

Mapping Prejudice: Social Justice Mapping

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Understanding Inequality Through Place and Space

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Racial Covenants

Racial covenants were a legal mechanism used to reserve property for the exclusive use of white people.

Inserted into property deeds, these powerful and explicitly racist contracts barred people of color from owning or occupying property.

Racial covenants were used in cities across the US. In Minneapolis and Hennepin County racial covenant begin restricting space in 1910 and became standard practice by real estate developers for more than half a century.

"And this condition and covenant shall run with the land and bind the heirs, executors administrators and assigns of the party of the second part." (The grantee therein.)

"This deed is further given on the express condition that, and the party of the second part agrees, that the said premises shall not at any time be sold, conveyed, leased, or sublet, or occupied by any person or persons who are not full bloods of the so-called Caucasian or White race.

"And this condition and covenant shall run with the land and bind the heirs, executors, administrators and assigns of the party of the second part." (The grantee therein.)

This transfer is made subject to the following restrictions: No dwelling shall be placed thereon with less than four rooms, neither shall said property be transferred or leased to a colored person. In the event of a violation of any of these provisions, it shall work a forfeiture of the title herein conveyed, and said title shall revert to said grantors. These covenants shall run with the land, and be a part of the title thereof.

Background

Map

Racial Covenants

Racial covenants were finally made unenforceable locally in 1953 and nationally by the Fair Housing Act of 1968, but the damage they inflicted on communities of color are reflected in contemporary inequality.

Racial covenants have remained an open secret in the decades since their legal use. Despite the collective knowledge of communities they affected, their impact has been widely unacknowledged. Popular consciousness has not reflected lived experiences of individuals and families of color who were intentionally shut out of vast areas of our city based on race.

Mapping Prejudice

Mapping Prejudice is a community facing project at the University of Minnesota working to uncover the history of **racially restrictive covenants** in Hennepin County.

This curriculum aims to give students knowledge in 3 key areas:

- Structural and Systemic Racism
- Understanding the Historical Context of Contemporary Inequality
- Using Spatial Research Tools and Methods for Social Justice

Curriculum

Mapping Prejudice is a research project at the University of Minnesota working to create the first comprehensive map of racial covenants in an American city.

This research is a powerful classroom tool.

The history of racial covenants and the covenant map are powerful demonstrations of using historical context to understand structural racism and contemporary inequality.

Exploring Mapping Prejudice's research methodology offers an opportunity to show students a path for promoting social justice social science and geospatial research.

Warm Up

1. ***What makes an area a ‘neighborhood?’***

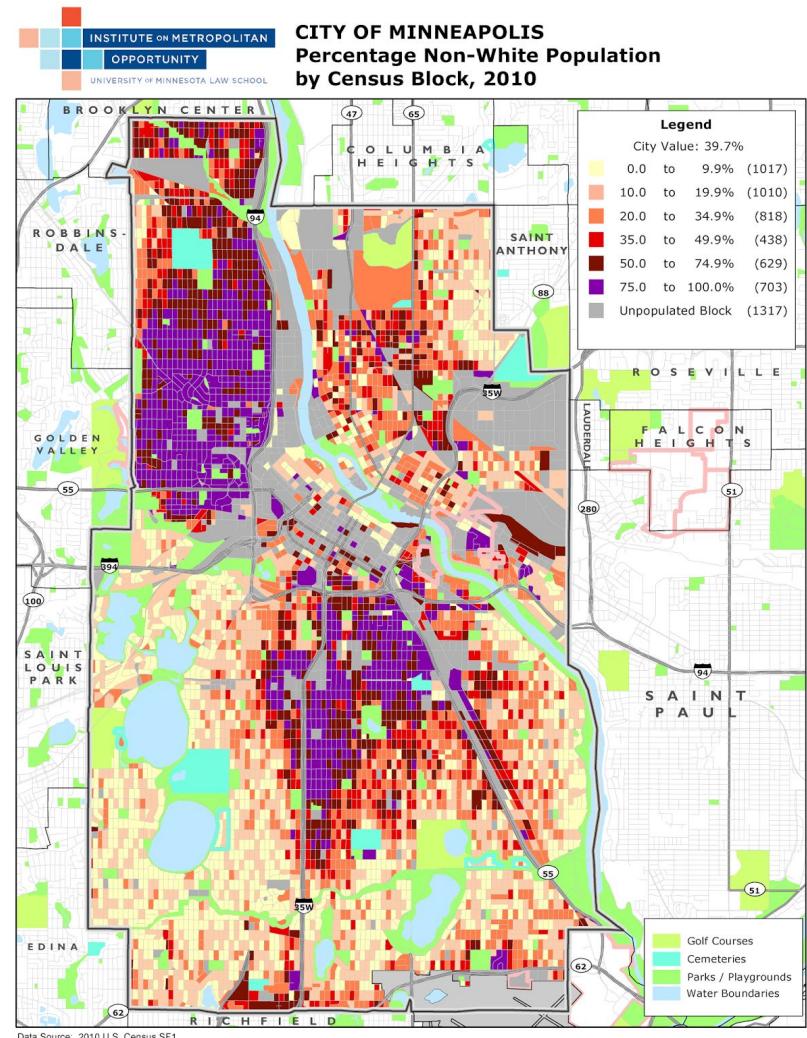
2. ***How do we distinguish one neighborhood from another?***

Minneapolis

What is this map saying?

Why is it organized like this?

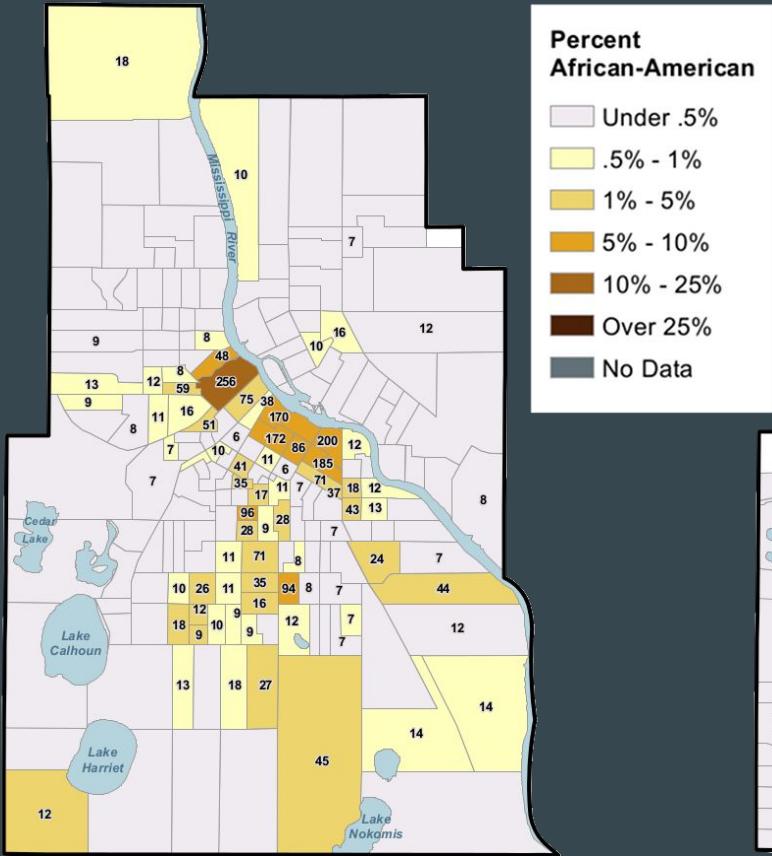
Do you think our city always looked this way?



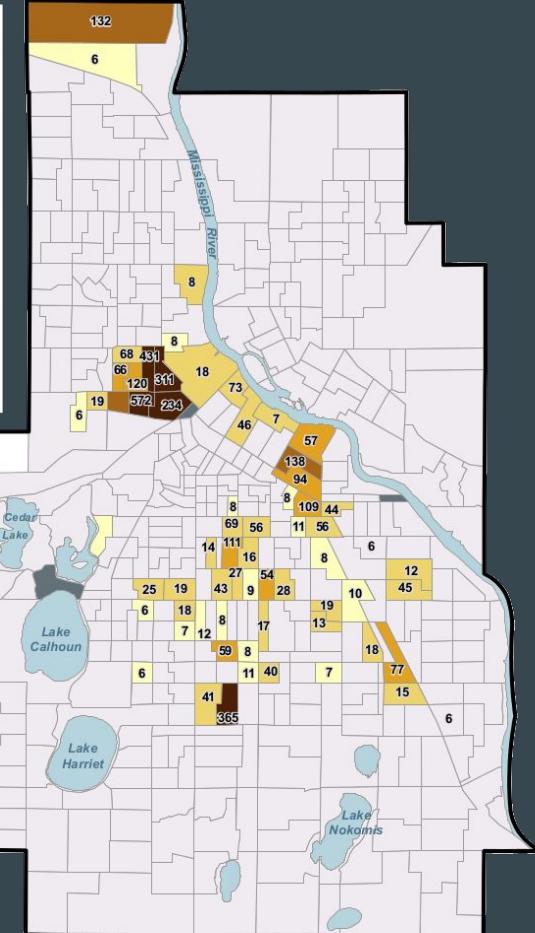
Minneapolis was not always segregated

Formal & informal
mechanisms of
exclusion and
removal
intentionally
created spaces
reserved
exclusively for
white people

1910



1940



What Were These Mechanisms?

- White Violence
- Real Estate Steering
- Prohibitory Financial Practices
ie: Redlining
- **Racial Covenants**

Structural & Social

creation and preservation of
“valuable space”

white space = valuable space

extraction, exclusion, concentration



Neighbors Walk Out of Meeting When Peace Is Urged.

Minneapolis Star Photo

Crowd of 3,000 Renews Attack on Negroes' Home

Part of Crowd About Negro's Home

Stones Again Hurled at House on Colum-Bus Avenue.



**NEW
BEAUTIFUL
HIGHLY
RESTRICTED
RESIDENTIAL
SITES**

Bordering on Valley View Park and overlooking Glenwood-Camden Parkway and beautiful 681-acre Glenwood Park with 18 hole golf course, chalet, bathing beach, etc. As close to downtown as Lake Calhoun.

All lots to have water and graded streets.

SUCCESS OF THE FIRST UNIT HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE TO OFFER YOU THIS MOST ATTRACTIVE SECOND ADDITION WITH THE SAME BEAUTIFUL HOME SITES THAT THE FIRST HAD. YOU WILL LIKE THEM EQUALY AS WELL. COME EARLY—THEY ARE GOING FAST.

CHOOSE THAT HOME SITE TODAY



What Are Racial Covenants?

"And this condition and covenant shall run with the land and bind the heirs, executors administrators and assigns of the party of the second part." (The grantee therein.)

"This deed is further given on the express condition that, and the party of the second part agrees, that the said premises shall not at any time be sold, conveyed, leased, or sublet, or occupied by any person or persons who are not full bloods of the so-called Caucasian or White race.

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Map

Mapping Covenants

- Finding and mapping racial covenants has been challenging. Getting the data for every racial covenant in a city is only the first challenge, researchers must then be able to find and show where they were.
- You are going to learn to use spatial and historical research methods to uncover these documents and map them in the city.

You Are The Researcher

Covenant Mapping Process

1. Read and annotate a deed
2. Fill boxes with appropriate information
3. Locate the parcel on the map
4. Regroup and discuss

1) Identifying information:

- **Document Number**
 - **Date** (*Filed vs Deed*)
 - **Grantor** (the *seller*)
'Party of the first part'
 - **Grantee** (the *buyer*)
'Party of the second part'

known to be the persons described in and who executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged that they executed the same as their free act and deed.

Henry A. Johnson Henry A. Johnson
Notary Public, Hennepin County, Minn.
My Commission expires Feb. 5, 1929.
(Notarial Seal)

State of Minnesota) ss.

County of Hennepin)

On this 16th day of June, 1928, before me, a Notary Public, within and for said County, personally appeared Charles Cally, to me known to be the person described in and who executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged that he executed the same as his free act and deed.

Henry A. Johnson Henry A. Johnson
Notary Public, Hennepin County, Minn.
My Commission expires Feb. 5, 1929.
(Notarial Seal)

Identifying Information:

Document No: _____

Date: ____/____/_____

Grantor: _____

Grantee: _____

Geographic Information:

Addition: _____

lock: _____

Lot: _____

Deputy

888888888888888888888888

Doc. No. 1519828 Filed Dec. 27, 1928, at 10:10 o'clock A. M.

30
This Indenture, Made this 9th day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and twenty-seven (1927), between Estates Improvement Company (a corporation under the laws of the State of Minnesota) of the County of Hennepin and State of Minnesota, party of the first part, and C. Edgar Collins and Ada Collins, Husband and wife or the County of Wayne and State of Michigan, parties of the second part.

Witnesseth, That the said party of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of One Dollar and other good and valuable consideration, to it in hand paid by the said parties of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, does hereby Grant, Bargain, Sell and Convey unto the said parties of the second part as joint tenants and not as tenants in common, and their assigns, and to the survivor of said parties and the heirs and assigns of the survivor, Forever, all that tract or parcel of land lying and being in the County of Hennepin and State of Minnesota, described as follows, to-wit:

Lot number One (1) in Block number Ten (10) in Chicago Avenue Highlands, according to the plat thereof on file and of record in the office of the Register of Deeds in and

2) Geospatial Information

○ **Addition**

ex: ‘Chicago Avenue Highlands’

○ Block

ex: '10'

○ **Lot**

ex: '7'

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Lot: _____

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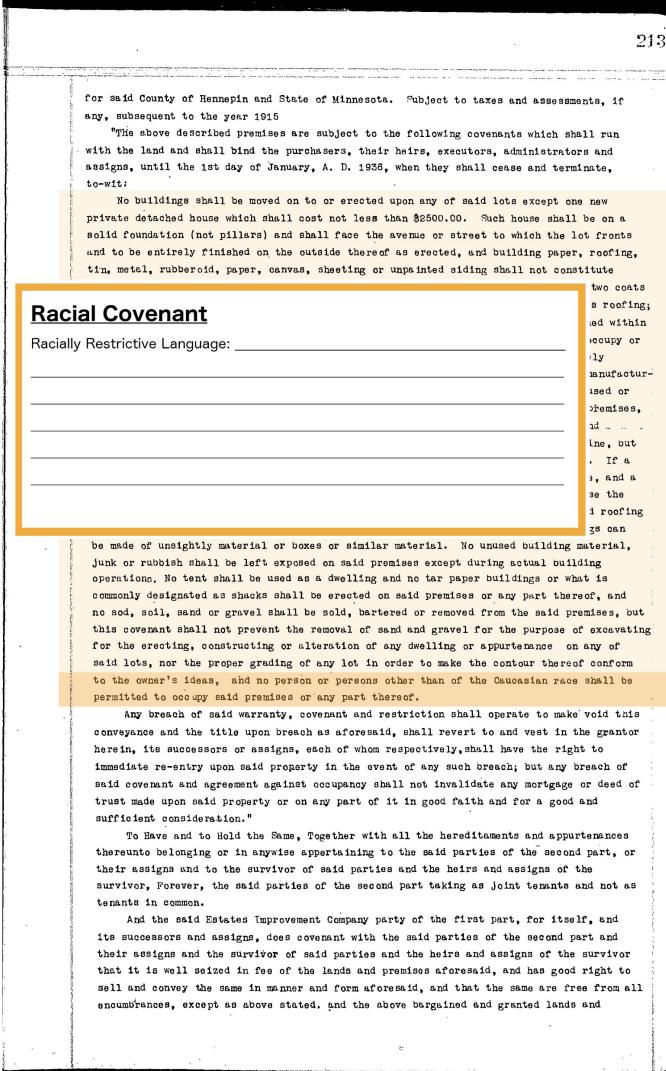
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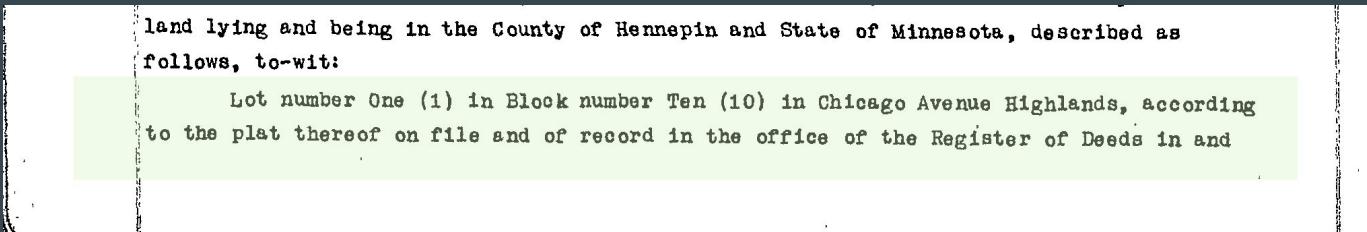
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3) Racially restrictive language

- **Darker highlighted portion = racially restrictive language**
- What observations can you make about the racial language used?
- What other types of restrictions are included?
- What do you think this says about the motivations and impacts of this practice?
- **Note any questions/observations!**



Using spatial information to find the property



Geographic Information:

Addition: CHICAGO AVE HIGHLANDS

lock: 10

Lot: 1

Find Your Addition's Plat Map Index)

CHICAGO AVE HIGHLANDS MPLS	53a
DIAMOND LAKE TERRACE	76a
DORMANS 2ND ADDN TO MPLS	45b
DORMANS 3RD ADDN TO MPLS	47a
EDGEWATER ON NOKOMIS	76b
EDGEWATER ON NOKOMIS 4TH ADDN TO MPLS	76b
FIRST DIV OF SEVEN OAKS ACRES	46b
HARRIET SQUARE ADDN TO MPLS	55a
KAVLIS LYNNHURST PLATEAU TO RICHFIELD	74a
LAKELAND TERRACE ON NOKOMIS MPLS	53b
PENNHURST	74a

PENNHURST 2ND ADDN	74a
PERKINS SEVEN OAKS ADDN TO MPLS	46b
REES TRACT CEDAR SHORES ADDITION	57a
SUNSET GABLES MPLS	57a
THE WALTON AGENCY ADDN TO SEVEN OAKS	46b
THORPE BROS NOKOMIS TERRACE ADDN	49a
TINGDALE BROS PORTLAND WAY	81a
WALTON HILLS 2ND ADDN TO MPLS	57b
WALTONS RGT BLKS SEVEN OAKS ACRES	46a
SEVEN OAKS ACRES MPLS	46a

Locate The Addition

Geographic Information:

Addition: CHICAGO AVE HIGHLANDS

lock: 10

Lot: 1



Locate The Block

Geographic Information:

Addition: CHICAGO AVE HIGHLANDS

lock: 10

Lot: 1



Locate The Lot

Geographic Information:

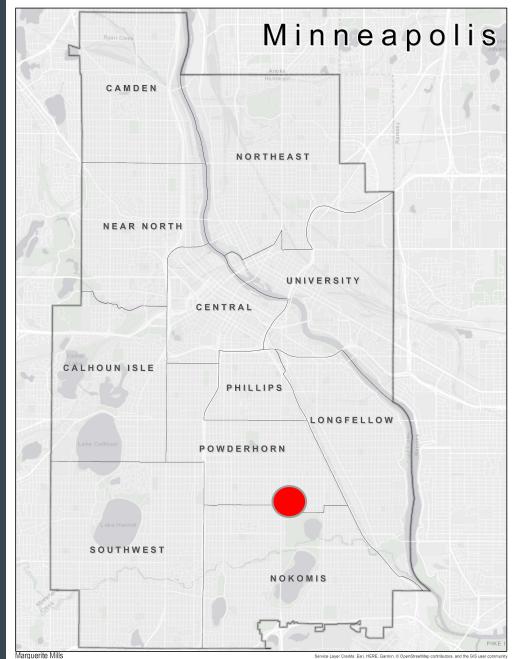
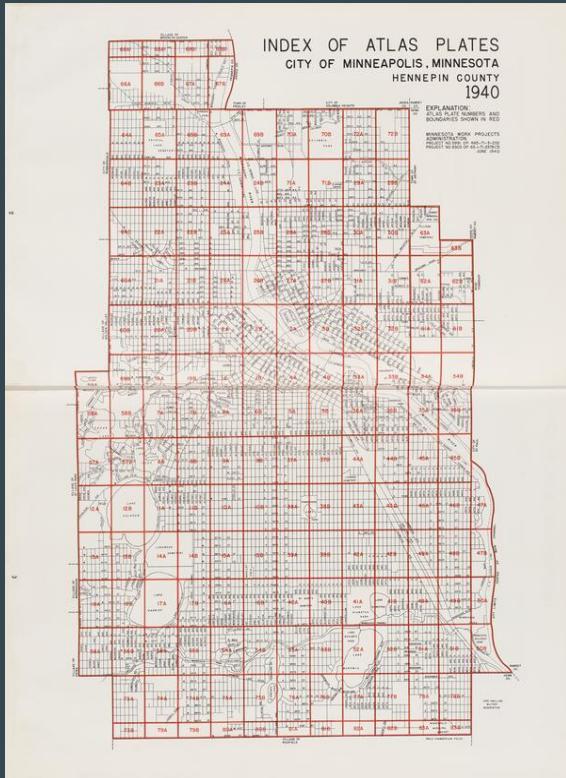
Addition: CHICAGO AVE HIGHLANDS

lock: 10

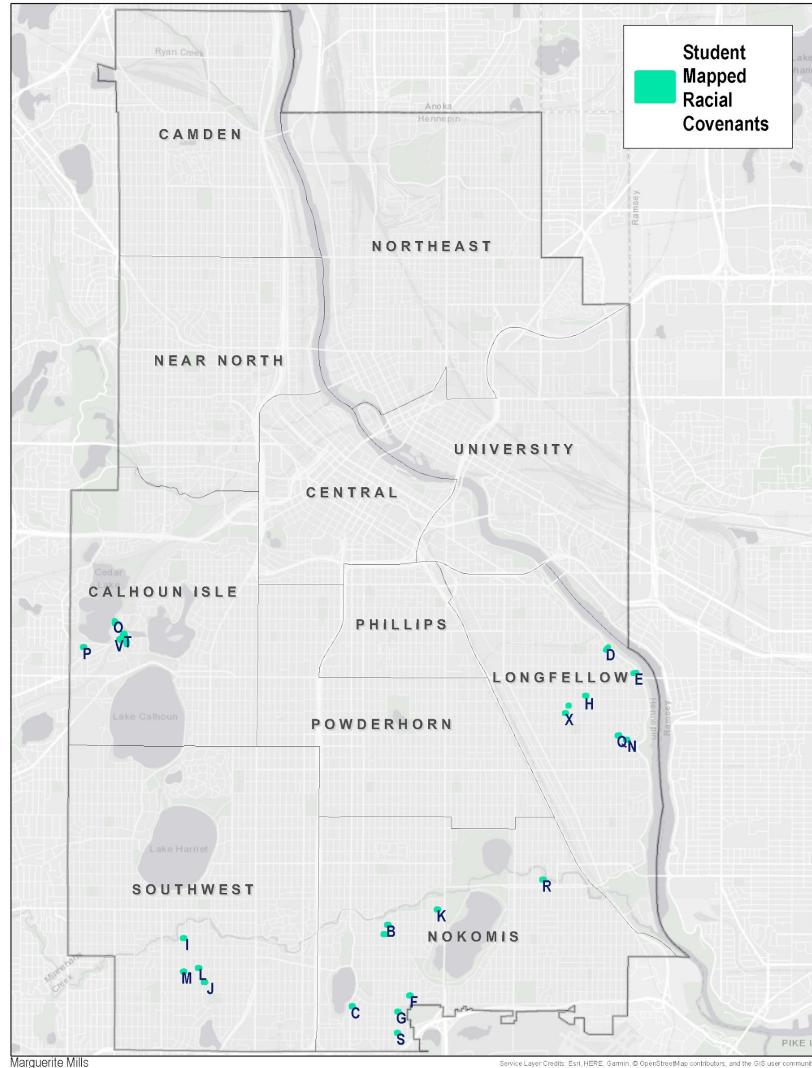
Lot: 1



Locate your parcel in Minneapolis



Lesson Sample - Geospatial Research Learning



Why Does This Matter?

Primary Sources and Maps

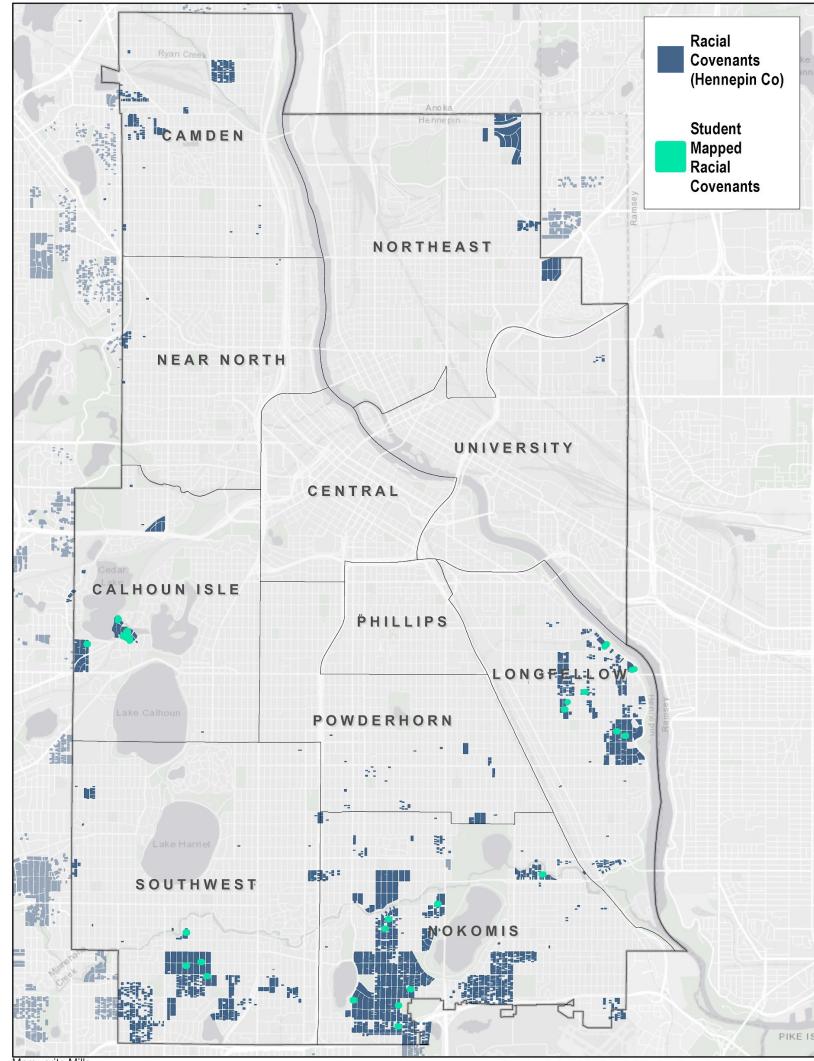
- Reading racial covenant language reveals the explicit racism behind these practices.
- How does the map change or add to what the covenants can tell us on their own?
- Covenants did not live on pieces of paper. They were experienced by people. How these on a map tell us more about their experience?
 - This is not something we can fully grasp by simply knowing they existed somewhere in space. We are missing the critical relationship to place that helps us to understand how they impacted people over time.

The Covenant Map

Mapping Prejudice does the same research you just did - we are working to uncover all of the racially restrictive covenants in Hennepin county.

How can this data be used to tell us something beyond knowing the existence of covenants?

What patterns do you see in this map?
How can we use this information reframe conversations about social justice?

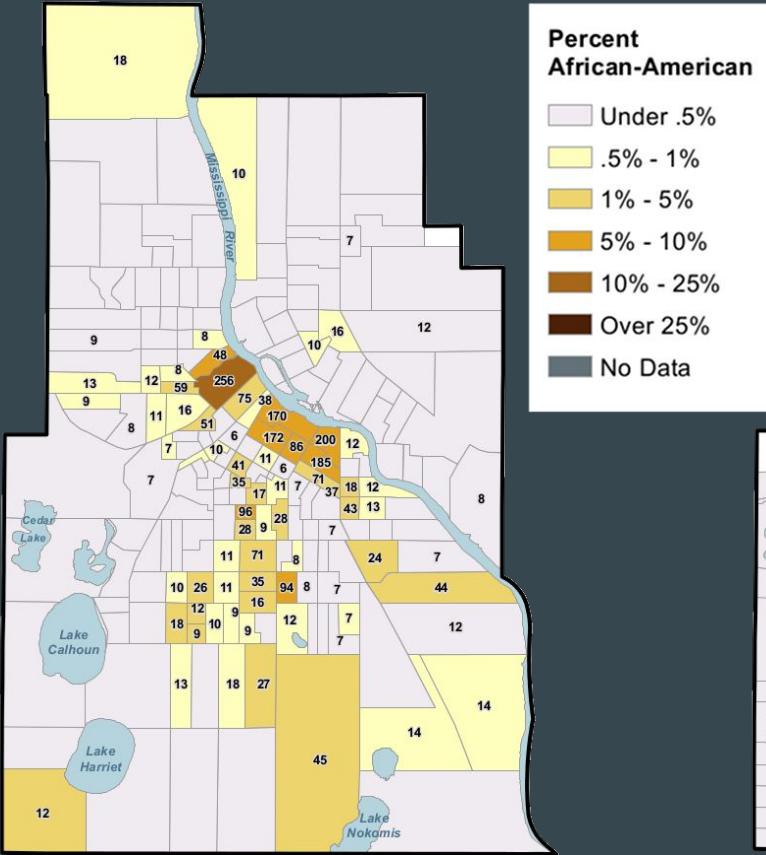


Covenants Forced People of Color Out of Integrated Neighborhoods.

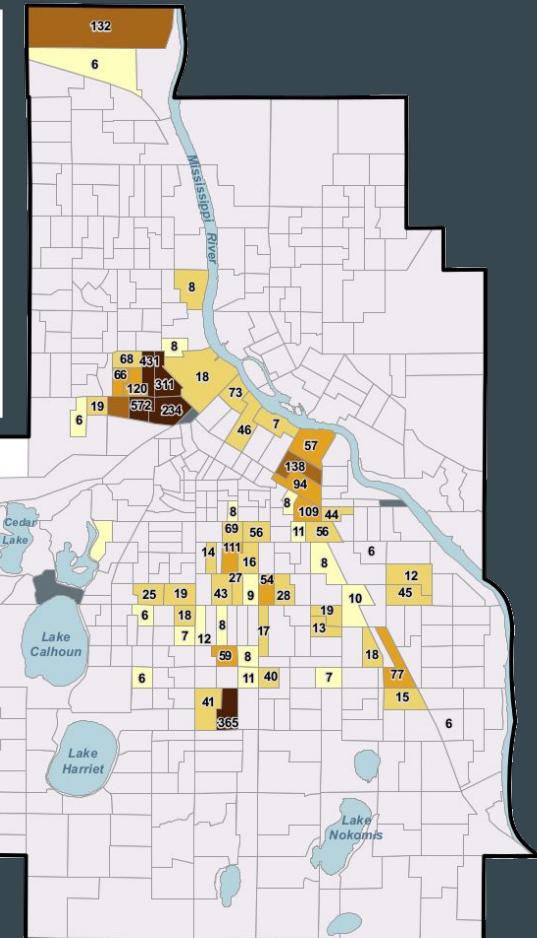
They then formed communities in the few areas of the city that were left over.

These communities thrived before being ravaged by systematic disinvestment and upheaval.

1910



1940



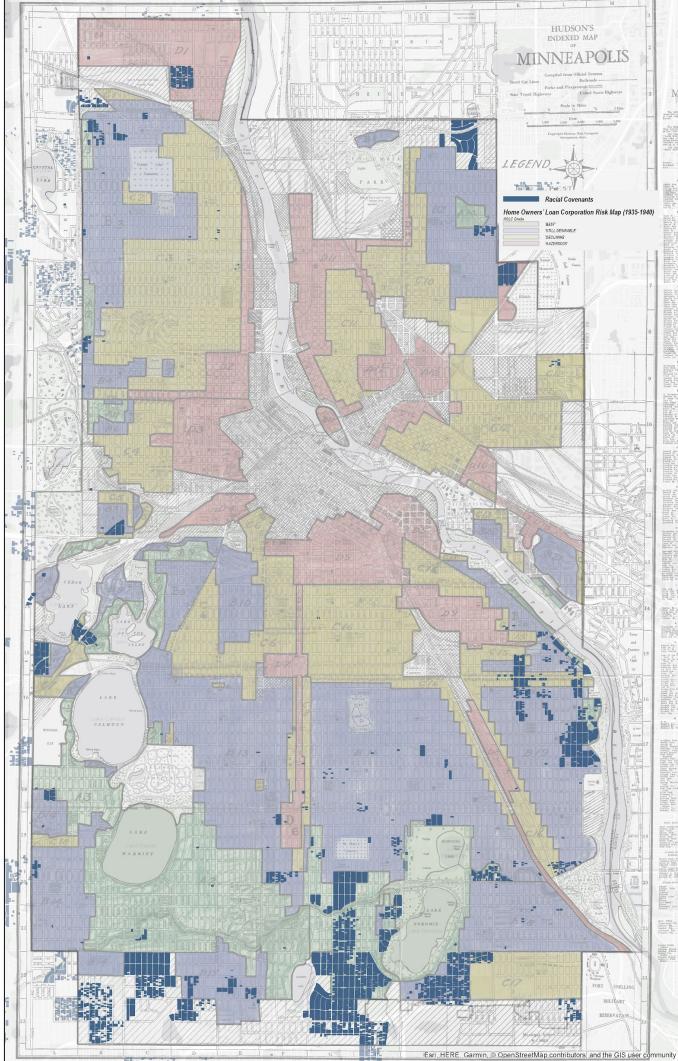
Redlining & Spatial Hierarchy

Covenants paved the way for 'redlining.' Between 1935-1940 the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) created maps of US cities that explicitly ranked the 'desirability' of space.

While covenants created white space, HOLC maps assigned value to space. HOLC maps assigned a grade of 'Best,' 'Still Desirable,' 'Definitely Declining,' or 'Hazardous' to spaces. 'Best' could only be assigned, according to the HOLC system, to areas with racial covenants.

This 'grade' had carried heavy material consequences. Financial institutions based lending practices on these rankings. Loans were unavailable to buyers in 'redlined' or 'hazardous' areas. With the most valuable areas of the city off limits and no loans available in their communities, people of color were shut out of homeownership.

Unlike racial covenants, 'redlining' was legal and common practice until the 1980s.

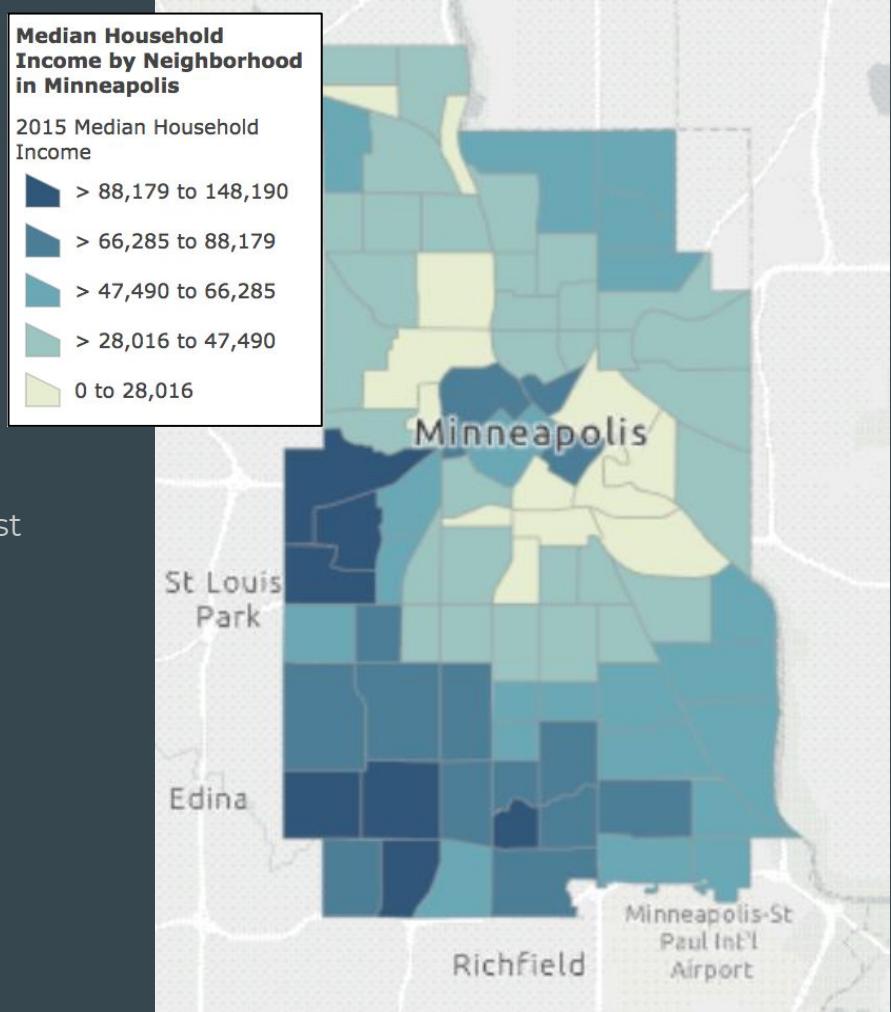


Covenants & Wealth

Homeownership represents arguably the most important means of wealth accumulation for American families.

This is not confined to a single person or generation. Homeownership is an investment that transfers financial stability in families over generations. 75% of home buyers receive family assistance to buy their first home. Families excluded from homeownership over generations are at a distinct disadvantage to those who have benefited from intergenerational wealth accumulation over generations.

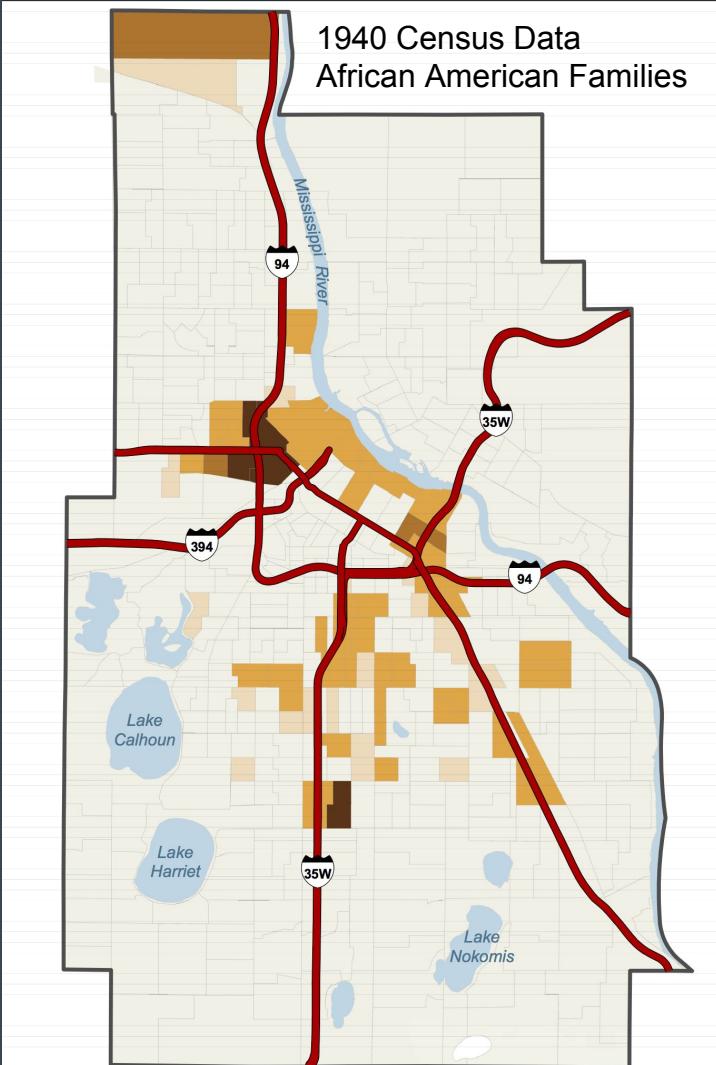
Covenanted areas of the city reamplify the wealthiest parts of our city today. This is not natural or the consequence of personal choices, it is the result of intentional policies and structural racism.



Infrastructure

Historic African American Communities & Subsequent Infrastructure Projects

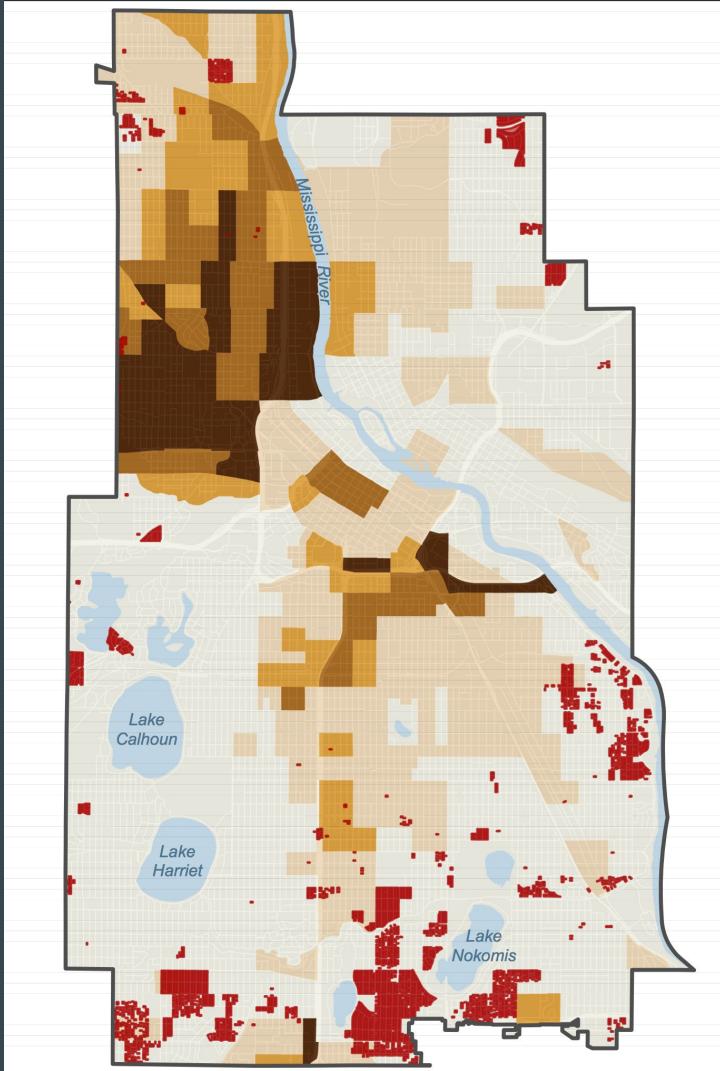
After being removed and excluded from large parts of the city, communities of color in Minneapolis were strategically decimated infrastructure. In many ways this was a dual assault, after systematic exclusion from 'desirable' areas of the city and targeted disinvestment in remaining the areas, communities of color were uprooted and divided by a transit system designed to facilitate white movement to economic opportunities in suburbs. This was far from unique to Minneapolis. In addition to the well known Rondo neighborhood in St. Paul, routing freeways through communities of color was common practice across US cities.



Covenants & Contemporary Demographics

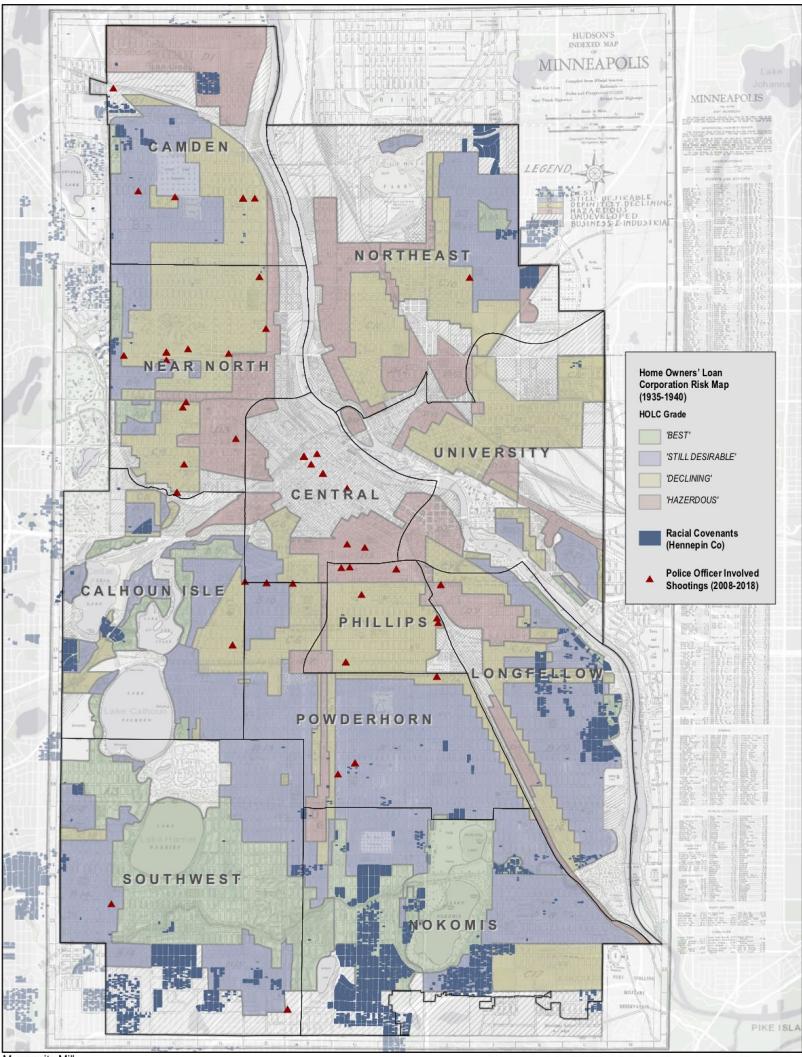
The impacts of racial covenants were not undone once they were made illegal and unenforceable.

2010 census data shows that by covenanted areas remain the whitest areas of the city today.



Agency & Movement

- Covenants *only* created white space
- They allowed white people to move freely in and out of space
- Black movement and space were controlled and destabilized:
 - Racial Covenants
 - Discriminatory Lending & Disinvestment
 - Infrastructure Projects
 - Urban Renewal
 - **Over-policing**
 - Eviction
 - Gentrification



- Why is it important to take historical context into account to understand contemporary inequality?
- How spatial research give us insight into current circumstances in relation to historical practices?

Learn more at
mappingprejudice.org