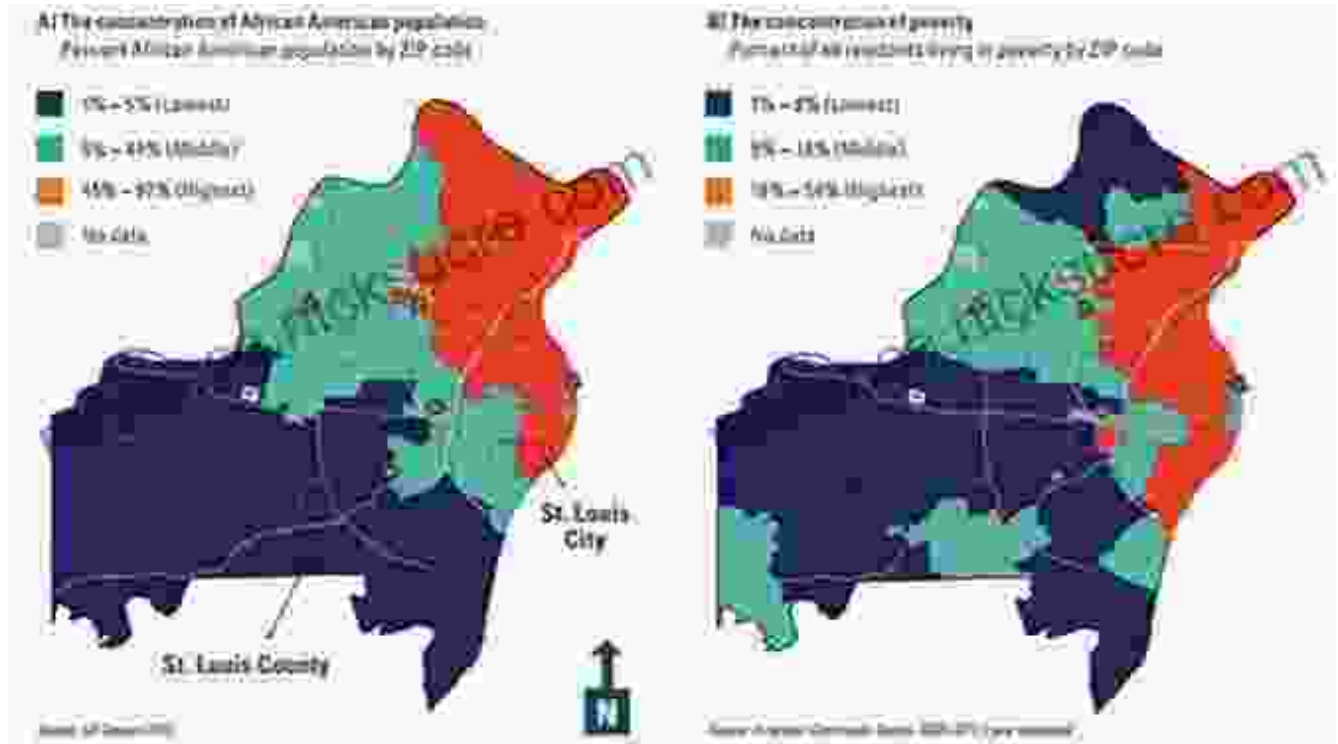
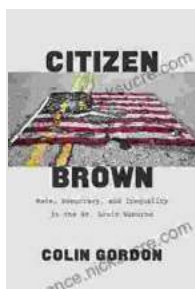


# Race, Democracy, and Inequality in the St. Louis Suburbs: A Long Tail of Disparities



The St. Louis suburbs are a microcosm of the racial and economic disparities that plague the United States. While the region has made progress in recent decades, significant challenges remain. This article explores the history of race and democracy in the St. Louis suburbs, examining the root causes of inequality and offering solutions to address these challenges.



## Citizen Brown: Race, Democracy, and Inequality in the St. Louis Suburbs by Colin Gordon

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 210 pages  
Lending : Enabled



## **A History of Racial Division**

The St. Louis suburbs were founded on a foundation of racial segregation. In the early 20th century, white residents fled the city of St. Louis to escape the growing black population. They established all-white suburbs, often through restrictive covenants that prohibited the sale of homes to black families. This pattern of segregation continued for decades, creating a patchwork of racially homogeneous communities.

The legacy of this segregation is still visible today. The St. Louis suburbs remain some of the most segregated in the country. Black residents are more likely to live in poverty, have lower incomes, and experience higher rates of crime and unemployment than white residents. They are also less likely to have access to quality education, healthcare, and other essential services.

## **The Impact of White Flight**

One of the most significant factors contributing to inequality in the St. Louis suburbs is white flight. In the decades following World War II, white residents began to flee the city of St. Louis in large numbers. This exodus was driven by a number of factors, including fear of crime, declining property values, and the growing black population.

White flight had a devastating impact on the city of St. Louis. It led to a loss of tax revenue, a decline in property values, and a decrease in the quality of public services. It also created a more racially segregated city, with black residents concentrated in the city's poorest neighborhoods.

## **The Rise of the Suburbs**

As white residents fled the city, they settled in the suburbs, where they found more affordable housing, better schools, and lower crime rates. The suburbs became havens for white families, who were able to enjoy a higher quality of life than their urban counterparts.

However, the suburbs were not immune to the problems of racial inequality. Even though they were predominantly white, the suburbs still had a significant black population. Black residents in the suburbs often faced discrimination in housing, employment, and education. They also had less access to quality public services than white residents.

## **The Long Tail of Disparities**

The disparities between black and white residents in the St. Louis suburbs are not simply a matter of history. They are a persistent problem that continues to affect the region today. The long tail of disparities is the result of a number of factors, including:

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- **Residential segregation:** The St. Louis suburbs remain highly segregated, with black residents more likely to live in poverty-stricken neighborhoods with high crime rates and low-quality schools.

- **Racial discrimination:** Black residents in the suburbs continue to face discrimination in housing, employment, and education. They are also more likely to be stopped by the police and subjected to excessive force.
- **Lack of investment:** The St. Louis suburbs have historically underinvested in black neighborhoods. This has led to a lack of affordable housing, quality schools, and other essential services.

## **Solutions to Address Inequality**

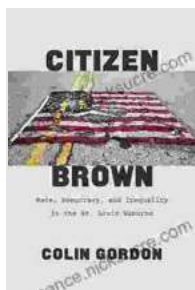
The long tail of disparities in the St. Louis suburbs is a complex problem that requires a comprehensive solution. There is no single solution that will address all of the challenges facing the region. However, there are a number of steps that can be taken to reduce inequality and create a more just and equitable society.

One of the most important steps is to address the underlying causes of inequality. This includes tackling racial discrimination, investing in black neighborhoods, and providing equal access to quality education, healthcare, and other essential services.

It is also important to challenge the narrative of the St. Louis suburbs as a haven for white families. The suburbs are home to a significant black population that faces many of the same challenges as black residents in the city of St. Louis. By acknowledging the experiences of black suburban residents, we can begin to address the long tail of disparities that they face.

The St. Louis suburbs are a microcosm of the racial and economic disparities that plague the United States. While the region has made progress in recent decades, significant challenges remain. The long tail of

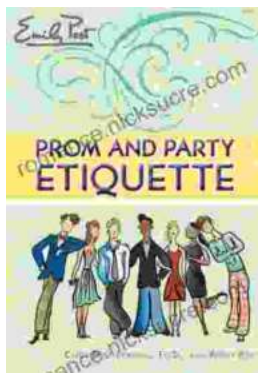
disparities is a result of a number of factors, including residential segregation, racial discrimination, and lack of investment. To address these challenges, we must challenge the narrative of the St. Louis suburbs as a haven for white families, acknowledge the experiences of black suburban residents, and invest in policies that promote racial equity.



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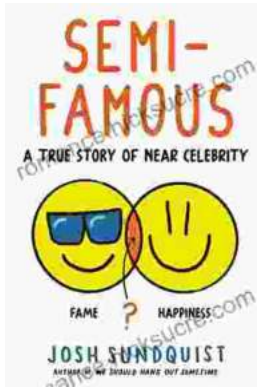
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