COMING TOGETHER? TRENDS IN BLACK-WHITE OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION, 1980 TO 2009


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Occupational segregation, the differential distribution of groups of workers across occupations, provides one of the most important mechanisms for creating, maintaining and legitimating social inequality. In this study I examine trends in occupational race segregation from 1980 through 2009/2010 and use fixed-effects regression analysis to assess how changes in occupational characteristics such as earnings, benefits and demographic composition are associated with changes in the representation of black men and women. My findings show that after 1980 trends toward racial occupational integration slowed and after 2000 may have began to reverse. Race and sex continue to be important for understanding the occupational distributions of black and white workers as black workers are disadvantaged relative to white workers and black men are especially disadvantaged.

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