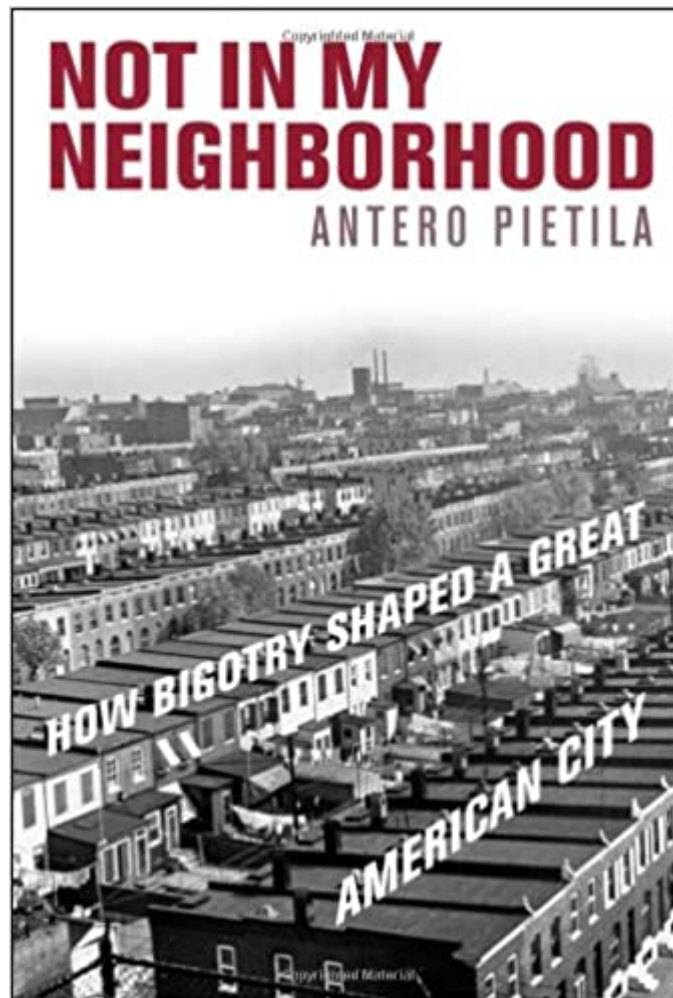




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# Not In My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped A Great American City



## Synopsis

Baltimore is the setting for (and typifies) one of the most penetrating examinations of bigotry and residential segregation ever published in the United States. Antero Pietila shows how continued discrimination practices toward African Americans and Jews have shaped the cities in which we now live. Eugenics, racial thinking, and white supremacist attitudes influenced even the federal government's actions toward housing in the 20th century, dooming American cities to ghettoization. This all-American tale is told through the prism of Baltimore, from its early suburbanization in the 1880s to the consequences of "white flight" after World War II, and into the first decade of the twenty-first century. The events are real, and so are the heroes and villains. Mr. Pietila's engrossing story is an eye-opening journey into city blocks and neighborhoods, shady practices, and ruthless promoters.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A sharply critical, exhaustively researched, and absolutely invaluable analysis, *Not In My Neighborhood* is the most important kind of history book-the history that must be studied so that its mistakes are not repeated (and so that solutions to difficult problems can be worked upon for the future)! Highly recommended. (Midwest Book Review)...Spellbinding....The scope of Pietila's research over the past 130 years is dazzling (Jason Policastro *Baltimore Brew*)With its sensitive subject, this groundbreaking book is a monumental effort.....Pietila hooks readers with anecdotes and arresting details. (Diane Scharper *Baltimore Sun*)From suburbanization in the late 19th century

to white flight after WWII and, more recently, the targeting of minorities with predatory sub-prime lending, the picture of Baltimore, once again, isn't pretty. (Steven Levingston *The Review of Higher Education*) *Not In My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped A Great American City* offers a powerful survey of a Baltimore issue that shaped a city's psyche when discrimination policies toward blacks and Jews shaped a world....Eye-opening and recommended for any college-level social issues collection. (Midwest Book Review, May 2010) Antero Pietila's sweeping and detailed portrait of Baltimore's 20th-century blockbusters is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand how and why the city came to look the way it does today. Morris Goldseker, the mighty Jack Pollack, "Little Willie" Adams, James Rouse, Joseph Meyerhoff, and even civil rights legends such as Juanita Mitchell all played their part and profited from Baltimore's racially rigged housing business. Clearly written, fast-paced, and filled with telling anecdotes, *Not in My Neighborhood* brings these players to vivid life, even if it merely nods to some of the larger, more impersonal forces that gave them their opportunities. (Baltimore City Paper, December 2010) Former Baltimore Sun reporter Pietila, who covered Baltimore neighborhoods and politics for 35 years, has produced an engrossing chronicle that emphasizes the links between racism, real estate practices, and urban politics. Indeed, the author argues they have been inseparable in Baltimore and the nation. Pietila suggests that federal housing programs (1930s-60s) transformed the eugenics movement into national policy, and he significantly places realtors and developers at the very center of Baltimore politics. Most of the narrative focuses on the period 1910-68, although the author traces racial and real estate patterns back to the 1880s. The third section covers the 1960s and early 1970s....White versus black racism and black and white anti-Semitism are the main themes here, but Pietila's...account reveals class and religion added to already complex tensions. For instance, some Jewish developers would not rent or sell to Jewish families. Newspapers and personal interviews provide some colorful details. Secondary scholarship connects the Baltimore example to the national struggle over access to decent housing, driven by optimism, fear, and sometimes violence. Summing Up: Recommended. (CHOICE) *Not in My Neighborhood* offers a lively, informative portrayal of how real estate practices throughout the twentieth century contributed to the segregated cities we see today. In a brief epilogue, the author voices optimism that increasing demographic diversity in the United States will lead to a more integrated future. (Journal Of Planning Education And Research 2011-01-01)

Antero Pietila spent thirty-five years as a reporter with the Baltimore Sun, most of it covering the city's neighborhoods, politics, and government. A native of Finland, he became a student of racial

change during his first visit to the United States in 1964. He lives in Baltimore.

Even if you've never been to Baltimore, but have an interest in race relations, this book is a must read. If you are familiar with Baltimore, that goes double! This is one of the best books I've read in the past year. The author, being a newspaperman, has a keen eye for the telling detail. He presents both the big picture and the little nuggets that make the story come to life. Because I have lived in Baltimore, I am familiar with many of the personalities and locations featured in the book, but I still learned a lot. For example, that Fulton Avenue served as an unyielding boundary between black and white neighborhoods for 34 years -- an eternity! Since Fulton Ave. has for decades been simply a street through the massive black section of West Baltimore, I had no idea of its important role in decades past. Also, while the subject of the book is quite serious, the writing style is extremely accessible. It's almost like a series of New Yorker-style articles, but arranged in chronological order that works perfectly. Readers will be able to get a clear understanding of how Baltimore's black population expanded from the city center to the boundaries with Baltimore County over the past 100+ years. For a deeper dive into one of the episodes described in this book -- the "breaking" of Edmondson Village -- I also recommend "Blockbusting in Baltimore: The Edmondson Village Story" by W. Edmond Orser. It's written in a more academic style, but is still pretty readable. If you have enjoyed "Family Properties" by Beryl Satter, you should read this book as well.

This was such an informative book and of great interest to me. This particular copy was purchased as a gift and I hope the recipient enjoys it as much as I enjoyed it when I read it. The history of zoning with a racial bias in my home town beginning right after the Civil War is absorbing and sheds a lot of light on things I never learned in school. The writing is succinct but not dry. I recommend it to anyone interested in the desegregation process in large city milieus.

A very informative and enlightening book which opened my eyes to the extent taken by local, state and national governments to promote segregation by race, ethnicity, and economics.

This book is well worth reading in order to understand how our country has become so polarized. It traces the laws and attitudes that have led to our city unrest and negotiation. It was eye opening, and written in an easy to read style.

Read this book for a class I took last semester, lots of great information you don't hear about in

history classes growing up. Well written.

Very thorough research although a little disjointed. If you want to know how we got here Baltimore...this is a must read.

read this book if you want to get in details the research that went on in the development of Baltimore City, and the economic shifts that happened in Baltimore.

Rarely have I bought a book that was so enlightening that I did not want to lend it to others, but had to buy them copies of their own.

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