Annika Ahlstrom

Mr. Howlett

Honors History

10. Jun. 2022

Racism in Rochester

All around the world, racism is a constant issue. Many different groups have had to face racism ever since the beginning. Rochester, New York is no exception to this. There is still segregation and discrimination in this city, and it needs to come to a stop. In order to become a better community overall, the people need to come together to put an end to racism.

In Monroe County, the odds of dying before the age of sixty-five varies depending on race. The odds of dying before the age of 65 in Monroe County, including Rochester, varies depending on race. If you’re Latino, 52%, black is 46% and white is at only 26%. Also, from 2019 to 2020, there was approximately a 150% increase in the number of hate crimes committed against Asian-Americans. Instead of getting better with time, the world has slowly worsened its stance on racism and mistreatment of minorities.

In 1968, the Fair Housing Act was created which resulted in the outlaw of racial restrictions, the words and phrases used to form these covenants continue to remain in the first deed for house. These exclusions of people of color are found in Brighton, Gates, Irondequoit, Rochester, Greece, and Pittsford, on thousands of house deeds. Neighborhoods that were considered one of the most preferrable were required to prevent African Americans from living there. Because of this, they were confined to certain areas they were allowed to live in and were segregated from white people.

Coinciding with land deeds, the government also created a form of containment called redlining. Redlining are red colored boundaries created by the HOLC after judging living areas. These red areas were often home to African Americans and Immigrants and were labeled as “hazardous” zones. Larger populations of African Americans and Immigrants were also considered “hazardous”. These sections were also separated based on one’s wealth and their skin color. The living conditions for these regions were very poor and unsanitary. Even as the population of African Americans and Immigrants increased in red areas, the government did not create more housing to accommodate this issue, they decided to split pre-existing ones which quickly became unfit to live in for larger families. When African Americans had decided that they needed to move away from these unhealthy living environments, realtors would refuse to sell any houses outside of the red zones to them.

When minorities and Immigrants came to Rochester, many were forced to live in poverty. Realtors and Homeowners refused to sell their property to these kind of people. Many of these minorities had to turn to illegal means of income in order to provide for their families. They lived in Ghettos since it was the only place they were allowed, and crime rates increased within these areas.

The poverty rates among these minorities is also undoubtedly high. Hispanic children have a poverty rate of 40%, while African American kids have around 49% poverty rate. Some of the children coming from the poorest families in New York reside within Rochester. The vast majority of the students that attend the Rochester City Schools are poverty-stricken. Studies have shown that an appalling 94% of students who go to these city schools are at an economic disadvantage.

Works Cited

Doherty, Edward J, et al. “Hard Facts Update: Race and Ethnicity in the Nine-County Greater Rochester Area.” Edited by Patti Singer, *ACT Rochester*, Aug. 2020, [www.actrochester.org/](http://www.actrochester.org/).

Jubenville, Tanner “Racial Covenants found on Thousands of Monroe County Property Deeds.” *WHAM*, 7 Nov. 2019, 13whamnews.com/.

Leonard, Jennifer, and Elizabeth Thorley. “Racism and Rochester: A Statement from Rochester Area Community Foundation.” *racf*, Sept. 2020, [www.racf.org/](http://www.racf.org/)

Louden, Bennet. “Racist Restrictions Buried in Property Records.” *Rochester Business Journal*, 3 Apr. 2020, rbj.net/.

“Meadowbrook and Rochester: Segregates by Design.” *Meadowbrook*, www.meadowbrookbrighton.org/.

Murphy, Justin. “1930’s Rochester Redlining Maps Show Discrimination.” *Democrat and Chronicle,* 20 Oct. 2016. [www.democratandchronicle.com/](http://www.democratandchronicle.com/).

Murphy, Justin. (2018). Democrat and Chronicle. “Why Are Rochester Schools America's Worst? Study Kodak Park School 41.” *Democrat and Chronicle*, 8 June. 2018, [www.democratandchronicle.com/](http://www.democratandchronicle.com/).

Murphy, Justin. “How Rochester’s Growing City and Suburbs Excluded Black Residents.” *Democrat and Chronicle,* 5 Feb. 2020. [www.democratandchronicle.com/](http://www.democratandchronicle.com/).

“Redlining; an ugly Reality in Rochester.” *Democrat and Chronicle*, 20 Jan. 2013. drive.google.com/.

The Board and Staff of Rochester Area Community Foundation. “Statement on Anti-Asian Racism and Violence.” *racf,* Mar. 2021, [www.racf.org/](http://www.racf.org/).

Thompson, Brennon. “Crossing the Color Line.” *TED x Talks,* 14 Jun. 2018. [www.youtube.com/](http://www.youtube.com/).