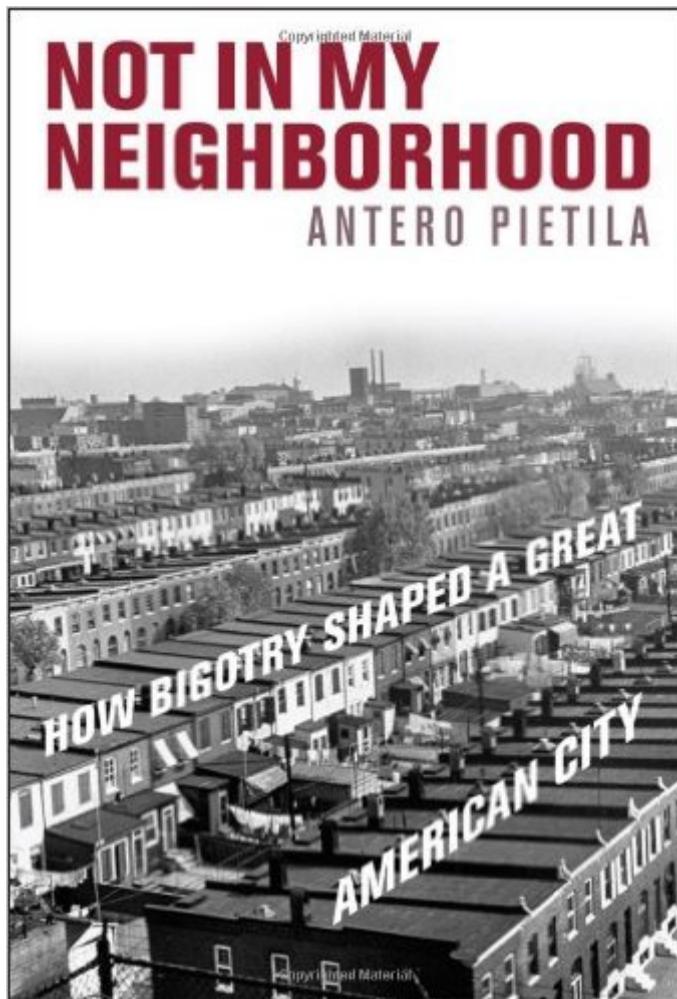


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Not In My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped A Great American City



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

As a Baltimore resident with a keen interest in the city's history I bought the book to see what the author had to say about an ugly period in the city's history. The transformation from a predominately white to a predominately black city occurred during several decades between 1950 and 1980 and had profound effects on the city's character and well-being. Pietila writes a good account of why Baltimore flipped from being a white city to a black city and how this change was fueled by the ugly specter of racism and blockbusting - brutal tactics employed by often ethically challenged realtors to scare white homeowners in selling out at rock bottom prices and flipping the houses to black buyers

at much higher prices. I enjoyed the history of the racial changes in the various neighborhoods, starting back in 1910 when the first white homeowner sold to a black buyer in an area outside the accepted black ghettos. I won't get into more details about the content of the book as that's been written by other reviewers but I will add a few of my observations that may or may not be relevant, depending on what you are looking for out of the book. 1. Pietila refers to several of the early country estates surrounding the city as "plantations," such as Homewood "plantation." These were never plantations in the sense of large Southern agricultural based, intensively farmed, plantations, but simply country pleasure estates owned by the city elite who may have owned black servants. Perhaps this is nitpicking but the implication when using the word "plantation" is quite strong and should be carefully used. 2. I would have enjoyed more direct interviews with residents of the neighborhoods that flipped from white to black, from the white sellers to black buyers.

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