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# TRUST, DIVERSITY, AND SEGREGATION IN THE US AND THE UK


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- Generalized trust, the belief that “most people can be trusted,” is all about having faith in people who are different from yourself. Of course, we trust people like ourselves –especially people we know well. Such trust reflects our experiences, either directly or indirectly (through perceptions of group traits or stereotypes). Believing that “most people can be trusted” is a leap of faith, a moral decision that *we ought to trust others* (Uslaner, 2002, ch. 2).
  - Generalized trust matters because it helps connect us to people who are different from ourselves. Trusters are tolerant of immigrants and minorities and support equal rights for women and gays. They believe in a common core of values and hold that ethnic politicians should *not represent only their own kind*. *People who trust others are more likely to give to charity and volunteer their time, especially for secular causes that help people unlike themselves. Trusting societies have more effective governments, higher growth rates, less corruption and crime, and are more likely to redistribute resources from the rich to the poor* (LaPorta et al., 1999; Uslaner, 2002, chs.5 and 7).


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- Generalized trust is a form of “bridging” rather than “bonding” social capital (Putnam, 1993, 93). Trust should thus be a route to having a diverse set of friends and acquaintances. Yet, there is little evidence that this happens. An even greater enigma is that some prominent papers show that in the United States, at least, people living in areas with diverse populations are *less likely to trust others and to have heterogeneous social networks*.


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- If trust means faith in people who are unlike ourselves—and I have demonstrated that this is indeed how people interpret the question—then it is discomfiting to find that a diverse environment leads to less trust. Diversity has been linked to many positive outcomes, from increased wages and higher prices for rental housing (Ottaviano and Peri, 2005), greater profits and market share for firms that have more diverse work forces (Herring, 2006), and greater problem-solving capacities (Gurin, Nagda, and Lopez, 2004).


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- Robert Putnam, in a now famous article “E Pluribus Unum” in *Scandinavian Political Studies* (2007) worries that increasing ethnic diversity through immigration leads to lower levels of social capital:
    - Ethnic diversity is increasing in most advanced countries, driven mostly by sharp increases in immigration. In the long run immigration and diversity are likely to have important cultural, economic, fiscal, and developmental benefits. In the short run, however, immigration and ethnic diversity tend to reduce social solidarity and social capital. New evidence from the US suggests that in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods residents of all races tend to ‘hunker down’. Trust (even of one’s own race) is lower, altruism and community cooperation rarer, friends fewer. In the long run, however, successful immigrant societies have overcome such fragmentation by creating new, cross-cutting forms of social solidarity and more encompassing identities.... Diversity seems to trigger *not* in-group/out-group division, but anomie or social isolation.


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- Putnam is careful to distinguish between African-Americans in the United States, whose families have been in the country for many generations, and more recent immigrants. But his findings apply to both “new” immigrants and African-Americans.
  - Putnam worries about the impact of immigration for social capital in the near and medium term. His worries apply to other nations with large immigrant communities as well. Do his results lead to support for reduced immigration?


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- Virtually every large city in Western societies has seen an influx of immigrants, often from countries with different cultures. The concerns about diversity lead us to ask whether immigrants constitute a threat to social relations in the host country. Does immigration threaten social cohesion? More critically, might immigrants even constitute a redefinition of national identity.


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- The US-UK comparison is interesting . First, the two countries share a common culture and their majority (white) populations now have roughly similar levels of trust: 43 percent for the UK in the Citizenship survey and 39 percent for the United States in the 2008 General Social Survey. Yet, minorities occupy a far more prominent place in the United States than in the United Kingdom. Minorities constitute about nine percent of the British population and 30 percent in the United States .
  - African-Americans in major cities often face “hyper-segregation,” extreme isolation. There is nothing like this for British minorities.

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- Americans have long adhered to the “melting pot” model—a single common set of values and an expectation that immigrants will blend in and adapt to the majority culture. In the 2002 General Social Survey only 20 percent of respondents said that it was not important for immigrants to adapt to the common culture. African-Americans are somewhat more likely to say that adaptation is not essential (by 32 percent compared to 18 percent for others). Yet Hispanics—who comprise the largest number of recent immigrants and who some say constitute a threat to the common culture (Huntington, 1998)--are no more likely to say that adaptation should be optional (19 percent compared to 20 percent of non-Hispanics).

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- The problem is not *diversity* but *residential segregation*.
  - When people of different backgrounds live apart from each other, they will not—indeed, cannot—develop the sorts of ties—or the sorts of attitudes—that leads us to trust people who are different from ourselves.
  - The evidence on diversity and trust is not all supportive: There is other accumulating evidence that diversity alone does not lead to less trust or worse outcomes. Hooghe et al. (2009) finds that diversity does not lead to less trust. Collier, Honohan, and Moene (2001) find that ethnic group dominance, but *not simple ethnic diversity*, leads to a greater likelihood of civil conflict. Alesina and Zhuravskaya (2009) find that ethnically and linguistically segregated neighborhoods, but not fractionalization, lead to a lower quality of government.

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- Concentrated minorities are more likely to develop a strong identity that supercedes a national sense of identification (trust in people who are different from oneself) and to build local institutions and political bodies that enhance this sense of separateness. Geographical isolation may breed in-group identity at the expense of the larger society. Segregation may also lead to greater political organization by minority groups, which can establish their own power bases in opposition to the political organizations dominated by the majority group as their share of the citizenry grows.

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- Segregation also leads to greater inequality—and inequality is the strongest determinant of trust--over time in the United States, across the American states, and across nations without a legacy of communism. Bowles, Loury, and Sethi (2009, 11) argue that “...when segregation is sufficiently great, group equality cannot be attained even asymptotically, no matter what the initial conditions may be.”
  - There is substantial evidence that segregation is strongly tied to worse outcomes for minorities on a wide variety of measures including educational attainment and job prospects—and that segregated neighborhoods have more crime and weak infrastructures.

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- I find, using data from the Social Capital Benchmark Survey (Uslaner, in press) as well as the United Kingdom Citizenship Survey (2007), the Equality, Security, Community Surveys of the University of British Columbia (2000 and 2002) and the German Social Survey that “there is no evidence that having a friend of an opposite race makes a person more trusting in general.”
  - Contact, Allport held, must be accompanied by “equal group status within the situation, common goals; intergroup cooperation; and the support of authorities, law, or custom.” These are rather demanding conditions. Simply knowing someone of a different background, even having them as a casual friend, is not sufficient to shape more fundamental beliefs such as trust (or tolerance).

# Diversity and Segregation

- Fractionalization measures such as those used by Putnam and others cannot distinguish between simple population diversity and residential segregation. A city/state/nation /neighborhood with a highly diverse population—and thus a high fractionalization index—may be marked by either high or low residential segregation.
- Figures 1 and 2 present alternative scenarios on residential segregation. They represent hypothetical neighborhoods of blue and red ethnicities. Each neighborhood has equal shares of blue and red residents. In Figure 1, the two ethnic groups live apart from each other, divided by a highway, so there is less of an opportunity to interact. In Figure 2, the neighborhood is mixed. Each blue (red) resident has at least one red (blue) neighbor. Yet the fractionalization indices are identical.

Figure 1: High Segregation, High Fractionalization

Figure 2: Low Segregation, High Fractionalization

Figure 1

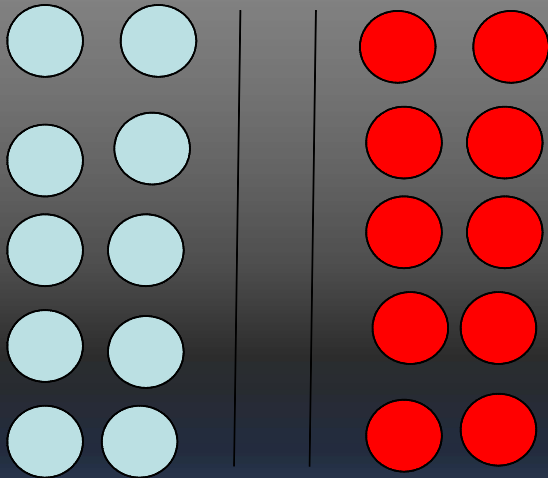
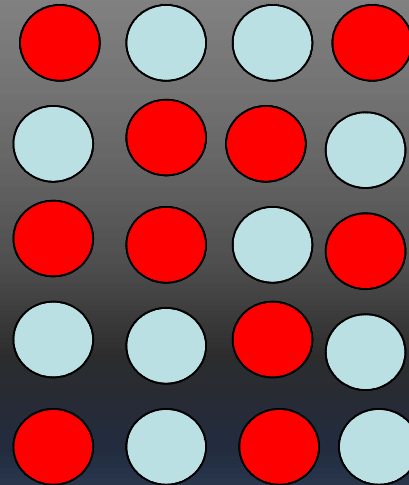







Figure 2






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- Several measures of residential segregation have been developed for American communities. Here I focus on one developed by John Iceland under contract for the Census Bureau. Iceland calculated both segregation and diversity measures for American communities.
  - Diversity and segregation are *not the same thing*. Across 325 communities in the U.S., the simple correlation for the two measures in 2000 is just .297 (and .231 for 1990 and .270 for 1980).


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- While diversity is more of a surrogate for the minority share of the population and segregation is not, there is at least a moderate relationship between residential segregation and the non-white share of a city's population. The least segregated cities in the data set—Portsmouth, NH and two cities each in Washington (Spokane and Yakima) and Oregon (Eugene and Medford)—also have low shares of minorities. I interact the segregation and diversity measures to produce an indicator of residential integration in diverse cities for the US SCBS model.


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- There is less segregation in Britain, but that does *not mean that whites and non-whites live next to each other*. Almost 80 percent of whites estimate that more than half (or even all) people within walking distance of them are from the same ethnic group as they are.
  - Most non-whites, including people of African and East Asia heritage—and most Muslims say that less than half of the population within walking distance are from different groups. Yet, this is not a simple picture of a fully integrated society. Almost 60 percent of whites believe that the ward they live in is less than half minority. Almost 90 percent of East Asians, Africans, and Muslims say that their wards are 80 percent or more minority—and 70 percent of each say that 90 percent of their immediate neighbors are from minority groups.

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- I conducted a statistical analysis of trust in the US and the UK, mixing survey analysis with city-level measures of both diversity and residential segregation in the US and using measures of perceived segregation in the UK.
  - I argue that integrated neighborhoods alone are not sufficient to lead to greater levels of trust. Instead, people must live in integrated neighborhoods *and* have diverse social networks.
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- *More critically, people living in well integrated cities who have diverse social networks are much more likely to be trusting than people who live in segregated cities with homogenous social networks or who fear crime. Segregation and diversity are not the same thing; and diversity is largely a proxy for large non-white populations rather than an "intermingling" of different ethnic and racial groups.*

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- In the US, the interaction of segregation and diversity is powerful for all respondents and whites if people have diverse social networks: People living in integrated and diverse communities with diverse social networks are 27% more likely to trust others.
  - Friendship networks matter in integrated areas *for blacks and whites equally*. Having friends of different backgrounds in communities with lower segregation boosts trust by 29 percent for whites and 30 percent for both African-Americans and whites. Whites who live in diverse and integrated environments who belong to groups made up of different types of people are 19 percent more likely to trust others. There is no effect for African Americans, perhaps because they are considerably more likely to join integrated groups.
  - Diversity does drive down trust for whites (between 23 and 29 percent) but this effect is more than made up by the boost in confidence from mixed social networks in integrated and diverse communities. Diversity has no effect on trust for African-Americans.

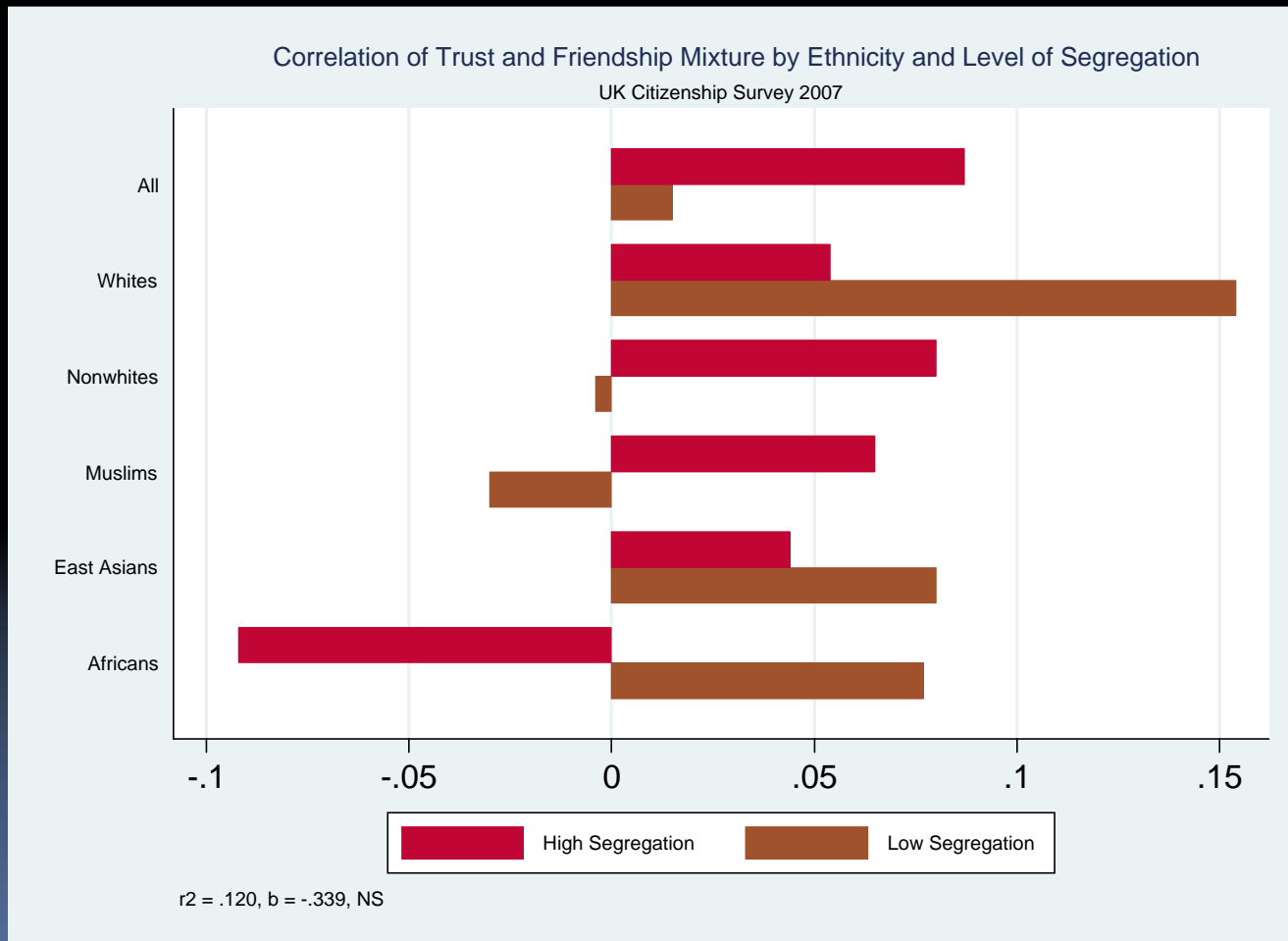
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- In the UK, the interaction between the number of close friends and the level of integration in one's environment is *always significant—for every group*. The *probit effects are similar for most groups—with the exception of East Indians for whom a diverse set of friends in an integrated environment matters most*. East Indians are *less likely than other minorities (other than Muslims) to have such diverse environments and ties—though still 3.5 times as likely to do so as whites*.

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- For the UK, the impact of diverse social networks in integrated neighborhoods is much smaller than the effects for the American models except for African-Americans. This suggests that white (majority) populations respond to diverse environments more powerfully where there are higher levels of segregation.
  - The roots of trust are different for majority and minority groups in Britain. Ironically, many of the factors I expected to shape trust for minority groups are significant *only for, or primarily for, whites*. *The importance of country of origin matters only for whites and for Muslims. The importance of ethnicity to your sense of identification matters only for whites, while concern about crime seems more consequential to trust for whites, as does the belief that everyone should speak English. The more isolated white majority seems to respond more to the demands of multiculturalism than do minorities. For East Asians, Africans, and Muslims, the key factors underlying trust are educational and economic status and especially confidence in the police—rather than a sense of vulnerability and fear for safety.*

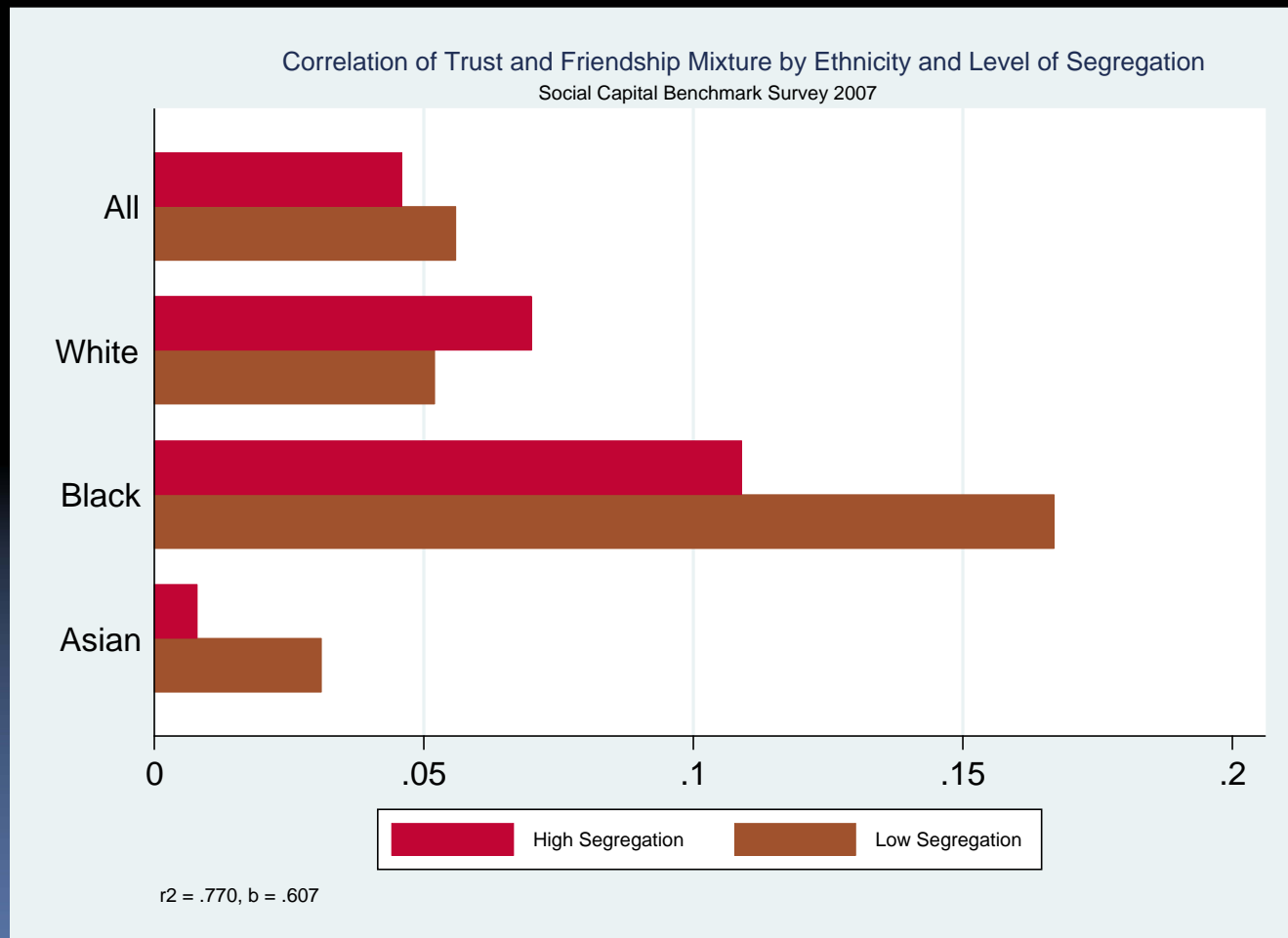
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- Having diverse social networks in integrated communities really does matter. Looking at integrated communities that are very diverse does not reduce the linkage between:
    - Diverse social networks in integrated communities – higher social trust.
    - This relationship holds not only for the US but also for the United Kingdom. Estimates for Sweden and Canada are yet to come.
    - Diverse social networks in integrated communities also leads to more volunteering for secular causes.

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- Integration by itself does not lead to generalized trust. Integration must be accompanied by social interactions with a diverse group of friends and group members or at least a sense of security in your community. More integrated communities in the United States are marked by lower economic disparities between majority and minority groups. Segregation is not as clearly tied to economic inequality in the UK.


In the UK the correlation between diverse social networks and trust is higher in low segregation contexts only for whites and people of African heritage.





In the US the correlation between diverse social networks and trust is higher in low segregation contexts only for African-Americans. For whites the correlation in integrated neighborhoods is *lower* than it is in more segregated neighborhoods.



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- How do we get integrated neighborhoods? The US seems to have the most segregated communities in the West. And the most segregated minorities are African-Americans, *not* recent immigrants. Segregation is markedly lower in the UK and in Sweden, although it is increasing in Sweden.
  - Both the UK and Sweden have government policies designed to foster integrated neighborhoods. But policies alone are not sufficient.

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- Existing research and my own findings in the US and the UK indicate that segregation to a great extent is caused by the reluctance of whites to live among minority groups. Whites who prefer almost all-white neighborhoods are also less trusting.
  - So it may not be so easy to “create” trust by integrating neighborhoods if you need trust to get integrated neighborhoods in the first place.

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- Nevertheless, in both the UK and Sweden, there is substantial evidence that immigrant groups move out of highly segregated neighborhoods after relatively short periods of time. In Sweden, different immigrant groups live together in neighborhoods, even if segregated by whites.
  - Even if the impact of integrated neighborhoods on trust is limited, there may be real gains to be made especially if young people interact with people of different backgrounds.

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- Putnam fears that diversity brings out the “turtle” in all of us. Stephen Hawking recounted a confrontation between Bertrand Russell and an old woman who claimed that we all live on the back of a giant turtle, which stood on the back of another turtle, and so on indefinitely. The entire foundation of our planet and thus our society was a myth, and so is believing that diversity is inimical to trust and that we must wait until we find a way to socialize minorities better. We need to recognize that segregation rather than diversity is the root of low trust. Otherwise, in the words of the old woman, “It’s turtles all the way down.”

