time in the mid 1970s in an island within part of the subject 'black belt', at college in IIT as an architecture student. We were quite aware and wary of the seemingly endless line of the projects both north and south of us but not of what was there before the campus construction of the 1950s-60s and also of what was there at that time, beyond the nabes I knew. I've gotten some answers with this book.

I am giving this 5 stars since 6 were not available. AMAZING book. I grew up in the area and was totally unaware of what took place. There is a BIG reason for that, which the book will explain. Anyone who grew up near the south side of Chicago needs to read this.

After reading The Hidden War,(which made extensive reference to Hirsch's book)I wanted a more detailed history about the creation of public housing as we know it to be in Chicago. This book gives detail of how the political,educational, civic organizations wanted to contain the burgeoning African American community which was growing during post world war II and the great migration years. The powerful in Chicago used government policies to maintain housing segregation...the powerless resorted to violence to keep African Americans out of neighborhoods...the results were the massive and bleak housing structures which are called public housing. This book not only talks about the historical wheelings and dealings of the white power structure, but it also gives insight into how the same tactics are being used today, to maintain certain class and racial segregation. This is a good companion must read along with The Hidden WARS.

This book is a fine piece of scholarship that thoroughly documents crucial and underappreciated chapters toward understanding the state of race, violence, and segregation in urban America. It is both expose of grotesque violence of and exploitation of African-Americans in the post-WWII period and also narrative tragedy of partially well-intentioned, but also profit-hungry or cowardly interests who expanded the oppressive ghetto in Chicago even as they thought they were trying to loosen it. Very important book.

It is very tempting to think of what is taking place in Chicago as something isolated in time, and that is not only incorrect, but leads to a wealth of false conclusions. The Black experience in Chicago is a process that really begin with the first Ghetto, and Hirsch suggest reached its peak with the Second Ghetto coming out of the second wave of the Great Migration, and the somewhat irrational fear of the University of Chicago.

I use this book to supplement my teaching on A Raisin in the Sun and Clybourn Park. Excellent history of discriminatory housing.

this historically correct non-fiction keeps the reader engaged while still remaining quite academic and statistically relevant. if you are interested in the intersection of urban planning/race/and the destruction of our cities, read this book.

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