

# Freedom to Discriminate Reveals the Hidden History of Housing Segregation

*Gene Slater Exposes Realtors' Role in Institutionalizing Discrimination and Shaping Conservatism*

CA, UNITED STATES, May 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In his eye-opening and meticulously researched book [Freedom to Discriminate](#), housing policy expert Gene Slater reveals the crucial yet largely untold role that real estate professionals played in segregating America. This landmark historical analysis exposes how realtors shaped national policies, manipulated the rhetoric of "freedom," and directly influenced the rise of modern political conservatism.

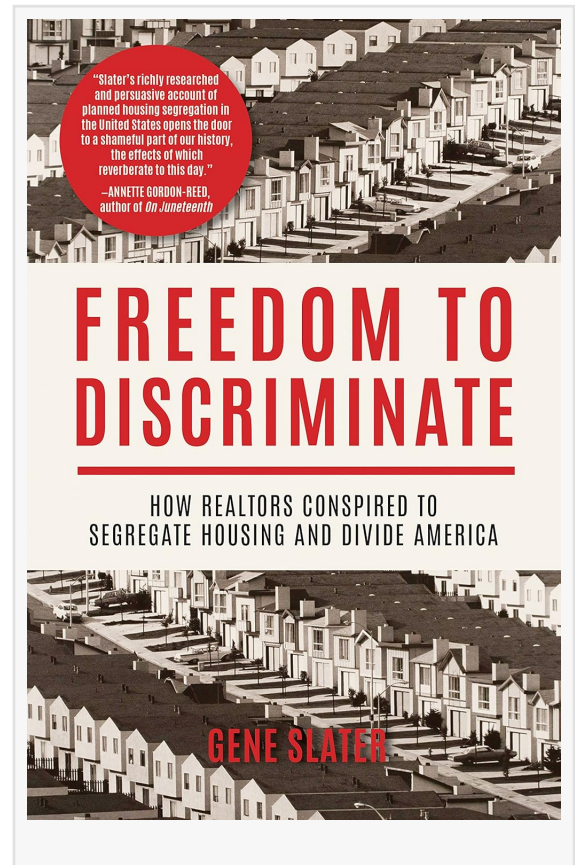
Selected as one of the top urban planning books of the year by Planetizen, *Freedom to Discriminate* is a must-read for historians, policymakers, and anyone seeking a deeper understanding of racial segregation, housing policy, and political polarization in the United States.

Now available in audiobook format, listeners can access *Freedom to Discriminate* on both [Amazon](#) and [Audible](#).

## A Seismic Revelation in U.S. Housing History

Drawing on decades of research and rare industry documents, Slater delves into the real estate industry's efforts to maintain all-white neighborhoods and fight fair housing laws. The book traces the ways in which realtors weaponized the concept of individual choice and property rights to promote systemic segregation while concealing its racist underpinnings.

Slater pinpoints California's Proposition 14 (1964) as a pivotal moment in this history—a ballot initiative that sought to enshrine housing discrimination into state law. Passed with overwhelming support, this measure set a precedent for the use of conservative rhetoric in opposition to civil rights reforms. As Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Annette Gordon-Reed

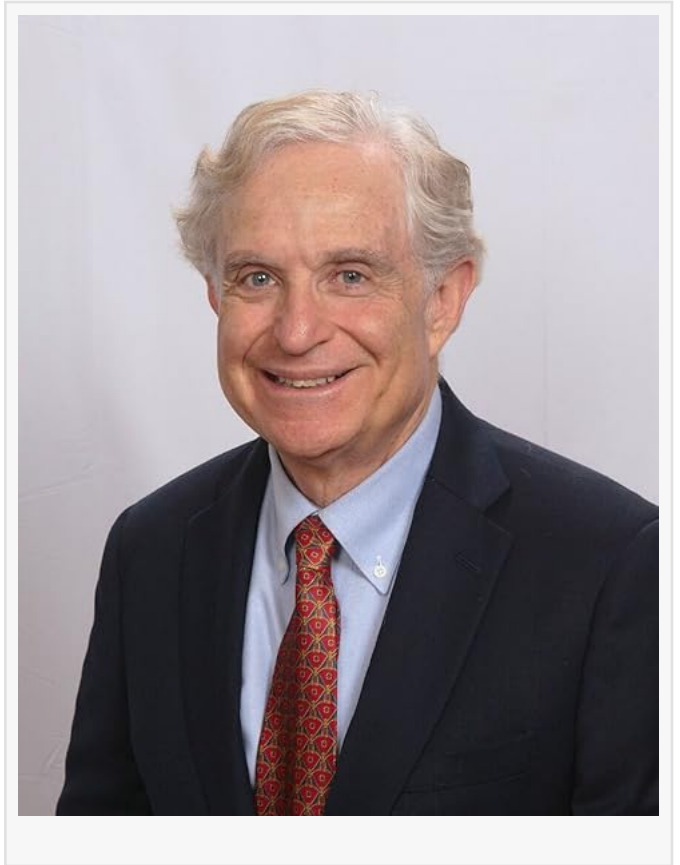


asserts, *Freedom to Discriminate* “should be read by all who are interested in America’s current racial predicament.”

#### Critical Acclaim and Expert Praise

Since its release, *Freedom to Discriminate* has received widespread acclaim from leading historians, urban planners, and public intellectuals:

- Eric Foner, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, highlights Slater’s analysis of realtors’ influence on conservative politics, stating that the book “provides a template for opposition to an overbearing liberal state.”
- Mark Brilliant of UC Berkeley calls the book a “searing account” of how real estate professionals entrenched segregation under the guise of race-neutral policies.
- Rick Perlstein, bestselling author of *Reaganland*, remarks: “They told a Big Lie—that Black neighbors lower property values—then made it true.”
- Marcia Chatelain, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, praises the book as a “fascinating and timely look at how consumer choice can fuel insidious racism.”



#### A Timely Examination of Race, Property, and Political Power

In an era where racial disparities in homeownership and wealth persist, *Freedom to Discriminate* is a powerful call to confront the long-standing structures of economic and racial inequality. Slater’s expertise as a senior advisor on housing policy for federal and state governments offers an authoritative perspective on this pressing issue.

Slater’s groundbreaking revelations challenge readers to reconsider the myths surrounding the so-called “American Dream” and to recognize the real estate industry’s lasting impact on today’s social and political landscape.

#### About the Author

Gene Slater has spent over forty years advising federal, state, and local governments on housing

policy. He is the co-founder and chair of CSG Advisors, one of the nation's leading firms on affordable housing. Slater played a critical role in designing programs that financed over 110,000 homes for first-time buyers following the 2008 financial crisis. He holds degrees from Columbia, MIT, and Stanford and resides in the Bay Area.

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