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## The Cost of Segregation || Part I: Racial Attitudes

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Donna Terek / The Detroit News

The Rev. Malik Shabazz, leader of the New Black Panther Party, doesn't advocate integration. "Am I interested in co-existing with things the way they are today? Hell no," he says, shown leading a protest in Detroit.

### Attitudes

## Stereotypes born of racism have endured

Ignorance, not hate, separates us, experts say

By Ron French / The Detroit News

William Allen has lived in Dallas, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Boston and New York, and considers Detroit "the most race-conscious place I've lived."

Here, people see race lurking behind every political decision and police investigation. Yet the Michigan State University political science professor balks at labeling Metro Detroiters racist.

Statistics show Metro Detroit to be the most segregated metropolitan area in the nation, but "I don't believe the segregation numbers mean racism, nor

### CyberSurvey

#### Will segregation end on it's own?

Do you think segregation in Metro Detroit will eventually go away on it's own, without the intervention of government, business or other groups?

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tell you much of anything," Allen said.

Segregation today no longer is automatically equated with racism, either by race relations experts or the many black and white homeowners who continue to live separately.

"Most whites are not racist," says University of Michigan sociologist Reynolds Farley. "At the same time, there continues to be a strong undercurrent of traditional negative stereotypes."

Those stereotypes, born in times of blatant racism, continue today in part because blacks and whites live apart, he said.

Raymond K. Sewell Jr., the first black assistant prosecutor in Macomb County and now a federal administrative law judge, has been on the blunt end of those stereotypes. When he stops at Caribou Coffee, some whites have assumed he must be a former professional athlete because he is a black man in ritzy Birmingham.

"I don't think whites are completely comfortable with me," said Sewell, who grew up in Detroit and now lives in Bloomfield Hills. "It's not conscious prejudice, but part of our culture. You can tell the difference between someone who is racist and someone who is coming from a background (surrounded by negative racial stereotypes). They don't care (about race), they've got their own problems."

There are exceptions. Doug Chastney of Center Line is a member of a white supremacy band called Angry Aryans. He's tired of "integration being shoved down my throat. It's a simple law of nature. (Integration) is like telling cats and dogs that it's OK to integrate.

"A lot of whites today are hypocrites," Chastney said. "They don't want to talk about race because it makes them uncomfortable. But they don't want to live around blacks."

The Rev. Malik Shabazz, leader of the New Black Panthers in Detroit, doesn't want integration either.

"Am I interested in co-existing with things the way they are today? Hell no," Shabazz said. "God will kill white people unless they change."

Only 6 percent of blacks and 4 percent of whites in a Detroit News poll listed their dislike of another race as their reason for living apart.

Barb Young thinks segregation today has little to do with hate and much to do with ignorance.

Young, the editor of a trade magazine in Chicago, also has lived in Detroit and upstate New York. She has found, no matter where she goes, "I'm always aware that I'm black. It's not about being fair, it has to do with reality."

Race relations in Detroit are "no different from any other major city," Young said. "It's just a matter of degrees ... of ignorance."

## CyberSurvey

### Is the improvement in black/white relations permanent?

Will the current thawing in black/white relations in Metro Detroit (as measured by a January Detroit News/WDIV poll) is likely to be permanent, even though many social scientists say such a scenario would be unprecedented? Why or why not?

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**The white supremacy band Angry Aryans, pictured on their CD "Racially Motivated Violence," opposes integration. Says member Doug Chastney of Center Line: "It's a simple law of nature."**

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