

## **“That’s So Ghetto!” A Study of the Racial and Socioeconomic Implications of the Adjective Ghetto**

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There are many terms that are socially and symbolically associated with marginalized populations. The term ghetto is one such word. Ghetto is a word that was historically connected to European Jews who were often forced to live in ethnically homogenous enclaves referred to as ghettos. In the modern day use of the word in the United States, ghetto is often synonymous with low-income communities of color, often low-income Black communities (Wacquant 1997, Small 2008). More so, the word finds itself tied to conceptions of Blackness, and is commonly invoked as a method to demean Blacks, and Black identified self-expression. This paper examines the implications associated with the term ghetto. Through a quantitative survey and focus groups with college students, this paper specifically seeks to understand racial implications associated with the term, and just as importantly, the effect and the perception of the term by Blacks. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: [journal@transformativestudies.org](mailto:journal@transformativestudies.org) Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2018 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]*

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