

# **HALF A CENTURY LATER, SEGREGATION STILL PERSISTS IN CHICAGO**

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BY:YUJIN KIM



# INTRODUCTION

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Racial discrimination had a critical impact in segregating the white and black communities in Chicago since the mid-twentieth century. Although many decades have passed and social values have changed within the society, Chicagoans resist to assimilate themselves into an integrated society as one harmonious group of residents.

Through this exhibit, it will show the critical state in which Chicago displays reluctance in implementing and conforming changes in their community throughout the half-century that has passed. Socioeconomic and geographical tensions show the segregation that occurs today. Due to the lack of communication between the two communities, many Chicagoans do not see the severe problems and issues created by segregation. Therefore, the exhibit will demonstrate this issue through photographs and contemporary videos that describe the lives under segregation in Chicago. The idea for this exhibit arose from the well-known play, *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, which realistically depicts the social tension and restrictions of the African American middle-class by describing the author's personal experiences of breaking down the past and challenging to bring about the struggles in families, class, and identity that were submerged by the Civil Rights Movement. With Chicago still being the most divided city in the nation of the twentieth-first century from neglecting the severe racial segregation in Chicago, the social division between the white and black communities persists in which the exhibit serves to revive this issue back to the society to implement a change in the people's minds to support in making a better Chicago.

# INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO NAVIGATE THROUGH THE VIRTUAL EXHIBIT

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- In order to read the information of each artifact, click onto the description label next to the pictures on the walls of the gallery. This will allow you to walk up to the descriptions of each figure and read the information.
- After reading the description, zoom back out of the picture by clicking to the words “Zoom out” on the top right corner of the wall. This will allow you to look back at the wall of the gallery. Repeat the process for each artifact.
- If the top right corner of the wall indicates “Next Group”, simply click on the words and it will direct you to the next section of the exhibit.
- Enjoy!

# HOUSING SEGREGATION

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Housing segregation was one of the geographical conditions that created a physical distinction in Chicago's community. The African Americans settled mostly in the South Side of Chicago, having it called its own, "Black Belt" of the South in the 1950s. Because they were threatened and discouraged to integrate a community with the white population, the African American population was crowded into this small area of Black Belt, having many constructions to build smaller homes to fill in the large population of black immigrants into the state. As large families moved into Chicago, the homes were very unsanitary, causing many people to become ill and suffer in the small, cramped dwelling. One of the constructions that was made for the African Americans was the Cabrini -Green Housing Project in which was filled with hundreds of families in this one building with poor sterility and safety regulations. Although there are some projects today to support the low-income families in Chicago, the past Green Housing Projects are torn down to industrialize Chicago in those spaces, starting a new social problem for the now homeless, former residents.



# HOUSING SEGREGATION

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# HOUSING SEGREGATION



# CHICAGO'S BLACK BELT

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Russel Lee

*Chicago's Black Belt*

1941

Photograph

This picture shows one of the sections of Chicago's Black Belt during the 1940's. The African Americans had to live in such homes that overcrowded families in these small spaces and had limit safety procedures/ regulations in these communities. The African American families would not spread out to different areas of Chicago due to social pressures against integration.

# SEPARATE, UNEQUAL, AND IGNORED



David Schalliol

*Separate, Unequal, and Ignored*

2011

Photograph

This picture is the Frances Cabrini row houses on the Near North side of Chicago, Illinois. This housing project was by the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) that was built for families with low incomes, searching for affordable housings. Many public housing projects were implemented in the late 1950s as many African American families immigrated into Chicago. However, due to unsanitary and hazardous living conditions, many constructions were developed even up until today. As shown in the picture, the black community homes are greatly different from the buildings of the North side, showing a comparison between the two separated communities.

# CABRINI HIGH-RISES



Betty Hulett

*Cabrini High-Rises*

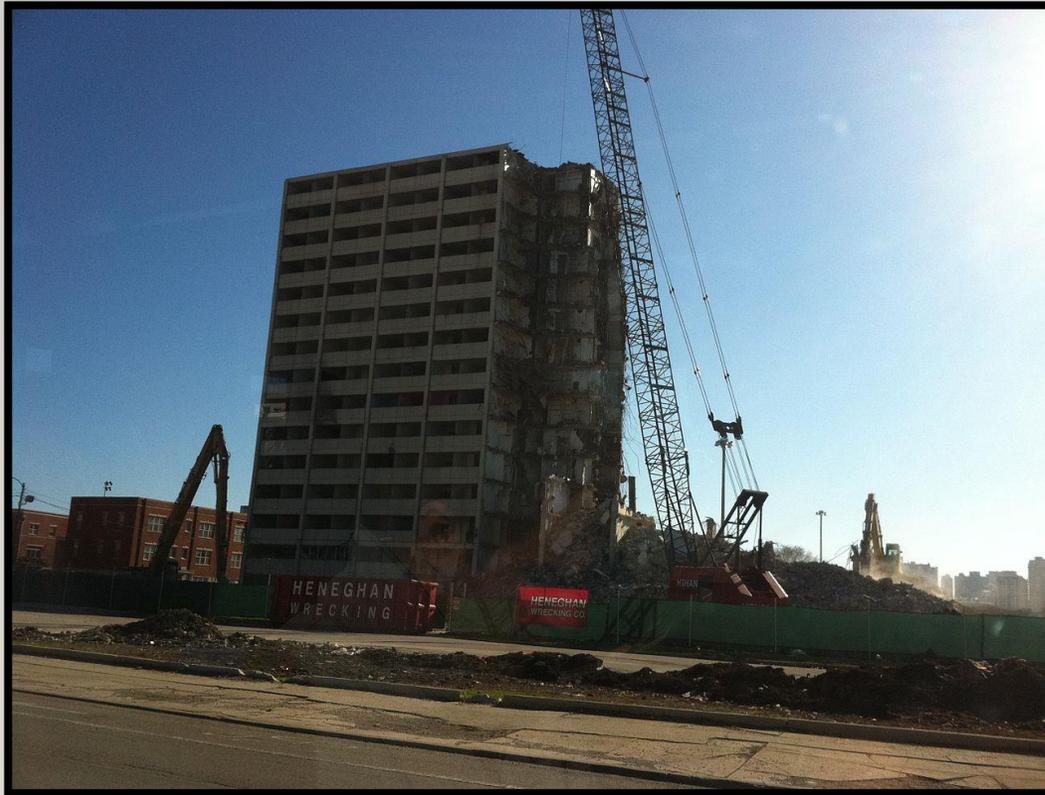
1959

Photograph

This is a picture of the “Cabrini Extension” homes that was built in 1958 under the project by Chicago Housing Authority (CHA). This was the second housing project in Chicago, following the Frances Cabrini Homes that was built by 1942. Due to the large population influx, the CHA constructed these buildings to quickly provide homes for the new incoming residents in Chicago. The buildings were poorly made due to the fact that these homes were rapidly made to make homes for the new residents. However, aiming to reach out to the low-income consumers who would take whatever it takes to have a home in the city, these high rise building projects were used for economic advancement for business profit.

# DEMOLITION OF CABRINI-GREEN

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Victorgrigas

*Demolition of Cabrini-Green*

2011

Photograph

This picture is the demolition of the last building of the Cabrini-housing project. In 2011 the homes part of the Cabrini-green housing project were becoming demolished due to its notorious reputation as a sector of violence, illness, and problems. The CHA's decision to remove the residents of the housing communities led to more severe socioeconomic, homelessness, and racial segregation in Chicago, forcing former residents to the streets, or more impoverished neighborhoods that are secluded from the city.

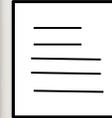
# SEGREGATION IN EDUCATION

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Segregation in the education system of Chicago today is reflected from the deep roots of the segregated education system in the 1950s. The educational system was never equal due to the racial issues that split up the population into two distinct communities. As schools in the black communities did not receive the same funds and benefits as those in the white communities, African Americans are not getting the same education levels. Schools in this region are shutting down and teachers are getting fired because of the lack of support from the city. Although Chicagoans are living in the same state/ area, they are living in two worlds with different values and equalities. The division that was created long ago still affects the status of Chicago society today, and the reluctance to improve the separation from both communities factors into the persisting segregation and inequality through these years.

# SEGREGATION IN EDUCATION

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# SEGREGATION IN EDUCATION

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# LITTLE ROCK DESEGREGATION

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Will Counts

*Little Rock Desegregation*

1957

Photograph

This is a picture of Elizabeth Eckford who was one of the first African Americans to attend an all-white Little Rock Central High School. As she walked to the school, she was followed, threatened, and cursed by an angry white mob, telling her to go back to her “original” place. African Americans were constantly under the pressure to never integrate with the white population, which led to the distinct line between the two different races in the school community.

# UNTITLED



Scott Olson

*Untitled*

2013

Photograph

This picture shows some of the students at a magnet school in Chicago. As depicted from this picture, the author of this article, Dexter Mullins, indicates that African Americans takes up 90% of the district along with 7 white student population (less than 1% of the population). Lead researcher Gary Orfield mentions that throughout the years until today, segregation branched out to become a much more complicated idea of the combination of race, ethnicity, language, and poverty in Chicago. Segregation has become a complex issue in which became something that is difficult to resolve in Chicago. Geographical segregation between the black and white communities and the poor and rich led to complex, segregated educational system that still exists today.

# UNTITLED



John Gress/ Reuters

Untitled

2013

Photograph

This is a picture of a recent segregation protest in Chicago, implementing support in equal opportunities in education in all ethnicities. As stated in the article by Suzi Parker, segregation protests in Chicago's public educational system today is eerily reminiscent of the past in the 1963 protests. Chicago remains to be the most segregated school district in the country and many districts are still unintegrated. The black segregated schools did not receive funding, having the schools regulated under poor regulations and conditions and teachers laid off as schools shut down while the class size increased by the minute. The racial issues in the 1960s played a huge role in shaping the district and leading to the education inequality in different regions of Chicago, still affecting the educational system today.

# IDENTITY

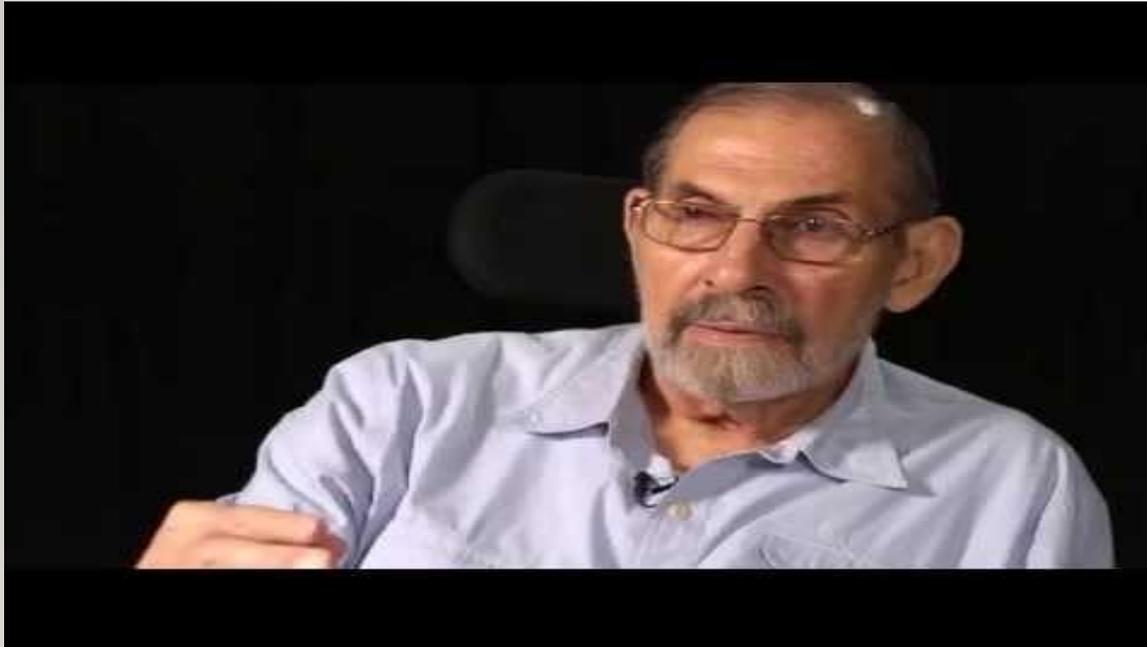
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The idea of identity has brought up heavy tensions in Chicago. Even after the enactment of desegregation, de facto segregation divided up the society not by law, but by individual pressures that lead to a physical separation. African Americans were constantly threatened by the white community from moving out of their black communities or doing things that were different from what an ideal perception of black person would do. As Chicagoans have their own identities of being individual communities, the black community is slowly disposing the idea of integrating with the white community and grow fond of the idea of segregation, taking it in as an understandable and comfortable situation to live through after many years of experience. The white community turned poverty and segregation into an abstraction, and eventually, this separation became part of the social norm in which Chicagoans, including political leaders, lingered to touch or resolve the problem. Segregation is now part of the Chicagoan culture identity and social norms, persisting throughout the several decades that arose from the historical discrimination that permanently engraved in its past and to its present.



# 8 ANDERSON: DE JURE SEGREGATION VS. DE FACTO SEGREGATION

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Alan Anderson

*8 Anderson: De Jure Segregation vs. De Facto Segregation*

2015

Interview

During the interview with Alan Anderson, he mentions something very critical that involves with the segregation present in Chicago. He distinguishes the difference between de jure segregation and de facto segregation. Mentioning that Chicago is suffering from de facto segregation, Anderson explains that although Chicago had been relieved from de jure policies of the past, the people has chosen to live separate lives due to the fear and tension that the two communities struggled with for many years. During the civil rights movement, although the North was considered a place for free slaves, the North itself was segregated severely not by laws and regulations like the South had, but by social pressure and tensions among the people. Due to the pressure and tensions, Chicago still remains divided between the two races, and they individually made their own identities that do not integrate to one another.