

THE INFLUENCE OF GEOGRAPHY ON THE LIVES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN  
RESIDENTS OF ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA, DURING SEGREGATION

by

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A Dissertation  
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Graduate Faculty  
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The Requirements for the Degree  
of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Earth Systems and Geoinformation Sciences

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to the memory of my older sister, Anna Perry Gillespie, who held a PhD in Sociology from Colorado State College. Ann was my model and my inspiration from the day I was born. I would not have entered Mason's PhD program had it not been for Ann's encouragement. Much of my research is qualitative, and at the time of my research Mason's Geography and Geospatial Information Sciences department did not offer a course in qualitative research methods. Ann helped me write an interview instrument, critiqued my interview transcripts, and taught me how to ask the questions. I deeply regret Ann's untimely death before the research was complete.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
List of Tables .....	viii
List of Figures .....	ix
Abstract .....	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER TWO: SEGREGATION PATTERNS, NORTH AND SOUTH .....	13
2.1 Residential Patterns .....	13
2.2 Occupational Patterns .....	17
2.3 Business Patterns .....	18
CHAPTER THREE: QUANTITATIVE DATA USED IN THE STUDY .....	23
Introduction .....	23
3.1 Aggregate census data .....	23
3.1.1 Description .....	24
3.1.2 Source .....	25
3.1.3 Converting aggregate data to an Excel database .....	25
3.2 Manuscript census data .....	26
3.2.1 Description .....	26
3.2.2 Source .....	26
3.2.3 Converting manuscript data to an Excel database .....	28
CHAPTER FOUR: QUALITATIVE DATA USED IN THE STUDY .....	30
Introduction .....	30
4.1 Interviews .....	30
4.1.1 Sampling method .....	30
4.1.2 Participants .....	31
4.1.3 Interview procedures .....	33
4.1.4 Process interview data using grounded theory techniques .....	33
4.1.5 Strategies for enhancing rigor .....	33
4.2 Oral Histories .....	35
4.2.1 Sources of oral histories .....	36

4.2.2 Processing oral histories using grounded theory techniques .....	36
4.3 Cross referenced telephone books .....	36
4.3.1 Source of telephone books .....	39
4.4 Land deeds .....	39
4.4.1 Source of land deeds .....	39
CHAPTER FIVE: RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS .....	40
5.1 Abstract .....	40
5.1.1 Background .....	40
5.1.2 Methods .....	40
5.1.3 Results .....	41
5.1.4 Conclusions .....	41
5.2 Background .....	41
5.3 Methods .....	46
5.3.1 Data Collection Methods .....	46
5.3.2 Data analysis methods .....	49
5.4 Results .....	50
5.4.1 Centralization .....	51
5.4.2 Clustering .....	55
5.4.3 Concentration .....	59
5.4.4 Evenness .....	61
5.4.5 Exposure .....	67
5.5 Discussion .....	69
5.6 Conclusions .....	73
CHAPTER SIX: OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE .....	75
6.1 Abstract .....	75
6.1.1 Background .....	75
6.1.2 Methods .....	75
6.1.3 Results .....	75
6.1.4 Conclusions .....	76
6.2 Background .....	76
6.3 Methods .....	81
6.3.1 Data collection methods .....	81
6.3.2 Data analysis methods .....	82

6.4 Results .....	83
6.4.1 Preparing for work – career training opportunities .....	83
6.4.2 Laboring on the farms.....	87
6.4.3 Working in the brick yards .....	88
6.4.4 General laborers and domestic workers.....	93
6.4.5 Working for the federal government in the Civil Service .....	95
6.4.6 Working in Arlington – 1950-1970.....	102
6.5 Discussion .....	105
6.6 Conclusions .....	107
CHAPTER SEVEN: BUSINESSES.....	108
7.1 Abstract .....	108
7.1.1 Background.....	108
7.1.2 Methods .....	109
7.1.3 Results .....	109
7.1.4 Conclusions .....	109
7.2 Background .....	110
7.3 Methods.....	110
7.4 Results .....	114
7.4.1 Food .....	116
7.4.2 Housing.....	119
7.4.3 Transportation.....	120
7.4.4 Personal Services .....	121
7.4.5 Professional Services.....	123
7.4.6 Impact of desegregation on the black-owned businesses .....	125
7.5 Discussion .....	127
7.6 Conclusions .....	128
CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS .....	130
CHAPTER NINE: EPILOGUE .....	133
Appendix.....	137
References.....	141



## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
Table 1: Population totals in Arlington, Virginia, and the United States. ....	8
Table 2: Study participants .....	32
Table 3: Variable definitions for all index variables .....	51
Table 4: Rates of suburbanization for selected metropolitan areas. ....	52
Table 5: Segregation index scores for Arlington in 1900-1970.....	54
Table 6: Dissimilarity Index scores for selected cities. ....	63
Table 7: Isolation Index scores for selected cities in 1970. ....	69
Table 8: Black-owned businesses in the three African American neighborhoods .....	114

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
Figure 1: The Halls Hill settlement in 1905.....	4
Figure 2: African American settlements in Arlington in 1900. ....	5
Figure 3: Growth in population in Arlington in 1900-1970. ....	6
Figure 4: African American population proportion .....	9
Figure 5: NHGIS aggregate census query output. ....	25
Figure 6: Decennial manuscript census schedule. ....	27
Figure 7: Database built from 1910 manuscript census schedule.....	29
Figure 8: Participants in the snowball sample .....	31
Figure 9: Arlington 1950 cross referenced telephone book.....	38
Figure 10: Arlington enumeration districts in 1900-1940 and census tracts in 1950 .....	47
Figure 11: House in Negro quarter in Rosslyn, Virginia, in 1937.....	60
Figure 12: East Arlington in 1910. ....	65
Figure 13: Arlington, Virginia. Farm Security Administration trailer camp in 1942.....	66
Figure 14: Correlation of Arlington population to black job types in 1900-1940.....	78
Figure 15: Black employment in Arlington in 1900-1940.....	88
Figure 16: Arlington brick yards in 1878. ....	89
Figure 17: West Bros Brick Yard. ....	90
Figure 18: Arlington Civil Service employee. ....	96
Figure 19: Black Arlington World War II servicemen. ....	100
Figure 20: Arlington African American occupational categories in 1950.....	103
Figure 21: Arlington African American occupational categories in 1960.....	103
Figure 22: Arlington African American occupational categories in 1970.....	104
Figure 23: Hicks Restaurant and Market in Halls Hill in 1960. ....	118
Figure 24: Mr. Walker at his shoe repair shop.....	121
Figure 25: Mamie Brown's Friendly Beauty School .....	122
Figure 26: Chinn Funeral Home .....	124
Figure 27: Mix of old and new housing in Halls Hill in 2012 .....	134

## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE INFLUENCE OF GEOGRAPHY ON THE LIVES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN RESIDENTS OF ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA, DURING SEGREGATION**

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George Mason University, 2013

Dissertation Director: Dr. Nigel M. Waters

Most scholarship on racial segregation in U.S. cities retraces the Great Migration from the rural South to the urbanizing, industrializing North. It identifies residential, occupational, and entrepreneurial patterns typical of the South, and very different residential, occupational, and entrepreneurial patterns typical of the North. Arlington County, Virginia, adjacent to the federal government and to the large, prosperous African American community in Washington, D.C., provides a unique opportunity to study processes that transcended this dichotomy. Combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods and mixed data sources, this program of research discovered that life for African Americans in Arlington, Virginia, during Segregation was largely determined by the County's unique context.

Using 1900-1940 manuscript census data, 1950-1970 aggregate census data, and segregation indexes the study measured five dimensions of segregation and discovered

high residential segregation resembling neither Northern nor Southern patterns. The results of the indexes demonstrated that some indexes are inappropriate for measuring segregation in Arlington. The study introduced a new procedure for aggregating manuscript census data for use with the indexes. Semi-structured interviews and oral histories of Arlington's elderly black residents documented the influence that proximity to the federal government had on Arlington's residential patterns.

Scholarship on occupational choice describes the enormous impact that environment plays on such choices. This program of research studied the impact, both positive and negative, that two phenomena in the environment of African Americans in Arlington – Segregation and proximity to the federal government – had on occupational choice for the African American community as Arlington grew from a scattering of farm settlements to a prosperous white suburb of Washington, D.C. (the District). The District's black high schools offered excellent career training and the government offered Civil Service employment. The arrival in Arlington of the Pentagon and large numbers of white federal workers provided new sources of employment, but obliterated existing farm and brick factory work.

During Segregation Arlington's African Americans were limited to living and doing business in three of the County's 38 census tracts. This program of research discovered that neither the entrepreneurial patterns typical of Northern nor those of Southern cities were found in Arlington's African American community. Using census data, interviews, and telephone books this study explored the businesses built by entrepreneurial African Americans in Arlington during Segregation. It discovered that the black neighborhoods

were dispersed, lacking public transportation, with insufficient customers to support the self-contained business infrastructure found in many segregated cities of similar size.

Conversely Arlington's black residents were welcomed in the extensive black-owned business infrastructure of nearby Washington, D.C.

The study concluded that Arlington's geography, its location on the border between North and South and its proximity to the federal government influenced the residential patterns, the occupational choices, and the entrepreneurial activities of its African American community during the years of Segregation.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

Arlington has been home to African Americans since the 1600s when slaves worked on tobacco farms (Rose, 2009). Some black Arlingtonians are descendants of the original slaves, living on land their ancestors purchased from their masters at the end of the Civil War (Netherton and Netherton, 1987; Rose, 2009). Several of the study participants trace their roots back to Virginia slaves.

Symptomatic of Virginia's long struggle with racial issues was its inability to define race. In 1866 Virginia law stated "Every person having one-fourth or more Negro blood shall be deemed a colored person" (Guild, 1969:33). In 1910 Virginia revised the definition, declaring "Every person having one-sixteenth or more Negro blood shall be deemed a colored person" (Guild, 1969:35). Finally in 1930 the State made up its mind "Every person in whom there is ascertainable any Negro blood shall be deemed a colored person" (Guild, 1969:35).

Determining the correct definition of race was vitally important. In 1900 Virginia's African Americans and whites could not attend the same schools. They could not sit on steamboats, motorcars, or trains together. They could not be quartered together in penitentiaries. They could not sit together in "any public hall, theatre, motion picture, show, or any place of public entertainment or assemblage" (Guild, 1969:145-149). If

they were to intermarry, they would “be guilty of a felony and be confined in the penitentiary for from one to five years” (Guild, 1969:36).

Arlington County has been at the center of that struggle. Arlington is on the margin between North and South. It is in a culturally “Southern” state, yet it lies in close proximity to Washington D.C. In fact, from the 1801 Act when Virginia ceded Arlington to the federal government until 1846 when the Act of Retrocession gave the County back to Virginia, Arlington was a portion of the District of Columbia. Like the rest of Virginia, once a part of the Confederate States of America, Arlington has a long history of racial segregation.

During the Civil War, runaway slaves – contraband – fled to the District seeking safety. Unable to accommodate so many penniless refugees in the District, the government built villages for them. Freedmen’s Village was built in 1863 on the grounds of Robert E. Lee’s former plantation in Arlington (Green, 1967). When Freedmen’s Village closed in 1888, many of the residents moved further into Arlington to live. A few of the study participants are descendants of those residents.

After the Civil War some former slaves from Georgia and the Carolinas migrated north along the Atlantic coast (Rose, 1969). Some of those migrants settled in the District and a few settled in Arlington (Green, 1967). In 1900, 2.6 percent of Arlington’s African Americans had roots in this migration, including a few of the study participants.

From 1910 to 1970 the sociological phenomenon referred to as the Great Migration occurred, when between six and seven million rural, Southern African Americans migrated to cities, mostly in the North (Crew, 1987). While industrial Northern cities

were the destination of most of the migrants, some came to the Washington, D.C. area. Few, however, moved to Arlington. In 1940, only twelve percent of Arlington's African American community, including one of the study participants, had roots in a Southern state other than Virginia.

By 1900 Arlington was on the cusp of transformation from farmland to a white suburb. The County was lightly populated; about 38 percent of the residents were African American. They lived in several small settlements and three black neighborhoods (Halls Hill, Johnson's Hill, and Green Valley), each neighborhood growing individually when a specific farm was subdivided and sold. An Arlington County historian describes the County at this time (Rose, 2009:145):

Arlington County in 1900 had much open area and many farms but it was evolving from a strictly rural area to a suburban community. However, many of the amenities of life were still to come. Wells were still the source of water and outhouses or septic tanks took care of sanitation. There was no water or sewer system in the County. Gas might be used for illumination in the cities, but not in Arlington where kerosene lamps were still the rule.

Figure 1, a picture of the African American settlement of Halls Hill in 1905, bears out this description.





**Figure 1: The Halls Hill settlement in 1905.**  
Reproduced with permission of the Virginia Room, Arlington Public Library.

Until legislation during the Civil Rights Era required it, official Arlington County neglected the African American community, spent little on black schools, refused to grant licenses to most black businesses, and failed to pave streets (Morris, 2001) or run water and sewer pipes in black neighborhoods (Rose, 2009).

At the turn of the twentieth century roads were built, and two new electric railroads connected the County to itself and to the District. On the heels of the railroads came developers promoting subdivisions for residential development. The black neighborhoods remain; all but one of the black settlements have since disappeared.

Figure 2 is a map of the County and the black settlements and neighborhoods. Chapter Five discusses the fate of those settlements.

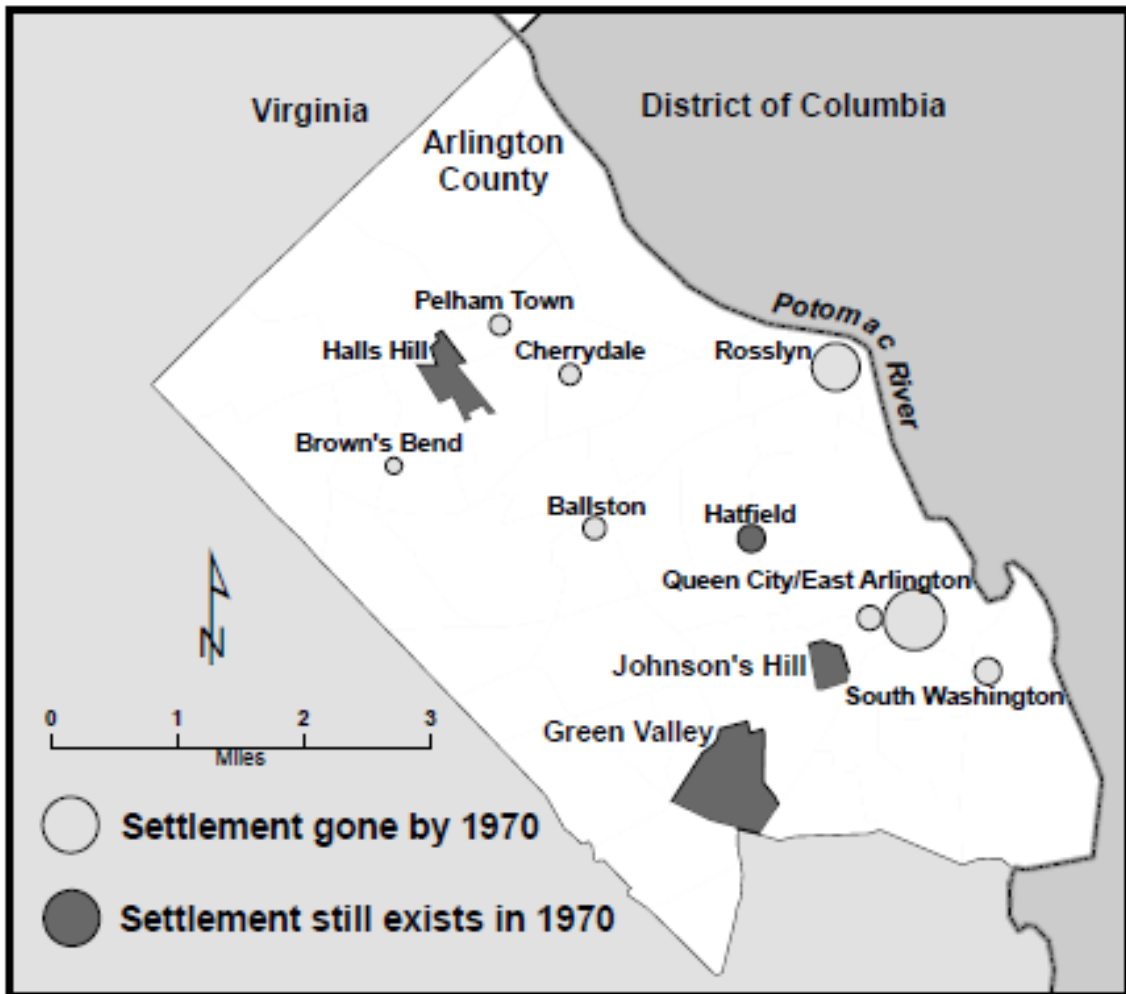
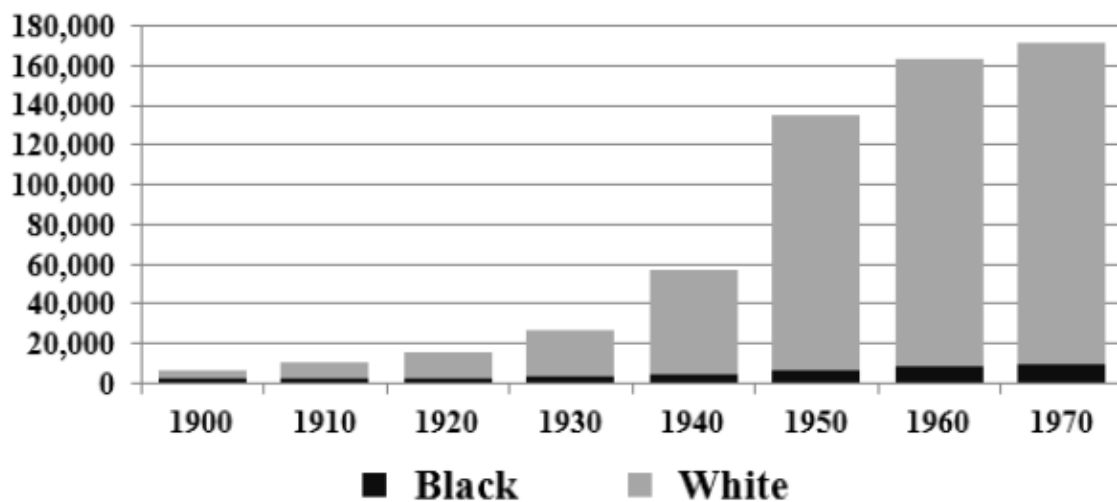


Figure 2: African American settlements in Arlington in 1900.  
Map by Nancy Perry, projection NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N.

Beginning with the buildup of the government workforce during World War I, many white federal workers moved out of the District, creating suburbs in outlying areas of

Maryland and Virginia. The influx of white federal workers into Arlington, similar to the migration described by Lassiter and Niedt (2012), intensified during the New Deal and World War II, lightening the complexion of the once rural county (Rose, 2009). Figure 3 illustrates the dramatic increase in the white population during the first seventy years of the twentieth century while the African American population grew slowly. Chapter Five discusses the impact the influx of white residents had on the residential patterns of Arlington's African American community, and Chapter Six discusses the impact that same in-migration had on occupational choice for the African American community.



**Figure 3: Growth in population in Arlington in 1900-1970.**  
Source: Minnesota Population Center. National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 2.0.  
Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota 2011.

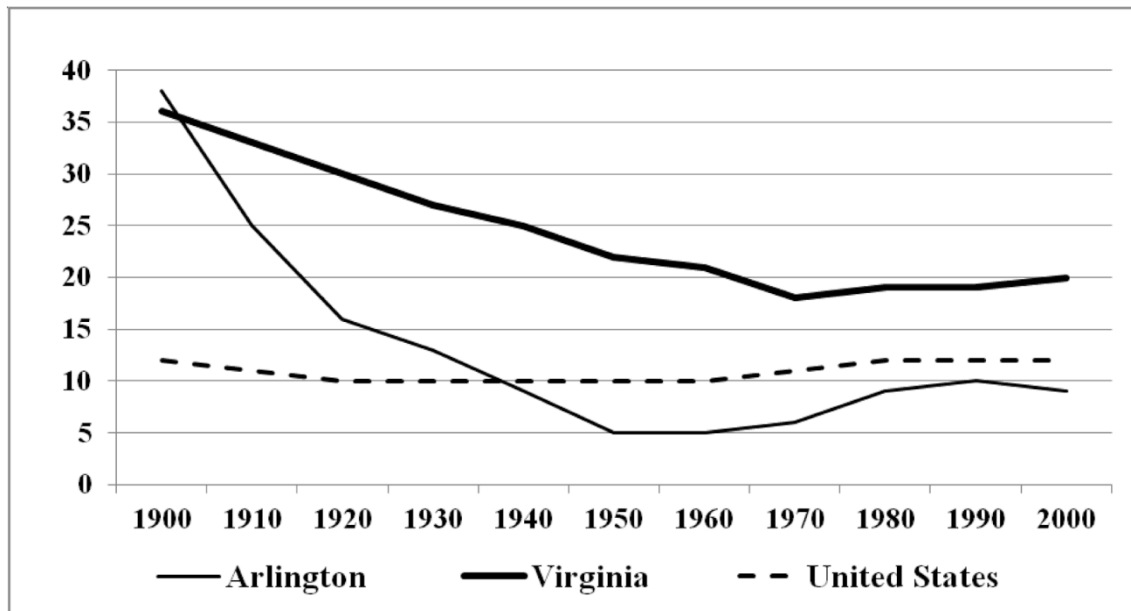
Table 1 lists the total population, the total African American population, the total white population, and the percent of the population that is African American or white for Arlington County, the State of Virginia, and the United States for the 1900-2000

censuses. Virginia, a Southern state, has always had a higher proportion of African Americans than the United States. At the beginning of Segregation, Arlington's proportion of African Americans was higher than that of the State of Virginia, but as Arlington grew into a white suburb, the proportion of African Americans fell rapidly until by 1940 the proportion of African Americans was not only lower than that of the State, but also lower than that of the United States. The proportion of African Americans gradually rose in Arlington at the end of Segregation, but remains lower than the levels of both the State and the United States. Figure 4 illustrates these trends, depicting the proportion of African Americans in the County, the State, and the United States.

**Table 1: Population totals in Arlington, Virginia, and the United States.**

**Source: Minnesota Population Center. National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 2.0.**  
**Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota 2011.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>
1900	Arlington	6501	2498 (38%)	4003 (62%)
	Virginia	1,854,184	660,722 (36%)	1,192,855 (64%)
	United States	76,303,387	8,840,789 (12%)	66,990,788 (88%)
1910	Arlington	10,251	2596 (25%)	7655 (75%)
	Virginia	2,061,612	671,096 (33%)	1,389,809 (67%)
	United States	92,228,531	9,828,667 (11%)	81,812,405 (89%)
1920	Arlington	16,039	2554 (16%)	13,485 (84%)
	Virginia	2,309,187	690,017 (30%)	1,617,909 (70%)
	United States	106,021,539	10,463,479 (10%)	94,869,384 (89%)
1930	Arlington	26,116	3338 (13%)	22,778 (87%)
	Virginia	2,421,851	650,165 (27%)	1,770,405 (73%)
	United States	123,202,660	11,891,706 (10%)	10,892,847 (88%)
1940	Arlington	57,952	5040 (9%)	52,922 (91%)
	Virginia	2,677,773	661,449 (25%)	2,015,583 (75%)
	United States	132,164,569	12,865,518 (10%)	118,254,041 (89%)
1950	Arlington	135,449	6517 (5%)	128,780 (95%)
	Virginia	3,318,680	737,125 (22%)	2,581,555 (78%)
	United States	150,697,357	15,042,286 (10%)	134,942,024 (89%)
1960	Arlington	163,401	8590 (5%)	154,172 (94%)
	Virginia	3,966,949	816,258 (21%)	3,142,443 (79%)
	United States	179,323,167	18,871,831 (10%)	158,831,732 (89%)
1970	Arlington	243,942	14,790 (6%)	225,181 (92%)
	Virginia	4,648,494	865,388 (18%)	3,757,478 (81%)
	United States	203,211,926	22,674,586 (11%)	177,656,092 (87%)
1980	Arlington	152,599	14,028 (9%)	126,121 (83%)
	Virginia	5,346,818	1,008,668 (19%)	4,229,798 (79%)
	United States	226,545,805	26,495,025 (12%)	188,371,622 (83%)
1990	Arlington	170,936	17,940 (10%)	130,873 (77%)
	Virginia	6,187,358	1,162,994 (19%)	4,791,739 (77%)
	United States	248,709,873	29,986,060 (12%)	199,686,070 (80%)
2000	Arlington	189,453	17,856 (9%)	130,794 (69%)
	Virginia	7,078,515	1,384,008 (20%)	5,116,929 (72%)
	United States	281,421,906	34,361,740 (12%)	211,353,725 (75%)



**Figure 4: African American population proportion in Arlington, in Virginia, and in the United States in 1900-2000**

This study discusses only two races – African American and white. Prior to the end of Segregation in the mid 1960s Arlington was home to virtually no other race. Even as late as the 1980 census the entire County had only two percent residents of other races.

This study will show how Arlington’s geography, its proximity to the District of Columbia and its historical membership in the Confederacy influenced the lives of its black residents long after the Civil War was over. The goal of the program is to use mixed methods, both qualitative and quantitative, to explore the impact of geography on the lives of the African American community. This goal will be achieved through three sub-studies:

1. During Segregation Arlington changed from a fairly integrated collection of small settlements to a very segregated suburb of the District. Analyze

Arlington's residential pattern and explore how proximity to the District influenced that pattern to answer the following research questions:

- What were the residential patterns of Arlington's African American community during Segregation?
- In what ways were the residential patterns influenced by Arlington's geography?

2. During Segregation African Americans had limited occupational choices.

Childhood is the period when individuals go through a series of stages in winnowing out unsuitable occupational choices. Explore the types of occupations worked by Arlington's African Americans and the ways that their occupational choices were influenced by Arlington's proximity to the District to answer the following research questions:

- What types of employment did Arlington's African Americans engage in during Segregation?
- In what ways were black employment choices influenced by Arlington's geography?

3. During Segregation African Americans were unwelcome in Arlington's white-owned businesses establishments. Analyze the entrepreneurial activities of African Americans in Arlington during Segregation to answer the following research questions:

- What types of businesses were built by Arlington's African American community during Segregation?

- In what ways were the types of businesses built by the African American community influenced by Arlington's geography?

This dissertation is divided into nine chapters. The rationale of the study is best described by an overview of the literature, found in Chapter Two. It examines three specific contexts: residential patterns, occupational choice, and entrepreneurship, comparing in each instance the context for African Americans living in the North and African Americans living in the South. This study employs mixed research methods, qualitative methods where appropriate and quantitative methods where appropriate, to get a rich understanding of the situation of segregation for a unique community living in a unique geography. Chapter Three discusses the quantitative data sources, consisting of census data in two formats – manuscript census schedules for the 1900-1940 censuses and aggregate data for the 1950-1970 censuses. The chapter describes the source and the format of each census data type and outlines the process used by this study to aggregate data in the manuscript census schedules, converting it to a format that can be used by segregation indexes for measuring the degree of residential segregation. Chapter Four discusses the qualitative data sources used in the study: interviews, oral histories, historical telephone books, and land records. The chapter describes the methods employed to process and analyze data from each of these data sources. Chapters Five, Six, and Seven provide the findings of the three sub-studies in the form of original research papers (one published, two under review) that were undertaken during the course of this program of research. Chapter Eight provides a summary of the conclusions



drawn from the research. Finally, Chapter Nine describes residential patterns, occupational choice, and entrepreneurship since the end of Segregation.

Note: The race of people studied in this dissertation has been known by many names.

During segregation they were referred to as Colored or Negro. The preferred name changed to black, popularized by black activist Stokely Carmichael during the Civil Rights era in the 1960s. At the time of this dissertation's writing the phrase African American is winning acceptance. This dissertation uses 'black' and 'African American' interchangeably. When 'black' is used it is not capitalized, as is the word 'white' also not capitalized.

## **CHAPTER TWO: SEGREGATION PATTERNS, NORTH AND SOUTH**

The previous chapter outlined the framework of the study with an introduction to Arlington County and Arlington's African American community. It is instructive to understand the phenomenon of segregation on a national level before examining the impact of segregation on Arlington's African American community. This chapter provides an overview of the literature about the three subtopics as they pertain to black life in the entire country. In each subtopic the manifestations of segregation differ in the North and in the South. Arlington, on the boundary between North and South, was subject to influences from both major regions.

### **2.1 Residential Patterns**

Sociologists, geographers, and others have long studied residential patterns in cities.

Burgess (1925) envisions concentric socio-economic zones around the city center, with the status of the household directly related to its distance from the city center. Hoyt's variation of Burgess' socio-economic zones (1939) follows lines of transportation and high ground radiating out from the city center in a sectoral pattern, with the household's financial status inversely related to its distance from these lines. Harris and Ullman (1945) describe a pattern found in some cities, of several nuclei, rather than the single city center. Bourne and Murdie (1972), using factor analysis and canonical correlation, unite these three models using data for Toronto.

Segregation also leaves its mark on residential patterns. Woofter (1969:37) said about residential patterns caused by segregation:

Each city has a pattern of its own determined by the percentage of Negroes in the total, the distribution of Negro employment, the distribution of the areas where property is within the means of colored families, the attitude of the people toward segregation, and the rate of expansion of business and manufacturing sections.

While each city's pattern is unique, it is also an instance of one of a limited number of general patterns. Because Segregation played out differently in the North and in the South, the general residential patterns found in Southern and Northern cities differ. Prior to 1900, 84 percent of all African Americans lived in the South. After the Civil War, twenty percent of Southern rural African Americans moved to cities. The residential patterns of those cities reflect their age. Older cities like Charleston found African Americans in wealthy as well as poor sections, living near their employers in alley dwellings or on nearby side streets (Groves and Muller, 1975; Massey and Denton, 1993), a remnant of earlier times when slaves lived near their masters. As more African Americans arrived, the dispersed pattern blurred and black urban clusters formed, both within the city and along the boundaries, often on the least desirable land (Ingham, 2003; Kusmer, 1976). Younger Southern cities like Birmingham, lacking the tradition of slaves living near their owners, exhibited this segregated pattern from the beginning (Groves and Muller, 1975; Wilson 2000).

During this same period, Northern cities displayed the Southern residential pattern of small black enclaves and alley residences dispersed within larger white neighborhoods, giving residents access to employment (Massey and Denton, 1993). African Americans were segregated more by economics than by race (Johnson, 1970); most African Americans worked in menial, low paying jobs and lived in relatively integrated neighborhoods (Massey and Denton, 1993). Professional African Americans - doctors, lawyers, ministers - sometimes lived in predominantly white areas. Black servants often lived with their white employer, giving a further impression of integration (Groves and Muller, 1975). Some Southern African Americans migrated to Northern cities, moving into existing black neighborhoods. The neighborhoods gradually expanded into adjoining white neighborhoods as former white owners moved up to better housing (Massey and Denton, 1993).

In the South, with the outbreak of World War I, the trickle of rural African Americans moving to cities became a flood. At the same time, whites began relocating in the suburbs, resulting in a new Southern residential pattern – large black residential districts in the center of some cities (Groves and Muller, 1975; Taeuber and Taeuber, 1965).

Meanwhile, many European immigrants who had kept the wheels in Northern factories turning during the nineteenth century returned home. A series of legislative acts, including the National Origins Act of 1924 (Sixty-Eighth Congress, 1925), made migration to America difficult and reduced the number of immigrant laborers in Northern factories. Needing a new source of cheap labor, the factories actively recruited Southern African Americans (Massey and Denton, 1993), resulting in the Great Migration (1910-

1970) (Rose, 1969; Crew, 1987; Tolnay, 2003; Gregory, 2005). The arrival of so many black in-migrants threatened the white population. Prejudice, racial violence, and segregation spawned a new Northern residential pattern, the ghetto. Unable to absorb all the migrants, black neighborhoods expanded into one large, dense, very black city within a city (Wilkerson, 2010).

World War II restrictions on new housing construction made the market extremely tight for both African Americans and whites. After the war, in Southern cities new housing was built for segregated occupation. Particularly in smaller Southern cities, because there was less in-migration, vacant land was available for construction. Southern African Americans often moved into new homes rather than into the older homes of upward bound white families (Taeuber and Taeuber, 1965). At the same time, Northern whites fled to the suburbs, leaving behind a pool of older housing for African Americans. As was the typical pattern in the North, African Americans assumed previously white-owned housing, easing the congestion in the ghettos.

De jure residential segregation existed until passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, and de facto residential segregation exists in some localities even today. Segregation developed in each community reflecting the community's context. Arlington had a unique context - a border state community with roots in the South but with influences from the North and from the nearby federal government. Chapter Five explores the residential patterns exhibited by the African American community in Arlington.

Residential segregation is measured in Arlington during the 1900-1970 study period

using widely used and respected segregation indexes, and the reasons are explained for the scores that Arlington gets on those indexes.

## **2.2 Occupational Patterns**

In 1870, 80 percent of all African Americans lived in the rural South (Massey and Denton, 1993). After the Civil War, former field slaves, knowing no other profession, were caught in the endless cycle of sharecropping while former artisan slaves, skilled in such trades as bricklaying, plastering, and carpentry, fled to the cities (Johnson, 1970). African Americans in the professions – dentists, lawyers, doctors – were generally limited to serving other African Americans (Bates et al., 2007). Job seekers looking for work with local governments relied on political patronage jobs – jobs often rewarded to potential voters. Until the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution gave them the vote, Southern African Americans had little leverage for obtaining such positions (Krislov, 1967). After passage of the Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act of 1883, establishing the classified Civil Service with its merit system based on competitive examinations, African Americans found work with the federal government. As a result of this legislation, the proportion of African Americans in federal service rose from 0.06 percent in 1881, to 5.8 percent in 1910, to 11.9 percent in 1944 (Krislov, 1967).

During the Great Migration (1910-1970) more than six million Southern African Americans turned their backs on agricultural work, migrating to Northern cities and seeking employment in industrial plants and factories (Rose, 1969). The District was

also a destination city, though the number fell far short of the volume migrating to large industrial cities like Chicago, Cleveland, and Detroit (Green, 1967).

African Americans suffered disproportionately during the Depression. They were often the first to lose their jobs when a company experienced a downturn (Tabb, 1971). Men resorted to working as day laborers. When necessary, women worked as domestics in white homes or did 'domestic' work in their own homes - supporting their families as dressmakers, laundresses, and proprietors of boarding houses.

When the United States was drawn into World War II almost no African Americans were among the 1,400,000 additional workers accepted to training programs and defense contracts to build ships, aircraft, ordnance, and the other infrastructure required to conduct a war (Johnson, 1970). After black leaders threatened to march on Washington D.C. (Krislov, 1967), President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, forcing government agencies and defense contractors to open up opportunities for African Americans to serve their country at home in factories as well as on the battlefield (Krislov, 1967).

Chapter Six examines the theories social scientists have advanced of occupational choice. The chapter explores the occupations chosen by African Americans living in Arlington during Segregation, and explains the influences that Arlington's geography, Arlington's proximity to the federal government, had on those choices.

### **2.3 Business Patterns**

In America's complicated racial history, black business ownership has reflected black status in society (Tabb, 2001). The well documented history of black

entrepreneurship in older Northern cities with large black populations – whether the city is Chicago, Cleveland, New York, or Washington D.C. (Drake and Cayton, 1962; Osofsky, 1966; Kusmer, 1976; Ruble, 2010) - has certain familiar themes (see also Boyd, 2011). Free black entrepreneurs established shops providing goods and services before and during Reconstruction (Birmingham, 1977; Bates et al., 2007), often catering to a white rather than a black clientele. African Americans were constrained in the types of businesses they could build, but they dominated the fields that were open to them, such as hair care, catering, tailoring, and shoe repair (Ingham, 2003). There were also limitations imposed by a lack of financing. To overcome their inability to make business loans they formed mutual aid societies - fraternal lodges - which grew into insurance companies and banks (Butler, 2005).

With the in-migration of Europeans in the late 1890s and early 1900, African Americans lost their monopoly in certain fields that had traditionally been theirs – e.g. catering (Boyd, 1998; House-Soremekun, 2002). Jim Crow laws, reflecting growing racial prejudice, made black business ownership increasingly difficult (Rose, 1985). Beginning around 1915 a massive in-migration of African Americans from the South intensified crowding in black ghettos and worsened the already tenuous relations with whites (Wilkerson, 2010). Tabb (1971) compares the black ghettos to colonies, where a superior group (whites) exploits their economic control over the inferior group (African Americans), subjugating them and making them politically dependent. The close dependency relationship that



black business owners had cultivated with the upper-class white clientele withered (Massey and Denton, 1993). As opportunities for serving white customers became problematic, African Americans targeted their businesses toward other African Americans. Isolated in the ghettos, the black residents made a ready market for their fellow black entrepreneurs (Aldrich et al., 1985; Boyd, 1998; Butler, 2005; Boyd, 2010) who built businesses such as grocery stores, restaurants, banks, and beauty parlors (Light and Rosenstein, 1995; Boyd, 2000b; Harvey, 2005).

Black businesses suffered disproportionately during the Great Depression. Not only retail stores, but also black banks and insurance companies collapsed (Massey and Denton, 1993). Black businessmen with a large, densely packed minority customer base were more likely to survive (Ingham, 2003). Their customers were encouraged to display racial loyalty to the black-owned businesses (Butler, 2005). The disadvantage theory of enterprise posits that when a minority group is excluded from the labor market, when they cannot get jobs sufficient to support themselves and their families, they often turn to trade – to starting a business (Light, 1979; Fischer and Massey, 2000). During the Great Depression the response of many African Americans, choosing between joblessness and self-employment, was to become survivalist entrepreneurs – “persons who become self-employed in response to a desperate need to find an independent means of livelihood” (Boyd, 2000a:648). Establishing hair care shops and salons was especially popular as the training was easily available, the

cost of establishing a shop was low, their customers could not get served in white-owned hair care shops, and the customers preferred black barbers and hair dressers who, they felt, could address their special hair care needs (Drake and Cayton, 1962; Aldrich et al., 1985; Willett, 2000; Boyd, 2000a; Boyd, 2010). These businesses, often cash-based and unregulated, produced an irregular income (Boyd, 2000a).

Different factors influenced black commercial development in Southern cities. There was not a large influx of European immigrants (Taeuber and Taeuber, 1965) into Southern cities. However, they were often the destination for rural Southern African Americans during the Great Migration. Ingham (2003) suggests that the shape and size of the business community and the types of businesses found there reflect the origins of the inhabitants. Southern black communities tended to be built on undeveloped land on the outskirts of cities. Small service businesses, and eventually a main business street evolved, with a few 'anchor firms' such as banks, department stores, or insurance companies. These anchor businesses gave the community stability.

Civil rights legislation was passed in the 1950s and 1960s, opening employment opportunities for African Americans in the general labor market (Harvey-Wingfield, 2008). After the mid 1960s black enrollment in colleges increased dramatically, with more African Americans earning business degrees than any other degree (Bates, 1997). These new college graduates were less interested in owning the small personal service businesses their parents and grandparents had

owned than in establishing high yield niche enterprises (Bates, 1997). Kollinger and Minniti (2006) found, based on 2002 survey data, that today's black businessmen and -women, confident in their entrepreneurial skills, are twice as likely to try starting a business as whites. However, contending with lingering residential segregation in cities, and lacking the protected market that their parents enjoyed, many black entrepreneurs struggle to succeed in business (Fairchild, 2008b; Fairchild, 2008a).

Chapter Seven explores the types of businesses established by African Americans living in Arlington during Segregation. It explores the influence that proximity to the large and successful businesses establishments built by the African American community in the District had on the types of businesses built in Arlington's black neighborhoods.

## **CHAPTER THREE: QUANTITATIVE DATA USED IN THE STUDY**

### **Introduction**

Census data, both aggregate census data and manuscript census data were incorporated into the study. Aggregate data were available for the entire study period. These data have limitations. By definition, aggregate data are combined from many sources. Census aggregate data are tabulations of rows of data, each row representing one individual. The aggregate data describe the aggregate of the group, but not individuals within the group. Manuscript data describe individuals within the group. Manuscript data were available for the first forty years of the study period. These data also have limitations. They come in an awkward format and must first be reformatted so they can be manipulated, sorted, and tabulated – an extremely time consuming process.

### **3.1 Aggregate census data**

Aggregate census data identify total counts – the total number of African Americans and total number of whites living in Arlington each census year, the total number of black men and the total number of black women per census tract living in Arlington each census year, the total number of African Americans per census tract working in each of the Census Bureau's occupational categories each census year.

This study used data from the 1900-2000 decennial censuses. Arlington County was fully tracked by the 1950 census; i.e. 1950 is the first census for which data aggregated on a census tract basis are available (NHGIS, 2004). Before 1950, census totals were

reported for the entire county. The number of tracts (38) and their configuration has not changed since they were first defined.

### **3.1.1 Description**

Aggregate census data are obtained by running a census query on the National Historical Geographic Information System (NHGIS) website. The query parameters consist of the Geographic Level of data desired (entire nation, state, county, census tract, block group, or block), the census year, and one or more datasets. For example, to learn the number of whites living in Arlington County in 1940 the parameters are ‘County’, ‘1940’, ‘Population, Housing, Agriculture & Economic Data’, and ‘Total White Population’. The output of the above query is the total number of white residents in each county in the United States (See Figure 5). The data column names are codes used by the Census Bureau; an accompanying text file maps the Census Bureau code to a descriptive name. The column labeled ‘BWS001’ contains the total white population of each county.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	GISJOIN	YEAR	STATE	STATEA	NATION	NATIONA	COUNTY	COUNTYA	AREANAM	BWS001
2798	G5100030	1940	Virginia	510			Albemarle	30	Albemarle	18990
2799	G5100050	1940	Virginia	510			Alleghany	50	Alleghany	20598
2800	G5100070	1940	Virginia	510			Amelia	70	Amelia	4175
2801	G5100090	1940	Virginia	510			Amherst	90	Amherst	14090
2802	G5100110	1940	Virginia	510			Appomatt	110	Appomatt	6581
2803	G5100130	1940	Virginia	510			Arlington	130	Arlington	51998
2804	G5100150	1940	Virginia	510			Augusta	150	Augusta	39537
2805	G5100170	1940	Virginia	510			Bath	170	Bath	6394
2806	G5100190	1940	Virginia	510			Bedford	190	Bedford	23339
2807	G5100210	1940	Virginia	510			Bland	210	Bland	6615
2808	G5100230	1940	Virginia	510			Botetourt	230	Botetourt	14528
2809	G5100250	1940	Virginia	510			Brunswick	250	Brunswick	8691
2810	G5100270	1940	Virginia	510			Buchanan	270	Buchanan	31470
2811	G5100290	1940	Virginia	510			Buckingham	290	Buckingham	7733
2812	G5100310	1940	Virginia	510			Campbell	310	Campbell	19324
2813	G5100330	1940	Virginia	510			Caroline	330	Caroline	6934
2814	G5100350	1940	Virginia	510			Carroll	350	Carroll	25572

**Figure 5: NHGIS aggregate census query output.**

### 3.1.2 Source

The boundary files and all the aggregate census data used by the study came from [www.nhgis.org](http://www.nhgis.org), the publicly available NHGIS website maintained by the Minnesota Population Center.

### 3.1.3 Converting aggregate data to an Excel database

The aggregate data were returned from the NHGIS interface in comma separated values (csv) format. The files were then saved as an Excel database after storing representative names in the column headers in place of the Census Bureau's codes.

## **3.2 Manuscript census data**

### **3.2.1 Description**

Manuscript census schedules (Figure 6) from the twelfth through the sixteenth census (1900-1940) were used for this study. Manuscript census data more recent than 1940 are not available; the U.S. government cannot release personally identifiable information about an individual to anyone other than that individual until 72 years after it is collected, as stipulated by law (92 Stat. 915; Public Law 95-416; October 5, 1978). The manuscript data are formatted as images of the original hand written schedules filled out by the census enumerator when taking the census, with one line in the schedule for each individual being enumerated. The data columns on the schedules changed over time. For example, the 1900 and 1910 censuses asked adult females the number of babies they had given birth to and the number of those babies that survived. The 1920 census asked for not only the individual's native language, but also the parents' native languages. The 1930 census asked adult males if they were veterans, and if so which war or engagement they served in. The 1940 census asked which New Deal programs, if any, the individual participated in. This study only used data columns common to all of the 1900-1940 censuses.

### **3.2.2 Source**

The manuscript data came from a publicly available website, [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com).

State Virginia Incorporated year 1783 Year of day 1940 S. D. No. 2-58  
 County Bedford Transmitted in other May 18 1940  
 Census of Bedford

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE-BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
 SIXTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES 1940  
 POPULATION SCHEDULE  
 FORM NO. 1 (REVISED 1937)

INSTRUCTIONS: This form is to be filled out by the enumerator. It is to be filled out for every person living in the household on April 1, 1940. It is to be filled out for every person living in the household on April 1, 1940. It is to be filled out for every person living in the household on April 1, 1940.

NAME	RELATIONSHIP	SEX	AGE	DATE OF BIRTH	PLACE OF BIRTH	EDUCATION	INDUSTRY	REMARKS
John	Head	M	45	1895	Virginia	High School	Farmer	
Mary	Wife	F	42	1898	Virginia	High School	Homemaker	
Robert	Son	M	15	1925	Virginia	High School	Student	
Elizabeth	Daughter	F	12	1928	Virginia	High School	Student	
William	Son	M	10	1930	Virginia	High School	Student	
Margaret	Daughter	F	8	1932	Virginia	High School	Student	
James	Son	M	6	1934	Virginia	High School	Student	
Anna	Daughter	F	4	1936	Virginia	High School	Student	
Charles	Son	M	2	1938	Virginia	High School	Student	
Thomas	Son	M	1	1939	Virginia	High School	Student	
Elizabeth	Daughter	F	0	1940	Virginia	High School	Student	

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS:  
 1. Was ever in military service? No  
 2. Was ever in naval service? No  
 3. Was ever in air service? No  
 4. Was ever in coast guard service? No  
 5. Was ever in merchant marine service? No  
 6. Was ever in fishing service? No  
 7. Was ever in other service? No  
 8. Was ever in foreign service? No  
 9. Was ever in government service? No  
 10. Was ever in private service? No  
 11. Was ever in other service? No  
 12. Was ever in other service? No  
 13. Was ever in other service? No  
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 95. Was ever in other service? No  
 96. Was ever in other service? No  
 97. Was ever in other service? No  
 98. Was ever in other service? No  
 99. Was ever in other service? No  
 100. Was ever in other service? No

Figure 6: Decennial manuscript census schedule.



### **3.2.3 Converting manuscript data to an Excel database**

The manuscript schedules are in portable document format (pdf), meaning that they can be read, but not manipulated. To be useful to this study the schedules were reformatted to allow manipulation of the data. A subset of the data columns from the schedule were manually copied one line at a time into an Excel spreadsheet (Figure 7). The rows were stored in the order that they appear in the manuscript schedule – the order of enumeration. The data preserved include the census year, township, enumeration district, household status (head of household, live-in servant, family member, or lodger), gender, race, age, birth state of the individual and/or of his parents (depending on the census year), the individual's occupation and place of work, and whether the head of household owned or rented the home. The Page and Line columns were preserved in order to allow reference back to the original schedule. The township column (Twp) reflects the fact that the Virginia's 1870 constitution mandated all counties be divided into three governing districts. Arlington's districts were named 'Jefferson', 'Arlington', and 'Washington'. The Census Bureau used the township boundaries to define the enumeration districts in the 1900 census, and in succeeding censuses subdivided those enumeration districts as the County's population grew. A diagram of the townships and enumeration districts appears in Chapter Five, Figure 10.

1910Census.xls [Compatibility Mode]															
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
1	Sort	Year	Twp	ED	Page	Line	HH	M-F	Race	Age	Pa	Ma	Occupation	Where	Own?
2791	2790	1910	Arlington	9	56	90	H	F	B	65	VA	VA	cook	family	O
2792	2791	1910	Arlington	9	56	91	H	M	B	45	VA	VA	teamster	self emplo	O
2793	2792	1910	Arlington	9	56	92		F	B	40	VA	VA	none		
2794	2793	1910	Arlington	9	56	93		F	B	12	VA	VA	none		
2795	2794	1910	Arlington	9	56	94		F	B	11	VA	VA	none		
2796	2795	1910	Arlington	9	56	95		F	B	9	VA	VA	none		
2797	2796	1910	Arlington	9	56	96		F	B	7	VA	VA	none		
2798	2797	1910	Arlington	9	56	97		F	B	4	VA	VA	none		
2799	2798	1910	Arlington	9	56	98		F	B	1	VA	VA	none		
2800	2799	1910	Arlington	9	56	99	H	M	B	28	MD	MD	laborer	odd jobs	R
2801	2800	1910	Arlington	9	56	100		F	B	24	MD	MD	none		
2802	2801	1910	Arlington	9	57	1		F	B	8	VA	VA	none		
2803	2802	1910	Arlington	9	57	2		F	B	4	VA	VA	none		
2804	2803	1910	Arlington	9	57	3		M	B	2	VA	VA	none		
2805	2804	1910	Arlington	9	57	4		F	B	0	VA	VA	none		
2806	2805	1910	Arlington	9	57	5	H	F	B	35	MD	MD	cook	family	R
2807	2806	1910	Arlington	9	57	6		F	B	17	VA	MD	servant	family	
2808	2807	1910	Arlington	9	57	7		F	B	9	VA	NC	none		
2809	2808	1910	Arlington	9	57	8		M	B	7	VA	MD	none		
2810	2809	1910	Arlington	9	57	9	H	M	B	50	VA	VA	laborer	odd jobs	O
2811	2810	1910	Arlington	9	57	10		F	B	38	VA	VA	none		
2812	2811	1910	Arlington	9	57	11		M	B	17	VA	VA	laborer	brick yard	
2813	2812	1910	Arlington	9	57	12		F	B	13	VA	VA	none		
2814	2813	1910	Arlington	9	57	13		M	B	7	VA	VA	none		

Figure 7: Database built from 1910 manuscript census schedule

## **CHAPTER FOUR: QUALITATIVE DATA USED IN THE STUDY**

### **Introduction**

This study used a variety of sources of qualitative data, the primary source being interview data. These included both interviews conducted for the study and interviews conducted by others at some time in the past (oral histories). In addition, the study used historical telephone books and land deeds.

### **4.1 Interviews**

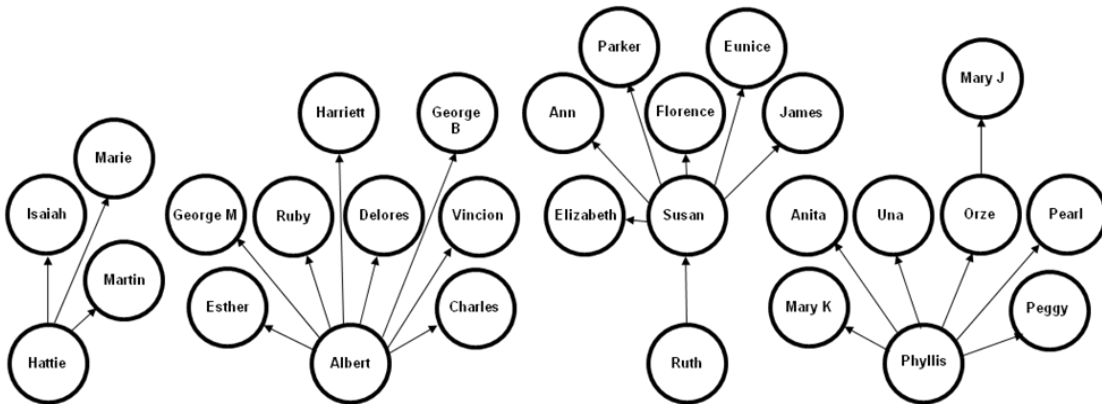
Interviewing is prompted by “an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (Seidman, 2006:9). While a great deal was learned from the census data alone, the significance of the events that transpired during Segregation in Arlington could best be learned by talking to the people who experienced them. Chapters Five, Six, and Seven discuss use of data from the interviews and oral histories.

#### **4.1.1 Sampling method**

Snowball sampling (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Weiss, 1994) was used to select the study participants. This sampling method, rather than a scientific or a random sampling method was used because the study was targeted at a specific, very small population.

The first participant was met at a civic association meeting in one of the black neighborhoods. This individual volunteered to be interviewed and to identify other prospective participants. Because he was so well connected, well respected by the

community, he proved to be very valuable to the study. Over time a good variety of participants was found, with approximately the same proportion of sample members from each tract as there are residents in that tract. Figure 8 depicts the participants included in the sample. When asked for contact information for specific persons or types of persons, the participants were helpful giving contact information. Some of the participants were reluctant at first to take part in the study, expressing doubt in their having anything meaningful to add. Mentioning who had recommended them (the known sponsor) helped encourage those individuals to agree to be interviewed.



**Figure 8: Participants in the snowball sample**

#### **4.1.2 Participants**

The selection criteria for participants were that they reached their majority by 1940, and they lived in one of the three black tracts during Segregation. All but two of the participants (Table 2) were born in Arlington and all of them reached adulthood in Arlington well before Arlington integrated. They represent a very small pool of

surviving African Americans who lived in Arlington during some portion of the study period.

**Table 2: Study participants**

Name	Age	Sex	Neighborhood	Description
Albert	78	M	Green Valley	Printer for Government Printing Office, retired as a dean at University of the District of Columbia
Anita	89	F	Halls Hill	Civil Service secretary for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, worked on several Presidential Commissions
Ann	92	F	Hatfield	Teacher, Civil Service as a clerk, retired as assistant branch chief of a Marine Corps administrative branch
Charles	80	M	Green Valley	Manages a taxi cab company
Delores	80	F	Green Valley	School teacher in the District
Elizabeth	92	F	Johnson's Hill	Building contractor, property manager.
Esther	85	F	Green Valley	Practical nurse
Eunice	85	F	East Arlington	Grew up in East Arlington
Florence	82	F	Johnson's Hill	Worked as a domestic, self employed baby sitter
George B	65	M	Green Valley	Son of a builder
George M	85	M	Green Valley	TV repairman
Harriett	85	F	Green Valley	Ran, cooked for restaurant
Hattie	71	F	Green Valley	Descendant of Freedmen's Village. Worked as a clerk in department store, receptionist, Civil Rights activist
Isaiah	87	M	Green Valley	Descendant of Freedmen's Village. Served in Coast Guard, worked in Civil Service as messenger for War Department
James	89	M	Ballston	Served in Navy, Civil Service clerk for Veterans Administration, Transportation Department, Treasury Department
Martin	82	M	Green Valley	Served in Marine Corps as a high level career officer
Marie	84	F	Green Valley	Granddaughter of a builder
Mary J	90	F	Halls Hill	Worked in school cafeteria, in Civil Service as a clerk, as nurse's aide
Mary K	85	F	Halls Hill	Worked for the Civil Service, grew up in Halls Hill
Orze	93	M	Halls Hill	Served in Army, laborer, Civil Service machinist
Parker	85	F	Johnson's	Grew up in East Arlington
Pearl	70	F	Pelham Town	Grew up in Pelham Town
Peggy	85	F	Halls Hill	Civil Service clerk
Phyllis	65	F	Halls Hill	Managed Halls Hill community center
Ruby	82	F	Green Valley	Waitress, school crossing guard, key punch operator, census enumerator, administrator of substitute teacher program for public school system
Ruth	77	F	Johnson's Hill	Worked in Civil Service as a typist for Marine Corps
Susan	80	F	Johnson's Hill	Worked in Civil Service as a typist, executive secretary to a high level officer in a large government agency
Una	85	F	Halls Hill	Grew up in Halls Hill
Vincion	80	M	Queen City	Laborer, custodian in public school system

#### **4.1.3 Interview procedures**

The interviews were conducted during the summer of 2010 and during the summer and fall of 2012. Some participants were interviewed both in 2010 and 2012. A few of the 2010 participants were either no longer alive or no longer well enough to submit to an interview by 2012. Most of the interviews were conducted in the participant's home. At the beginning of the interview, participants reviewed pages from the 1920, 1930, and/or 1940 manuscript census schedule listing the participant's family; this helped to stimulate the participant's memory. Thoughtful conversations ensued about the participants, their families, and their community. Interviews lasted between one and two hours.

#### **4.1.4 Process interview data using grounded theory techniques**

The interviews were analyzed using grounded theory techniques (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). This included assigning conceptual labels to blocks of text, sorting the labels into categories, and integrating the categories into emerging themes to answer the research questions. This is both an inductive and abductive process where the researcher searches for patterns in the participants' comments that would help answer the research questions. Conceptual labels and preliminary categories were identified after each interview. When new questions emerged from the data, a second interview guide was developed for a subsequent interview with the participant.

#### **4.1.5 Strategies for enhancing rigor**

Several techniques were employed in an effort to enhance rigor of the study (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). These include conducting multiple interviews with each participant, typing verbatim interview transcripts, member checking interview transcripts and emerging

themes with the participants, triangulating data collection methods, and maintaining an audit trail of memos across the data gathering and analysis processes.

- Multiple interviews enhance validity. Each participant was interviewed at least twice. At the first interview a semi-structured interview guide was used. The interviews were recorded, the recording was typed, and the transcript was analyzed to label concepts the participant discussed and to develop preliminary categories. This process always raised new questions, which were asked at a subsequent interview. The same interview guide was used for all participants for the first interview but an interview guide specific to the participant was used for subsequent interviews.
- Member checking allows “systematically soliciting feedback about your data and conclusions from the people you are studying” (Maxwell, 2005:111) by allowing the participants to edit their transcripts for the purpose of checking for errors. Participants were given transcripts of each interview to read and correct. All but one participant took the task of editing the transcripts very seriously, and returned them with corrections. Any corrections they made and any themes that emerged from the transcripts were discussed. Participants were given any pages from the final paper that included quotations from their transcripts for their final approval.
- Triangulation of the interview data and the census data, “Collecting information using a variety of sources and methods” (Maxwell, 2005:93),

reduced the risk of misinterpreting the individual data sources. It also assisted in the analysis.

- An audit trail was maintained for each participant. It contained all information collected about that individual other than the interview transcripts, and a diary of every occasion when the individual was contacted. For example, the audit trail contained the date and notes about the phone call when the participant was first invited to take part in the study, the date and notes about the first interview, the date and content of the thank you note written to the participant after the interview, any photos taken of the participant, any census data related to the participant's family, the researcher's impressions of the participant, and the researcher's notes about plans for future contact with the participant.

## **4.2 Oral Histories**

Because most black residents of the County who lived during the early portion of the study period are no longer alive, the interview data were augmented with oral histories of early residents. The oral histories were included as a data source because 1) the pool of participants is small, 2) the oral histories supplement and complement the interviews, 3) the oral histories were collected between ten and forty years ago making the participants a generation older than the study's participants, and 4) the oral histories increased the variety of occupations represented. The use of oral histories greatly contributed to the final analysis. As stated by Andrews et al. about a similar study conducted in Teignmouth, England (Andrews, et al., 2006:170): "The older people's stories clearly



demonstrate unique insights into the history of places. Indeed, what these narratives provide is recollection about self, about relationships with others and a place, insights rarely provided in such depth by other methods.”

#### **4.2.1 Sources of oral histories**

Fifteen of the oral histories, collected as part of a project funded by the National Endowment of the Arts, are publicly available in the archive at Langston-Brown Community Center in Halls Hill. An additional twenty oral histories, collected as an ongoing oral history project conducted by Arlington County, are publicly available in the Virginia Room at the Arlington Central Library.


#### **4.2.2 Processing oral histories using grounded theory techniques**

The oral histories were read and analyzed as if they were transcripts of interviews conducted by the study. This allowed the adequacy of the themes that arose from analyzing the interviews to be tested. This type of validation of results is referred to as ‘referential adequacy’ (Baxter and Eyles, 1997:515).

#### **4.3 Cross referenced telephone books**

For the study of black entrepreneurship, a list of black-owned businesses in Arlington during Segregation was needed. A list was built using an old telephone book. The book chosen was a cross referenced telephone book from 1950, the oldest such book available at the Arlington Central Library (Hill, 1950). A cross referenced telephone book, not to be confused with present day ‘Yellow Pages,’ lists every telephone number twice, first by the name of the individual and second by the address. While the names of the business owners was not known, the street names and address ranges of the streets running through the black neighborhoods was known. Individuals listed their name in the

telephone book and, if they chose, their business. For example Mrs. Toth, a practical nurse who lived at 1100 North Roosevelt Street, listed herself as “Toth, Mildred B. Mrs. nurse”. Figure 9 is a portion of the page listing the 1000 through 1600 blocks of Roosevelt Street North. This gave only a partial listing, as only those businesses that were open in 1950, had a telephone, and listed themselves in the telephone book were included. Chapter Seven describes how the cross referenced book was used by the study to identify black-owned businesses.



**George Mason Green Co.**  
**REALTORS**

• Loans  
• Insurance  
**JACKSON**  
**4-1400**

313

Mitchell Clara M Mrs  
ΔJA2-1675

1007 Johnson Lucy B Mrs ©

1009 Reese Chas E

1010 Syphax Alma D Mrs ©  
ΔJA8-5681

1013 Graham Jesse A © ΔJA2-8488

1014 Harris Flora S Mrs ©

1018 Javins Goldie Mrs ©

1021 Minor Wm R © ΔJA2-6581

Minor Margt E Mrs beauty  
shop

1022 Brittain Wm A © plstr  
contr ΔJA2-4049

1025 Jackson Jean M Mrs ©  
ΔJA8-1828

1026 Pitts Wm H © ΔJA8-2319

1100 Weaver Wm L © ΔJA2-7990

1101 Johnson Jessie B Mrs ©  
ΔJA2-9502

1103 Harper Marion © ΔJA8-6626

1109 Haskins Eug F © ΔJA7-2207

**S 12th intersects**

1201 Parker Roberta T Mrs ©  
ΔJA8-5489

1212 Durham Frank ΔJA2-7412  
Gee Wm R

1216 Brown Hattie E Mrs ΔJA8-2686

**13th intersects**

1221 King Larney © ΔJA8-1581

1300-62 **George Washington Carver**  
**Homes real est**

1300 Debose Geo H ΔJA5-4907

1301 Powell Carl M © ΔJA2-1823

1302 Garland Cephas A ©  
ΔJA7-6617

1304 Hayes Transfer & Stge Co  
ΔJA2-1824

1305 Richerson Raymond L ©  
ΔJA7-9473

1306 Gray Parks W © ΔJA5-7129

1308 Simmons Alice R Mrs ©  
ΔJA7-6833

1309 Harrell Ned © ΔJA7-1819

1310 Lindsey Phillip © ΔJA7-4647

1312 Dickerson Frances E Mrs ©

1313 Jones Wilbert C © ΔJA7-7464

1314 Dickerson Polly Mrs ©

1316 Hill Harvey C ©

1317 Moore John H © ΔJA4-3522

1318 Valentine Mary H Mrs ©

1350 Jones Jetsie J Mrs ©  
ΔJA7-1388

1352 Gray Wilson © ΔJA7-6105

1354 Thomas Robt L © ΔJA7-0646

1356 King Ruth W Mrs ©  
ΔJA2-7350

1358 Madison Leonard L ©  
ΔJA8-7586

1360 Madison Wm F ©

1362 Crittendon Mary M Mrs ©  
ΔJA2-6965

**S 13th rd intersects**

**ROOSEVELT N—From 6400**  
**10th N north**

1004 Vacant

1006 Clarke Danl F © ΔJE2-7288

1008 Putnam Howard M ©  
ΔJE3-1055

1010 Waters Henry F ΔJE2-5431

**11th N intersects**

1100 Toth Frank E © ΔJE2-7482

Toth Mildred B Mrs nurse

1104 Henderson Wm L II ©  
ΔJE3-0672

1108 Casey Jas F jr © ΔJE2-4234

1112 McCarthy Mary A Mrs ©  
ΔJE2-2609

1116 Stickles Joshua C ©  
ΔJE3-9348

**12th N ends**

1200 Bouldin Patricia L ΔJE3-8533

1204 Parry Gwynn S Mrs © nurse  
ΔJE2-1746

1300 Hall Stephens H © ΔJA2-3197

1301 Walsh John P © ΔJE2-4282

1304 Brown Kenneth L ©

1400 Ratherdale Robt C ©  
ΔJA2-1792

1403 Allender John S © ΔJE3-3107

1404 Williams Harvey R ©  
ΔJE3-1123

1405 Hagerty Patk H ΔJE4-5090

**N 15th rd intersects**

**16th N intersects**

1601 Loomis Donald O © ΔJE3-9242

1607 Mallory Richd © ΔJE2-7297

1609 MacKinnon Chas S © kennels  
ΔJE2-3432

1610 Blankenship Raymond E  
ΔJE2-1256

7

Figure 9: Arlington 1950 cross referenced telephone book

#### **4.3.1 Source of telephone books**

The 1950 cross referenced telephone book was found in the Virginia Room of the Arlington Central Library, 1015 North Quincy Street in Arlington.

#### **4.4 Land deeds**

Land deeds are physical records maintained by a municipality. They record the sale of all real property and contain such information as the date, name of the seller (grantor), the buyer (grantee), the price, and an exact description of the boundaries of the property being bought or sold. Land deeds were used to discover when African Americans first built homes in some of the small settlements, and when they sold their property and moved out of those settlements into one of the three black neighborhoods. Chapter Five discusses the use of the land deeds.

##### **4.4.1 Source of land deeds**

The land deeds reside in the Arlington County Office of Land Records, 1425 Courthouse Road, Suite 6200 in Arlington.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS<sup>1</sup>**

### **5.1 Abstract**

#### **5.1.1 Background**

In 1900 Arlington was bucolic farm land with 6500 residents living in a scattering of populated settlements, many of them comprised of black families. By 1970 Arlington was a bustling white suburb of almost 243,000 residents, 92 percent of them white. African Americans no longer lived in widely dispersed settlements, but rather were clustered into three all black neighborhoods. This chapter quantifies that clustering using segregation indexes and explores how two phenomena, segregation and proximity to the District, influenced the shift in residential patterns.

#### **5.1.2 Methods**

Decennial census data from 1900-1970 were processed using segregation indexes to quantify the degree of clustering displayed by African Americans. Because 1900-1940 manuscript census data are only available as images of the original census schedules, it was first aggregated using a two step procedure developed for this study. The 1950-1970 census data from NHGIS was already aggregated. Using a mixed methods case study method, the output of the indexes was analyzed in conjunction with data from interviews

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<sup>1</sup> The majority of the material included in this chapter was submitted as a manuscript and is in review: Perry N., Crew S., and Waters N.M., 2013, “We didn’t have any other place to live”: Residential Patterns in Segregated Arlington, Virginia. The data gathering and analysis were done by Nancy Perry, and the writing mainly by Nancy Perry. All authors contributed important intellectual content and provided critical review of the papers.

and oral histories to characterize the residential patterns of Arlington's African American community, and to understand the reasons for those particular patterns.

### **5.1.3 Results**

High levels of segregation were detected by the two indexes measuring isolation and uneven dispersion of the minority group. Medium segregation was detected by the index measuring the degree of concentration of the minority group on the land. No segregation was detected by the indexes measuring the presence of the minority in the center of the city and the clustering of minority neighborhoods into ghettos.

### **5.1.4 Conclusions**

Arlington's residential patterns are not typical Northern or Southern patterns. The African American community began the twentieth century relatively dispersed. During the study period they became progressively more segregated as Arlington grew from a collection of lightly populated settlements to a densely populated white suburb of the District. Segregation is an artifact of a community's history. The segregation indexes, measuring the artifacts of Arlington's history, show that Arlington's African American community, overrun by in-migrating whites, was slowly pushed into a few widely dispersed black settlements, but never pushed out of the County altogether. The process developed by this study for aggregating manuscript census data proved to be a reliable method for formatting the data for use with the segregation indexes.

## **5.2 Background**

Arlington has a long history of residential segregation that did not end until after the Fair Housing Act, passed by Congress in 1968, made residential segregation illegal. This

chapter measures residential segregation in Arlington during the study period and examines the residential patterns that resulted from that segregation.

Arlington's African American community has complex origins. Some black residents are the descendants of slaves who worked on Arlington's early farms, others are the descendants of runaway slaves housed at Freedmen's Village, yet others are the descendants of freed slaves who migrated north during Reconstruction, and still others are the descendants of sharecroppers who moved north during the Great Migration.

By 1900 the African American community was well entrenched. Thirty eight percent of the 6482 County residents were African American. A scattering of settlements emerged, twelve of them containing black households (Rose, 2009). The map in Figure 2 in Chapter One illustrates the location of those black settlements, including some that have since disappeared.

In a discussion of segregation, Johnson (1970:8) describes a residential pattern he labels 'small Southern towns'. He could have been describing Arlington's three black neighborhoods in 1900, Green Valley, Johnson's Hill, and Halls Hill, although the settlements are not located on the edge of town:

It is an interesting fact that practically all the Negro neighborhoods in the small towns are located on the edge of town. ... They are separated from one another by intervening white neighborhoods which have paved streets, street lights, water and sewerage connections which seldom reach the Negro residential areas. These areas, unlike those in the larger cities, are

not “inherited” from white residents who have moved on to better areas, but were developed as Negro residential areas, or “quarters.”

The three neighborhoods grew in parallel but in isolation from one another. In 1900 each was integrated but with a good sized black population, each had a black elementary school, one or more black churches, and a few businesses (Perry and Waters, 2012). By 1970 Halls Hill was 84 percent black and the other two neighborhoods were almost 100 percent black. When census tracts were defined, each of the three neighborhoods was made into a tract.

Many theories of neighborhood selection exist; all agree that the process of selecting a house, thereby selecting a neighborhood, has many variables. Coleman (1990) maintains that neighborhood selection has actors and resources, where each actor controls some resources. A household with a given amount of resources (social, cultural, monetary, earning ability) exchanges those resources to purchase housing in a neighborhood they like. Early freed slaves in Arlington bought land, had it platted, farmed it for a time, and then sold individual lots to other black families, thereby creating the first black neighborhoods. Many of those neighborhoods survived Segregation intact.

Residential patterns reflect supply and demand in the housing market (Logan and Molotch, 1987). Each neighborhood offers packages of amenities (schools, public transit, affordable housing). Households make their choice of neighborhood based on the household’s ability to pay for the location and the neighborhood’s amenities, weighing the location and amenities most important to them. The early black neighborhoods lacked access to utilities such as sewer, water, and electricity. However, the land was



affordable and they offered the African American families safety, stability, and welcoming black relatives and neighbors.

Once a household invests their resources in their home, they take steps to protect the value of that investment from perceived threats. During Segregation white neighborhoods erected racial barriers, fearing that in-migration of African Americans might lower their house value (Farley et al., 1993). Participants mentioned how white home owners put up cinderblock walls (in Halls Hill) and tall, thick hedges (in Ballston) to keep their black neighbors' homes out of sight of their own properties.

Schelling (1971) identifies three types of residential segregation: 1) organizationally enforced, 2) economically induced, and 3) segregation resulting from individual behavior. Organizationally enforced segregation is a result of practices that are legal and illegal, coercive and exclusionary, open or covert, kindly or malicious. Economically induced segregation causes the poor to live separately from the rich. Individually motivated segregation occurs when households allows habit, tradition, prejudice, fear, hostility, or alienation to inform their residential choices. Organizational segregation - restrictive covenants on houses in Arlington's new residential developments - left black households with few neighborhoods where they could live. Individually motivated segregation, reinforced by annual Ku Klux Klan marches past some of the neighborhoods, further encouraged the African Americans to remain in their black neighborhoods.

Economically induced segregation was less apparent in Arlington. There were no wealthy black settlements. The doctor, lawyer, and minister lived in the same

neighborhood as their patients, clients, or flock. Karl Taeuber (1975) points out that poor whites are not integrated with poor blacks, nor wealthy whites integrated with wealthy blacks. He maintains that residential segregation is systemic racial discrimination by whites against blacks.

Residential segregation is "...a measure of the degree to which two or more groups live separately from one another in different parts of the urban environment" (Massey and Denton, 1988:282). School districts and other agencies and individuals need to quantify segregation, i.e., compare the racial/residential pattern they see with a pattern displaying no segregation. Segregation is measured using segregation indexes. Taeuber and Taeuber (1965:29) discuss the value of such indexes:

[A] numerical segregation index, reflecting one basic aspect of a city's racial residential pattern, permits a variety of comparisons. Comparison of the index value for a city at one point in time with this value at a subsequent point in time permits some assessment of the impact of various intervening processes thought to encourage segregation or desegregation. Such an index is useful also for comparing different cities with each other. It lends objectivity to an effort to determine what features of the social organization of a city or what characteristics of the city's population are related to the degree of residential segregation.

The phenomenon of residential segregation has five dimensions: evenness, exposure, concentration, centralization, and clustering (Massey and Denton, 1988). Because segregation patterns are an artifact of a population's specific history, not all populations

display segregation on every dimension. Measuring multiple dimensions requires multiple indexes. “It may be that no single index will be sufficient because of the complexity of the notion of segregation, involving as it does consideration of spatial pattern, unevenness of distribution, relative size of the segregated group, and the homogeneity of sub-areas, amongst others” (Duncan and Duncan, 1955:217).

Index parameters include such data as the number of black and white residents in the area and in each subarea, the size of the area and each subarea, and the distance between each pair of subareas. The subareas are frequently wards, census tracts, or census blocks. The Census Bureau first used census tracts for the 1910 census, but not until the 2000 census was every city and county divided into tracts. This raises two issues when comparing index values: 1) the area units may vary in size from one census to the next, or from one city to another, and 2) small area units are more sensitive to pockets of segregation than large units (Taeuber and Taeuber, 1965). The most meaningful comparisons are made when the area units are approximately the same size, and when the area units are small.

## **5.3 Methods**

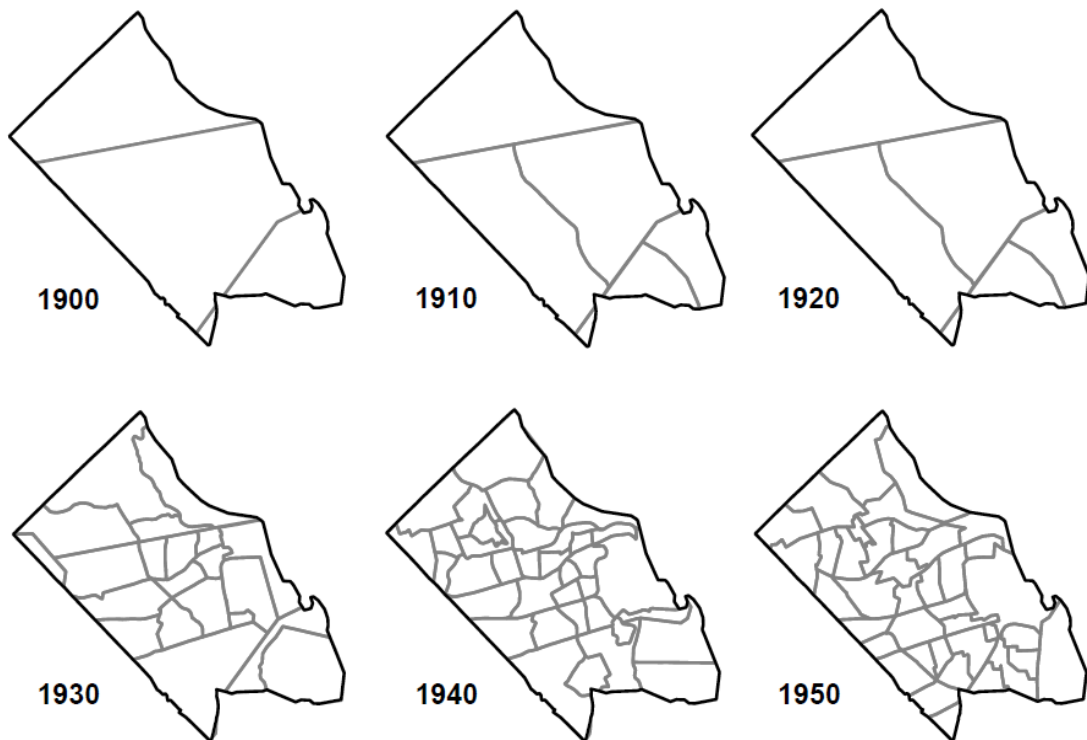
Using a mixed qualitative and quantitative case study method (Stake, 1995), this study explored Arlington’s residential patterns to discover if the community developed the patterns of a Southern city or of a Northern city. The data sources included census data, semi-structured interviews, oral histories, and deed records.

### **5.3.1 Data Collection Methods**

The study used two census data formats – manuscript census schedules from the twelfth through the sixteenth census (1900-1940) and aggregate census data from the seventeenth

through the nineteenth census (1950-1970). The manuscript data were first manually transferred into an Excel table as described in Chapter Three.

Prior to 1950, enumeration districts (ED) were the Census Bureau's units of enumeration for Arlington. As the County's population grew, the original ED were subdivided and reconfigured. Figure 10 illustrates why Arlington's ED are unsuitable for use with the segregation indexes; the ED changed frequently and the large units mask segregation.



**Figure 10: Arlington enumeration districts in 1900-1940 and census tracts in 1950**

To satisfy the requirement for 1900-1940 census data aggregated to small, consistent area units, a procedure was developed to define 'virtual blocks' in place of the ED. The

procedure assumes that when the census enumerators performed the actual census, they started at one end of a block, working their way around it before beginning the next block. Instructions to enumerators in 1900 confirm this assumption (U.S. Dept. of Interior, 1900:17): “If your district is in a town having a system of house numbers, the enumeration must be made by blocks or squares. Begin at one corner of some block, and proceed entirely around and through it before leaving it for another.”

The first step to define the virtual blocks is to transfer the manuscript data to an Excel database. At a minimum, household status and the race of each individual are required data columns. The second step is to sort the database by household status, grouping the rows for ‘head of household’ in the order that the households were enumerated. This results in a list of all the households in the order that they occur along the street. The race of the head of household is assigned to the entire household. Assign a block number to groups (virtual blocks) of contiguous households. The block size is arbitrary; for this study blocks of 20 households and larger blocks of 40 households were created. The third step is to count the number of white households and the number of black households that comprise each block and store that data with the block. For this research the virtual blocks were used as input to the segregation indexes for 1900-1940. Note that while census tracts are a set of individuals, virtual blocks are a set of households.

Aggregate census data identify the total number of black persons and white persons per census tract. The aggregate tract totals were loaded into an Excel table without modification for use as input to the segregation indexes for 1950-1970.

Census data revealed Arlington's residential patterns; the interviews revealed events in the history of the community that caused the patterns. We conducted the interviews during the fall of 2012. The snowball sampling method was used to identify interview participants (Weiss, 1994). For the residential patterns portion of the study a total of thirteen participants, representing three large black neighborhoods and five small settlements, were interviewed. All the participants for the residential patterns study grew up in Arlington. The methods used for collecting and processing the interview data are described in Chapter Four.

Because most black residents of the County who lived during the early portion of the study period are no longer alive, the interviews were augmented with oral histories of early residents. Including the oral histories revealed black settlements no longer in existence. The methods used for processing the oral histories are described in Chapter Four.

Land deeds were used to put dates on events the participants described. For example, land deeds revealed when the first African American purchased and then platted the land that became the settlement Ballston.

### **5.3.2 Data analysis methods**

The five segregation dimensions were measured, selecting one index to measure each dimension, using both the manuscript (virtual block) and the aggregate (census tract) data. A Python computer program was written to calculate the index values. The results for Arlington were then compared with equivalent results for other cities.

The analysis of the 1900-1940 Excel database included sorting it to discover the number of black and white households, the number and size of black settlements, the number and location of live-in black servants, the proportion of black families that owned or rented their homes, etc. Because each census was stored in a separate table, the above analysis was done for each census and the results were compared.

#### **5.4 Results**

Arlington's degree of segregation was measured on each of the five dimensions of segregation. The first three dimensions were measured using the 1950-1970 aggregate census data only. Those indexes require knowledge of the size and/or the location of the area unit. The size and location of the census tracts, the area unit of the 1950-1970 aggregate census data, is known. Because the virtual blocks have no known area size or location, they could not be used to measure the first three dimensions for the 1900-1940 censuses. The virtual blocks were used to measure the final two dimensions for the 1900-1940 censuses.

Variable definitions for all the equations in this section are found in Table 3.

**Table 3: Variable definitions for all index variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Definition</b>
A	Area of County
$a_i$	Area of tract i
n	Number of tracts
P	Proportion of African Americans in County
$p_i$	Proportion of African Americans in tract i
$P_{tt}$	Average distance between all tracts
$p_{xx}$	Average distance between black tracts
$p_{yy}$	Average distance between white tracts
T	Number of people in County
$t_i$	Number of people in tract i
X	Number of African Americans in County
$x_i$	Number of African Americans in tract i
$X_i$	Cumulative number of African Americans in ring i
Y	Number of whites in County
$y_i$	Number of whites in tract i
$Y_i$	Cumulative number of whites in ring i

#### **5.4.1 Centralization**

This dimension expresses the degree to which a group was clustered near the center of the city. The clustering is the result of both a push and a pull (Burgess, 1928) as white residents were pushed out of the city center by the growth of industry and pulled out to more attractive residential districts on the edges of the city. African Americans, unable to afford this change in lifestyle, tended to remain in the center, occupying the older and therefore cheaper housing. Over time the neighborhoods in the centers of affected cities became predominantly African American and the suburbs on the fringes became predominantly white. Table 4 contains evidence for the pull of city residents out to the



suburbs of selected metropolitan SMSAs, including the District. It compares the percent of residents of each SMSA located within the city in 1940 and again in 1950. The ‘Rate of suburbanization’ column contains the decrease in city residents in just ten years as residents of the SMSA moved to the suburbs. Note the high rate of suburbanization of the Washington, D.C. SMSA. Some of those District residents were pulled to the growing suburb of Arlington.

**Table 4: Rates of suburbanization for selected metropolitan areas.**  
**Source: Taeuber and Taeuber, 1965:153**

SMSA	Percent of SMSA population in the city		Rate of suburbanization
	1940	1950	1940-1950
Detroit	68.3%	61.3%	7.0
Cleveland	69.3%	62.4%	6.9
Philadelphia	60.4%	56.4%	4.0
St. Louis	55.7%	49.8%	5.9
Washington, D.C.	68.5%	54.8%	13.7
Baltimore	75.4%	67.6%	7.8

The Relative Centralization Index (RCE) (Massey and Denton, 1988) was used to measure centralization of Arlington’s African Americans. The index uses area subunits that form rings of increasing distance from the central business district. RCE was calculated by processing aggregate 1950-1970 tract level census data. Arlington is a small county so there were only five rings of tracts around the center tract.

$$RCE = (\sum_{i=1}^n X_{i-1}Y_i) - (\sum_{i=1}^n X_iY_{i-1})$$

RCE index values can range from -1.0 (whites clustered in the center of the city) to 1.0 (African Americans clustered in the center of the city). Arlington's RCE scores in Table 5 indicate no centralization of either racial group from 1950-1970. The slight increase in the RCE value from 1950-1960 and 1960-1970 is due to the location of the three large neighborhoods. By 1950 all but one of the settlements was gone. The first ring around the center tract contained the one remaining settlement. The second ring contained no settlements. The third ring contained all three of the large neighborhoods. The fourth and fifth rings contained no settlements. As African Americans moved out of the settlements into the three neighborhoods the population was increasingly located in the third ring, but with one small settlement close to the center.

Table 5: Segregation index scores for Arlington in 1900-1970

Dimension	Centralization	Clustering	Concentration	Evenness	Exposure
Index	Relative Centralization (RCE)	Spatial Proximity (SP)	Delta (DEL)	Dissimilarity (D)	Isolation ( $\alpha P_x$ )
Range	-1.0 – 1.0	1 - >1	0.0 – 1.0	0.0 – 1.0	0.0 – 1.0
Units	tract	tract	tract	20/40 block tract	20/40 block tract
1900				0.601 / 0.568	0.620 / 0.626
1910				0.756 / 0.684	0.627 / 0.614
1920				0.861 / 0.770	0.616 / 0.611
1930				0.912 / 0.891	0.623 / 0.672
1940				0.961 / 0.946	0.507 / 0.637
1950	-0.030	0.965	0.583	0.803	0.664
1960	0.050	0.963	0.613	0.811	0.765
1970	0.091	0.976	0.591	0.734	0.640

Centralization of African Americans did not occur in Arlington during Segregation.

Beginning with the buildup of the government workforce during World War I, many federal workers fled the congestion of the District, creating suburbs in outlying areas of Maryland and Virginia. Arlington was one area to which they fled; population totals indicate that most of the new residents were white. Rose (2009:156) describes this period:

In the decade between 1900 and 1910, the population of the County rose from 6,430 to 10,231. In the next ten years it moved up to 16,040 despite the annexation of a sizeable area by Alexandria City in 1915. Highways and the transportation system were improved and expanded ... Arlington's suburban character was intensified and it was well on its way to becoming what in fact it later was called, the "bedroom" of the District of Columbia.

Arlington's African American community was already well established in the three black neighborhoods when the whites arrived. In this respect Arlington's residential pattern matches a Southern pattern described by Taeuber and Taeuber (1965:56):

In the North, there has never been any significant amount of rural and village settlement by Negroes, and they have been excluded from nearly all new housing developments in the suburbs. In the South, by contrast, Negroes have long resided in many rural and village places that have been brought in to the metropolitan sphere as urban settlement expanded outward.

#### **5.4.2 Clustering**

The clustering dimension expresses the clustering together of racial neighborhoods in space. While the centralization dimension was a measure of the degree of clustering of racial neighborhoods relative to a central point, the clustering dimension is a measure of the degree of clustering of those same neighborhoods relative to each other.

The clustering of racial neighborhoods in cities is a twentieth century phenomenon, an artifact of the Great Migration. Few migrants settled in the District in the early years, but by the 1930s the numbers of in-migrants had increased. However, the volume of migrants to the District fell far short of the volume to large industrial cities like Chicago, Cleveland, and Detroit (Green, 1967). Even fewer migrants moved to Arlington. Those that arrived were moving into old, established, cohesive African American communities. The Spatial Proximity Index (SP) (White, 1986) was selected to measure clustering of Arlington's black settlements. The index employs a proximity grid with a row and

column for each area unit (38 rows and 38 columns for Arlington's 38 census tracts) containing '1' in the cells of contiguous tracts and '0' in all other cells. SP is the average proximity between members of the same group ( $P_{xx}$ ), the opposite group ( $P_{xy}$ ) and all groups ( $P_{tt}$ ), weighted by the proportion of the population that group represents. SP was calculated by processing aggregate 1950-1970 tract level census data.

$$P_{xx} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^n x_i x_j c_{ij}}{X^2} \quad P_{xy} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^n x_i y_j c_{ij}}{XY} \quad P_{tt} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^n t_i t_j c_{ij}}{T^2}$$

$$SP = \frac{XP_{xx} + YP_{yy}}{TP_{tt}}$$

Index values can range from 1 (no clustering of black tracts or white tracts) to values greater than 1 (clustering of black tracts or white tracts). Arlington's SP scores in Table 5 indicate no clustering from 1950-1970. While Arlington was not a destination city during the Great Migration, some migrants did arrive during that period from Southern states. In 1900 three percent of Arlington's African American community originated in states south of Virginia. By 1940 twelve percent of the African American community originated in states south of Virginia.

One participant, Anita, described the period prior to World War II, when African Americans moved to Green Valley from Southern Virginia:

[W]hen people came here they found property that was available. Just during the same time [a black builder] who migrated here, who was a

carpenter, was building homes and they just latched on to them, stayed and raised families. They would send back down to wherever they came from and brought other relatives up. ... They were building the Pentagon. All that drew a lot of people from the South here for work, from further down in Virginia here to work.

Southern African Americans moving to Arlington during the Great Migration came individually, not in waves. The existing black neighborhoods absorbed them without extreme crowding. A few of the study's participants' parents were part of the Great Migration.

Arlington was also subject to a different migration – a migration of white federal employees beginning early in the twentieth century after trolley and rail lines connected Arlington with the District. “People worked in Washington then. They had to commute. They did it by trolley and train. And that was considered the way to do it. They could live in the country, have a little bit of land, and have a house that was cheaper than in the city” (Leventhal, 2012). The white in-migration intensified during the New Deal and World War II, completely changing the complexion of the once rural County.

The new white residents required homes, and developers were quick to provide them.

Existing farms and several of the small black settlements were bought and cleared.

Residential segregation was an established fact by this time; African Americans were unwelcome in the new developments that replaced their settlements. Their only choice, if they were to remain in Arlington, was to move to one of the three black neighborhoods and buy or rent a home from another African American. Note on Figure 2 in Chapter

One the black settlements that disappeared during the study period. Ballston was such a settlement.

The Ballston settlement was located near the junction of two historic roads, Glebe Road and Wilson Boulevard. The black family of William Green purchased the land in 1880 from a white farmer, had it platted, and sold individual lots to other black families (Deed Book, F4:293). This was a very stable community. Twenty five families lived in Ballston in 1920; many of them were related; all of them owned their own homes. More than 75 percent of those same families appear on the 1930 and 1940 census. That the settlement was close knit is evident from the memories of James:

I remember how, thank God, how people treated me. They all treated me like I was their child. We were taught to respect everybody, and so it was just like the 25 families there, it was just like we were one family and they treated me like I was the baby of that family. The Turners, the Grangers, the Andersons, I had respect for them and it was like I was their youngest kid. ... We were all families but we were happily one family.

Once World War II ended and housing construction resumed, the land occupied by the Ballston settlement became very attractive to developers, who bought up Ballston properties. James recalled:

[T]hat was in '46. Soon after there were people trying to get our property... Across the street was Mr. Galloway, who was a minister. He was the last African American that sold out. He had a rickety little place. I can see him. Everything else was gone, but he held out. He didn't get

what he was asking for. I don't know how much he was asking for, but he didn't get it.

Mr. Galloway sold his property in 1951 (Deed Book, 174:362). Ballston's families scattered to the remaining neighborhoods. James and his new wife moved to Green Valley.

#### **5.4.3 Concentration**

The concentration dimension expresses the relative amount of physical space occupied by a given group. If the group lives under very crowded conditions they are residentially concentrated.

The Delta Index (DEL) (Massey and Denton, 1988) was selected to measure the concentration of Arlington's African Americans. Residents crowded together in high rise tenements are concentrated; residents of one story houses with gardens are not. The inputs to this index include the area and number of African Americans in each census tract, and the total area and number of African Americans in the County. DEL compares the density of African Americans living in census tracts with the density of African Americans in the County. DEL was calculated by processing aggregate census data from 1950-1970.

$$DEL = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n \left| \frac{x_i}{X} - \frac{a_i}{A} \right|}{2}$$

Index values can range from 0.0 (no concentration) to 1.0. The index values can be interpreted as the proportion of all African Americans in the County who would have to move to another census tract in order for all African Americans to be able to enjoy



maximum physical space. Arlington's DEL scores in Table 5 indicate only moderate concentration of African Americans from 1950 through 1970.

While the black neighborhoods grew more segregated, they never resembled the ghettos found in large cities such as Chicago or New York. None of the neighborhoods contained buildings more than two stories tall, and most families lived in garden apartments or single family homes such as the house in Figure 11.



**Figure 11: House in Negro quarter in Rosslyn, Virginia, in 1937.**  
Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, LC-USF34-015608-D,  
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/fsa.8b31475/>, accessed 2/10/2013.

#### 5.4.4 Evenness

The evenness dimension expresses the differential distribution of two groups within the total space. Unevenness is detected if the proportion of African Americans and whites in each tract is not the same as the proportion of African Americans and whites in the entire County. Of the many indexes that have been developed to measure evenness, the Dissimilarity Index (D) (James and Taeuber, 1985) was selected. The index has a long history of use in racial studies (Farley, 1977; Darden, 1995; Massey and Denton, 1987; Massey, 1979, DeFina and Hannon, 2009). The value of the index is insensitive to the relative size of the group, but very sensitive to the size of the tracts. Small pockets of segregation within a large tract are not detected using this index. Lieberson explains “[T]he smaller the spatial units the greater the possible index of segregation...If tracts were broken down into blocks, then the index based on blocks would be at least as high as that obtained for tracts...” (1963:34).

This index does not require information about the location or size of the area units so D was calculated using virtual blocks for 1900-1940 and census tracts for 1950-1970. To test Lieberson’s assertion, two sizes of virtual blocks were used – 20 households and 40 households.

$$D = \frac{\sum_i t_i |p_i - P|}{2TP(1 - P)}$$

Index values can range between 0.0, (total evenness) to 1.0, (total unevenness). An index value greater than 0.6 indicates high segregation, and 1.0 indicates that every tract is either all white or all black. Arlington’s D scores are found in Table 5.

This index discovered significant unevenness in the distribution of African Americans in Arlington during Segregation. As Lieberson predicted, the 40 household block scores are slightly lower than the 20 household blocks. Table 6 compares Arlington's dissimilarity results with other cities. The 1940 values used city blocks for all cities except Arlington. The Arlington value, the second highest in the table, is based on 40 household virtual blocks. For all cities in the table, the 1940 city block values are higher than the 1950 tract values. The drop in Arlington's values when using tracts instead of virtual blocks has several explanations: 1) the dividing line between two otherwise white tracts bisects the settlement called Hatfield, putting half its residents in one tract and half in the other, 2) seven percent of the African American community lived as servants in otherwise white tracts, 3) the black tracts were slightly larger than the black neighborhoods, causing whites to be included in the black tracts.

Table 6: Dissimilarity Index scores for selected cities.

Source: 1Taeuber and Taeuber, 1965:39-40; 2Taeuber and Taeuber, 1965:54; 3Massey and Denton, 1987:815-816

City	1940 <sup>1</sup> (blocks)	1950 <sup>2</sup> (tracts)	1960 <sup>2</sup> (tracts)	1970 <sup>3</sup> (tract)
Arlington	94.6	80.3	81.1	73.4
Baltimore	90.1		89.6	81.9
Boston	86.3	82.5	83.9	81.2
Charleston, SC	60.0		79.5	
Chicago	95.0	89.0	89.8	91.9
Cleveland	92.0	85.3	84.8	90.8
Dayton	91.5	86.9	88.0	86.9
Detroit	89.9	80.4	79.9	88.4
Greensboro, NC	93.1	77.7	83.4	65.4
Indianapolis	90.4	75.2	76.2	81.7
Milwaukee	92.9	85.8	85.0	90.5
Philadelphia	88.0	73.3	78.5	79.5
Pittsburgh	82.0	68.6	74.3	75.0
San Diego, CA	84.4	65.8	68.9	83.4
Seattle	82.2		79.7	81.9
Washington, D.C.	81.0		79.7	81.1

Once they sold their homes, black families had few housing choices. The new white developments were segregated. An instrument to keep the developments white was the restrictive covenant. This contractual agreement between property owners was effected by inserting the following words into the deed: "...nor shall said property or any portion thereof to be sold, leased, or bequeathed to any person not of the Caucasian Race".<sup>2</sup>

Until 1948, persons violating a covenant could be taken to court. In 1948, the Supreme Court decision – Shelly v. Kraemer, made covenants unenforceable by the courts (Ruble,

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<sup>2</sup> These words were inserted in many deeds at the Arlington County Office of Land Records.

2010). However, restrictive covenants were still common in Arlington until passage of the Fair Housing Act made them illegal (Leventhal, 2012). Therefore, prospective black home buyers were limited to purchasing homes from other African Americans, and over time the only homes owned by other African Americans were located in the three black neighborhoods.

A new principal arrived in 1941 – the federal government (Goldberg, 1992). During World War II the War Department outgrew its buildings and prepared to build the Pentagon in Arlington, partially on land occupied by the black settlements of Queen City and East Arlington (Figure 12). Exercising eminent domain, the government condemned all the houses in the settlements, gave the residents less than thirty days to move, paid each household \$2,050 for their property (Vogel, 2007), and leveled the two settlements, evicting over 220 black families. Eunice, who was 12 on the day her family moved, reminisced:

It was just such a sad story, because so many people had nowhere to go ... no idea of what to do. All the government was thinking about was building the Pentagon, and running us off. And it worked that way too. It was sad, a sad situation ... you could see people standing outside with their few belongings. ... and some of those people had no place to go.



**Figure 12: East Arlington in 1910.**

**Photo shows unpaved streets, no gutters, no sidewalks. By 1941 when it was leveled to make way for the Pentagon, Arlington County still had not run streets, sidewalks, curbing, gutters, water or sewer to East Arlington. Reproduced with permission of the Virginia Room, Arlington Public Library.**

The supply of housing during the War was extremely limited. In 1942 Arlington's Housing Registry Office received 4,300 applications. They were able to fill just 650 of them (Rose, 2009). The newly homeless residents of Queen City and East Arlington moved wherever they could find room. Eunice and nine family members moved into a wooden shed with a dirt floor. Vincion's family moved into a government supplied trailer (Figure 13). He remembered:

We were from Queen City. We had to move because we were where they were going to put the Pentagon. They put us out. After we moved from

there, when they started building the Pentagon, we lived in a [government supplied] trailer in Green Valley for two years ... Then we moved to Johnson's Hill and we lived in a military style home there, like barracks that [the government] had built, because we didn't have any other place to live.



**Figure 13: Arlington, Virginia. Farm Security Administration trailer camp in 1942.**  
General view of the camp from the roof of the community building. Source Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, LC-USF34-100, accessed 2/10/2013.

### 5.4.5 Exposure

The exposure dimension expresses the potential for contact within or between members of the racial groups.

The Isolation Index ( ${}_xP_x$ ) (Massey and Denton, 1988) was selected to measure the exposure of African Americans to other African Americans, e.g., the percent of African Americans in the census tract of the average black resident. The amount of exposure an African American experiences to other African Americans depends not only on the concentration of African Americans, but also on the number of African Americans relative to the number of whites in the community, e.g., if the same proportion of African Americans live in every census tract but the city is fifty percent black, then the average black resident will be exposed to more African Americans than if the city is five percent black.

This index does not require information about the location or size of the area units so  ${}_xP_x$  was calculated using virtual blocks for the 1900-1940 censuses and census tracts for the 1950-1970 censuses. Two sizes of virtual blocks were used – 20 households and 40 households.

$${}_xP_x = \sum_{i=1}^n \left( \frac{x_i}{X} \frac{x_i}{t_i} \right)$$

Index values can range from 0.0 (no probability of exposure to another African American) to 1.0 (100 percent probability of exposure to another African American). An index value greater than 0.5 indicates that African Americans are more likely to have African Americans than whites as neighbors. Arlington's  ${}_xP_x$  scores in Table 5 indicate a fairly high exposure of African Americans to other African Americans.



The scores indicate no trend over time; they do not consistently increase nor decrease from one census to the next. This suggests that two phenomena are at work coincidentally. Arlington's black neighborhoods grew denser, the black population slowly increased as African Americans were pushed out of the small settlements into the three black neighborhoods, so that this would cause the scores to increase from one census to the next. However, the proportion of African Americans to whites decreased with each census, so that this would cause the scores to decrease from one census to the next. The result of these countervailing trends was to produce a stasis.

Table 7 compares Arlington's  $xP_x$  scores with those of fifteen other cities with large black populations. The average of those 15 scores is 0.666; Arlington is slightly lower than average.

**Table 7: Isolation Index scores for selected cities in 1970.**

Source: The figures in this table come from Massey and Denton (1987:815-816). The Arlington figure was calculated using 1970 aggregate census data.

City	1970 (tract) <sup>1</sup>
Arlington	.640
Baltimore	.772
Boston	.567
Chicago	.855
Cleveland	.819
Dayton	.733
Detroit	.759
Greensboro, NC	.561
Indianapolis	.645
Milwaukee	.739
Norfolk/Virginia Beach	.735
Philadelphia	.682
Pittsburgh	.535
San Diego, CA	.419
Seattle	.427
Washington, D.C.	.772

## **5.5 Discussion**

Arlington's African American community was fairly integrated in 1900, living in small black clusters, segregated from whites more by income than by race. The County displayed neither the residential patterns typical of the North nor those typical of the South. The Southern pattern of small African American communities around the periphery of the city, particularly built on land deemed undesirable by whites, was not

evident. Arlington's black neighborhoods were found rather evenly dispersed all though the County, on land that is now considered very desirable. As is evident from their names, all three of the black neighborhoods (Halls Hill, Johnson's Hill, and Green Valley) are built on hills with a view of the District. Also not detected was a phenomenon described by Hoyt (1939:68) where as the proportion of minority residents increased so did the level of segregation: "...a far smaller degree of [segregation] tends to obtain in cities having a small number of nonwhites, or where nonwhites constitute only a small proportion of the total population." In Arlington as the white population increased exponentially, the level of segregation increased even as the proportion of African Americans decreased.

Arlington's African American community has its roots in the South. Almost all the participants could trace their families several generations back to an ancestor who lived in slavery. However, the white community has much more complicated roots. The original whites were Southern with Southern attitudes about African Americans, but that community was soon eclipsed by the huge in-migration of white federal workers whose roots can only be guessed. Certainly they were not all Southern. While the whites coveted the land African Americans lived on, and while they were eventually successful in pushing African Americans out of the little settlements (but not out of the three neighborhoods), it was accomplished with power and money rather than with violence. African Americans were not newcomers. They had been there as long as the original whites and much longer than the in-migrating whites. Coming from an agricultural background, they appreciated the efficacy of owning the land they lived on and sacrificed

to buy it, giving proof to Coleman's theory (1990). Even African Americans who worked humble jobs as farm laborers, servants, and railroad porters owned their own homes. In 1900, 59 percent of the black families were homeowners and by 1920, 64 percent of the families were homeowners. Such a high level of home ownership put the African American community at an advantage when developers began scooping up land to build housing developments for the whites. Because they owned their homes, African Americans were not so easily pushed aside.

In 1900 half the black families lived in settlements of thirteen households or fewer. They were able to select a neighborhood for what Logan and Molotch (1987) referred to as its amenities. By 1940 half the black families lived in settlements of 140 households or more. They had three neighborhoods from which to choose, so amenities were less important than an available dwelling or land on which to build. Schelling (1971) identified three types of segregation: organizationally enforced, economically induced, and individual behavior. All three types were at work moving African Americans out of the small settlements into the neighborhoods. Forces outside the black community - residential developers, the County, the federal government - coveted land African Americans owned and occupied. One by one they persuaded or coerced black families to sell their land and move; because of residential segregation the only place they could move was a black neighborhood. As a consequence, by 1950 almost all the settlements were gone. Taeuber's theory of racial discrimination (1975) was borne out, as everyone in the community - the doctor, the minister, the laborer, and the domestic worker - lived in the same neighborhood, segregated by color, not income.

Segregation indexes measure residential patterns. Those patterns are artifacts of events that occurred well before the measuring. The events that shaped Arlington's residential patterns result from Arlington's proximity to the District and the federal government. Selecting the correct index to use should be informed by events in the community's history. If a particular event did not take place there will be no artifact to measure, and the index will give misleading results.

The indexes tell not only what did happen, but also what did not happen. Measuring the centralization dimension revealed that Arlington's whites did not flee the city and move to the suburbs, leaving African Americans behind. Arlington was the suburb that the whites fled to, and the African American community was already established when they arrived. Developers nudged aside small pockets of black families living in settlements to make way for white developments, but had no effect on the contours of the three black neighborhoods.

Measuring the clustering dimension and the concentration dimension revealed that the Great Migration passed Arlington by. There was no trace of the slow expansion of black neighborhoods under the weight of thousands and thousands of in-migrating African Americans. Arlington's black neighborhoods simply experienced infill as additional African Americans arrived. Because the African American community never grew very large, there was enough land for everyone to live on in little one- and two-story frame houses. There were no apartment buildings, no high rise projects.

A neighborhood's well being and stability depends on the behavior of the neighbors (Massey and Denton, 1993). This is particularly true in a segregated neighborhood where

poverty is endemic. If one resident chooses to neglect his/her property, indulge in crime, or exhibit other antisocial behavior it can spread to the neighbors. This did not appear to happen in the three neighborhoods. Perhaps the fact that so many of the residents were related to each other, the fact that no one could (and therefore no one did) move out, the fact that the neighborhoods were so small that everyone knew everyone else's business, helped the residents to develop a strong sense of community. Wilma stated "You knew everyone. You knew every single house that was in Halls Hill at that time. You knew every person and they knew you. It was really a tight-knit community."

Arlington grew from a relatively integrated collection of farm settlements in 1900 to an extremely segregated, majority white suburb in 1970, as the small black settlements disappeared and their residents moved to the black neighborhoods. This is reflected in Arlington's scores on the evenness dimension and the exposure dimension. In 1900 half the black families lived in settlements of thirteen households or fewer. By 1940 half the black families lived in settlements of 140 households or more. Forces outside the African American community – residential developers, the County, the federal government - coveted land African Americans owned and occupied. One by one they convinced, and occasionally forced black families to sell their land and move; because of residential segregation the only place they could move to in Arlington was another black neighborhood. By 1950 almost all the small black settlements were gone.

## **5.6 Conclusions**

Arlington's development is unlike the typical story of urban growth during Segregation.

The African American community was located between the North (Washington, D.C.)

and the South (the State of Virginia). The residential patterns that emerged during Segregation were typical of neither. Historically, African Americans in-migrated to a city in search of work, rapidly grew in numbers, and slowly pushed into the white neighborhoods. The whites then retreated to more affluent areas of the city and beyond to the suburbs. In Arlington the African American community was entrenched in their settlements and neighborhoods; more than half of them owned their homes. Whites began in-migrating in search of a home outside of the District but within an easy commute. The whites grew in numbers with the rapid growth of the federal government, beginning with World War I, and then the New Deal, World War II, and the Cold War. They did not push African Americans out of the County, but they did succeed in pushing them out of their small settlements into the three existing black neighborhoods. Those neighborhoods were not located on the less desirable areas along the edges of the city, but rather were dispersed evenly through the County on very desirable land. After integration African Americans did not move out of their neighborhoods into the white areas, but remained where they were, giving proof to Uhlenberg's hypothesis of migration. Those neighborhoods have since gradually become integrated as both whites and people of other races have moved in.

## **CHAPTER SIX: OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE<sup>3</sup>**

### **6.1 Abstract**

#### **6.1.1 Background**

Most scholarship on occupational choice describes a period from childhood through young adulthood when individuals select the occupation that best satisfies their needs based on their values, interests, education, and environment. In Arlington during the study period, environment - both the constraints of segregation and proximity to the District and the federal government - had an enormous impact on occupational choice for the African American community.

#### **6.1.2 Methods**

Using a qualitative case study method, including mixed data sources (interviews, oral histories, and qualitative census data), this paper describes the types of work done by members of Arlington's African American community during Segregation.

#### **6.1.3 Results**

At the beginning of Segregation farming, brick yard labor, general labor, and domestic work supported most African Americans. Over time as the government grew and as both

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<sup>3</sup> The majority of the material included in this chapter was submitted as a manuscript and is in review: Perry, N., Reybold, L.E., and Waters, N.M., 2012, "Everybody was Looking for a Good Government Job": Occupational Choice during Segregation in Arlington, Virginia. The data gathering and analysis were done by Nancy Perry, and the writing mainly by Nancy Perry. All authors contributed important intellectual content and provided critical review of the papers.



the Pentagon and large numbers of white federal workers moved to Arlington, many new sources of employment became available, including Civil Service employment, while existing farm and factory work were obliterated.

#### **6.1.4 Conclusions**

This study discovered that sharing a boundary with the District and the federal government represented both an advantage and a liability to Arlington's African American community. The advantage was abundant Civil Service jobs. The liability was loss of brick yard labor and farm labor as the brick yards were leveled to allow construction of the Pentagon and the farms were subdivided to make way for new white residential developments.

#### **6.2 Background**

The previous chapter examined the residential patterns of Arlington's African American community during the first seventy years of the twentieth century, noting how African Americans became progressively more limited in where they could live as Arlington grew from a bucolic farming community into a white suburb of the District. This chapter examines the impact that the proximity to the federal government and the in-migration of whites had on the occupational opportunities of Arlington's African Americans during Segregation, a time when occupational opportunities were limited for most African Americans.

During Segregation, entrepreneurial Arlington African Americans supported themselves by running their own businesses. A few individuals worked in the building trades, a few opened repair shops, a few ran small groceries and retail shops, a few provided barbering,

babysitting, or cleaning services. These businesses were small, reflecting their limited customer base; most African Americans satisfied all but their most basic business needs at black-owned enterprises in the District (Perry and Waters, 2012). However, the majority of the County's black workers were wage earners.

The state adopted a new constitution in 1902 that disadvantaged the African American community with literacy tests, poll taxes, and segregated schools, theaters, and transportation (Guild, 1969). However, no provisions in the new constitution forbade African Americans from working with whites. They were unnecessary; society enforced separation of the races, limiting black occupational choice.

The manuscript census schedules list the occupation of each enumerated individual. As white federal workers began migrating to Arlington, the variety of jobs available to African Americans increased. Figure 14 shows the correlation between the total County population and the number of job types available to black workers. An expanding population spelled the need for more shops, services and industries, which in turn spelled increased occupational choices. However, increased choices do not necessarily translate to improved choices. In 1900 African Americans were working the least desirable jobs from a small pool of job types. By 1940 they were working the least desirable jobs from a much larger pool of job types. In 1900 no African Americans were working at the country clubs. By 1940 the clubs hired African Americans to work as caddies, as servers in the club dining room, as short order cooks in the snack bar. They did not hire them to work as accountants in the office, as the business manager, as the club 'pro'. In 1900 most workers held jobs on farms, in the brick yards, or as general laborers and domestic

workers. By 1940 the farms were replaced by ever expanding white residential neighborhoods, the last remaining brick yard was on the verge of being closed, a much smaller proportion of African Americans were filling jobs as general laborers. Instead, African Americans were working in jobs that did not even exist in 1900 including Civil Service jobs. The Appendix is a list of job types worked by Arlington's African Americans as listed on the 1900-1940 manuscript censuses, illustrating how limited the occupational opportunities were for the black community even as the number of job types grew with each census. The 1940 list includes the gas station attendant but not the gas station owner. The grave digger is there but not the funeral home director. Nurse's aides made the list but no nurses.

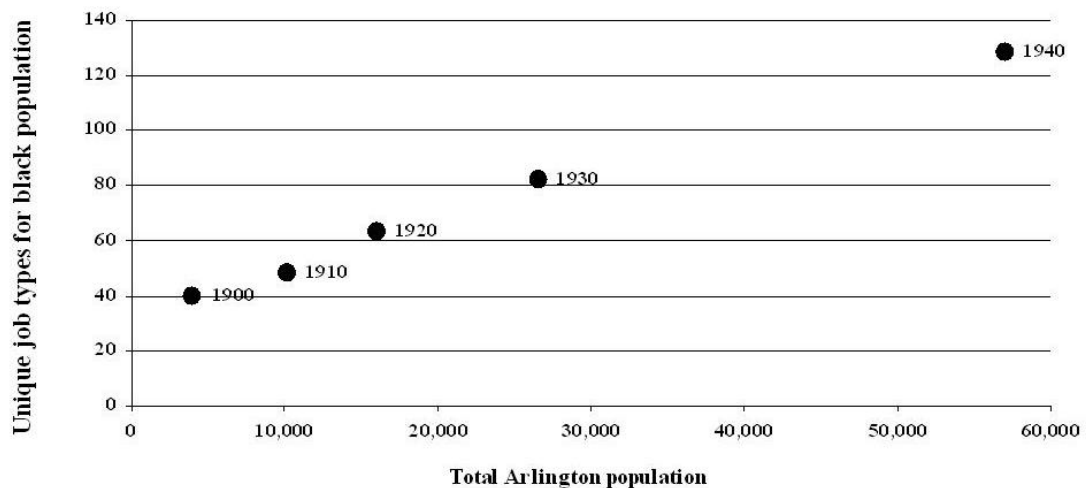


Figure 14: Correlation of Arlington population to black job types in 1900-1940.

For years social scientists have analyzed the process of occupational choice. While theories abound and each theory is unique, all agree that selecting an occupation is a long process beginning in childhood and extending through young adulthood or even later. Each theory emphasizes the role that social constraints such as racial segregation play in informing the individual choice.

For example, Ginzberg (1988) describes the process as a series of age specific stages, beginning in early childhood where children consider any/every occupation, continuing in early adolescence where they narrow down their choices, until young adulthood where they take action to make their occupational choice a reality. Their final choice is determined by 1) their level of educational achievement, 2) their emotional response to the environment, 3) their individual value system determining the 'value' they place on various occupations, and 4) reality - the limitations imposed by the environment. Racial segregation was a limitation on the occupational choices of Arlington's African American community.

Like all children, Arlington's black boys and girls began their childhood having no understanding of the limitations that segregation would put on their adult careers.

Gottfredson (1981) says that small children accept all occupations as possible choices. Over time they become aware of their gender, social class, intelligence, interests, competencies, and values. As they mature they focus on occupations they deem most appropriate based on their maturing self concept. Where occupational requirements conflict with the child's self concept, a compromise takes place "...largely as a natural process of learning what is typical and acceptable within one's surroundings long before

youngsters enter the job market” (1981:564). Seeing the occupational choices of the adults in their environment helped them understand the occupations they too could aspire to, but also the occupations they wanted to avoid.

Blau (1956) describes occupational choice as a series of crossroads in the individual’s life, decision points that winnow the occupational alternatives. The final career choice reflects a compromise between the individual’s estimation of the value of the work and his/her ability to do the work. The winnowing process is influenced by factors within the individual’s control (education, personality, values, social standing) and factors outside his/her control (racial prejudice, market demand, job requirements).

Cultural values and work values guide individuals when they are making an occupational choice. Arlington’s children learned the cultural value of responsibility and the work value of diligence from watching their parents struggle under Segregation’s constraints to take care of them. Brown (2002) said that cultural and work values combine with other factors in our environment to either limit or encourage occupational choice.

Work is done within a work environment. When choosing an occupation the individual is also choosing that environment. Holland (1985) defined six major work environments and the occupations within each environment. Within their preferred environment, individuals select an occupation that they are familiar with, and that satisfies their assessment of themselves. Their choice is constrained by limitations imposed by society. Occupation seekers targeted by racial segregation choose from the subset of occupations open to their race.

All of the above theories recognize the role that societal constraints play in occupational choice. Segregation was a deciding factor in the occupational choices of Arlington's African American community. Arlington was unlike almost every other segregated town. While it was once part of the Confederacy, it lies directly across the Potomac River from the District and the federal government. This research explored the limitations on occupational choice within the African American community living in Arlington during Segregation, and the impact that Arlington's proximity to the District had on those choices. While race remains to this day significant to occupational choice, the focus for this paper is limited to the years 1900-1970.

### **6.3 Methods**

Thousands of African Americans in communities across the United States lived and worked under the constraints of segregation, each community with its own particular set of circumstances, so a study of black occupational choice during Segregation must be specific to the context where it occurs. This study of occupational choice is an intrinsic case study, an optimal choice when the focus of inquiry is "the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (Stake, 1995: xi). The study explores the impact that Arlington's unique geography had on black occupational choice.

#### **6.3.1 Data collection methods**

The study incorporated various data sources including interviews, oral histories, and census data. The primary qualitative data source was semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted during the summer of 2012. Snowball sampling was used

(Weiss, 1994) to identify study participants for interviews. The fourteen participants, eight women and six men, ranged in age from seventy-seven through ninety-three years of age, with an average age of eighty-four, and were employed during their adult years. Members of the sample came from each of the three larger black neighborhoods as well as three of the smaller settlements. The oldest participant went to work after graduating high school in 1939; most participants entered the workforce in the 1940s. Each participant was given pages from the 1920, 1930, and/or 1940 manuscript census listing the participant's family. These pages helped to spark conversations about the participant's occupation ('occupation' is a data column on the census page). The methods used for collecting the interview data are described in Chapter Four. The interviews were augmented with oral histories. The lives of the sample of participants did not represent the entire time span of the study. The oral histories added data about occupations that no longer existed by the time the participants were old enough to go to work, so including the oral histories increased the variety of occupations represented.

Census data, both aggregate census data from 1900 through 1970 and manuscript census data from 1900 through 1940, were incorporated into the study. The manuscript data columns used for this study include the age, gender, family status, and occupation of the individual.

### **6.3.2 Data analysis methods**

As the data sources are mixed, the analysis methods are similarly mixed, applying the appropriate analysis method to each data source. The interview transcripts and the oral

histories were analyzed using the techniques of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), as described in Chapter Four).

The Excel tables containing the manuscript census data were sorted first by race and occupation to determine the number of African Americans in each occupational field. They were sorted by race, gender, and occupation to determine the main occupations worked by black women and the main occupations worked by black men. Because each census was stored in a separate table, the above analysis was done for each census, and then the results were plotted on a graph and analyzed. Manuscript census data identified the types of occupations worked by African Americans, the percent of the black working population in each occupational category, and the percent of the black population engaged in work.

The aggregate census data were analyzed to calculate the percent of African Americans living in each census tract and the percent of African Americans working in each of the occupational categories identified by the Census Bureau. This could only be done for 1950, 1960, and 1970 censuses as 1950 is the first year when the Census Bureau used census tracts as the area of enumeration in Arlington.

## **6.4 Results**

### **6.4.1 Preparing for work – career training opportunities**

Holland (1985) stated that an individual's occupational choice is constrained by his environment, including the schools where the individual receives his career training.

Arlington's segregated schools were inferior, leaving their graduates ill prepared for their eventual careers. The only black high school in the County, Hoffman-Boston School of



Negroes, opened in 1930 (Rose, 2009). Black Arlington teachers were paid less than their white counterparts (Rose, 2009). Johnson (1970) says that it was typical in the South for black teachers and other employees to receive lower wages than whites. He posits that this was based on the assumption that African Americans have lower living standards and requirements. When asked how they would rewrite their careers if they could do so, many of the participants mentioned that they would have liked to teach, but said that black teachers were paid so little at the time that they could not afford to do so. The County spent less on black school buildings and supplies. Susan, from Johnson's Hill, told about her teacher's trips to white Washington-Lee High School to collect discarded books for use by the children at Hoffman-Boston:

It was "separate but equal" they called it. We got the books from North Arlington. The teachers would go get the books and bring them and we would clean them up. We would have to erase all the junk out of them and everything.

Mary, whose parents sent her to school in the District, said:

The teachers at Hoffman-Boston were very good but they just didn't have the things to teach with because they got the leftover books from Washington-Lee. All the teachers did the best they could, but they just didn't have the equipment.

The high school's physical plant was substandard. Vincion, who attended Hoffman-Boston and went on to be a custodian in the Arlington Public School System said:

During some of the winter months when we were going to school there was no heat in the building... So instead of me staying in class I went down and learned about the furnace. And I got that junker going and I got heat in the building. So part of my day was shot.

Hoffman-Boston provided little career training. According to Susan, a Hoffman-Boston graduate, the school offered 'shop' classes for boys and home economics classes for girls. Typing classes were available for everyone who could provide their own typewriter; the typing classrooms at Hoffman-Boston lacked typewriters until the early 1950s (Coates, 1991).

The District's black schools were considered the best black school system in the country (Green, 1967). Because of their excellent reputation and because black teachers in the District by law were paid the same as white teachers, black teachers from all over the country competed to teach in the District's black schools (Birmingham, 1977). The District's schools were funded by Congress (Green, 1967). A teacher from Halls Hill said (Johnson, 2000):

But I always said I wanted to be a teacher but I will not teach in Virginia because you don't make any money. So I taught in Washington. Now that's one area where black and white teachers made the same money ... [M]y salary was the same to begin with as a white teacher would have been.

Most participants' families sent their children to District schools. Technically, Arlington's black students were not allowed to attend District schools once Hoffman-

Boston was built, although an exception was made for children whose parents worked for the federal government. However, many participants had relatives living in the District and their parents enrolled them in District schools using the relative's address. Ten of the fourteen participants attended high school in the District. A resident from Halls Hill whose father was a laborer for the Department of the Interior said (Deskins, 2001):

“When your parents worked in the federal government, you didn't have to pay to go to school in the District, you know. But a whole lot of kids out here went; they just gave an address in Washington.”

Most of the participants attended Armstrong Technical High School, studying fields such as printing, engineering, drafting, and architecture as well as the usual high school subjects. Students who were destined for college were also taught college preparatory subjects. One participant who went through Armstrong's printing program was so skilled that he was hired by a white printing shop immediately upon graduation. In time he was the highest ranked printer at the Government Printing Office, printing the Congressional Record and the Warren Report.

Two of the participants attended the District's Cardozo Business High School, focusing on business, accounting, and secretarial courses, with college preparatory classes for those who wanted them. Students who intended to work after graduation were well prepared in typing and shorthand before they graduated. One of the participants attended Cardozo's college prep business courses, graduated with a scholarship, and eventually earned a degree in business administration from Howard University in the District.

#### **6.4.2 Laboring on the farms**

Black employment in the first quarter of the twentieth century reflects Arlington's farming roots. Figure 15 was created based on the occupational titles used by the census. Over half of the farm workers were black in the 1900 census, and almost all were male. Farmers and farm laborers are included in the 'Farms' totals. Prior to the twentieth century, Arlington was largely farmland (Netherton and Netherton, 1987), first worked by slaves (Rose, 2009) and later by black farmers and farm laborers. Black employment in the first quarter of the twentieth century reflects those farming roots. Farm laborers were counted in all parts of the County in early censuses; later censuses found them only in northern census districts. Anita's grandfather supported his family with a truck farm near his home:

My grandfather had every kind of farming thing in that little space that he had. We had three kinds of cherry trees, we had pears, and not many apples but I think he had one apple tree called crab apple which you couldn't eat because they are so sour. But we had good grapes. Oh, we had grapes...My grandfather used to take that produce down to Washington Circle in the District and sell it. That was in Georgetown. That is how he supported himself and his family.

The proportion of black workers who labored on farms gradually fell from 24 percent in 1900 to one percent in 1940. By 1950 the decennial census records no farms within the boundaries of the County. Black farm employment evaporated as farms were consumed by housing developments for the new white residents, many of them federal employees. Because of growing residential segregation, the African American community was

constrained to living in the existing black neighborhoods, which grew progressively more crowded, while the small black settlements and settlements gradually disappeared.

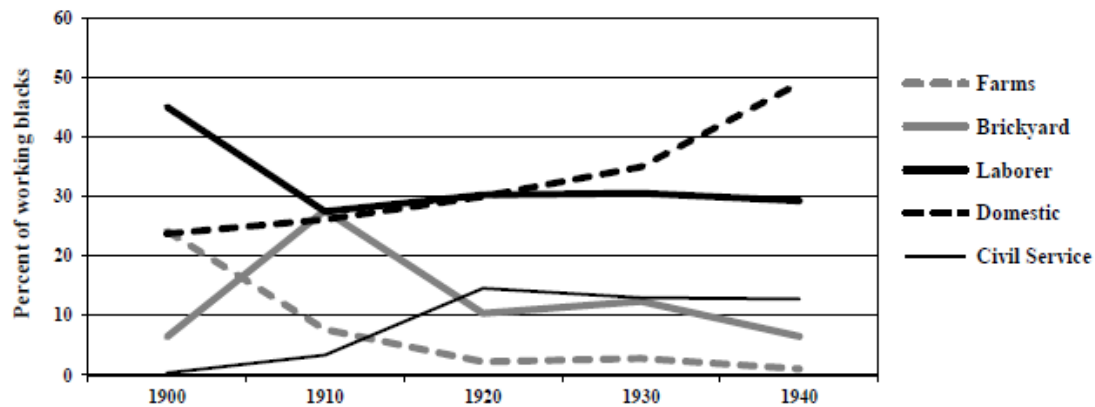


Figure 15: Black employment in Arlington in 1900-1940

### 6.4.3 Working in the brick yards

A number of brick yards were established parallel to the Potomac River in Arlington, taking advantage of rich clay deposits located along the river. These brick yards were documented as early as the 1870 census, when 4 percent of Arlington's African Americans were listed as brick yard laborers. In the 1900 census 80 percent of the brick yard laborers were black men. Figure 16, a fragment of an 1878 map of Arlington (inset) (1878 Alexandria County Virginia), shows (in ellipse) five brick yards: Appleman & Bros, West Bros, Potomac Brick Works, Smitson Brick Yard, and Adamantine Brick Co. One of the largest of these was West Bros (Figure 17). Bricks from this company were used to build the White House, the Pentagon, the U.S. Supreme Court building and the Capitol (Mackey, 1907). Brick yard laborers were counted in southern census districts

through the 1940 census. The proportion of blacks laboring in the brick yards peaked in the 1910 census and gradually fell off.

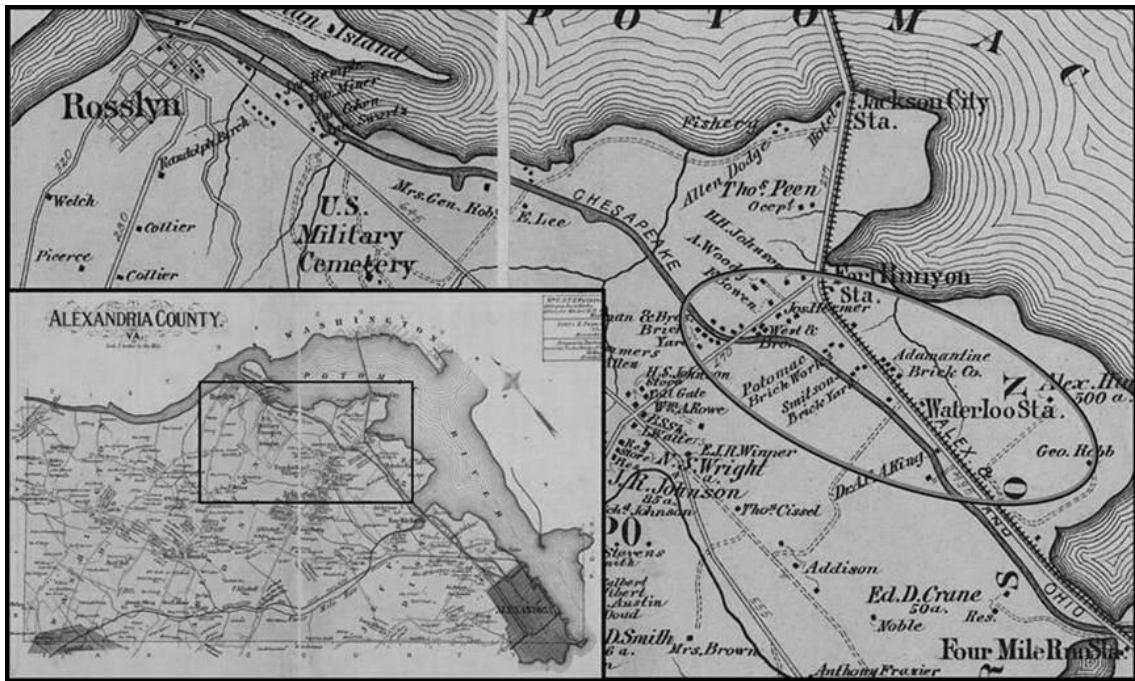


Figure 16: Arlington brick yards in 1878.  
(1878 Alexandria County Virginia), Permission = public domain in the U.S.

Work in the brick yards was unpleasant. Vincion, describing his memories of the yards, said:

I visited the brick yard as a kid. I remember it being really hot in those places. The kilns that they used were like Eskimo huts...You could go inside and go down a little ways – a lot of heat. I don't know how people could stay down in there. They had to go in to place the bricks and they had to go in to get them out. They were still hot when they took them out.

They didn't let them cool down first because they were making them so fast. It was a really hard job.



**Figure 17: West Bros Brick Yard.**  
Reproduced with permission of the Virginia Room, Arlington Public Library.

The brick yards offered work not only to Arlington African Americans, but also to African Americans from nearby cities who commuted to Arlington to work. Vincion grew up in Queen City. He recalled:

A lot of people from Queen City worked for the brick yards. A lot of people came from all over to work there. I know a gentleman...and he lived all the way outside of Charlottesville, and he would come up to work in the brick yard. There wasn't much work down there, it was all farms, so he would come up [to Arlington] to work and then he went back home. A lot of people came up here to work, worked all week, and then went home for the weekends.

Other employment opportunities arose in support of the brick yard laborers. Florence, who was born in East Arlington, reminisced:

I knew people who used to prepare meals and take to the people who worked in the brick yards. I wouldn't say it was catering, but they would prepare meals and carry it down, lunch or dinner. I think they got paid at the end of the week, when the people that worked there got paid.

This employment source ended abruptly in 1941 when the federal government in its buildup prior to entering World War II exercised its right of eminent domain, condemning the land occupied by West Bros brick yard and the two adjoining black settlements, East Arlington and Queen City, in order to build the Pentagon. The African American community lost both housing for one hundred fifty families and brick yard employment for well over one hundred workers (Goldberg, 1992). While jobs in the brick yards were lost with the building of the Pentagon, other work opportunities eventually replaced them. Participants mentioned their neighbors, uprooted by the closure of the brick yards, finding work constructing the Pentagon. Vincion described his father's role in preparing the land so the Pentagon could be built:

Lots of people were building the Pentagon. My father was driving then...He was hauling all the sludge. It was a swamp. They had to dig that out and haul it away. And they dumped that waste up on Johnson's Hill, in this area [Hatfield], Rosslyn, anywhere they found a place to dump; that is what they did. And then they filled it in with dirt, brick,



slag, whatever. They dug down as far as they could go to get all the loose matter, and then they filled it in.

Once the Pentagon was complete in January of 1943, it provided jobs for many Arlington African Americans. Martin, whose mother worked there, said:

After the Pentagon and the Navy Annex buildings were built she, as well as some of the other ladies in Green Valley, were able to get custodial jobs either at the Pentagon or Navy Annex. She was at the Navy Annex and my grandmother was on the custodial staff at the Pentagon.

Ruth described the work her neighbors found at the new Pentagon:

Most of the men when they lost their job at the brick yard they worked as custodians. [My neighbor] was an older gentleman. But he went to work for the Pentagon. You know the night people who clean? And he retired from that. They made more money and they probably had pensions.

Some felt that leveling East Arlington and Queen City to make way for the Pentagon was an improvement. Ruth said: “Building that Pentagon was progress. We talked about Queen City being torn down, leveled, but as years went on it made progress for this area.”

Not all the participants agreed. Arlington’s black neighborhoods exhibited a strong sense of community, forged during the trials of Segregation (Perry and Waters, 2012).

Participants who lived in the two settlements lamented the loss of their old neighborhood.

Florence, whose family was forced to move from East Arlington said:

Do you know one thing, all of my friends that I went to school with, they are gone. I have two friends that used to live in my neighborhood. They live in DC. When we had to move from [East Arlington], that's when they went to DC. They never came back to this area. When East Arlington got leveled, that really broke that community up.

#### **6.4.4 General laborers and domestic workers**

While census data show farm laborers living in the northern enumeration districts and brick yard laborers living in the southern districts, all enumeration districts were home to general laborers and domestic workers. Figure 15 includes general laborers and day laborers in the 'Laborers' totals while all servants, butlers, nannies, laundresses, and cooks who said they worked for private families are included in the 'Domestic' totals. Over time the number of general laborers leveled off, but during the ten year period between the 1930 and 1940 census there was a sharp increase in the proportion of domestic workers. This may reflect the adverse effect of the Great Depression. Virtually all the participants mentioned the poverty their families experienced. The proportion of the African American community that was employed grew from 47 percent in 1930 to 53 percent in the 1940 census. Perhaps this explains the increase in the number of domestic workers, as girls and young women went to work as maids and domestics to help their families make ends meet. Vincion discussed the lengths his parents went to provide for their children during the Depression:

They worked hard to try to keep us together, to feed us and clothe us. My dad was driving truck, and my mother worked. She took in ironing

clothes for people and she was working over at Fort Myer, at the laundry or dry cleaners over there...she ironed clothes for people and she made beautiful hot rolls every weekend. That helped us to survive – she ironed and she made hot rolls for people.

Career ambitions were truncated as students dropped out of college to support themselves and their families. Orze reminisced:

At [the time that I got out of high school] jobs were hard to find. When I first came out of high school I went to Miner Teachers College for one semester. But I couldn't afford to buy clothes to wear to school. I had to keep wearing the same clothes day after day. My father was dead at the time.

A sharecropper's son explained why his family left the farm and moved to Halls Hill (Williams, 2001):

We didn't have nothing to eat half the time when we first came here, wasn't much to eat. During the Depression, between '29 and '30, '31 we didn't have much to eat. [My father] didn't have much of a job. [My mother] stayed in Leesburg because she was working as a maid in a kitchen, so she stayed there. But my father came because there was no work or nothing like that. One of my older brothers, he would find something so we could have something to eat. We went hungry many days because we didn't have much to eat. He'd pick up something just to tide us over until my father got a real job.

Ruth came home after one year of college in Richmond because her mother was too sick to continue doing domestic work and could no longer afford to send her to school: “But my mom took sick and when I came home she said ‘You probably will only make that one year.’...She was not well. There were things at home...she just could not manage. So I came home, and I went to work.”

The Depression impacted whites as well as African Americans. One Halls Hill resident who worked as a domestic for a white couple in the early 1930s said (Graham, 2003):

I worked for Mrs. Smith first. Mr. Smith, bless his heart, they got too poor to pay me. And the man, he had arthritis and he couldn’t even tie his shoes...I lived with them. I lived in the house with them and I had to tie his shoes, and after he got his shower and everything, I’d help him get his shirt on because he had arthritis so bad, and then I left them and went to work for Mrs. Martin, and that’s where I was when I got married.

Over time the types of jobs available to black workers increased. Ruby commented on the increase in the variety of work available: “A lot of them from my mother’s and my father’s generation worked those [laundress, brick yard, and domestic] jobs. But as we came along there were more opportunities. When my children came along there were just so many other things they could do.”

#### **6.4.5 Working for the federal government in the Civil Service**

African Americans who did not choose to labor in the brick yards or on a farm, or who were not interested in ironing a white family’s laundry had another option – working for the government. The Pendleton Act, mentioned above, created the Civil Service –

providing employment in trades and professions as well as in clerical and administrative work. Figure 15 illustrates the popularity of the Civil Service career choice for Arlington's black workers. Eleven of the fourteen participants worked in the classified Civil Service, many in clerical positions, for at least some portion of their careers (Figure 18). The three who never worked a Civil Service job left school before graduation to go to work.



**Figure 18: Arlington Civil Service employee.**  
Photo courtesy of Florence Ross.

Civil Service jobs were, in theory, available to African Americans in federal offices nationwide. While the Civil Service Commission encouraged all federal hiring offices to

treat job seekers equally, until the Ramspeck Act of 1940 was passed, prohibiting discrimination in federal employment (Van Riper, 1958) many regional offices discriminated on the basis of race. One Halls Hill resident who lived in Texas during the Depression described the problems he had finding Civil Service employment in Texas (Browne, 2001:11):

I was a messenger for the Veterans Administration and when I found out they had electricians, a fella told me “You go down to see Mr. Mann, the fella on the first floor.” So I went down and said “Mr. Mann, I’m a graduate electrician and I notice you have electricians.” He said, “Son, wait a minute. I’ll save your time and my time. It’s not the policy of the United States government to hire Negroes as electricians.” And I said, “Now that ain’t right. This is supposed to be Civil Service.” I went to Civil Service. Civil Service people said, “They can hire whomever they please.”

During segregation such positions were not open to African Americans in many regions, but in the District that was not the case. Not all of the jobs required a high school diploma, and others only required the applicant to demonstrate the ability to type. Compared to the general labor and domestic work available to African Americans in Arlington, the Civil Service positions paid well, and offered the security of a pension. Many of Arlington’s black workers chose to stay in the Civil Service, rising to the highest levels possible within the limits of their education and ability, until they retired.

Getting hired, however did not guarantee that black employees would be treated equitably. Ann, a former civilian employee of the Marine Corps, hired in 1942, recalled:

[Y]ou just move up. Somebody retires and you take your turn. It wasn't always that way and it wasn't automatic – not by any means because I was passed over many times and did not get jobs because Marine Corps was one of the last and I think they resisted integration more than any of the other branches, I believe. I certainly did experience it.

Most of the participants entered the Civil Service on the bottom rung as messengers, clerks, and typists. In 1938, five percent of the District's black population worked for the Civil Service. Of those, 90 percent held custodial jobs, 9.5 percent held clerical jobs, and only 0.5 percent held sub-professional rank jobs (Green, 1967). At the same time, 12.8 percent of Arlington's African Americans were Civil Service workers. The existence of a large group of African Americans who were willing to accept a low level job and a government looking for workers to fill low level jobs was a happy coincidence. The African Americans got steady employment, received what they considered a good salary, and earned a pension. The government got employees who valued their job and worked to keep it because there were so few other employment opportunities.

Isaiah, who worked for Civil Service after serving in the Coast Guard during World War II, said:

Of course the blacks didn't have the big jobs. I went in as a messenger. Back in those days they had messengers carrying things around. They didn't have computers and everything, you know. So I went in as a messenger and worked in

the post office where mail would come in at the War Department... That was a good job.

James, who was drafted into the Navy during World War II, and returned home to work for the Department of Veterans Affairs as a clerk for the rest of his career said:

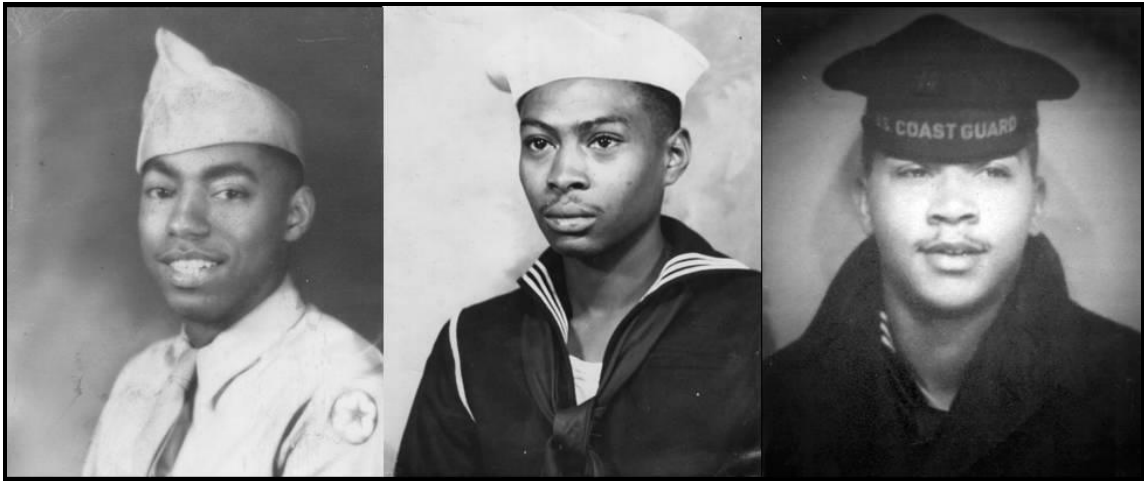
It was a good job working for the government. They had a pension. That is what I am living on now.

Anita's father was a trained pharmacist who could not find work in any white owned pharmacies. He too turned to Civil Service to support his family:

Anyway, [my father] went to work as a messenger in the State Department, which was a good job for them then. It was a good job. Everybody was looking for a good government job.

Three of the participants held Civil Service jobs when they were drafted to serve in World War II (Figure 19). Thanks to the Veterans' Preference Act, they resumed their jobs on returning from the war. One participant from Halls Hill benefited further from this Act. Prior to the draft he was turned down by the Civil Service for an apprenticeship as a machinist because he was two years older than the cutoff age, so he took a Civil Service job as a machinist helper instead. The Veterans' Preference Act lifted the apprenticeship age restrictions for returning veterans; on his return from the War the participant began his apprenticeship and enjoyed a long career as a machinist for the federal government.





**Figure 19: Black Arlington World War II servicemen.**  
 After service in World War II black soldiers, sailors, and coastguardsmen returned to Arlington and the Civil Service jobs they left behind. Photos courtesy of George E. Jones, Melvin Green, and Milton Rowe.

Most of the participants entered the Civil Service not by choice but by necessity. Anita, who dreamed of studying fashion design, got her first taste of secretarial work in a New Deal program for young adults:

They had a program for young people in high school. My mother got me in the National Youth Administration program; it was a program nationwide and I worked in an office at Howard University in the School of Religion. I will never forget it. ...So this was my introduction to office work. ...So when I took the [Civil Service] typing examination I was ready.

Opportunities for African Americans in private industry were so scarce that Civil Service positions were often the only choice. Ruby told why she took a government job:

I always wanted to be a secretary so I went to Cardozo Business High School in D.C. After I graduated it was funny because you could look in

the paper and it was saying 'high school education' and the first thing they would ask you [when you called to apply for the job] was what school did you graduate from and as soon as you said one of the black schools they would say "Oh I'm sorry, that's been filled." ...It was kind of hard to find employment even after you came out of high school unless you went into the federal government.

Some participants were inspired by their parents, such as Susan who reminisced:

The thing with my father was, when he worked [as a custodian] in the government buildings he used to see the girls taking shorthand. He thought that whatever you do, you must learn how to take shorthand. You have got to learn how to do that. If you are going into business you have got to do that. Those girls are really something.

Others were inspired to avoid the work their parents had done. Ruth, whose mother worked six days a week as a domestic for private families, realized that she had to get the necessary skills to avoid domestic labor:

And I remember one summer I didn't have a job, and she worked for one family and the sister said she needed somebody to iron so my mother said "Take the clothes over to the house. [Ruth] will do it." I was at home during the day. I thought "I don't want to do this for the rest of my life." That made an impression on me.

Living in a segregated society has a negative impact on career advancement. Information about employment opportunities is often spread through a network of informal social

contacts (Crain, 1970; Granovetter, 1974). In segregated Arlington African Americans learned about job openings in the low level fields that their friends and neighbors worked, not job openings in the high level fields occupied by white society. Ruby, who worked at the National Security Agency (NSA), explained how she got her job as a key punch operator: “I knew someone who worked there. They couldn’t get me the job, but they could say ‘You know NSA is going to hire for such and such a thing.’” Albert described how he helped a member of his social network find work: “Every time I moved up, one of my high school friends did too. Every time I moved up I would pull him into the job I vacated. When I left to go to the university I pulled him into my job.”

#### **6.4.6 Working in Arlington – 1950-1970**

Figure 20, Figure 21, and Figure 22 were created using aggregate data from the 1950 – 1970 censuses. The data used in this section compare census totals for workers living in the three largely black census tracts with workers living in the 35 largely white census tracts. In 1950 the black tracts were 81 percent black while the white tracts were 99 percent white. The figures depict the percent, not the count, of all African Americans and all whites working in each particular occupation group. For example, in 1950 only five percent of Arlington’s residents were black; ten percent African Americans worked as craftsmen while eleven percent whites worked as craftsmen.

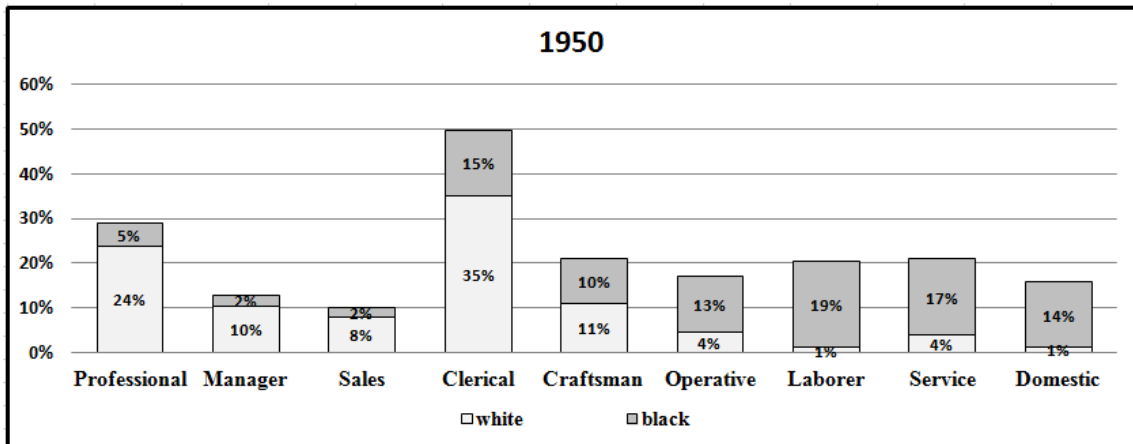


Figure 20: Arlington African American occupational categories in 1950.

In 1960 the 35 white census tracts were 98 percent white. The three black tracts were 96 percent black. The percent of African Americans in the County rose to almost six percent.

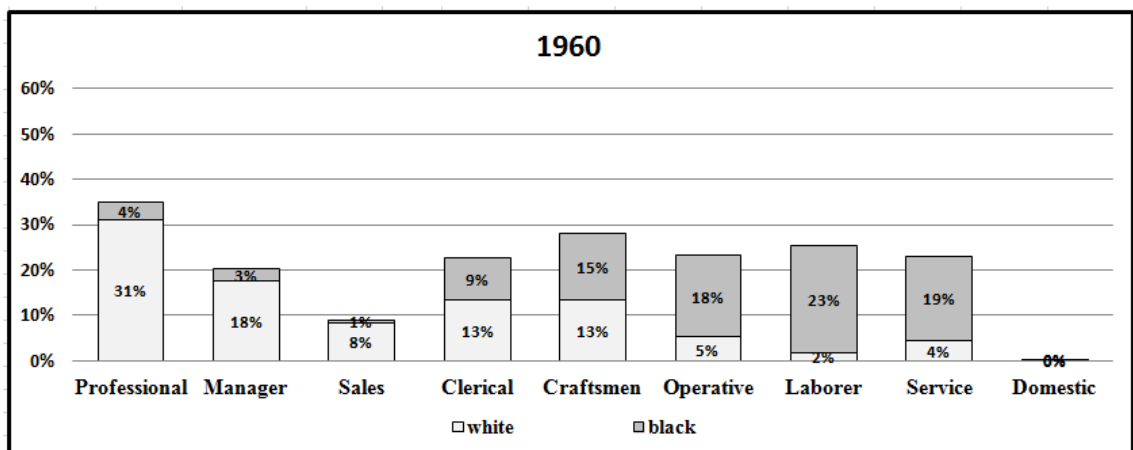


Figure 21: Arlington African American occupational categories in 1960.

In 1970 the 35 white census tracts were 96 percent white. The three black tracts were 92 percent black. The percent of African Americans in the County rose to slightly over six percent.

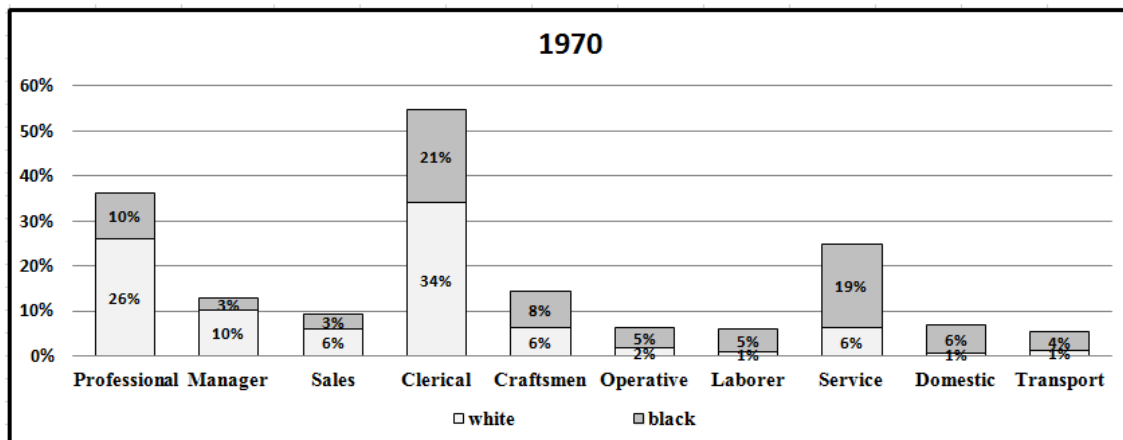


Figure 22: Arlington African American occupational categories in 1970

By 1950 farmers, farm laborers, and brick yard workers no longer appeared in Arlington’s census totals. The last farm was lost to residential development prior to the 1950 census; the last brick yard was lost to Pentagon construction in 1941. The authors were unable to locate participants who had worked as farmers or brick yard laborers. Ruby explained: “A lot of them from my mother’s and my father’s generation worked those [farmer and brick yard] jobs. But as we came along there were more opportunities. When my children came along there were just so many other things they could do.” Comparison of the 1950 census totals in Figure 20 with Figure 15, and comparisons of Figure 20 with Figure 21 and Figure 22, reveal a gradual improvement in the occupations

worked by Arlington's African American community in the waning years of de jure segregation. The percent of workers in laborer positions gradually fell as the farm and brick yard laborer positions disappeared and as other opportunities opened up. The number of clerical and 'office' jobs increased. In 1940 the Civil Service employed thirteen percent of Arlington's workers. This total included all Civil Service workers, including printers, soldiers, clerks, machinists, and laborers. By 1950, fifteen percent of Arlington's workers were doing clerical work, mostly working for the Civil Service, and that number continued to increase in the succeeding censuses. The percent of black domestic workers fell from an all time high of fifty percent in 1940. Other than ministers and a few teachers and doctors, African Americans in 1940 held almost no jobs in professional, managerial, and sales positions. Totals in those fields increased with succeeding censuses.

The participants spoke with satisfaction about how their children and grandchildren, often college educated, had more occupational opportunities than they had. George, who ran a TV repair shop, said of his sons, both successful businessmen: "My kids are on a different level than I am in terms of education. [My youngest son] is very, very good at what he does. He has four or five people who work for him."

## **6.5 Discussion**

The theories of occupational choice describe the process an individual experiences while selecting a career. Variables peculiar to the individual, including environmental factors, rule out many of the possible occupations. One such environmental factor is segregation. This paper discussed how proximity to the District and to the federal government

influenced career choice for the African American community in Arlington, Virginia during Segregation.

The participants' work lives were easier than the work lives of their parents. They remembered their mothers working as domestics for private families six days a week and taking in laundry to wash on the seventh day. They remembered their fathers coming home after a day of carrying bricks out of a baking hot brick kiln at West Bros brick yard. As their parents had done before them, the participants worked hard so their children would do even better than they had. Appreciating the value of an education, many expressed pleasure in the fact that they had sent their children to college, an opportunity that most of the participants themselves lacked. Many of those children have gone on to professional careers, doing their parents proud.

The story of Arlington's African American community during this trying period would have been so different if Arlington was not next door to Washington, D.C. The proximity to the District gave many young Arlington African Americans the opportunity to attend District high schools and learn saleable job skills, and the opportunity to then market those skills, often to the federal government. Arlington was a magnet for whites fleeing the congestion of the District. The whites required new residential developments where there was once farm land, pushing African Americans out of their small settlements and settlements into the black neighborhoods, and segregating them residentially. The arrival of the whites spelled the loss of farm jobs and the gain in service jobs to support the new white residents. The federal government, in building the Pentagon, destroyed the brick

yards where African Americans had long worked, and replaced them with an abundance of low level service jobs.

The participants were philosophical about the impact that segregation had on their occupational choices. Segregation was all they had known all their working lives. Each person was asked to talk about the limitations they experienced when entering the job market but no one accepted the invitation to complain. Instead, they described how hard their parents worked, how supportive their neighbors were, what an inspiration their teachers had been, how proud they were to send their children to college. Several told stories about a time in their lives when a white person helped them out. Segregation had limited the career options of this group but it went unmentioned.

## **6.6 Conclusions**

The huge in-migration of white federal workers eliminated some occupational choices for African Americans living in Arlington when farms were eliminated to make room for residential developments. At the same time, the increased population created many more low level service jobs. Proximity to the federal government eliminated other occupational choices of African Americans when the last brick yards were leveled to make room for the Pentagon. But once the Pentagon was completed it provided many new Civil Service job opportunities for African Americans. Excellent job training was available to the Arlington children who attended the black school system in the District.



## **CHAPTER SEVEN: BUSINESSES<sup>4</sup>**

The previous chapter examined the types of employment available to Arlington's black wage earners during Segregation. Some black residents chose to run businesses of their own rather than seek employment elsewhere. Most of these could be considered survivalist entrepreneurs, "persons who become self-employed in response to a desperate need to find an independent means of livelihood" (Boyd, 2000a:648). This chapter explores the types of businesses that were started by Arlington's African Americans during Segregation.

### **7.1 Abstract**

#### **7.1.1 Background**

During Segregation, African Americans were unwelcome to trade in almost any kind of business in Arlington other than grocery stores. Some residents started their own business, providing themselves an income and providing the neighbors the goods and services they could not obtain from the white community. Because the black neighborhoods were dispersed, lacking public transportation, the customer base comprised only those living within the neighborhood where the business was located.

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<sup>4</sup> The majority of the material included in this chapter was submitted as a manuscript and published: Perry, N. and Waters, N.M., 2012, Southern Suburb/Northern City: Black Entrepreneurship in Segregated Arlington County, Virginia. *Urban Geography*, 33(2), 655-674. The data gathering and analysis were done by Nancy Perry, and the writing mainly by Nancy Perry. All authors contributed important intellectual content and provided critical review of the papers.

For goods and services not available in their own neighborhoods, Arlington's black community traded in the extensive black-owned business establishments in nearby Washington, D.C.

#### **7.1.2 Methods**

Using aggregate census data and a Geographical Information System, three census tracts were identified that were home to most of the black population. Using 1950 telephone records, lists were compiled of businesses located within those tracts. During semi-structured interviews of black residents who were adults during Segregation, the lists of businesses were refined, removing white-owned businesses, adding businesses not on the lists.

#### **7.1.3 Results**

Almost all black-owned businesses built during the study period were small home-based businesses that supplied immediate needs. These included restaurants, convenience stores, beauty salons and barber shops, and repair shops, almost all located in the owner's home. Once Arlington integrated and African Americans were allowed to trade in white-owned businesses, the small neighborhood businesses slowly disappeared.

#### **7.1.4 Conclusions**

The nature of the businesses built by the African American community during Segregation was largely determined by the County's geography. The black neighborhoods provided too small a customer base to support any but the small businesses with low overhead. Lack of public transportation between the neighborhoods made shopping in the District easier than shopping in another black neighborhood so Arlington's African Americans satisfied most business needs in the District.

## **7.2 Background**

With the turn of the twentieth century, Arlington grew from a collection of small integrated settlements into a majority white suburb. The spirit of Jim Crow settling on the County made African Americans increasingly unwelcome in white society, including in white-owned enterprises. Severely limited in their ability to work with or shop in the white community, African Americans built businesses in their own neighborhoods. Largely working out of their homes they supported their families and provided many of the goods and services needed by their neighbors. In the process their neighborhoods grew cohesive and self reliant. Black entrepreneurs faced many obstacles during Segregation, including the inability to borrow money from white-owned banks, buy land or buildings in white areas zoned for business, get business licenses from the County, hire white workers, or work for white customers. Integration dismantled many of the barriers to African Americans – where they could live, where they could shop, where they could work. Integration also removed the need for many of the black-owned businesses built during Segregation. While most of the small businesses eventually closed, the communities they had served remained cohesive.

## **7.3 Methods**

This chapter uses aggregate census data from the 1950 through 2000 decennial censuses.

In 1950, 80 percent of Arlington's African Americans lived in only three of Arlington's 38 census tracts: tract 8 - Halls Hill, tract 31 - Green Valley, and tract 33 - Johnson's Hill, so those tracts were the focus of this chapter.

Abiding by state statute 010255, Arlington County is not required to retain business license records for longer than three years or the date of the last audit, so no official

records remain of black businesses from 1950.<sup>5</sup> The business license records, had they been available, would not have given a complete picture; African Americans applying for business licenses during Segregation were frequently turned down. Therefore, they often ran their businesses unlicensed out of their homes (African American Businesses in Arlington, 2005).

Census tracts were selected as the area of enumeration because the boundaries around the three black census tracts closely matched the boundaries of the three black neighborhoods. Johnson's Hill was completely black; the tract boundaries exactly matched the neighborhood boundaries. The other two tracts were both 78 percent black; the tracts were slightly larger than the neighborhoods. Another 20 percent of Arlington's African Americans lived in small settlements outside the three neighborhoods. Because there is no way to relate the census totals to the settlements, (Arlington census data are not available at a block group level or block level until 1990) the settlements were not included in this chapter.

The names and addresses of businesses located within the three black census tracts came from two sources. One source was a cross referenced telephone book from 1950. Using a County map, a list was made of the names of the streets that ran through the tracts and their address ranges within the tracts. Any business listed in the telephone book on any of those streets within the address ranges was assumed to be black-owned. This gave only a partial listing, as only those businesses that listed themselves in the telephone book were included.

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<sup>5</sup> Telephone conversation with an employee at the Office of the Commissioner of Revenue, Arlington County, 18 May 2010.

The other source of business names came from semi-structured interviews with eighteen residents of the three black tracts. The interviews were conducted during the summer of 2010. During the interviews the authors' telephone book lists were discussed, the participants identified businesses on the authors' lists that in fact were not black-owned, and those businesses were removed. Approximately half the businesses on the Halls Hill and Green Valley lists were white-owned businesses on commercially zoned streets on the boundaries of the tracts. Johnson's Hill has no commercially zoned streets and no white-owned businesses were identified. Most participants remembered every business on the authors' list and the race of the business owner. Several individuals from each tract were interviewed, and their answers corroborated. Race was important during Segregation and African Americans were as aware of it as were the whites. At least one of the participants from each tract came prepared with a list of businesses located in his/her neighborhood during Segregation. The participants' lists were discussed and any businesses that were not also on the authors' list were added. In this way a master list for each tract was created.

Snowball sampling was used to select the participants, including six males and twelve females with an average age of 80 years. Sixteen of the participants were born in Arlington, most of them prior to 1930; all reached adulthood in Arlington well before Arlington desegregated. Some of the participants owned and/or ran businesses; others were customers of black-owned businesses.

During the interviews, the participants mentally walked the streets of their neighborhood, describing the businesses they remembered. Depending on their age, different

participants remembered different businesses but all of the participants from a given neighborhood remembered most of the same businesses. There was attrition among the businesses. The participants often talked about a business, mentioning the business it replaced at that site or the business that replaced it. The participants' world was so constrained by segregation, there were so many places that they were not allowed to go, but they clearly remembered the places where they could go. Some businesses probably were left out, but the authors feel the final list was suitable for our purposes. Table 8 is a list of all the black-owned businesses in the three tracts that surfaced either from the 1950 telephone book or from the interviews with the participants.

**Table 8: Black-owned businesses in the three African American neighborhoods**

Business	Halls Hill	Green Valley	Johnson's Hill	Status
baby sitter		2	1	closed
beer garden			1	closed
blacksmith			1	closed
bus line	1			closed
construction	3	7	7	closed
convenience store			2	closed
dance band	1			closed
dance hall	1			closed
dentist	1			closed
dry cleaner	1	1		closed
beauty school			1	closed
fuel (coal, wood, oil)	3			closed
funeral home		2		open
gas station	1	2		closed
grocery	5	1		closed
hair care	4	4	5	4 open, 9 closed
ice	1		1	closed
ice cream parlor	1			closed
junk dealer		3		closed
kindergarten		1		closed
lawyer	1	1		closed
notary		1		closed
nurse	3	8	2	closed
pharmacy		1		open
physician	2	2		closed
pool hall	2	1		closed
produce truck	1		1	closed
real estate			3	1 open, 2 closed
record store		1		closed
restaurant	1	4	2	closed
rooming house	1	1		closed
seamstress	4		2	closed
shoe repair		1		closed
taxi company	2	1		2 open, 1 closed
trucking	2	1	1	closed
TV repair	1	1		1 open, 1 closed
watch repair		1		closed
window cleaner	1		1	closed
<i>total</i>	44	48	31	

## 7.4 Results

From the time black families first bought land in the three tracts (Green Valley in 1844, Halls Hill and Johnson's Hill shortly after the end of the Civil War), the neighborhoods

grew in parallel, but also in isolation from one-another. Until the 1940s there was no cross-County bus service. The black-owned Hicks Bus Line ran a bus from Halls Hill to a transfer point in Rosslyn, where passengers caught a bus going into the District. The white-owned Arnold Bus Line ran a bus within walking distance of both Green Valley and Johnson's Hill to the same transfer point in Rosslyn. But no bus line ran between North and South Arlington, with the result that traveling to the District was easier than traveling to another black neighborhood. In 1950 the District had a much larger black population than Arlington. Of the 802,178 residents of the District, 280,803 (35%) were black. That large black population built a commercial infrastructure that African Americans from Arlington were welcome to access (Birmingham, 1977; Ruble, 2010). The participants reminisced about trips to the District to buy clothes, go to a restaurant, or attend a performance. Every informant agreed that neither they nor their families ever traveled to one of the other black neighborhoods in Arlington to shop. The small businesses were perhaps the strongest influence in uniting each neighborhood. As Ingham points out (2003:665) "It is a great irony that the evil of Jim Crow, under which black Americans were subject to segregation, humiliation, and persecution, encouraged black capitalism to flourish." He notes that an unintended result of the establishment of the black-owned businesses was the way they helped to unite the black neighborhoods. In Arlington a number of businesses, mostly home-based enterprises, catered to the people living in each settlement. Most of them offered services – few of the residents had the resources to open a retail business.



Locating the business in the home was born both of necessity and of convenience. It was difficult and expensive to buy land and erect a shop to house a business. It was cheaper and easier for the business owner, particularly women with young children, to run the business from home (Boyd, 2000a). Some of the entrepreneurs were so ambitious that they ran several businesses at one time. One Johnson's Hill informant described a family in her neighborhood that ran a beauty shop out of their living room and a restaurant out of their dining room. The family of one Green Valley informant ran a taxi service, a restaurant, and a beauty shop, and sold heating coal, oil, and ice.

The participants all agreed that no whites ever came into their business establishments. The only exception was offered by Harriett, who ran a small restaurant in Green Valley. Her restaurant was close to the lot where County snow removal equipment is stored. She explained:

We never saw any white people unless they were delivering beer or something. No whites came there to get anything. But the ones who worked for the County – the ones who had to work with snow, men who worked day and night, any color came. We made an agreement with the County that we would serve them breakfast and dinner too.

#### **7.4.1 Food**

The only white-owned businesses in Arlington where all the participants mentioned feeling welcome were the grocery stores. No one remembered being turned away from a Safeway or an A&P. Still, there were no Safeway or A&P stores in the black tracts; they were all several blocks away. Therefore, small groceries and convenience stores opened

in each tract. It was difficult for the small black grocery stores to compete with the Safeway in price or selection. However, they had one advantage - a resident was allowed to purchase groceries on credit. Ruth explained how the owner of the grocery store in her neighborhood handled her credit customers: “She kept what we called weekly accounts and people would pay her as they got the money. People would come in and want something and she had that book and she would say ‘you still owe \$5.’”

Many of the participants mentioned shopping at the ‘Jew store’, small groceries run by Jewish proprietors. Every tract had a Jewish-owned grocery. Some of the groceries also had small restaurants where beer and food were served. Hick’s Grocery in Halls Hill (Figure 23), the Middleton Store in Johnson’s Hill, and the Green Valley Market are examples of such store/restaurants.



**Figure 23: Hicks Restaurant and Market in Halls Hill in 1960.**  
This image was taken shortly before the building was demolished. Reproduced with permission of the Virginia Room, Arlington Public library.

African Americans were unwelcome to eat in white-owned restaurants. Several participants said that if their family went to a restaurant it would be to a black-owned restaurant in the District. Every tract had a few small restaurants, some of these located right in the owner's kitchen. One informant, the operator of the Shady Dale Restaurant in Green Valley, did all the cooking, dishwashing, and shopping herself, buying enough food for a few days at a time. Her biggest sales were Fridays when she did a fish dinner carry-out business for offices at the Pentagon. The Dun Movin' Restaurant in Green

Valley was described in a video about early black businesses as being so upscale that African Americans from the District traveled to Arlington to eat there (African American Businesses in Arlington, 2005).

#### **7.4.2 Housing**

Because of the dearth of housing there was a big demand for the services of construction craftsmen and builders. White builders were unwilling to build individual homes for African Americans. George explained “When blacks needed a house built they could only hire a black contractor so there was plenty of business. There was never a lack of need for housing.” The construction trades were represented in every tract, including bricklayers, plasterers, plumbers, electricians, and general building contractors.

Craftsmen worked directly out of their homes. Until integration, white builders refused to hire blacks, so most black craftsmen worked for black builders. Without competition from the white builders, the black builders had ample work – if they could find land to build on and get financing.

Finding vacant land was problematic. The three tracts were limited in size and land outside the boundaries of the three tracts was simply not for sale to African Americans. Each informant, when asked to describe the black/white boundaries of his/her neighborhood, could list the streets beyond which no African American could live (and within which no white would live).

When lots did go on sale the problem was arranging the financing. Neither the builders nor prospective homeowners could borrow money from an Arlington bank. Of his father, George explained “[He] couldn’t go in an Arlington bank to borrow money. He could go

to the District to get money but not for a loan to build in Virginia. Banks were chartered in the area in which you lived so you couldn't go to [the District] to get money to build in Arlington." Often, according to the participants, the seller lent the money to the buyer, or the buyer found another person who would make a personal loan to him to buy the land and/or house. Esther, who experienced such a sale in Green Valley, said: "If I had lots to sell I sold it to someone black, so we made an agreement with each other. Then we had to go to the Court House and register the sale."

One businessman who needed a loan to build a repair shop in Green Valley told of befriending a white man who eventually offered to lend him the money for his new shop, as long as he promised never to mention where he got the money. The Green Valley building contractor's son discussed the secret to his father's success. His father made friends with a white man who was a partner in a white mortgage and real estate company. This man funded the father's construction projects and held the mortgages on the buildings once they were sold.

#### **7.4.3 Transportation**

Until the 1940s Halls Hill was physically isolated from both the other black settlements and from the District. This isolation inspired two Halls Hill entrepreneurs to create taxi companies. Crown Cab is still in existence. The black-owned Hicks Bus Line took residents of Halls Hill to the transfer point in Rosslyn. This enabled the inhabitants of Halls Hill to reach jobs, shopping, and school in the District. Green Valley also has a taxi company, Friendly Cab, started in 1943. The son of Friendly Cab's owner explained about his father "Well, he had the restaurant. I guess people would come in the restaurant

and talk about needing a ride here or there and he decided he could open the business for them.” All the Friendly Cab drivers were black, many of them off-duty black firemen.

#### **7.4.4 Personal Services**

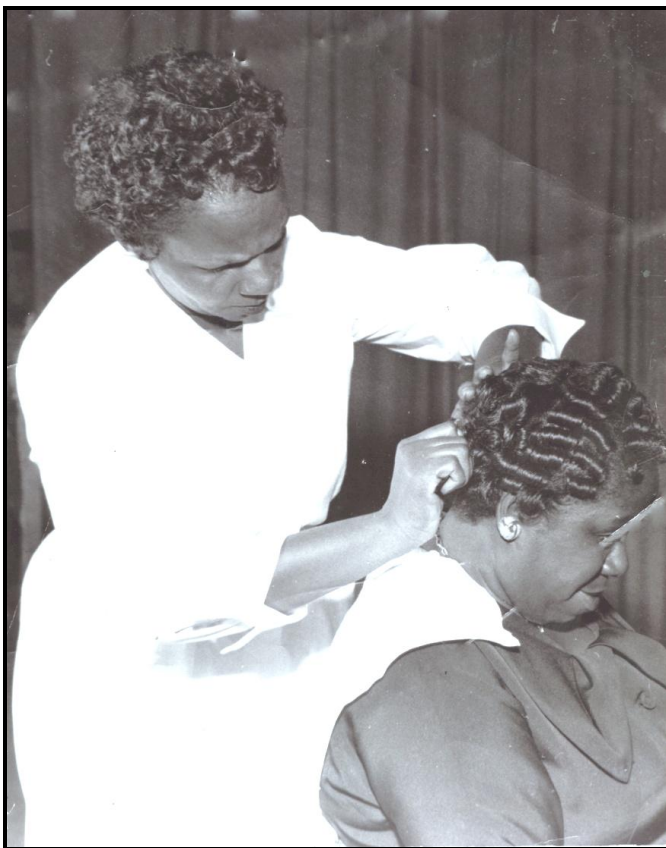
Skilled and unskilled personal services were available in every tract. Many of these businesses were home based, such as the two window cleaners, the six seamstresses, and the thirteen home health care nurses. The watch, TV, and shoe repairmen operated out of small shops (Figure 24).



**Figure 24: Mr. Walker at his shoe repair shop.**

If you were African American and your shoes needed to be repaired you took them to Mr. Walker. His store was the only shoe repair shop in Arlington that served African Americans. © Lloyd Wolf/Arlington Photographic Documentary Project. Reproduced with permission.

Each tract had several black-owned beauty shops and barber shops, most of them operated out of the barber or beautician's home. Ruth, emphasizing that these were professional hair care shops that just happened to be in the operator's basement, reminisced "They wore white uniforms. And when customers came, they rang the bell." One of the participants was the daughter of the founder of the Friendly Beauty School in Green Valley (Figure 25). By the time her mother retired she had trained over 300 students. There was no lack of work for them once they graduated.



**Figure 25: Mamie Brown's Friendly Beauty School**  
Mrs. Brown graduated more than 300 students, who went on to own and operate beauty shops of their own.  
Photo courtesy of Aaronita Brown.

#### **7.4.5 Professional Services**

The literature (Bates, 2007) describes the plight of professional African Americans, who could only hope to work in black areas with black clients. Such was the case in segregated Arlington. During the entire period of the study there were four doctors available to the residents of the three tracts, two practicing in Halls Hill and two in Green Valley. There were two lawyers, a single dentist and a single pharmacist serving the entire Arlington black community during the lifetime of the participants. The two funeral homes in Green Valley are still in operation (Figure 26), but the two private schools have both closed. In addition to the beauty school, a kindergarten operated in Johnson's Hill, started when the owner was unable to enroll her child in a white-owned kindergarten.





**Figure 26: Chinn Funeral Home**

**Black-owned mortuaries were guaranteed to have customers because African Americans were unwelcome in white-owned mortuaries. The Chinn family opened their funeral home in 1946. It is still in operation. © Lloyd Wolf/Arlington Photographic Documentary Project. Reproduced with permission.**

#### **7.4.6 Impact of desegregation on the black-owned businesses**

The strong sense of community that developed during Segregation survived integration.

Almost every informant still lives in the same neighborhood where he/she grew up.

When discussing their neighborhoods they remember virtually every address, every business, and every family. They were amused by the suggestion that once the Fair

Housing Act was passed African Americans would move out of their tract into the white neighborhoods. A Halls Hill informant explained “Those [black] people who moved into the white areas of Arlington were people who came from out of state. People who moved out of Halls Hill moved to another state. They didn’t move to other parts of Arlington.”

Half of the participants continued to operate their businesses for several years following integration. All but 13 of the original owners of the businesses listed in Table 8 have died. Of those who survive, only two continue to work in their business – the owner of the pharmacy and the owner of a TV repair shop. Most of the businesses (100) died with their original owner. A few (19) continued to operate for at least a limited period, some run by relatives of the original owner, the others sold to outsiders. Of those, nine are still in operation. These include the funeral homes, two taxi companies, four barber/beauty shops, and one real estate agency. Only the businesses that required a large initial investment (a building, a fleet of taxis) survived integration.

None of the home-based businesses is still open. Phyllis explained what happened to the home-based businesses in Halls Hill:

Over time they disappeared but they certainly didn’t just immediately go away. Even when Arlington integrated there wasn’t this overwhelming ‘please come in’ attitude. On our part there wasn’t this ‘I want to run over

there because now I can' attitude. So it took a while for those two pieces to merge because people here still had this sense of community and all these years they had been contained in Halls Hill. It took awhile for people to branch out.

While the black residents began patronizing white businesses, the white community in Arlington, much like the white communities in other recently desegregated areas (Bates, 1997), did not patronize the black businesses. This may have hastened the decline of the black businesses.

The participants gave various explanations for why the businesses finally closed. One successful Green Valley builder's children carried on their father's business for a time, but decided it was not to their liking. The son extolled the father's work ethic and explained "I didn't have that tenacity that my father did."

In several cases business owners sent their children to college. The owner of the Green Valley TV repair shop explained "My kids are on a different level than I am in terms of education. [My youngest son] is very, very good at what he does. He has four or five people who work for him."

Still, some of the business owners hope to hand their businesses down eventually to their children. Asked what would happen to his Green Valley taxi company when he is no longer able to run it, the owner said "I have a son and a nephew. They might want to take it over. I have to have it in shape to hand over to them."

## **7.5 Discussion**

Arlington is a Southern city in a Southern state. The businesses built by black Arlington entrepreneurs displayed some of the characteristics of a typical black settlement in a Southern city as described by Ingham (2003) (small businesses selling services) but did not display others (a main black shopping street, anchored by one or more large businesses). Arlington's black business model did not follow the pattern of Northern communities either. African Americans in Northern cities tended to cluster in large settlements, most of the businesses being located along a few streets. Although Arlington's black community was large enough (6500 African Americans in 1950) to support a proper business district, the residents were dispersed in three small neighborhoods and a few even smaller settlements.

Most of the businesses offered services rather than goods. The profusion of service businesses and the paucity of retail stores reflect the general poverty of the neighborhoods, and possibly the inability of shopkeepers to get business loans at white-owned Arlington banks. Survivalist entrepreneurs offered services such as hair care, tailoring, babysitting, or window washing – businesses that required very little investment to get started. To minimize the expense of running such a business, the owners often located the business in their homes. Eighty percent of Arlington's black-owned businesses were home-based.

Public transportation (bus) connected the neighborhoods to the District, but did not connect them to each other. Because the individual neighborhoods were so small (the largest had only 3000 residents in 1950) and because the lack of public transportation meant that the only customers of a business were residents of that neighborhood, no

business had a large enough customer base to enjoy anything more than a marginal existence. The African American community survived these trying conditions because of their proximity to the District, where a much larger black population had built an extensive business infrastructure that welcomed black Arlington customers.

Black Arlington straddled North and South. Its business community had some of the characteristics of a Southern black settlement and some of the characteristics of a Northern one. Because the African American community grew as three neighborhoods and several small settlements, and because there was no public transportation connecting the neighborhoods and settlements until the early 1940s, the business community never thrived. Traveling from the neighborhoods and settlements to the District was easier than traveling between the neighborhoods and settlements. Because the District offered so many attractive shopping and entertainment options, there was little incentive for African Americans to build an extensive business infrastructure of their own. Only those things that were not worth the effort of a bus trip to the District were obtained in one of the small businesses in a resident's neighborhood. Everything else was purchased in the District.

Once Arlington integrated, the white-owned stores enticed black customers away from the black-owned businesses. A few of the larger businesses still cling to existence, but all the home-based businesses have disappeared.

## **7.6 Conclusions**

Arlington's African American community displayed a business pattern unlike either a Northern or a Southern town. The black-owned businesses were greatly influenced by

their proximity to the District. Because the African American community was divided into three widely dispersed neighborhoods, with no public transportation connecting them, the residents seldom traded in other neighborhoods. Rather, residents of the neighborhoods traveled into the District to conduct business. The District's large, successful African American community had built a large business infrastructure that welcomed black customers from Arlington. The combination of proximity to the District, lack of transportation between the neighborhoods, and the small size of individual neighborhoods limited the types of businesses built by black entrepreneurs. Most businesses were located in private homes, and most businesses provided services rather than goods. Black Arlington shoppers traveled into the District to satisfy all but their most basic needs.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS**

Arlington County lies between the Southern state of Virginia and the District of Columbia, separated from the District only by the Potomac River. As a border community Arlington could be expected to display patterns typical of the North or those typical of the South. In fact, in all the areas this research studied, Arlington displayed patterns that result from its unique geography. This geography proved to be crucial to the survival of the African American community during Segregation.

This research explored three areas of life in black Arlington – where African Americans lived, where they worked, where they did business. In each area, geography dominated the story line. Arlington's proximity to Civil Service work for the federal government, proximity to white federal workers looking for homes in the suburbs, proximity to the District's large black business community, proximity to the District's black school system, proximity to a federal government looking for a site to build the new Pentagon, are all a function of the County's geography.

Most often, proximity to the federal government worked to the black community's favor.

At a time when African Americans had a very difficult time getting Civil Service employment in regional Civil Service offices around the country, they had no difficulty finding Civil Service employment at national offices in the District. The Civil Service jobs paid a modest but reliable salary and provided a pension that still supports most of

the participants of this study, at a time when employment opportunities with civilian white employers in Arlington were insecure, and poorly paying. The proximity to the District gave many young Arlington African Americans the opportunity to attend District high schools and learn saleable job skills, and the opportunity to then market those skills, often to the federal government in the District, while Arlington's black schools provided only the minimum education and little job training. Proximity to the District's large black business community gave Arlington's African Americans access to black-owned banks, insurance companies, funeral homes, a department store, a hotel, a hospital, theaters, and restaurants that were missing in Arlington. Without this conveniently located business infrastructure, Arlington's African American community would either have had to go without those goods and services or travel much further to get them. In some aspects, proximity to the federal government was not advantageous. The government grew exponentially during Segregation to manage a number of emergency situations, beginning with World War I, the New Deal, World War II, and the Cold War. Arlington was a magnet for white federal workers fleeing the congestion of the District. As soon as roads and trolley lines made a daily commute into the District possible, whites began moving across the river. They required new residential developments where there was once farm land, pushing African Americans out of their small settlements into the black neighborhoods, segregating them residentially. The impact of their arrival on occupational choice was the loss of farms and farm jobs and the gain in low salary service jobs. The federal government also proved to be a liability. During World War II, the War Department outgrew its many buildings and sought to put the entire department



under one roof. Lacking a suitable plot of land to build the Pentagon in the District, the government found a likely site across the Potomac River. To build it, the federal government destroyed settlements where African Americans had long lived and brickyards where they had long worked, and replaced them with an abundance of low level service jobs to support workers at the Pentagon.

While geography was probably the most important factor in this history, timing was also fundamental. The African American community has lived in Arlington for as long as the white community, although their status vis-à-vis the whites changed over time. In the 1600s African Americans in Arlington were slaves, working for white farm owners. By the beginning of the Jim Crow era, African Americans were well established in the County, over half of them owning land and homes. If they had arrived after the white immigration, if they had come during the Great Migration for example, the trajectory of their story would have been very different. The fact that they were established property owners gave them some power over their lives that migrants in the Great Migration lacked. And the few Great Migration migrants who came to Arlington benefitted from the fact that there were black neighborhoods to welcome them.

A final factor that helped Arlington's black community was their numbers. Whites might have viewed a large black community as a threat, but Arlington's black community was so small, and therefore so non threatening, that whites did not resort to violence to keep the community 'in their place'. One participant talked about his white neighbors holding a yearly Ku Klux Klan event, during which they marched in their robes down the street to the ball field to burn a cross. That was apparently all it took to keep things peaceful.

## **CHAPTER NINE: EPILOGUE**

The story of Arlington and the story of Arlington's African American community during Segregation is a story of change. Arlington is a much more integrated city than it was in 1900. The former all black neighborhoods are now home to all races. In the 2010 census 75 percent of the County's residents were white, nine percent were African American, and sixteen percent were other races.

Each of the neighborhoods reflects the changes brought by desegregation. Halls Hill is a neighborhood in transition. In the 40 years since 1970 the population not only became considerably less black, but it declined by 49 residents. Because of its easy access to the District, Halls Hill has become attractive to buyers and developers of every race. While many of the original frame homes remain, interspersed amongst them are new, large, expensive single-family houses (Figure 27). Green Valley is also in transition. Since 1970 the population has increased by 816 residents and dropped from 93 percent black to 38 percent black. In 1970 there were only two residents who were neither white nor black. In the 2010 census 1365 non-black residents lived in the neighborhood. As with Halls Hill, Green Valley is experiencing a wave of construction. A swath of land north of Four Mile Run was totally razed and a large development of townhouses and single-family homes is under construction. Since 1970 the proportion of African Americans in Johnson's Hill dropped from 99 percent black to 37 percent black. Johnson's Hill does

not appear to be in transition. The houses are well kept, but little construction is in evidence.



**Figure 27: Mix of old and new housing in Halls Hill in 2012**

In no small part because of its proximity to the District, Arlington has become an expensive place to live. The average County assessment on land occupied by the participants increased almost 500 percent in the last fifteen years, and the real estate taxes on that land also increased. Eventually the black neighborhoods could become so expensive that the very families who were forced to live there during Segregation will no

longer be able to afford to live there. One man interviewed for the Halls Hill oral histories expressed it well (Pelham, 2001, 4:24):

[I]t makes me kind of sad to see what's happening now because as the people move in, as the whites move in, the property value is going to go up and the blacks who are left here are going to have to pay a lot of money that a lot of them will not be able to afford or not want to pay.

Jobs at the farms and brick yards are long gone, and work in the Civil Service has taken their place. Many of the grandchildren and great grandchildren of the early African Americans are college educated, some working in professional fields.

Almost all the black-owned businesses built during Segregation are gone. Once Arlington integrated, the white-owned stores enticed their black customers away. A few of the larger businesses, having invested in a building, a fleet of taxis, or expensive equipment, are still clinging to existence. All the small home-based businesses have disappeared. Lining the one commercially zoned street running through Halls Hill are new fast food restaurants and other commercial establishments, all white-owned. In Green Valley many of the buildings that formerly held small businesses sit vacant. A few small businesses have taken their place, fewer of them black-owned. None of the streets in Johnson's Hill are commercially zoned and no new businesses have been built.

During Segregation the African American community in Arlington lived in the three black neighborhoods because that was the only land available to them. They made their lives there, raised their children there, established churches there. After passage of the Civil Rights legislation they could have moved out of those neighborhoods, but for most

of them the life they had built was too precious to give up, just for the opportunity to live in a white neighborhood that was obligated to allow them to move in but was not obligated to make them feel at home. While all of the African Americans alive in 1900 are gone, many of their descendents still live in Arlington. Most of them have chosen to live out their lives in their old neighborhoods, surrounded by their church, their neighbors, and in most cases by one or more of their children. The children, having grown up in a racially integrated environment, have less reason to settle down in the historically black neighborhoods. Whether they decide to stay once their parents pass on only time will tell. Thus ends this chapter in the history of the community.

## APPENDIX

### Jobs worked by Arlington blacks, as listed in 1900-1940 censuses

1900	1910	1920	1930	1940
ALMS house inmate	beautician/barber	beautician/barber	actor	architect
baker	bartender	bellman	attendant	army officer
beautician/barber	blacksmith	blacksmith	beautician/barber	attendant
blacksmith	butcher	bookbinder	blacksmith	awning hanger
butcher	carpenter	bookkeeper	book binder	beautician/barber
carpenter	charlady/janitor	bootblack	brick mason	bartender
clerical	clerical	brick layer	bundle wrapper	blacksmith
contractor	contractor	bus girl/bus boy	bus girl/bus boy	brick layer
cook/chef/baker	cook/chef/baker	carpenter	butcher	brick maker
cooper	driver/teamster	caulker	caddy	bus driver
driver/teamster	dry cleaner	charlady/janitor	car painter	bus girl/bus boy
engineer	elevator operator	clerical	carpenter	caddie
farm manager	engineer	contractor	carpet layer	car washer
farmer	farmer/dairyman	cook/chef/baker	car washer	carpenter
fireman	farrier	driver/teamster	cashier	CCC crew
foreman	fireman	electrician	caterer	cement contractor
gardener	fire master	elevator operator	cement worker	cement finisher
hostler	florist	expressman	charlady/janitor	charlady/janitor
insurance agent	harness maker	farmer/dairyman	checker	chemist
junk dealer	had carrier	farrier	clerical	clerical
justice of the peace	horse trainer	fireman	contractor	coat checker
laborer	hostler	foreman	cook/chef/baker	contractor
laundress/lauderer	huckster	gardener	delivery man	cook/chef/baker
merchant	laborer	hostler	dishwasher	delivery man
messenger	landscape gardener	inmate	driver/teamster	dish washer
minister	laundress/lauderer	insurance agent	electrician	ditch digger
nanny	linesman	ironer	elevator operator	drafter
painter	merchant	laborer	farmer/dairyman	driver/teamster
peddler	messenger	landlady/landlord	fireman	electrician
porter	minister	laundress/lauderer	garbage collector	elevator operator
sailor	moulder	lawyer	gardener	engineer
sanitary engineer	nanny	machinist	grocer	examiner
seamstress/tailor	painter	manager	harness maker	farmer/dairyman
servant	plasterer	mechanic	hauling	fireman
shoemaker	porter	merchant	hod carrier	fitter
soldier	postman	messenger	house painter	floor finisher
teacher	printer	minister	huckster	florist
waitress/waiter	seamstress/tailor	nanny	insurance agent	foreman
watchman	servant	nurse/midwife	kitchen helper	gardener
water boy	ship caulker	oyster peddler	laborer	gas station attendant
	shoemaker	painter	landlady/landlord	grave digger
	soldier	photographer	landscape gardener	grounds keeper
	stationary engineer	physician	laundress/lauderer	handyman
	teacher	plasterer	locker boy	hauling

undertaker	plumber	lumber dealer	hod carrier
waitress/waiter	porter	machinist	house cleaner
watchman	printer	mail handler	house demolition
well digger	prisoner	mailbag repair	house painter
	saleslady/salesman	manager	huckster
	seamstress/tailor	mechanic	insurance agent
	servant	merchant	junk collector
	slate roofer	messenger	kindergarten teacher
	soldier	minister	laborer
	stable boss	mortician	landlady/landlord
	stationary engineer	musician	landscaper
	stock clerk	nanny	lather
	stone mason	newsboy	laundress/laundrer
	teacher	nurse	locker room attendant
	tinsmith	operative	lumber checker
	waitress/waiter	packer	machinist
	watchman	painter	mail handler
	well digger	pantry boy	maintenance man
		physician	manager
		plasterer	marker
		plumber	mechanic
		porter	merchant
		presser	messenger
		printer	mill worker
		real estate agent	miner
		saleslady/salesman	minister
		scaffold builder	mortar mixer
		seamstress/tailor	musician
		servant	nanny
		shipping clerk	nurse aide
		soldier	office manager
		stove shiner	office nurse
		teacher	officer
		trimmer	operative
		waitress/waiter	orderly
		wallpaper hanger	packer
		watchman	painter
			paper hanger
			paving engineer
			PE teacher
			physician
			pin setter
			plasterer
			plumber
			policeman
			porter
			practical nurse
			presser
			printer
			proprietor
			Pullman porter
			real estate agent
			repairman
			saleslady/salesman
			sawyer
			seamstress/tailor
			section hand
			servant
			service man

sexton  
shipping clerk  
shoe shiner  
shoemaker  
sign painter  
silk finisher  
soldier  
stationary engineer  
stoker operator  
stone mason  
stove operator  
street sweeper  
taxi driver  
teacher  
telephone operator  
trash collector  
trimmer  
undertaker  
utility worker  
waitress/waiter  
watchman  
wrapper  
yardman



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