

## Infographic of the Day: How Segregated is Your City?

BY CLIFF KUANG Mon Sep 20, 2010

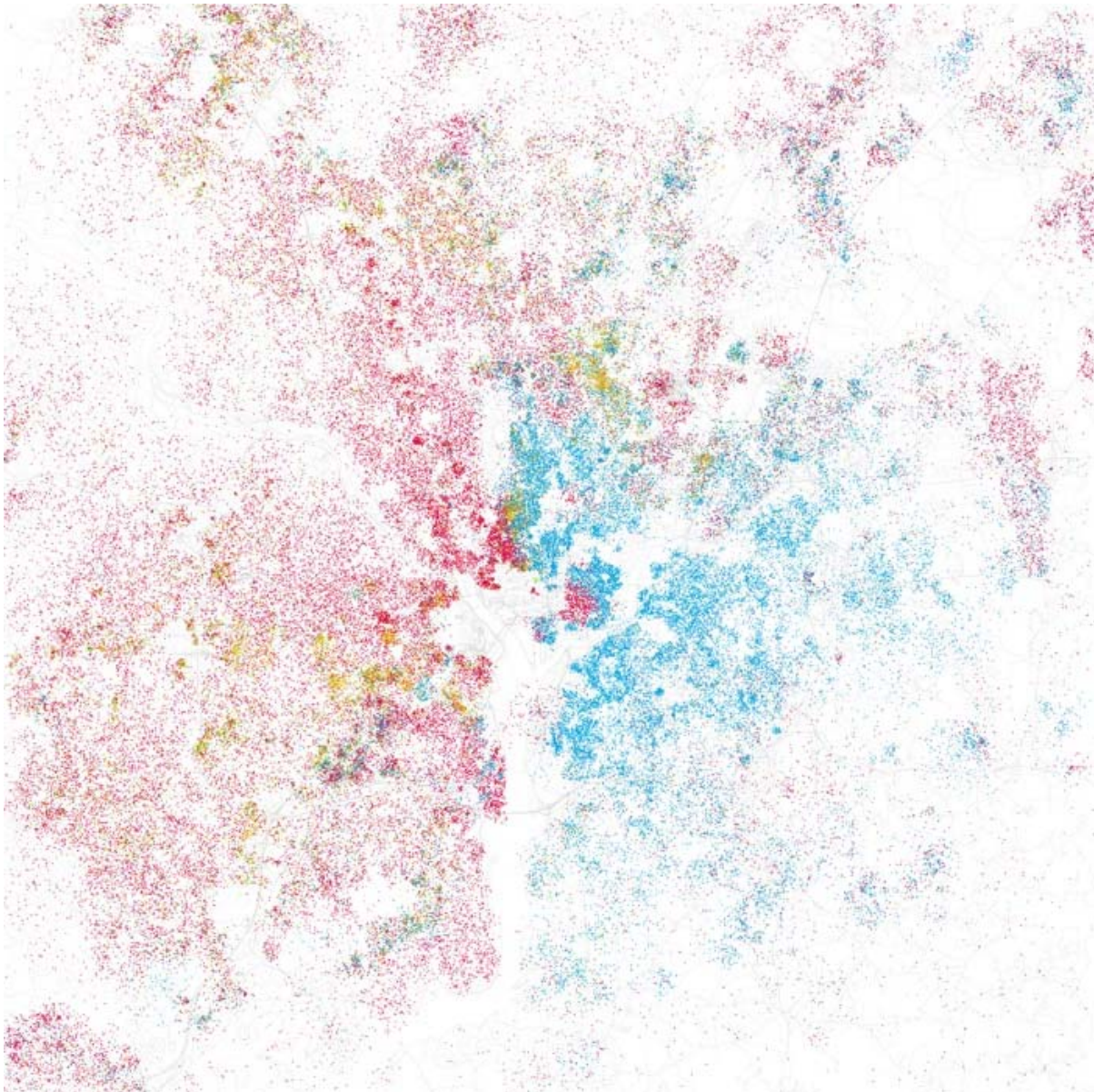
<http://www.fastcompany.com/1690097/infographics-of-the-day-how-segregated-is-your-city?>

Recently, cartographer Bill Rankin produced [an astounding map of Chicago](#), which managed to show the city's areas of racial integration.

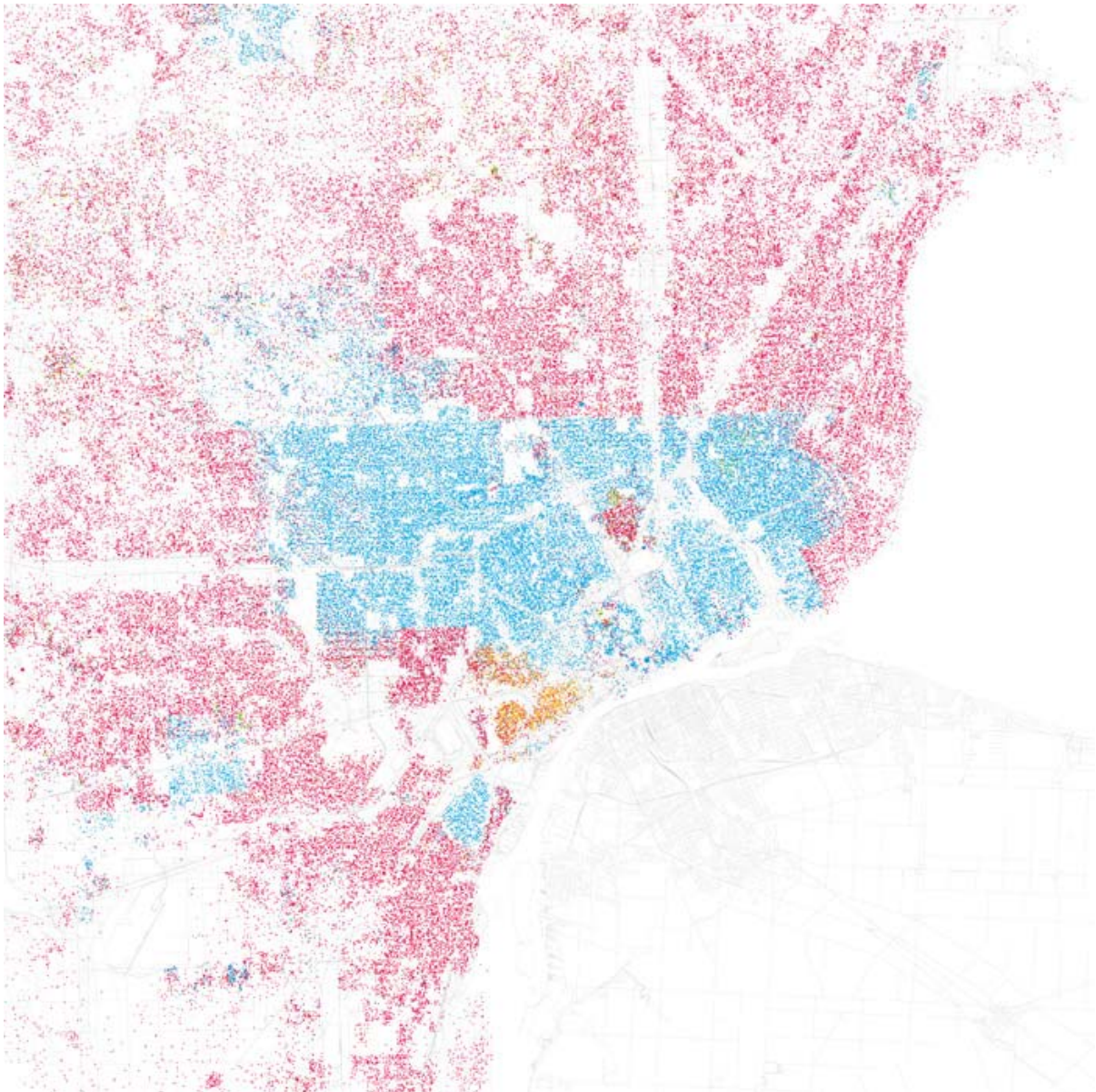
Eric Fischer saw those maps, and took it upon himself to create similar ones for [the top 40 cities in the United States](#). Fisher used a straight forward method borrowed from Rankin: Using U.S. Census data from 2000, he created a map where one dot equals 25 people. The dots are then color-coded based on race: White is pink; Black is blue; Hispanic is orange, and Asian is green.

The results for various cities are fascinating: Just like every city is different, every city is integrated (or segregated) in different ways.

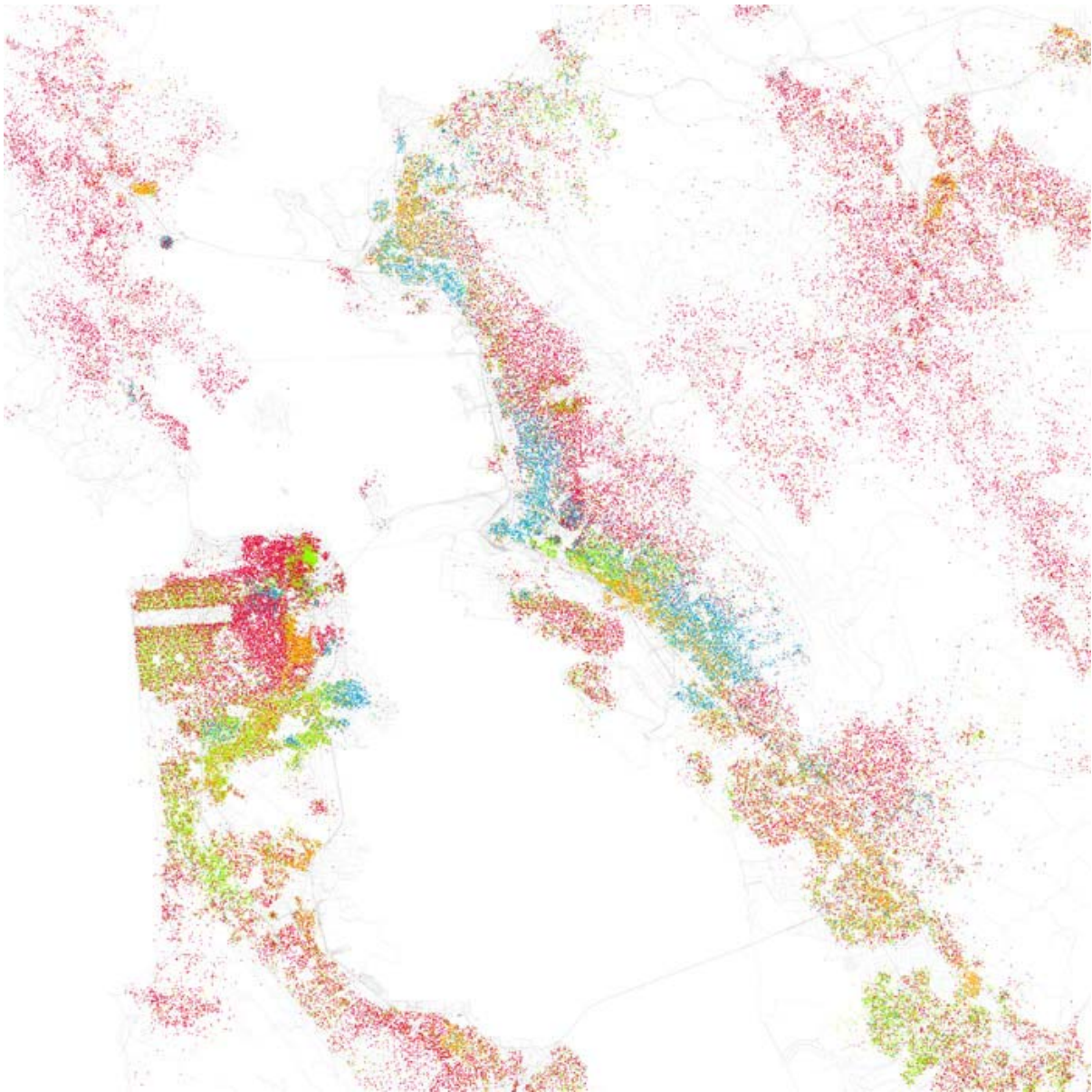
[Washington, D.C.](#), for example, has a stark east/west divide between white and black:



Detroit, meanwhile, is marked by the infamous Eight Mile beltway, which serves a precise boundary for the city's black and white populations. Integration is almost non-existent:



However, other cities present better pictures of racial integration. The San Francisco Bay, for example. While some parts of San Francisco are very, very white, large tracts of the outlying bay communities such as Oakland are quite integrated -- perhaps partly because no one minority totally dominates a single area:



That's not the case with [New York](#), however: There are areas of extreme racial concentration. But the sheer number of people in those areas means that the boundaries become intensely rich areas of cross-cultural ferment:



L.A., meanwhile, is sort of the opposite. Because no part of the city is particularly dense, you get blended neighborhoods which are at times larger than the racially homogeneous ones:



Meanwhile, here's what San Antonio looks like -- a city which demographics often point to as the future of the post-race Southwest, where whites and Hispanics live together without boundaries. While you can see there's a predominance of Hispanics near the city center, you can also see that Hispanics are completely evenly integrated throughout the rest of the city -- there's really no such thing as a rich, whites-only enclave (the [large version](#) in particular bears this out):



Fascinating, right? Originally, Rankin created the mapping methodology because he was frustrated with the way racial boundaries continue to be mapped. Usually, ethnic neighborhoods are shown [as homogeneous, sharply bounded swathes of color](#). But obviously, living in a city tells a much different story -- and the nature of the boundary areas are at least as important to the identity of any city.