


 EXPLORING & CONFRONTING
OUR RACISM


This month we will be looking into America's history of segregated housing by watching 2 films. ***Owned: A Tale of Two Americas*** is a documentary that takes us into the history behind the US housing economy. This documentary exposes a foundational story that is still affecting Black people today. The one hour and 23 minute documentary can be rented on Apple TV, Amazon, Vudu, or You Tube.

Segregated By Design examines the forgotten history of how our federal, state and local governments unconstitutionally segregated every major metropolitan area in America through law and policy. This 20 minute film can be viewed by using the link provided below:

Link: <https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/segregated-by-design/>

Study Guide Questions from *Owned*

1. Think about the following statements from the documentary and explain how a Black person living in a segregated neighborhood in America may feel/respond to the statements:
 - "When you don't own anything you are nothing."
 - "If you have a home you have a stake in the system."
 - "Who is the American dream of home ownership for?"

2. According to the documentary, how does segregated housing affect the way Black people think about themselves? How does segregated housing affect the way White people think about Black people? What do you think about segregated housing? In the film, *The Hate U Give*, Starr's mother Lisa wanted to move after Khalil was murdered and after King (neighborhood drug dealer) approached Starr. Maverick (Starr's Dad) did not want to move. Do you think segregated housing was a factor in their decision making?



3. What was the Fair Housing Act of 1964 supposed to do for Blacks?

4. Why do you think White families believe that allowing Black families to live in a neighborhood will lower the property value? What racist thoughts and stereotypes is this situation based on. Does every day wear and tear affect home values?

5. Many White families believe that they got where they are from their hard work. What light does this documentary shine on this view? What have you inherited from your family?

6. According to the documentary, who benefits from the housing market and who falls prey to debt and discrimination. Give some details.

Study Guide Questions from *Segregated by Design*

1. What legislation did Lyndon Johnson enact to desegregate neighborhoods in America? Was he or the Civil Rights Act successful?

2. What is redlining and how does it affect the real estate market? Is redlining an example of violence? Does redlining force Black families to live in environments that deny quality health or wealth?



3. Describe the role that American politics and government play in creating and maintaining slums. How conscious and how deliberate was it? Consider the levels of awareness of different people - realtors, office staff, neighborhood people, etc?

4. Describe blockbusting. Who gained from this practice? Who lost from this practice? Who was exploited as a result of this practice?

5. How have downtown areas and neighborhoods been designed to exclude Black people while keeping White communities comfortable?

Questions related to both films that we will discuss on April 27

1. Housing Policies - Questions 4 from *Owned* and Questions 1-5 from *Segregated by Design* address legislation that failed and policies created which denied access to home ownership to many Black people. If our government passes legislation aren't states supposed to enforce the laws? What does our government do when this does not happen?
 - a. What are the effects of redlining in areas near Baltimore, Oakland, or Marin City today?
 - b. Not only are Blacks discriminated against, who else does America's housing policies affect?



2. Violence -

- a. *Segregated by Design* - What are the long term effects of segregated neighborhoods on Black children? Consider emotional, educational, health and financial matters.
- b. *Owned* - We have heard of incidents of rioting in Black neighborhoods like Harlem, Washington DC, Los Angeles, and Baltimore since the 1960s. What did you learn about why Black communities rioted?
- c. *Owned* - America has created structural disadvantages in our Black communities while America continues to create structural advantages for White communities. Violence is defined as - behavior involving physical force intended to hurt someone. Are American policies perpetuating violence against Black people forced to live in segregated neighborhoods?

Challenge Actions for our meeting May 17, 2022

What will you do now to learn more, teach or confront "Segregation by Design"?

- Spend time talking to someone about what you have read and learned and be prepared to share what they learned from you and share the climate of the conversation.
- Attend a city council meeting on Diversity, Economic Development or Housing. Be prepared to share who was in attendance, what was discussed and what was not discussed.
- Consider reading this article from the Marin IJ [Marin Segregation Worsened in the last decade, new UC Berkeley census study finds \(10/12/2021\)](#)
- Consider reading this article from the Brookings Institution. It is a nonprofit public policy organization based in Washington, DC. Our mission is to conduct in-depth research that leads to new ideas for solving problems facing society at the local, national and global level. [Homeownership, racial segregation and policy solutions to racial wealth equity \(9/1/2021\)](#)
- Consider reading this article also from the Brookings Institution [America's formerly redlined neighborhoods have changed, and so must solutions to rectify them \(10/14/2019\)](#)