

SUSAN STRASSER  
susanstrasser.net



William Mortimer, *Baltimore Sun*, 1962

## A WHITE HISTORIAN CONFRONTS RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION

Although neighborhood segregation is so common in the United States that it almost seems natural, black and white people lived in close proximity in early American cities. This illustrated talk explores how that changed. Transportation technologies and the Great Migration of African Americans from south to north both contributed. But racial segregation was deliberately organized by the actors in the real estate system: city governments through zoning; the Federal government through the FHA, the GI Bill, and the 1949 Housing Act; developers through restrictive covenants; realtors through blockbusting; and banks, chambers of commerce, private landlords, and public housing administrators. Segregation was enforced by violence, terror, and intimidation.

In response to recent events, historian Susan Strasser seeks to serve people grappling with contemporary issues of race and racism. This is the fourth of a series of illustrated talks, "A White Historian Reads Black History."