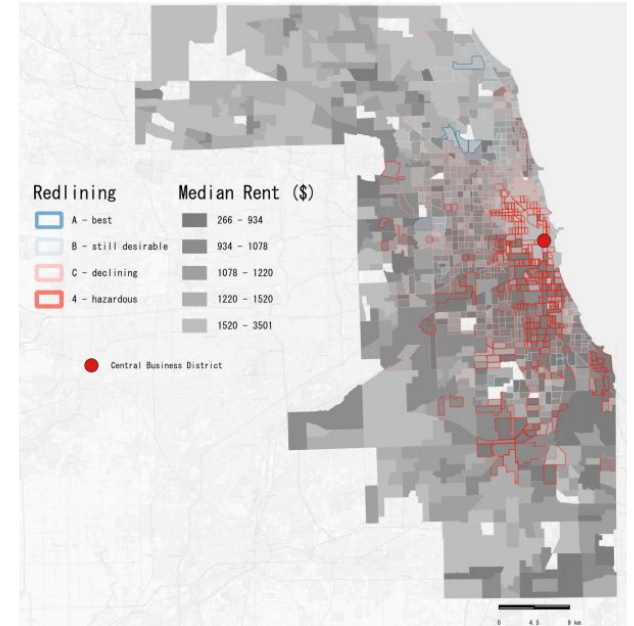
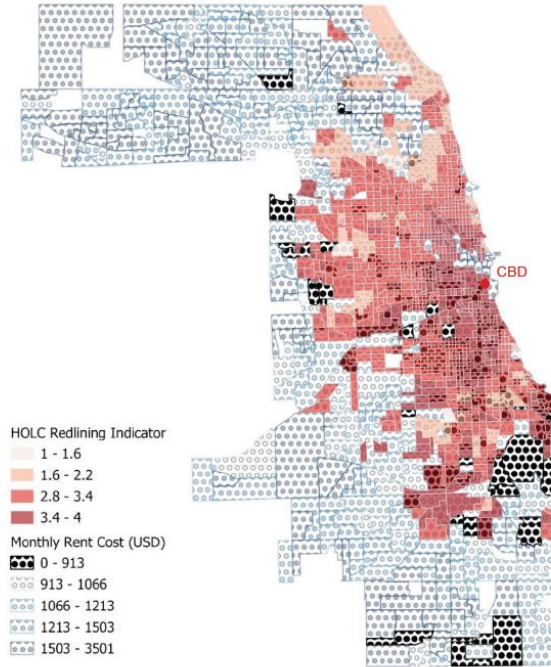
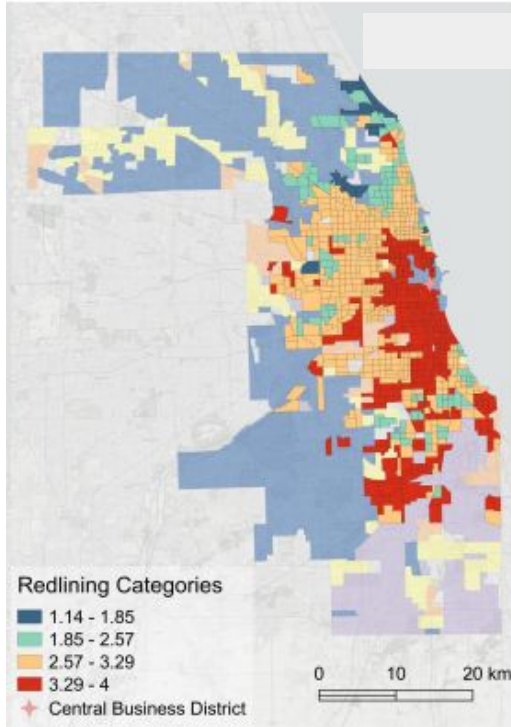


Things I Keep Correcting

Fall 2025

So you want to make a double choropleth map...



... consider not making one.

They tend to be busy and hard to read.

If you really want to make a double choropleth map...



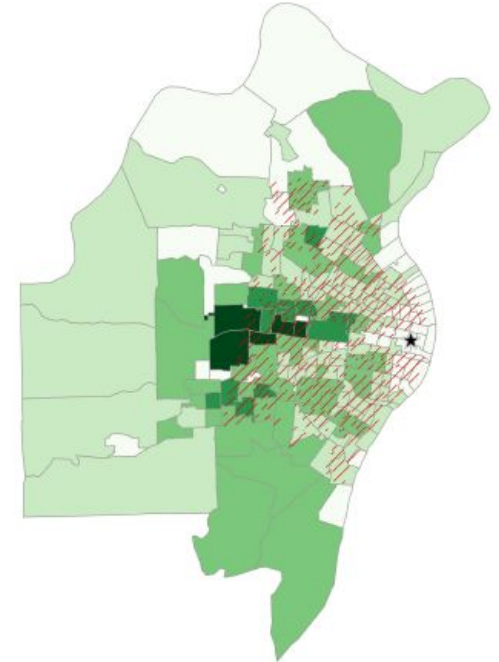
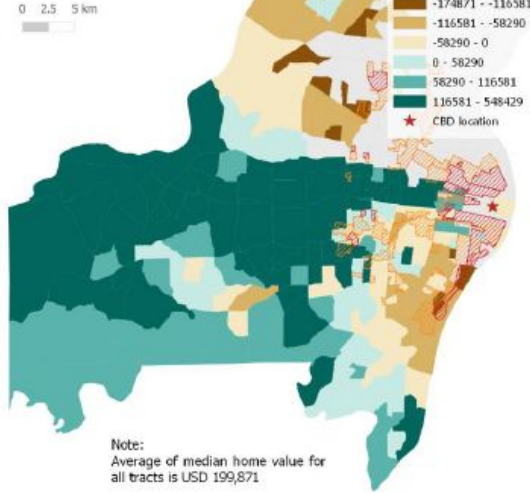
Consider **isolating** (ideally 1) variable(s) to simplify the map and lessen the visual clutter.

Median Gross Rent by Tract 1940

2020 Tracts with Black majority



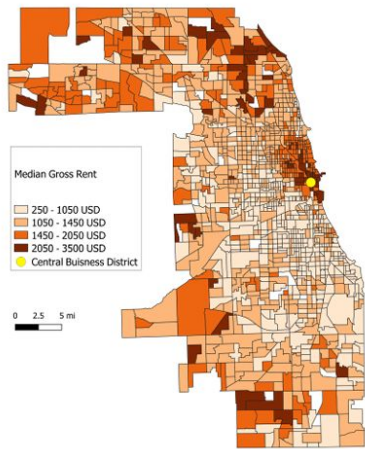
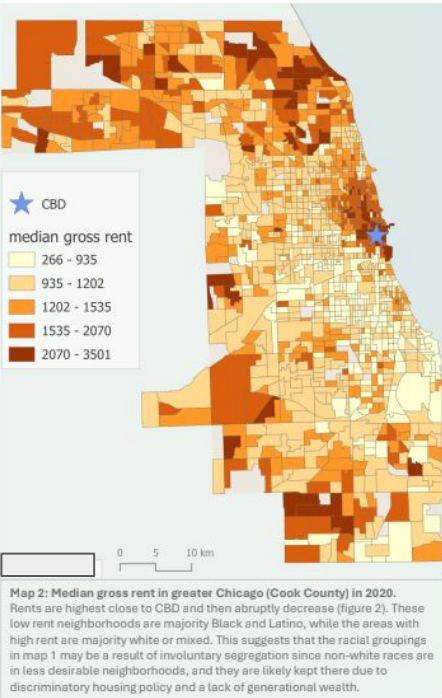
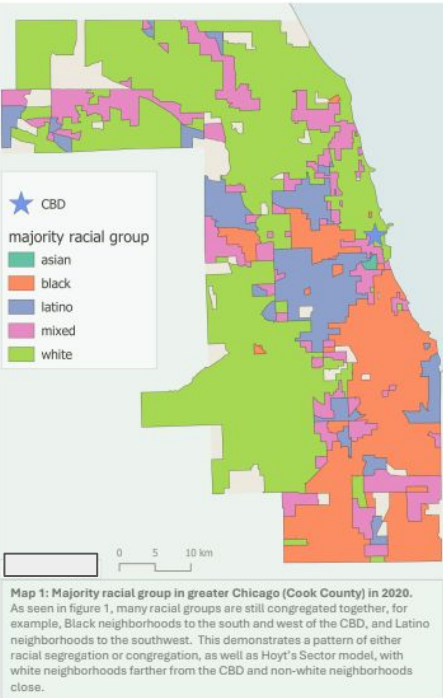
2020 Tracts with White majority



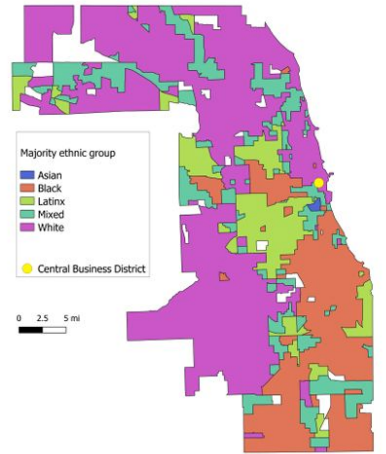
Median House Value (USD) // Redlined
★ CBD

- 0 - 2019
- 2019 - 4132
- 4132 - 7159
- 7159 - 12278
- 12278 - 20000

If you don't want to compromise on the data that is going to be visible...



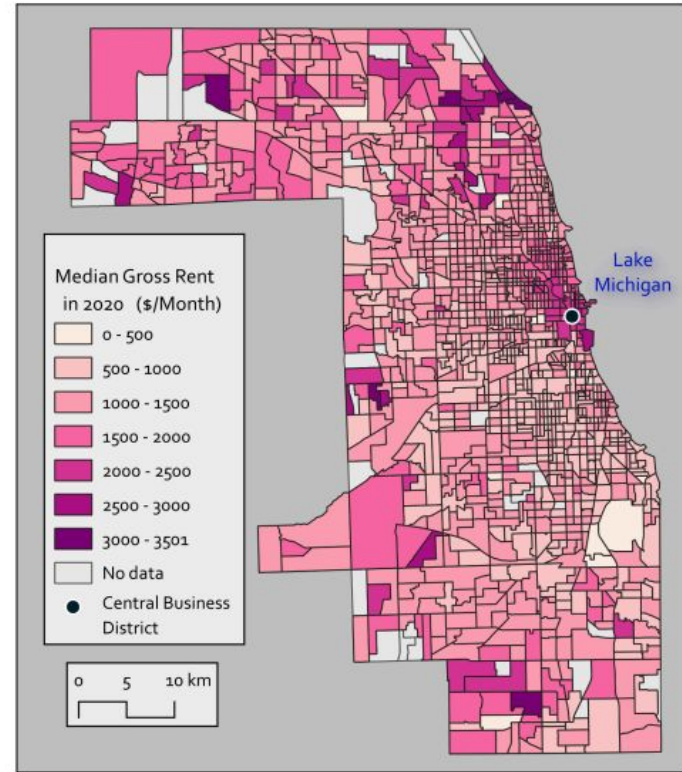
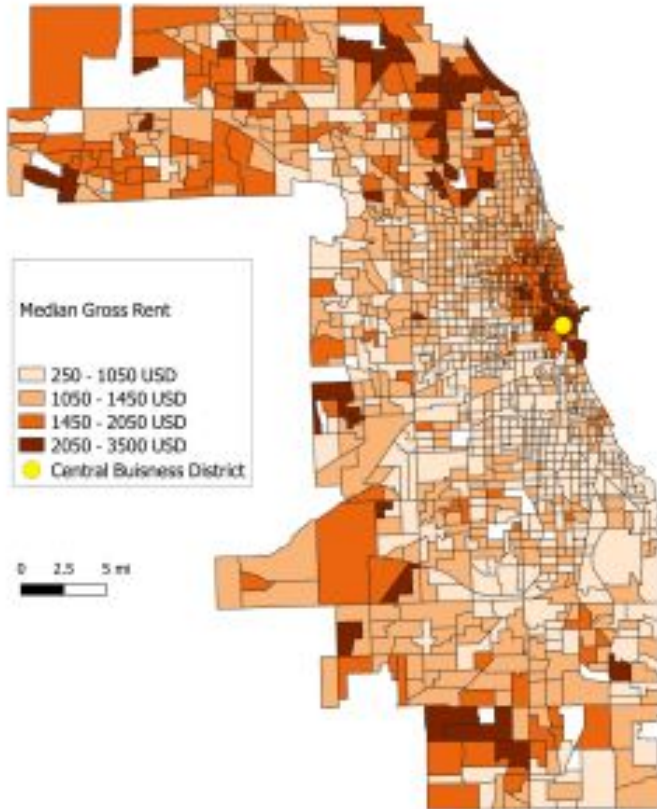
Map 1: Median Gross Rent in Chicago, 2020
High rent property is in white areas near the CBD, with lower-income property extending outwards and then transitioning back to high-income in the suburbs. This aligns with Smith's Gentrification theory, where higher-income, white populations reinvest in lower-income urban areas, leading to increased property values and displacement of original residents. The current high-rent, white majority properties near the city center are in areas that were previously heavily redlined, indicating gentrification.



Map 2: Ethnic Majorities in Chicago, 2020
The geographic data shows a multiracial population near the urban center, with predominantly white populations in the suburbs. This pattern aligns with Burgess's 1925 Concentric Zone Model, where cities are divided into zones: the inner zones are typically lower-income and diverse, while wealthier, predominantly white populations move outward to the suburbs. Ethnic majority today also aligns with 1930s redlining zones, indicating that redlining has had a lasting impact on urban demographics and socioeconomic patterns.

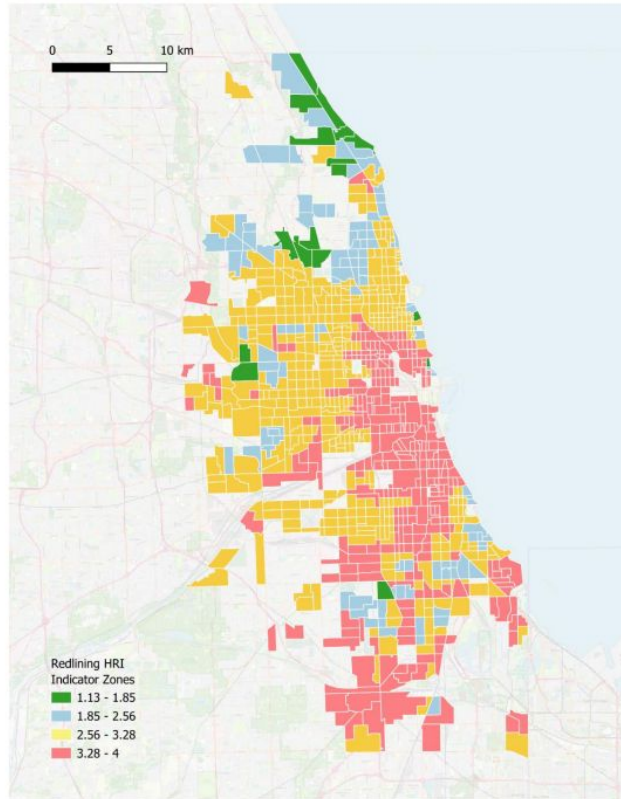
... consider putting two maps side-by-side. (because sometimes simpler is better!)

A thick line tends to draw more attention than a thin line!

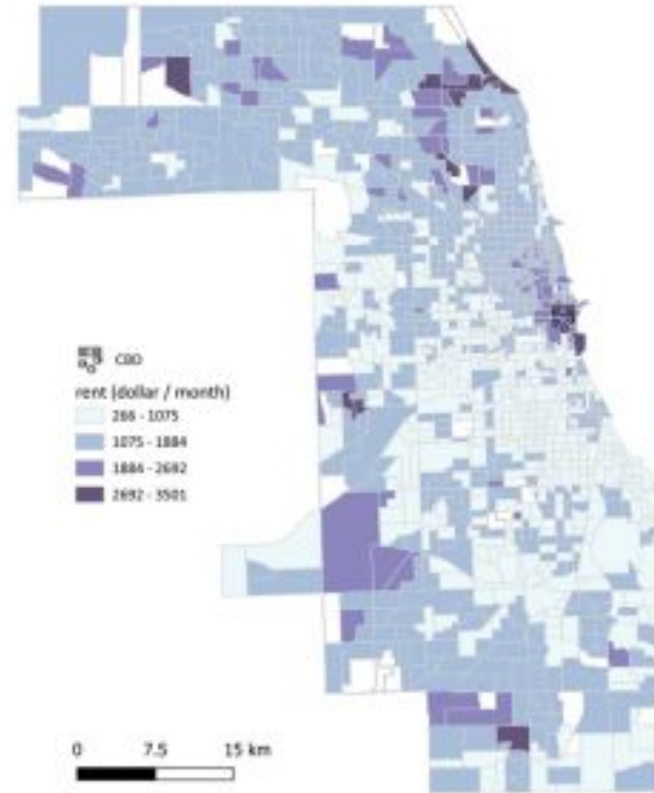


These maps are good but the tract borders distract from the interesting data.

Try decreasing the line thickness to 'hairline' and/or change the color of the line to be a lighter grey-white.

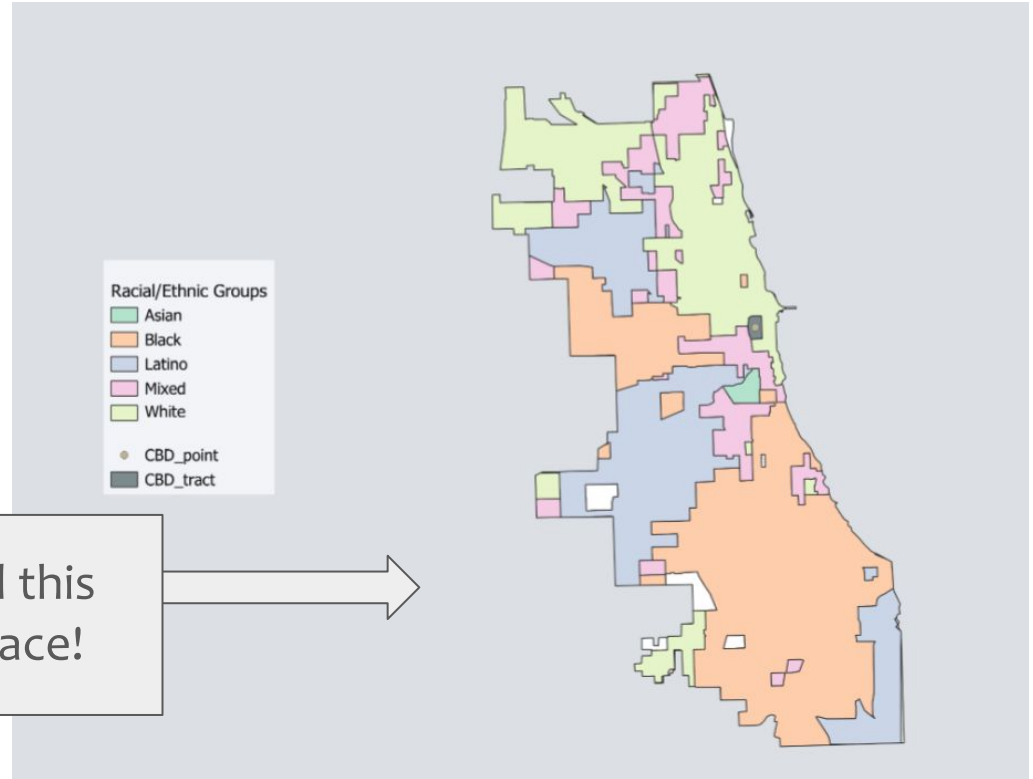
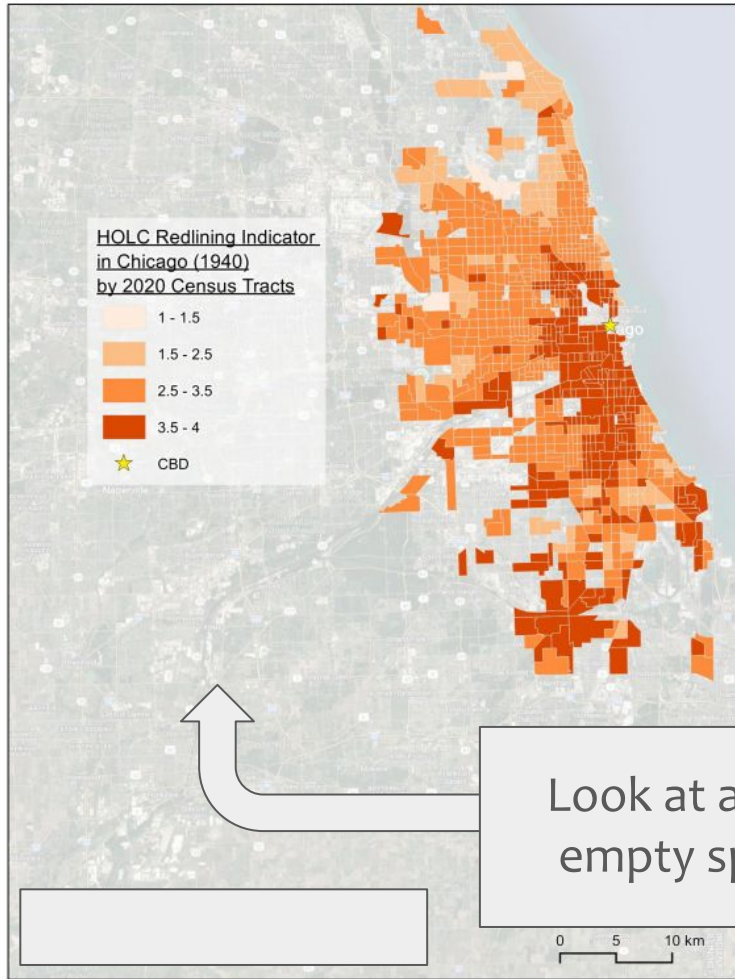


Map 1: Modern Chicago Census Tracts as Shown by Their Historic Redlining Index (HRI)





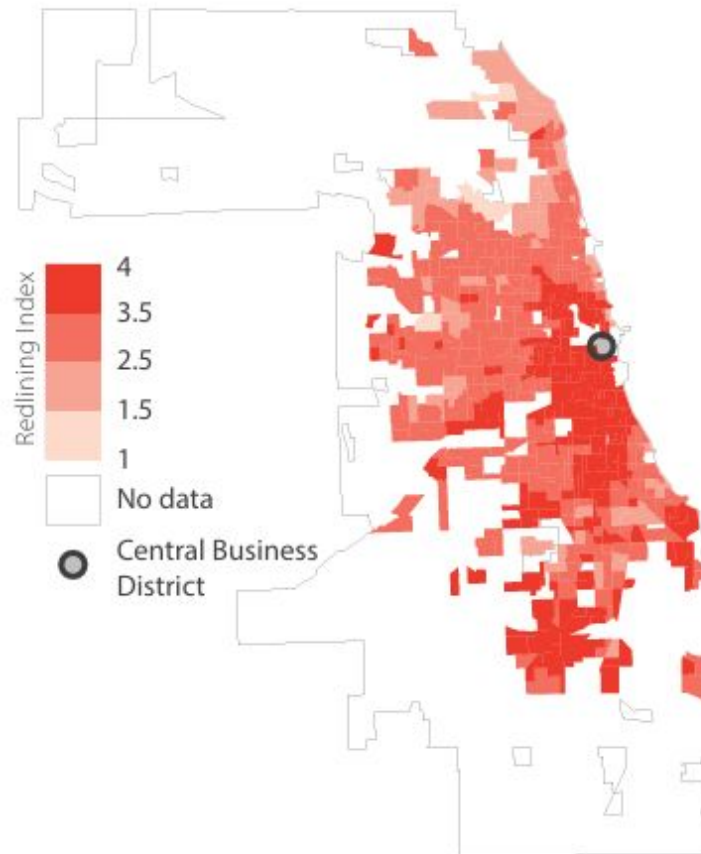
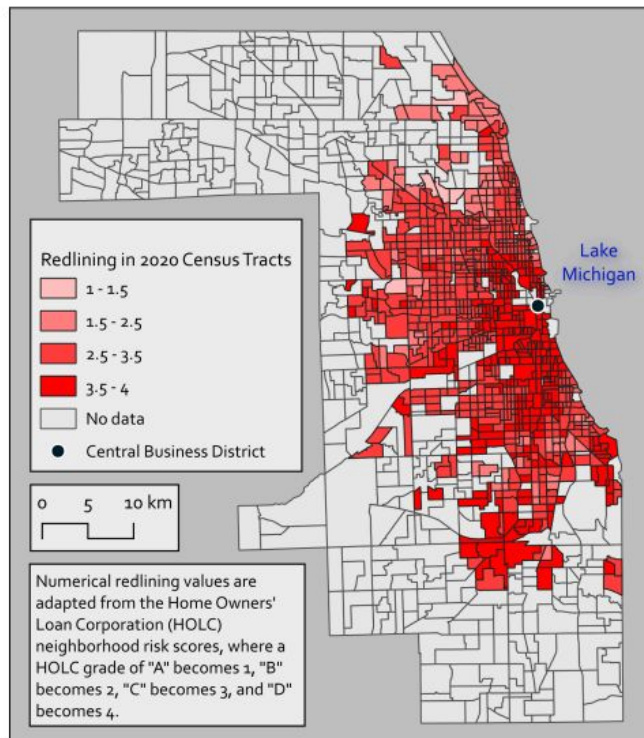
Remember the principles of balanced map design?



Look at all this empty space!

Choosing an appropriate color palette

Too little variation between colors makes the map difficult to read.

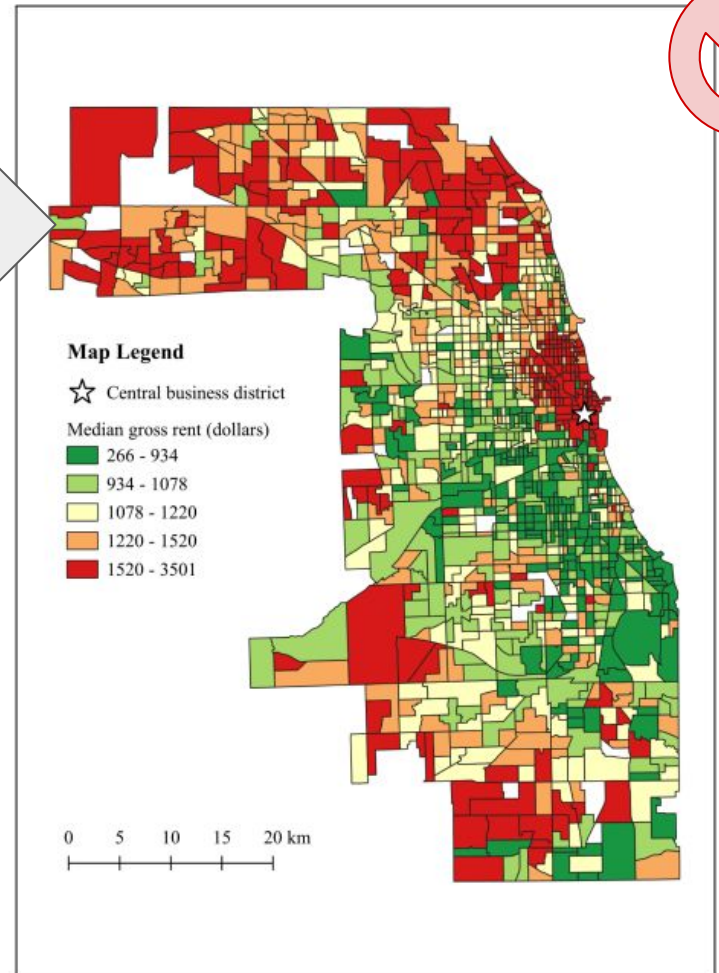
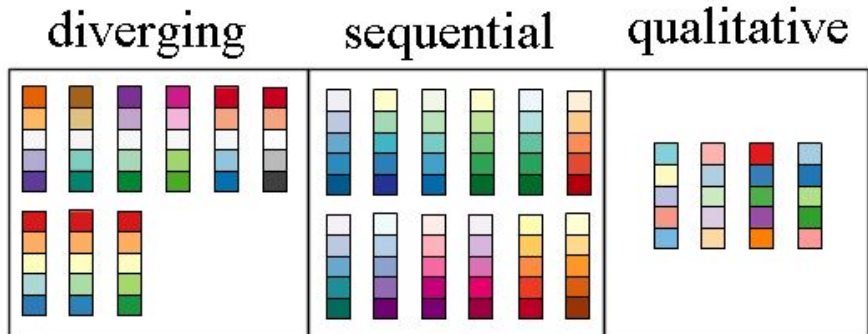


Choosing an appropriate color palette

This map uses a diverging color scheme.
What is the correct color scheme for this map?

Double check whether your color scheme is sequential or divergent or categorical.

Are you using it the right way?



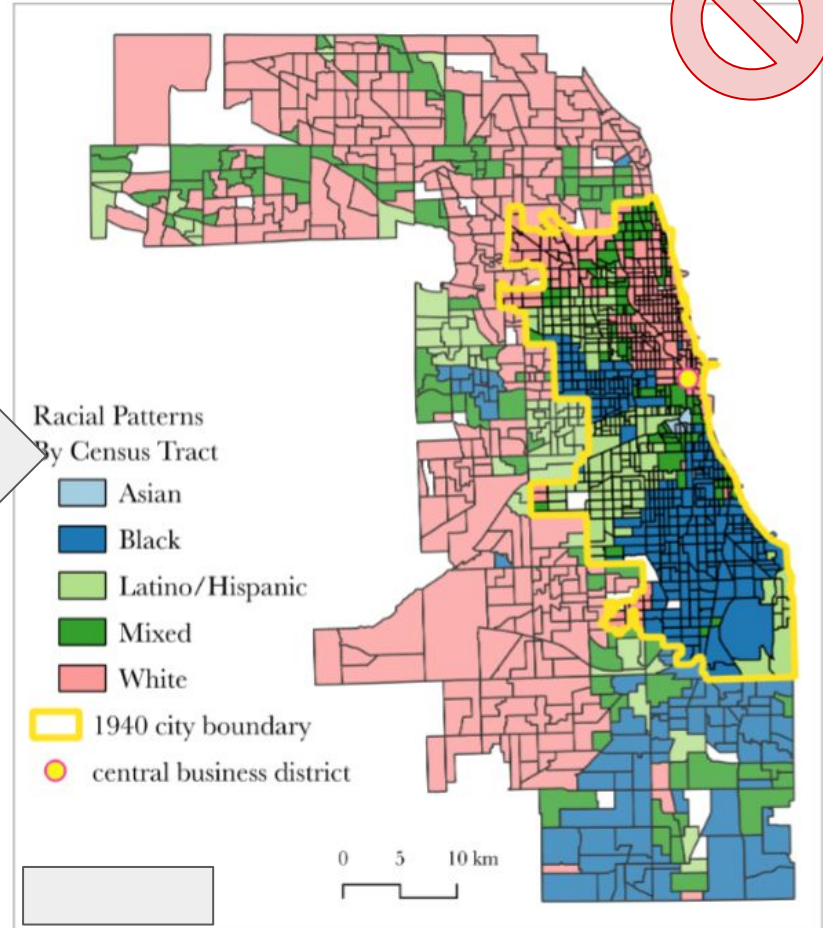
Choosing an appropriate color palette

Again, double check whether you are using an appropriate color scheme for your data.

The use of lighter and darker hues of the same color creates associations between independent categories and unknowingly orders them.

REMEMBER

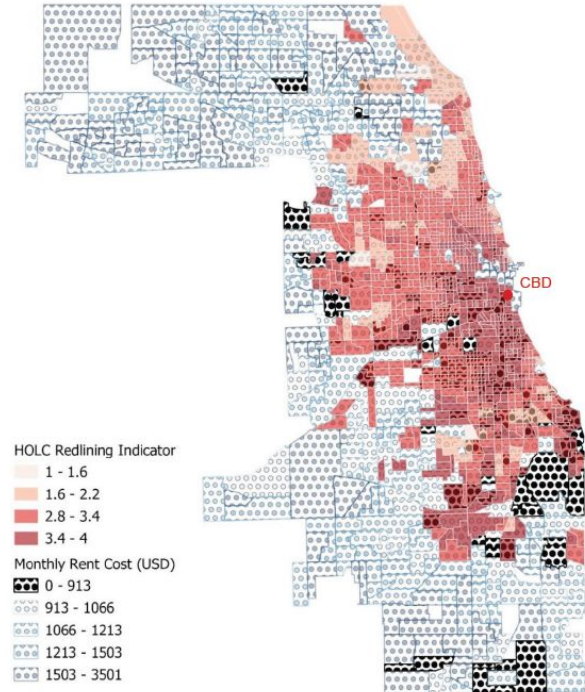
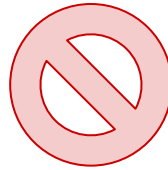
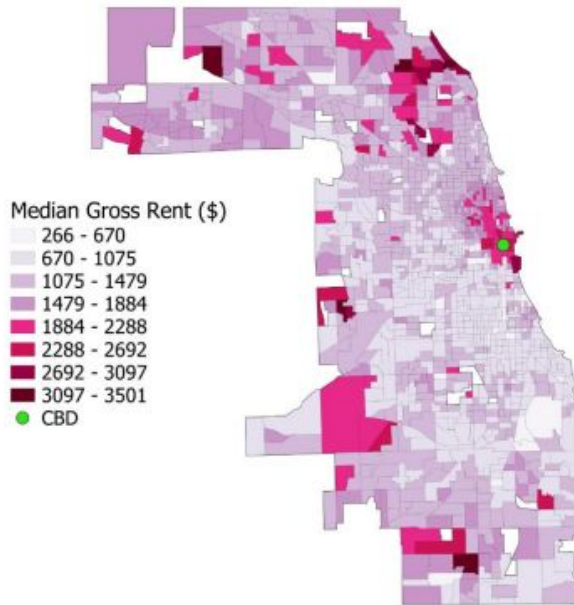
Never use a color scheme that implies ordered values (e.g. sequential or diverging) for a phenomena that is not ordered, ESPECIALLY categories of race and ethnicity.



Other things to consider!

Best practice is to keep the number of classes between 4-7. (5 is usually the sweet spot, if you are able)

Pattern fills are best for “overlays” or layers that you put on top of another layer with solid fill - not the other way around.



Other things to consider!

- Every map should have a scale bar
- Please look back in your notes in the conceptual handbook:
 - Cartography and Cartographic Design (page 17)
 - Thematic Mapping (page 50)
 - Choropleth Mapping Revisited (page 63)
 - Urban Structure and Segregation (page 78)
- Color Brewer as a helpful resource for choosing appropriate color palettes
 - colorbrewer2.org