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The connection between the elevated rate of homelessness as a Person of Color is no coincidence. Through the exploration of Kikisoblu’s story and the SPARC study, we can further understand how this connection came to be. The historical oppression, exclusion, and denial of property rights to Native Americans and POC strongly impact these communities today in pertinence to remaining systemic racism.

In Chapter Two, “Skid Road” of Skid Road by Josephine Ensign, Kikisoblu daughter of Chief Sealth’s story, is shared. She escaped domestic abuse with her children and restarted her life back in her homeland among the white settlers. Although she was respected by the community, this was not the case for many natives. Some Native girls got sucked into a damaging lifestyle, that of prostitution. The chapter goes on to tell of the first official brothel started by John Pinnell, “He named his Seattle brothel the Illahee, a Chinook Jargon word meaning “home” or “land “. The brothel was built on the sawdust-filled area along the waterfront, which was referred to as “down on sawdust” or the Lava Beds. The prostitutes were all Native American girls and women and were called “sawdust women” (Ensign 46). Not only were these native women and girls torn from their homes, but their culture was slandered in the process. A once wholesome word used by natives across the Pacific to talk about their home had been taken to describe a building representing the colonization and robbery of Native autonomy. And to make matters worse, sawdust, the waste that comes from the 500-year-old trees turned into settler houses, is what the girls are reduced to. This deep-rooted slandering and seizure of every Native liberty set such a strong divide that Seattle cannot shake. And so the housing disparities continue, for this story, this history, has never been truly amended.

Kikisoblu and the Duwamish’s stories are unfortunately common, as many situations have occurred across race and geographical lines throughout the USA’s history. Nationwide, “Black people were most overrepresented among individuals 18-24, accounting for 78.0% of this group. This group also had the highest over-representation of people of color broadly with 89.1% of 18-24 year olds identifying as people of color.” (SPARC 10). Primarily African Americans face overrepresentation like Natives do. As for the story mentioned above, many parallels can be drawn between these two groups. It is true that a long history of discrimination and second-class treatment cannot be rebounded so quickly. Denial of proper housing has been prevalent for all POC, and when it comes to generational wealth, housing is crucial. “While more research is needed to understand the phenomenon more fully, it is clear that sustained economic investment in communities of color is needed to counter centuries of being shut out of opportunities for wealth accumulation.” (SPARC 17). As the SPARC study has reinforced, economic mobility is one of the most essential factors in the prevention of homelessness.

The stories of settler expansion and, as a result, the wiping of Native American livelihood are relevant to why A people cannot simply ‘get over’ homelessness. People of Color have not been able to pass down a house like white families have been able to. The cushion of your parents’ or grandparents’ house to fall back on isn’t universal, and just like that, this can increase the chances of becoming homeless that much more. POC continue to suffer at a disproportionate rate of homelessness, for the story of Kikisoblu and many others have not even been half decently reprimanded.