

Discussion of “The Lasting Impact of
Historical Residential Security Maps on
Experienced Segregation”
by Aaronson, Han, Hartley, Mazumder

ABFER, May 2024

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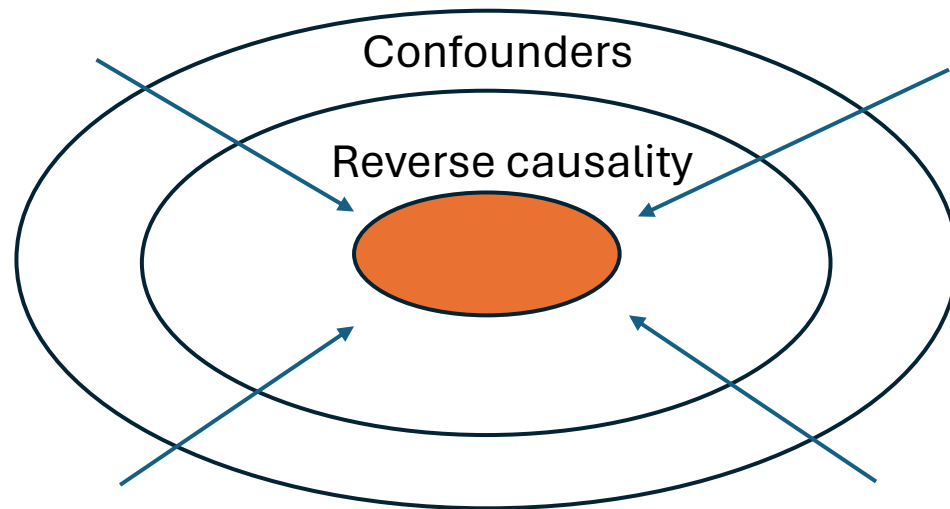
Pennsylvania State University and University of Tokyo

Paper Summary

- Findings
 - Redlining in the 1930s still has a persistent effect on residents' trip pattern beyond income effects
- Theme
 - “experienced segregation” – Path dependency created by a “wrong” policy
- History meets big data
 - The “redlining map” of 1930s (HOLOC map)
 - Cell phone records of visits from Safegraph
- Identification strategy
 - Census blocks on different sides of idiosyncratic redlining boundaries

General Comments

- Excellent writing
- No serious econometric problem to point out
- Very careful identification



- “Redlining” has created segregation in the orange subset.

Comment 1: Identification vs aggregate effects

Destination CD

Boundary	Idiosyncratic Boundaries (low propensity score)	Boundaries based on Characteristic
AB	?	?
BC	Main	Tab 2
CD	Tab 7	?

Destination AB

Boundary	Idiosyncratic Boundaries (low propensity score)	Boundaries based on Characteristic
AB	?	?
BC	Tab 2	Tab 2
CD	?	?

Additional dimensions in

- Destination: income, college, race (Tab 3)
- Proximity (Tab 4)
- Visit type: work, non-work, weekend (Tab 5)

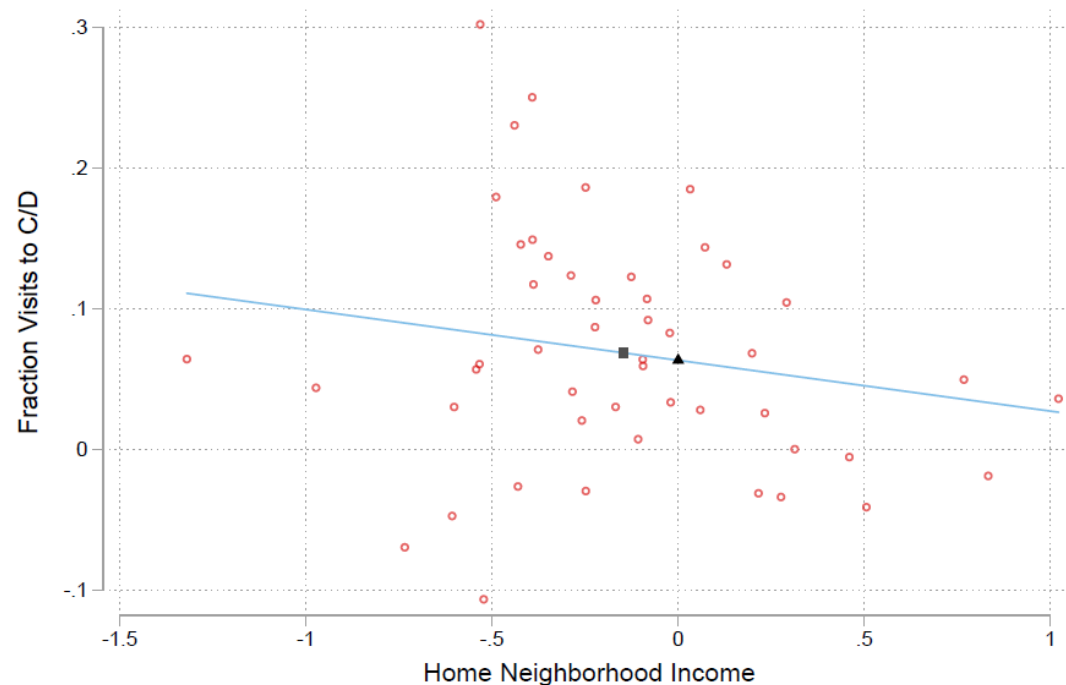
Can you extrapolate the results to estimate the aggregate effect?

Comment 2: Income

- My immediate questions – addressed in Section 3.4

Figure 1: Boundary Differences in Visit Patterns

(a) C-B Boundaries: Fraction Visits to C/D

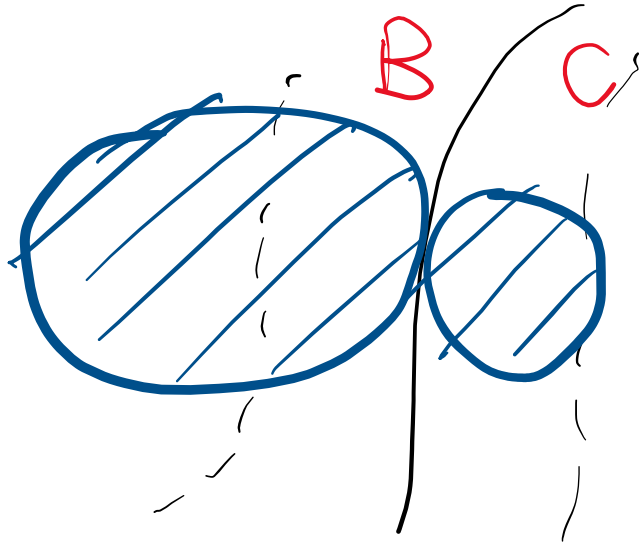


- Are income effects insignificant in other segments?

Boundary/Area	Income
A	?
AB	?
B	?
BC	Tab 7
C	?
CD	?
D	?

- Can you estimate income effects for AB and CD and within A, B, C, D?
- Are they small in other segments?

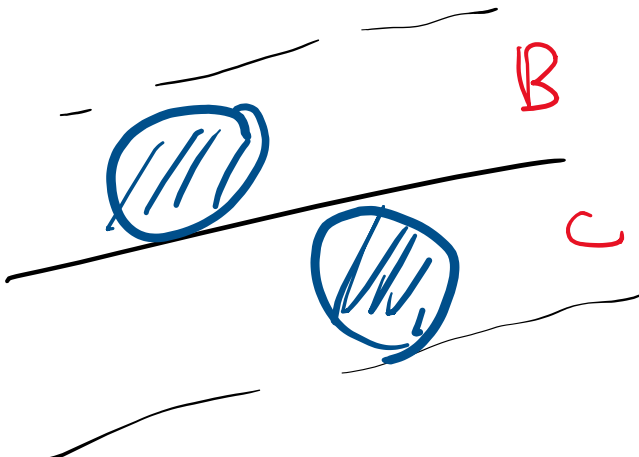
Comment 3: Map of example boundaries



- Area Size
- Geographical distribution
- Roads
- Hills
- Rivers

Even withing $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, there may be dividing factors despite similar PS

- Roads
- Bus routs
- River



Comment 4: City-level impacts

- Identification is based on the difference between
 - Population $\in [30k, 40k]$
 - Population $\in (40k, 50k]$
- This difference may be due to redlining but may also be due to population size
- Can you test discontinuity in level or slope at the “40k boundary” to see if 40k is special?

Conclusion

- Very nice paper with clean identification
- Nice to show that red lining has created hysteresis in resident trips
- A trade-off is that the identified effect is for a narrow segment of the economy
- The overall effect of the program is estimated by the 40k population threshold but I'd rather want to see "dirty" estimates for the omitted segments of the economy