

Evanston Policies and Practices Directly Affecting the African American Community



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AUTHORS' STATEMENT

This report was created at the request of City of Evanston staff in order to present evidence and factual information related to historic and contemporary instances where the City of Evanston might have facilitated, participated in, enacted, or stood neutral in the wake of acts of segregative and discriminatory practices in all aspects of engagement with the Evanston Black community.

The intention of this report is to compile, in one cohesive document, published facts from various sources, works, studies, surveys, articles, recordings, policies, and resources that are available for public consumption. The authors have worked to compile this information, cite materials, and provide a list of resources in order to assist others in locating the document's original sources.

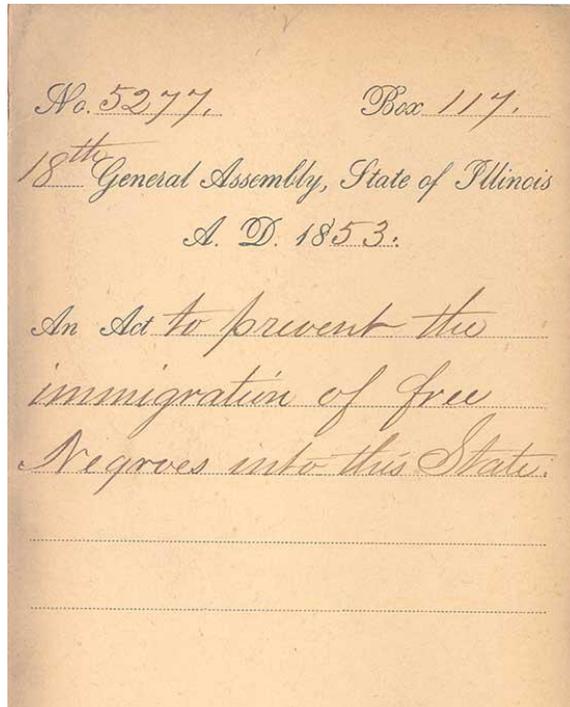
Further, the authors remain neutral and take no responsibility regarding the end use of this document and the information contained within the document. In addition, the authors do not take any positions other than fulfilling the fact finding assignment as requested by the City of Evanston.

This report is in progress and will have periodical updates when new information presents itself.

VERSION UPDATES

July 1, 2020	Start date
July 7, 2020	Review of initial findings and rough table of contents
July 10, 2020	First public viewing on an excerpt rough draft during Reparations meeting
Aug 27, 2020	First public viewing of the report in its entirety
Sept 2020-present	Periodic report updates

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State of Illinois, Bill 5277, "The 1853 Black Law passed in Illinois was considered the harshest of all discriminatory Black Laws passed by Northern states before the Civil War," from the exhibition, "[The 100 Most Valuable Documents at the Illinois State Archives](#)." (See also excerpt from "Slavery in The North" by Douglas Harper, <http://www.slavenorth.com/northwest.htm> at the end of this document)

Historical Overview

Since its platting, the City of Evanston both supported and created systems to segregate, limit, deny, and control Black citizens. Prior to the American Civil War, the state of Illinois adopted a set of "Black codes" or laws that governed the mobility and livelihood of all Black residents in the state. In essence, the laws ensured that one could not be a free Black person in the state. The codes restricted residency, settlement, and independent job opportunities, and severe punishment was administered if any of the restrictions were violated. Whippings and imprisonment, along with being sold back into slavery, were a few of the common punishments.

In Evanston, the first documented Black Evanston resident was Maria Murray Robinson. Formerly enslaved, she was reportedly purchased from a Maryland plantation at the age sixteen and later emancipated by the Vane family, who settled in Evanston in 1855. Maria worked as a domestic servant for the family until her death in 1903. Maria married George Robinson, who settled in Evanston in the early 1860s, and the couple made their home on Dempster Street near Forest Avenue. There was a small and growing Black community in that area. (Shorefront Archives)

In the nineteenth century, several pockets of early Black settlement existed throughout Evanston, including in the downtown area. However, beginning as early as 1900, and in light of

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a growing Black population in the city, the social climate began to exhibit changes in “race relations.” This was the beginning of systematic and institutionalized racist laws and restrictions that governed the lives of Black residents (as well as Black visitors to the city). These laws and restrictions evolved over the decades; the city’s government, civic institutions, recreational facilities, and retail establishments were dominated by white residents and they maintained control over the drafting and implementation of laws, as well as the cultural and social mores of the city; with little public and/or published comment or justification for the laws and restrictions, the city enacted and upheld a system of inequality and segregation.

For decades, Black Evanston residents were denied equal access to schooling, housing, retail, recreational, and commercial facilities, and many other areas. The city’s segregational and unequal systems were created over time and, for the most part, they were tacitly constructed both through private and public methods, including through the actions of the city government and its allies; while some policies were directly stated as a means to enact segregation, in most cases, rarely were the issues of discrimination and segregation mentioned or overtly identified in policies or practices that greatly impacted Black residents. Instead, through a variety of means, through the use of code words, and a focus on issues such as “development” and “safety”—all things that sounded “positive” but in truth masked the actual intentions of specific exclusionary and discriminatory policies-- the systems of segregation and processes of discrimination were enacted, upheld, and expanded for decades.

In 1939, Evanston’s first Black City Council member, Edwin B. Jourdain Jr., wrote one of many letters to his friend and ally, W.E.B. DuBois, the famous historian, civil rights activist, and co-founder of the N.A.A.C.P. Jourdain described the city he represented:

Evanston was “a town that once forced negroes¹ to sit in balconies only of movie houses, to use only a ‘colored bathing beach’ on the lakefront, to use city owned parks only for ball games among all-white or all-Negro teams, to stay off all city boards and commissions, to have no colored school teachers at all.” (E[dwin] B. Jourdain, Jr. to W.E.B. Du Bois, February 17, 1939, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312) Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, <http://credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b088-i365>.)

Jourdain’s letter described just a small portion of the larger picture of the city located just North of Chicago, the suburb known as a “city of homes,” the city that served as home to Northwestern University, and to tens of thousands of civic-minded residents who praised their city’s history and institutions.

¹ Use of the term “negro” and other antiquated and racist terms are quoted here in their original contexts.

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Jourdain's letter was just one piece of evidence that Evanston also had another history; one not widely told among white residents, but one that Black Evanston residents knew well. It was the history of a segregated town.

Over the decades, policies, practices, and patterns of discrimination and segregation took place in Evanston. These not only impacted the daily lives and well-being of thousands of Evanston residents, but they also had a material effect on occupations, education, wealth, and property; and for each generation that encountered discrimination and segregation in Evanston, there was another that followed, and another. While the policies, practices, and patterns may have evolved over the course of these generations, their impact was cumulative and permanent. They were the means by which legacies were limited and denied. Documenting this history is critical to understanding the precise nature and impact discrimination and segregation had in Evanston.

Resistance

The Evanston Black community did not sit idly by as discriminatory practices were being enacted by the city officials and white residents. Although not official city policy, Evanston's "Jim Crow" practices were embraced by the vast majority of the general white population. As early as 1903, reports relating to segregated practices appeared in local papers:

"Evanston Blacks Fear Wave of Race Prejudice": The article tells of a certain "colored" man frightening women and calls upon the colored people to keep their brother at home. The article is headed, "A Rope Might Do," and the colored people in Evanston take it seriously. . . (*Chicago Tribune*, May 6, 1903)

"North Shore Towns Aroused: Influx of Negroes Alarms the Residents of Evanston, Wilmette, Winnetka and Glencoe": . . . As a solution to the problem suddenly presented, Evanston citizens are reviving the old scheme of a town for negroes, to be located near Niles Center. To this it is proposed to deport objectionable characters. (*Chicago Tribune*, January 22, 1904)

"Charges Stir a Post office: Race Discrimination on of accusations at Evanston – Trouble is said to arise out of Employment of Negro Carriers": . . . DePugh accused Peterson frequently of discrimination against the colored carriers and is said to have made frequent threats that he would "tell what he knew." Several times he was threatened with dismissal. (*Chicago Tribune*, February 7, 1906)

"Jim Crow Cars for Cultured Evanston": Evanston Southern (White) Society Successful in Jim Crow Theater, will now resort to Jim Crow street cars — The Unwarranted segregation a blight in cultured Evanston; Where there are as many churches as schools. The Rights of the negro citizen should be demanded and respected; the matter peaceably adjusted, once and always— The constitution of the United States must be respected and guarded as strictly as the "Monroe Doctrine" was in the case of Cuba and the Mother Country. (*Chicago Defender*, August 26, 1911)

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“The Segregation Equivalent at Evanston”: . . .Whether Evanston is to continue to maintain a clean, respectable, unbiased community such as she bears by reputation will be watched editorially by the Defender with great interest. (*Chicago Defender*, August 26, 1911)

“Forces are Fighting Jim Crowism”: Rev. H. S. Graves of Ebenezer AME and Rev. E.H. Fletcher of Mt. Zion Baptist church charged against Jim Crowism from their pulpits on last Sunday evening. . . (*Chicago Defender*, September 2, 1911)

Leaders of several Black churches, businesses, and other civic organizations actively challenged the “Jim Crowing” of Evanston, bringing to light the issues of segregation in restaurants, theaters, street cars, and housing. By 1918, an Evanston Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was established to champion these causes. At that time, the NAACP was a nine-year-old civic organization founded to advance civil rights and to combat racism and discrimination in the United States.

SEGREGATED PRACTICES

City Facilities

Transportation: As early as 1911, Black Evanston residents reported widespread experiences of discrimination both on city streetcars and “L” trains. (David Kenneth Bruner, “A General Survey of the Negro Population of Evanston,” Northwestern University, May 1924, 31). That year, a lengthy article appeared in the *Chicago Defender* with the headline “Jim Crow Cars for Cultured Evanston,” addressing issues of segregation in seating and the growing adoption of Jim Crow systems:

Evanston southern (White) society successful in Jim Crow theater, wil now resort to Jim Crow street cars - the unwarranted segregation a blight in cultured Evanston, where there are as many churches as schools. (*Chicago Defender*, August 26, 1911, page 1)

Beaches: Evanston beaches were free prior to 1931. However, they were segregated. Blacks could go to a small section of the beach off of Lake Street. As city council member Edwin B. Jourdain, Jr. began challenging Evanston’s segregated practices during the 1930s, one of his focuses was allowing public access to all beaches for all taxpaying residents without discrimination. To circumvent/control the beaches, the City had begun a “beachfront beautification program” to renovate some of the city beaches. To pay for this, beach tokens were sold beginning in 1931 through city agencies, thus allowing the city to screen Black residents and block them from purchasing the tokens. The Black community still had access to the free beaches in the segregated sections. The institution of beach tokens was one workaround that did not require written policies. The exclusion was maintained by the use of tokens to help maintain the “beautification” of some of the beaches, and to keep Blacks - and other “undesirables” - out. (Source: conversation with Edwin B. Jourdain, Jr’s youngest son, Spencer Jourdain, summer of 2018 with Shorefront)

Public Parks: Evanston, as a social policy, bought into the concept of Jim Crow and applied it to housing, schools, civic engagement and public spaces. In the issue of parks, integrated activities were not allowed. Alderman Jourdain used baseball games as a visible challenge. Parks and Forestry would deny public park use permits to any group attempting to have integrated games. As permits were generated, this would allow the Parks department to question the uses and activities proposed by residents. If they were not deemed “socially” acceptable, permits were denied. Jourdain challenged the notion by organizing by hosting integrated games. He would attend wearing his aldermanic badge and challenge police who would come and attempt to end the games. He further took it up at the City Council and penned letters to the federal government arguing that public parks were supported by residential taxes and to put restrictions on them was illegal and unconstitutional. (Source: Shorefront Archives Edwin B. Jourdain Jr. collection, memos to city parks and recreation and to the mayor.)

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Business Districts



Section of the Black Business Dist. along West Railroad (Green Bay Road) c1924. Photo by David Bruner

Retail and Restaurant Patronage:

“Practically every restaurant in Evanston refuses to serve Negroes who, when they go to even the less respectable ones, are simply ignored,” the *Daily Northwestern*, the university’s student newspaper, reported in 1936. (Editorial, reprinted in “Score Northwestern Officials for Attitude on Race Students,” *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 26, 1936.)

“Refusal to serve Negroes in eating places and discrimination in stores seemed to be rather frequent,” reported David Bruner in his 1924 survey of Black Evanston residents. (Bruner, 31)

Evanston’s Cooley’s Cupboard restaurants, a popular place for collegiate students, regularly refused service to the Black community. Early sit-in protests were held at the establishment. One interviewed resident remembered an instance where he went into the establishment, “...when we got our food, my milkshake was loaded with salt. And my hamburger was loaded with salt, where it wasn’t edible...” (Louis Mosley, Shorefront oral history collection, www.shorefrontvoice.org)

In regards to retail businesses, one Black resident commented that “It was understood that we do not go downtown Evanston to shop. If we did, no more than two at a time would enter a store. We would purchase what we need and leave immediately... Most everything we needed could be purchased within our own community.” (Shorefront oral history collection)

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Theaters: In 1911, the *Chicago Tribune* reported the opening of the New Theater of Evanston (on Sherman Ave) which featured a “ ‘Jim Crow’ ” section. Black patrons were forced to use a separate stairway and sit only in a “reserved block of seats” in the balcony. “Without friction of protest,” the paper reported, the theater “segregated the black and white races.” (*Chicago Tribune*, August 22, 1911.) The company that owned the theater had recently segregated another five-cent theater on Davis Street, allowing Black patrons there only. (See below.)

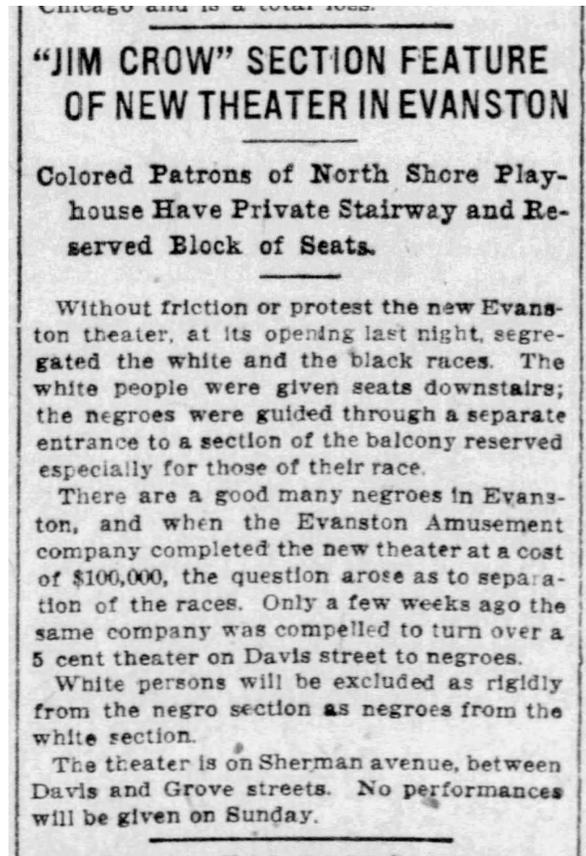
This was one of several incidents that were reported in the local newspapers. Other headlines covering multiple instances included:

“Colored People Admitted in All Parts of Evanston Theater”: The management of the Evanston theater came into camp with a flag of truce begging mercy of the butler of the Northwestern railroad president, Dr. and Mrs. Garnett, and Attorney Auter for trying to keep them out of a decent place to sit in their playhouse... (*Chicago Defender*, September 9, 1911)

“Evanston Theater Sued by Mrs. Garnett”: Mrs. Helen W. Garnett, wife of Dr. Garnett, who lives in Evanston. The suit was brought for \$500 in the circuit court. Hon. E.H. Morris is the man behind the law. (*Chicago Defender*, February 10, 1912)

“Evanston Theater Still Bars Negroes”: On last Saturday evening the Evanston Theater company again showed that it did not want and would not have Negroes sitting on the ground floor. . . Mr. Vance informed her that they would not tolerate Negroes on the first floor. (*Chicago Defender*), June 22, 1912

“Demands Right to Choose Seat”: Evanston, IL, May 5—John Smith, who was arrested after he had refused to take a seat to which he was directed in an Evanston movie show, today prepared to make a fight against the “Jim Crow” rules which are enforced in a number of similar places. . . (*Chicago Defender*, May 6, 1916)



Chicago Tribune, August 22, 1911

The practice of segregating theaters (and other establishments) would continue into the 1930s when Alderman Jourdain led the fight against the practice. The issue of whether or not to allow theaters to open on Sundays was before the City Council. Jourdain spoke out against allowing Sunday openings, arguing that it would only add another day that Black residents would experience segregation in theaters.

Jourdain had a deciding vote on the issue of Sunday openings for theaters. Jourdain challenged the theaters that he would not be in support of Sunday shows if Evanston theaters continued segregated seating arrangements and related “Jim Crow” practices. (Source: Edwin B. Jourdain Jr. collection, correspondences between Alderman Jourdain and movie theaters)

EMPLOYMENT

Black Evanston residents were limited in the kinds of employment they could find in Evanston and largely worked in domestic and blue collar jobs. Based on an informal survey of Black residents conducted by David Bruner in 1924: “Common laborer, janitor, chauffeur, and expressman head the list for the men in the order named, and indicate very well the occupations most common. Among women, the occupations heading the list are laundress, day laborer, hairdresser or beauty parlor operator, and caterer. As a matter of fact domestic service is the

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most common employment for women.” (Bruner, 27). According to City Council member Edwin B. Jourdain, Jr., for many years, the City of Evanston did not hire Black teachers for the public schools, and there was a complete absence of Black employees in city government, save for one or two Black residents employed in the police department.

In 1915, white city employees were reportedly “aroused” when a rumor circulated that Mayor Pearsons might appoint W.H. Twiggs, a Black man, to serve as head of the city’s general information department. In 1889, Twiggs had run unsuccessfully for Village Clerk. (“Negro Appointment Rumor Stirs Evanston City Hall,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 29, 1915; “Evanston,” *Inter-Ocean*, April 21, 1889.) Earlier, Twiggs had also been appointed to the position as “city sealer” as “a concession to the colored voters.” (“Patten Names His Aides,” *Chicago Tribune*, April 22, 1901). In January 1916, Twiggs was indeed appointed head of the general information department, the “first of race to hold office in Evanston.” (*The Day Book*, January 4, 1916). Two months later, after he “failed to pass examination,” he was forced to resign from his position. (*The Day Book*, March 1, 1916). (See also: Dino Robinson, “William H. Twiggs: Early Pioneer,” *Shorefront Journal*, October 2013.)

It was not until 1931 that Evanston would elect a Black City Council member: Edwin B. Jourdain, Jr. Shortly afterward, however, Jourdain was dramatically unseated from office, “deprived of his seat by the Evanston City council” after having been charged with (unsubstantiated) election “irregularities” by his opponent. (“Colored Alderman Loses Seat in Evanston Council,” *Chicago Tribune*, February 2, 1932.) In April 1932, Jourdain ran again for City Council and won, again, and thereafter, he would serve as a leader in the fight to end discrimination at Northwestern and in Evanston.

At Northwestern University, Black Evanston residents had “long been de facto excluded from the university in terms of employment.” (Thompson, *The Takeover 1968*, 16). Those who did find jobs on the campus were largely relegated to positions of menial labor, including cleaning and garbage collecting.

Classified advertisements (below, reprinted from *The Takeover 1968*) over the years, serve as evidence of discriminatory hiring practices:

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HOUSEBOY—COLORED
 For Evanston fraternity; room, board,
 \$90 per month. Call Greenleaf 9385.

WILLARD HALL
 Northwestern University, Evanston.
 Will have an opening for
 1 dishwasher immediately.
 1 experienced cook, white, Sept.
 1 salad girl, white, Sept.
 Call Mrs. Cowan. University 7300.

Newspaper help wanted ads for a “colored” houseboy and a white cook and salad girl, *Chicago Tribune*, December 30, 1946 (top) and *Chicago Tribune*, August 15, 1943 (bottom)

Such ads were reflective of the broader environment of discriminatory employment in Evanston.

HELP WANTED—FEMALE

WANTED—A WHITE GIRL ASSIST
 gen'l. hswk. Home nights, ref. req.
 Tel. 6949. Address 2657 Broadway. 2-31u

WANTED A GIRL OR WOMAN TO
 care for 14 yr. old boy evenings. Ad-
 dress 2729 Eastwood Ave. or pho-
 ne 2124-J. 2-31t

WANTED—A YOUNG GIRL, WHITE
 to assist with housework. Co. home
 nights. A competent gen'l. girl. No
 washing. Phone 2593. 2-31u

WANTED—COMPETENT WHITE MAID
 gen'l. housework. No laundry. Small
 family, good salary. Glencoe 212. Re-
 verse charges. Mrs. Ward. 2-31u

RELIABLE LAUNDRESS TUESDAYS
 Steady work \$1.50. 1240 Forest Ave.
 Ev. 7005. 2-31u

WANTED—COMPETENT WHITE MAID
 2 in family. Apartment. Tel. 1331. 2-31u

WHITE MAID WHO WILL GO HOME
 nights. Small family. Ph. WIL. 1512. 2-31u

MAID FOR GEN'L. HSWORK. NO OB-
 jections to new comer. Ph. WIL. 1245. 2-31u

EXPERIENCED MAID. GOOD SEAMS-
 tress. Wages \$29 per week. In Hub-
 bard Woods. Address B 252. 2-31u

WHITE GIRL TO ASSIST WITH
 housework. Light work. Small wash-
 es. Cooking exp. not necessary. will
 teach. Good home. Wages \$19 to \$12.
 Phone 4941. 2-31p

WANTED—WHITE GIRL OR WOMAN.
 No laundry. \$10. Tel. 5823. 2-31u

Classified Ads, *Evanston News Index*, January 4, 1922.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS

Minstrel Shows in Evanston

Minstrel shows, which first gained popularity in the U.S. in the 1830s -1840s, were “popular” performances in which white people blackened their faces and performed a stereotype of and degrading representation of Black people. Racist in both representation and intent, minstrel shows derided and objectified the figure of the Black individual as comic, pathetic, and ignorant. As the National Museum of African American History and Culture explains: “Minstrelsy, comedic performances of ‘blackness’ by whites in exaggerated costumes and make-up, cannot be separated fully from the racial derision and stereotyping at its core. By distorting the features and culture of African Americans—including their looks, language, dance, deportment, and character—white Americans were able to codify *whiteness* across class and geopolitical lines as its antithesis.” “Blackface: The Birth of An American Stereotype,” National Museum of African American History and Culture, Smithsonian Institution, <https://nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/blackface-birth-american-stereotype>

Indeed, the minstrel show was not merely a form of harmless entertainment. It was a means by which white people exerted control over Black people; it was a method of both defending and extending power. As professor David Leonard explained, minstrel shows were “an assertion of power and control [which] allows a society to routinely and historically imagine African Americans as not fully human. It serves to rationalize violence and Jim Crow segregation.” Alexis Clark, “How the History of Blackface Is Rooted in Racism,” History.com, February 15, 2019, <https://www.history.com/news/blackface-history-racism-origins>

Some Evanston organizations and newspapers propagated racist imagery in minstrel show entertainments offered to city residents, which were staged frequently. In April 1909, Evanston’s YMCA hosted a program that included a minstrel show and “Plantation scene” advertised as featuring “100 Plantation Negroes and Pickanninies in Good Old Summer Melodies and Up-to-Date Songs.” The racist imagery used in the advertisement (see below) reflected a widespread and “accepted” view among the mainstream white population of both minstrel performances and the racist depictions they perpetuated. At least one minstrel show was staged at an Evanston public school in 1921 (see below). Beginning in the nineteenth century, and for many years after, the Evanston Boat Club hosted an annual minstrel show. And, at Northwestern University, minstrel shows were performed frequently. According to our research, Northwestern’s final minstrel performance took place in 1963 at the university’s annual WAA-MU show.

COMING SOON

"IT"

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

Big, Funny Event of the Season

Will Positively Show Rain or Shine

AT THE
Y. M. C. A. Gymnasium, Evanston

APRIL 23 AND 24, 1909

CURTAIN WILL RISE AT 8 P. M.
The Program will include Many Daring Acts

Do not fail to see
The Funniest Clowns
Big Alabama Minstrels
Music, Songs,
Troupe of 60 Grand and Trained
Voices

Great Feats by Ariel Artists

Many Trained Wild Animals
(captured in the country that
Roosevelt will traverse.)

Prof. Sandow Johnsing
(World's Strong Man)

Great Nelson Family
in daring tumbling feats.
A hair-raising act.

Will-do Bros
Greatest Bar Performers of the Age

Great High Diving and leaping act
over "T. R." the Greatest
Living Elephant.

Wonderful Feats
in Pyramid
Building by the
ZUZU FAMILY.

**Grand Hand-
Balancing Act**
by Prof. Dick

**Great Electric
Club-Swinging
Act**
Alone worth the
price of admission

**High Kicking. 50
Original Georgia
Pickanninies in
Daring & Dazzling
Acts**

**YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO MISS THE BEAUTIFUL PLANTATION SCENE
IN THE BIG FIRST PART**
100 Plantation Negroes and Pickanninies in Good Old Southern Melodies and Up-to-Date Songs

**A big laugh from start to finish. Red Lemonade, Jumbo Peanuts
and all that goes with a big show.**

REMEMBER THE DAYS AND DATES
Friday and Saturday, April 23 and 24, 8 P. M.

**SHOW
GROUNDS Y. M. C. A. Gymnasium**

GENERAL ADMISSION 35c **RESERVED SEATS 15c EXTRA**

Reserved Seats on sale at the Y. M. C. A. and Hill & Lettingwell's Beginning Monday, April 12th

Advertisement, April 1909.

BIG COON SHOW TONIGHT

FIRST W. A. A. MINSTREL READY FOR UNVEILING AT RAVINIA.

LOCAL HITS ARE NUMEROUS

Co-Eds Promise Snappy Entertainment
—Financial Support Not Satisfactory.

The minstrel show is all in fine shape for the performance tonight at Ravinia, and it is going to be the best ever given at Northwestern. Miss Arnold and Mr. Lowrie, backed by the Woman's Athletic Association, have left nothing undone in order to give the student body a performance they will long remember.

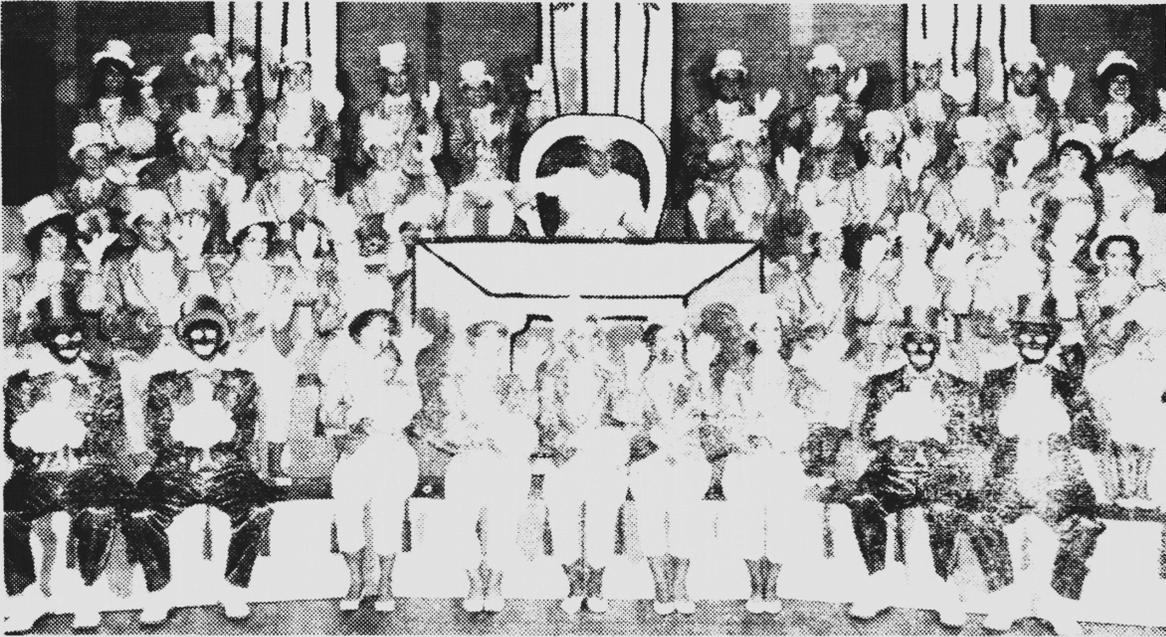
Daily Northwestern, April 20, 1912



Razzy, Jazzy Music
will be the feature of the
OAKTON MINSTREL SHOW
The seating capacity is only 600—So
come early
Oakton School Auditorium
Ridge Ave. and Oakton St.
Friday and Saturday Nights
• April 1st and 2nd, at 8 o'clock
ADULTS, 50c CHILDREN, 25c
Get your tickets early as none will be
sold at the door until 7:45 p. m.

Advertisement for the "Oakton Minstrel Show," performed at Oakton School, an Evanston public school, *Evanston News-Index*, March 28, 1921

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"Congressional Revue" is the finale of the first act of "Mud In Your Eye" and presents an imaginary session of the United States Congress in the form of a minstrel show with black-face end men, tambourines, and an interlocutor who might be the speaker of the House.

Daily Northwestern, May 9, 1963

SERVICES, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE



Community Hospital. Shorefront Photographic Collection

Community Hospital

For years, Evanston's two hospitals, the Evanston Hospital and St. Francis Hospital, restricted access to Black residents and employed no Black doctors on their staff. As a result, in 1914, two Black doctors, Arthur Butler and Isabella Garnett, opened a hospital for Black patients at 1918 Asbury Ave, known as the Evanston Sanitarium.

Over the next 15 years, the Sanitarium served Evanston's Black population from a converted residential home. The operating room was next to the furnace room, separated by a door. After Dr. Arthur Butler's untimely death, the Sanitarium was renamed Butler Memorial. At the same time, a new committee (interracial) formed to plan for the future of the hospital. The committee's goal had a dual purpose: to provide a new facility to serve the growing Black community and to keep Black patients away from both Evanston and St. Francis hospitals.

In 1951, an article in the *Alabama Tribune* appeared with the headline: "Illinois Town to Get New Jim Crow Hospital," (*Alabama Tribune*, May 18, 1951). The Sanitary District Board of Chicago (now known as the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago) agreed to grant a 99-year lease on two acres of Evanston property located on the east bank of the North Shore Chanel (between Brown and Gray Aves) for the site of a new 56-bed hospital to serve the "Negro population of Evanston." Eugene Beck, Evanston City Council member representing the fifth ward, said that the hospital was "sorely needed." The Evanston City Council endorsed the deal. Dr. J. B. Martin, the sole Black trustee on the Sanitary District Board of Chicago, voted against the deal stating that it would "promote segregation." ("Lease Sanitary District for Hospital," *Chicago Tribune*, May 11, 1951.)

The new "Community Hospital of Evanston" was promoted as being "interracial." When it opened in October 1952, six of the 21 doctors on staff were Black.



Father and Son Banquet c1922 at the Emerson Street YMCA. Shorefront Photographic Collection

Emerson Street Branch YMCA

The Evanston YMCA, established in Evanston in 1885, did not allow membership from the Evanston Black community. The historical evolution of a separate and segregated facility demonstrated the Evanston paternalistic viewpoint of its own history.

As a result of being denied membership in c. 1907, James Rayford Talley enlisted the assistance of a small group of leaders and businessmen to organize its own spiritual and outdoor recreational outlets for Black male youth just off of West Railroad (now Green Bay Road) and Foster Street and continued there for several years. Talley's efforts attracted an influential supporter of the Evanston Y.

Comes Dr. Harris, Negro's Friend

Now started, at the instance of an Evanston philanthropist, Dr. Dwight J. Harris, a movement of incalculable consequence in inter-racial responsibility. This city needed a Negro branch of Y.M.C.A. Central. There met, August 20, 1909—a good date to remember—at the headquarters of the big friend of all Evanston, seventy young Negro men who were addressed by sponsors of the project and by W. A. Hunton, International Secretary of Colored Y.M.C.A. work. Forty-two persons subscribed \$165 and developments were committed to Dr. Harris, three Negro pastors and Mr. Dale. ("Half Century of Building Health and Character 1885-1935")

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Dr. Harris continued his involvement as sort of a liaison between the Evanston YMCA and Rev. Talley. What was clear in the general social makeup of Evanston at that time was the notion of social responsibility for the less fortunate, in particular, the Black community. Many sources of early Evanston history had, in most cases, prescribed itself to paternalism. This notion is exemplified in several reports and studies and, in regards to the YMCA, in the pamphlet “A Half Century of Building Health and Character 1885-1935”.

Much work in garnering support of the branch YMCA brought graduates from the Hampton Institute to the site on December 27, 1913. Following a speech by Robert S. Abbot, founder of the *Chicago Defender*, presentations about the importance of education and trades offered at Hampton were facilitated by graduates of Hampton (*Chicago Defender*, Dec. 27, 1913, p. 2.)

The Emerson Street Department YMCA was formally dedicated on Sunday, July 5, 1914 with James R. Talley as Department Secretary. The event was covered in the *Evanston Daily News* and the *Chicago Defender*. (*Evanston Daily News*, February 5, 1914.)

The immediate years that followed the opening of the Emerson Street Branch YMCA proved its importance and, soon, it was already too small to service the rapidly growing Black community. In 1910, the Black population was 1,160. By 1920, it grew to 2,522 and by 1930 to 4,938 (U.S. Census data). Within a city that was facing the increasing presence of Jim Crow policies, the Branch provided needed services, a meeting place and networking for the Black community, and housing for Black Northwestern University students who were barred from campus housing. Thus, the Branch Y maintained a system paralleling “separate but equal” services.

By the mid 1920s, it was evident that the Emerson Street Branch needed bigger facilities. The Branch turned away 155 applications from young men competing for the eight available dorm rooms. It suffered a fire in the gym on March 8, 1924 which resulted in \$5,390 damages, hosted its largest turn-out for the Father and Son Banquet in 1926, and closed out the same year without a deficit, all within a \$9,600 allocated budget.

As the Evanston YMCA made plans to relocate its facility from the immediate downtown area of Evanston into a newly-built building, made possible by a major fundraising campaign, a portion of the funds raised were slated for the expansion of the Emerson Street Branch. In reviewing its options, the Evanston YMCA Board considered incorporating the Emerson Branch into the proposed new location of the Evanston YMCA at Grove Street, more than 15 years before the national effort of integrating facilities began to take shape. The idea apparently was abandoned.

“At first we thought the Emerson branch might be moved and made a part of the new Grove Street building, but we received so many requests from Negro members to keep the branch at its present location, at 1014 Emerson St., that we acceded to their wishes and made no plans for its removal.” (George R. Folds, “Plan New Building to House Negro Y,” *Evanston News Index*, Oct. 11, 1928, 2.)

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The push for a larger facility that encompassed both the Evanston YMCA as well as the Emerson Street YMCA raised more than one million dollars. Of that fund, \$941,283.05 was marked for the new construction of and contents of the central Evanston YMCA, while \$106,471.54 was slated for the Emerson Street Branch for both the building's expansion and its contents. This included an appropriation of \$17,500 from the Rosenwald Fund (*A Half Century of Building Health and Character 1885-1935*).

At this time, Northwestern University did not allow Black students to live in any campus dormitories. Students, if they did not commute, took up residence in the homes of local Black residents or at the Emerson Street Y. Students continued to room at the Emerson Branch until Northwestern fully desegregated its campus dormitories in the 1960s. (*Northwestern University, A History, 1850-1975*, 238-239; Thompson, *The Takeover 1968*.)

After the rededication of the expanded Emerson Street Branch in 1930, commissioned reports and surveys still suggested its facilities were inadequate, further demonstrating a very serious need for services, space and funds. Even with these inequities, the Emerson Branch continued to enjoy its heyday period pre and post-World War II.

By 1940, the Evanston Black population reached 6,026 and the Emerson Street Branch boasted a significant membership accomplishment. It was estimated that four out of five Evanston Black boys of eligible age were members of the Emerson Branch in 1941. There were 1,095 members recorded in 1942. (Norman J. Weston, "YMCA Reports New Records," *Evanston Review*, January 2, 1941.)

Exemplifying the need and use of the Emerson Street YMCA, it was utilized as a meeting place by other organizations within the Black community. Throughout the branch's history, clubs, organizations, religious groups and other initiatives had their beginnings within its walls. Black high school students held their swimming classes at the Emerson Street Branch as well as their prom. ETHS did not allow the Black student body to attend proms or swim in the pool. Sports and intramural sports were segregated, with nearby high schools barring Black and white students from playing together.

It should be noted that an active committee of women also oversaw the girls activities at the Emerson YMCA since the local YWCA also has segregated policies in place.

Desegregating Facilities

"I remember when I came back from California in 1945 - 1946, and wanted to go swim in the Y pool. Not thinking twice about where to go, I went to the Grove Street YMCA. There I was politely told that my membership was for the Emerson Street Branch only." (Fred Hutcherson, III, Shorefront Interview, Dec. 2004)

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The National YMCA began in earnest to desegregate all of its YMCAs across the United States in 1944. In two issues of the *National Council Bulletin*, (Vol. 28, No. II, Dec, 1954 and Vol. 29, No I, Jan, 1955) it was announced that areas in Philadelphia, PA, St. Louis, MO, and Brooklyn and Queens, NY, had completed integration processes.

The Board of Managers of the West Branch YMCA believes that the West Branch YMCA is the best place in our community where white people and Negroes can maintain a socio-religious movement together. We deal with community needs. We serve youth. We are a cooperative enterprise. We can help you, and you can help us. We all believe in, and we all invest in the youth of West Philadelphia. (*"Interracial Policy Becomes Practice"*, National Council Bulletin, Vol. 28, No. II, Dec, 1954)

Recognizing the trend, the Evanston YMCA began to address the issue of desegregation. On December 21, 1954, the first interracial committee was formed in Evanston to address major developments between the two YMCAs (YMCA board minutes, December 21, 1954).

From these minutes it is clear that the serious matter of the financial stability of the Emerson Y was also at question. The interracial committee was appointed to address the financial and managerial concerns of the Emerson Street Branch YMCA. The minutes from the December 1954 meeting strongly suggest the beginning of the demise of the Emerson Street Branch YMCA. At the end of the meeting, the board asked for the resignation of Thomas Hummons after eleven successful years serving as the executive secretary of the Emerson Branch. A later public announcement indicated that Mr. Hummons himself resigned and took a position as "a Field Representative with the Chicagoland Clearance Commission" (*Evanston Review*, April 28, 1955).

One outcome of the interracial committee's work was the formulation of a plan to desegregate the Evanston Y on Grove Street. In 1957, the Evanston YMCA implemented its desegregation plan beginning with the 4th grade level, with each consecutive year desegregating each of its age groups. By December 18, 1963, the Grove Street location announced that it had fully desegregated its facilities with the 7th and 8th grade levels, the last levels to be integrated. Within 12 months, the nation passed its revised Civil Rights Act in 1964. Several youth from the Black community began to frequent the Evanston YMCA on a regular basis as a show of interracial cooperation.

The seven-year process was not an easy goal to meet and it was met with opposition, mostly from the Evanston YMCA membership. In all of the board minutes during this time period, it became clear that there were many board, staff and members of the Evanston YMCA that were against integrating the Evanston YMCA.

While most of the teen groups submitted written letters approving integration, the young women's group was adamantly against desegregation, especially for social events. Even though

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many groups and members submitted letters of approval, the general off-the-record accounts leaned toward a general un-acceptance of the idea of desegregation. Many members suggested that they would cancel their memberships and/or donations to the organization if integration within the Grove Street YMCA were to happen. A survey was issued soliciting thoughts to “the issue” to board members, group leaders and staff. In the following years, debate and heated discussions in open and closed board meetings tackled the response gained from the survey (see appendix “1960 Staff Retreat Notes”). In the later years, the interracial committee was referred to as the “special committee” and the “liaison committee.”

Additionally, throughout the years, there was continued concern about the Emerson Branch’s financial stability. Between 1954 and 1961, the Branch reported an average “subsidy” (new term introduced from “budget”) of \$20,000 per year. In these years, the total income had consistently come in at 45 percent of the budgeted expenses. Financial resources from the Black community, donations to the facility and corporate backed donations were in stark contrast to those of the Evanston YMCA.

The closing of the Emerson Street Department YMCA brought on an assortment of feelings within the Black community. Anger, resentment and abandonment were the resulting feelings of many in the local Black community. Others felt that the closing was long overdue. Not for what it offered, but for its symbol of racial prejudice and Jim Crow — an unwanted center in contradiction of the Black Power movement of the 1960s and 1970s. As the greater community was invited to join membership of the Y on Grove Street, it was met with mixed emotions from not feeling a part of a family represented in the negative symbolism of the Grove Street Y teen hang-out area, the Plantation Room. The room included a painting that depicted enslaved Black people working in a field.

Dozens of Black residents who have been interviewed and who have participated in past activities or who were employed at the Emerson Street Y, had nothing but fond memories of the Y. They shared times of dances, parties, club meetings, church activities and recreation. They also shared feelings on the closing of the Emerson Street YMCA in 1967. There were attempts to purchase the building for alternate community use (attempts that were rejected). In 1980, the Emerson Y building was demolished after the City of Evanston gave the building to the fire department for training. The building was set on fire before it was demolished.

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SCHOOLS

“Fortunately,” wrote David Bruner of Evanston’s school system in 1924, “it has been possible to have one school district which is largely Negro and ever more becoming so.” (Bruner, 57) For years, no Black school teachers taught in the city’s schools. Grammar and middle schools were segregated, and the majority of Black students attended a single school, Foster School. Although Evanston Township High School was integrated, there were a variety of practices deployed to separate Black and white students, from enrolling Black students in basic, rather than advanced, courses to barring Black and white students from sitting together in the classroom.



Foster School c1910

Foster School

Between 1905 and 1967, Foster School provided all younger Black generations with education and by the 1940s, it was the predominant school where Black students were encouraged to attend and where Black teachers could find employment. This was a result of Evanston’s participation in the segregated societal system of Jim Crow.

Transfer of Pupils, Causes Vigorous Protest in Evanton

The Transfer of 42 pupils from the North Evanston schools to the Foster School ... caused an indignant protest from residents of the Fifth ward of Evanston. ... “If they are not trying to get rid of the Negrop pupils,...it certainly is a curious coincidence that the entire overflow was 100 percent black.” (*Chicago Defender*, March 30, 1918, p. 13)

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On April 18, 1903, a vote was cast approving the construction of a new school building in the amount of \$30,000 in bonds and an additional \$20,000 tax levy. On July 1, 1903, School District 75 received a building permit to construct a two-story brick building at 2010 Dewey Avenue by architect Ernest Woodyatt. Also in 1903, Ellen Foster, who previously operated her own school at 1319-321 Emerson Street, was elected principal of Foster School. Named after a Northwestern University president, Randolph Sinks Foster, the school opened in 1905 with a student body nearly 100% White and faculty and staff 100% White. By 1945, the student body was nearly 100% African American.

Evanston's plan to segregate the Black community resulted in, and conveniently made, a segregated school. By the end of 1930, most Black residents resided in the Fifth Ward of Evanston and Foster school was centrally located in that ward. To ensure that Black students and not white students attended Foster School, boundary lines which determined the school zone for Foster were drawn down the middle of major streets and through alleys.

“... when a street on the border of a school district has noticeably changes in racial composition, a redistricting is made, presumably for the benefit of both races. If a street bounding the Foster district becomes solidly colored in population, it is placed entirely in the Foster district...” (Alice Orian Rood, “Negroes in School District 75, Evanston, Illinois”, 1926)

The few white students who were caught within the boundary were encouraged to attend other District 75 schools. Black students living outside the Fifth Ward and able to attend closer schools were often “persuaded” to attend Foster. Although the majority of the students who attended Foster before World War I were white, by 1928, 85% of the students were Black. By 1945, Foster had a 99% Black student body. A “testing-out” program enabled Black students who scored above a certain percentage to attend other predominantly white schools in Evanston.

Prior to the 1940s, a certified Black teacher could not be employed in Evanston as a teacher. The first known Black “teacher” at Foster was Mr. Charles Bouyer, who was employed as a physical education instructor during the 1930s. He is also believed to have been the first Black public school teacher in Evanston and the only Black teacher in either District 75 or 76.

As a response to much protest from the Black community between 1940 and 1950, Black teachers were hired. Foster School was the designated school where Black teachers could teach. Patsy Sloan was the first Black teacher hired to work within the school districts. Lorraine Morton was the first Black teacher hired who taught outside of Foster School at Nichols Middle School.

On October 30, 1958, a serious fire destroyed most of Foster School with estimated damages at roughly \$500,000. The north wing of the building was usable after being repaired, and a new south wing was built and dedicated in December 1960. During the reconstruction, the displaced Foster school students forced a semblance of integration in surrounding schools. Instead of being incorporated into the existing classrooms, however, the Foster students were kept separate and met in the gyms, libraries or other makeshift accommodations.

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In an effort to confront the pending mandate of a national desegregation plan, School District 65 implemented an experimental school in 1966. Based at Foster School, the Laboratory School (Lab School) involved bussing white children from several overcrowded schools via a lottery, adding classes each year. Classrooms were composed of equal numbers of Black and white students. Innovative curriculum programs were developed in partnership with Northwestern University.

By 1969 the Lab School, and Foster School, was renamed to the Dr. Martin Luther King Laboratory School. By 1979, the school was relocated to the former Skiles School and the Foster building was shut down.

The shuttered Foster School was met with further protest and the local NAACP chapter filed a racial bias lawsuit against the school district citing that the Black community wants “equity and parity in education.” (*Evanston Review*, Pioneer Press, June 21, 1979)

Evanston Township High School (ETHS)

Evanston Township High School is the only public high school in Evanston. Historically, it was in the high school where Evanston’s Black and white students would interact with each other for the first time in a public school setting, with some limitations. Black students were subjected to racial biases; they could not fully participate in intramural activities, swim in the pool, join certain clubs, or attend prom. Expectations in classes were not balanced. Black students were prevented from academic earned recognition.

“I guess the only thing that I have any bad memory about [ETHS] is my math teacher telling me I couldn’t get an ‘A’ because I was Black.” (Helen Cromer Cooper, Shorefront oral history collection, www.shorefrontvoice.org)

Social restrictions were enforced and inter-racial dating was not approved. Black students who were caught were often suspended from school.

“Evanston High School was very racial then and there was like a separation. We had one school, and Dr. Michaels was the principal. And he and I had our problems about out-of-race dating at that time or going out with people. We had our problems. I think I was suspended a couple of times for it.” (James Burton, Shorefront oral history collection, www.shorefrontvoice.org)

In 1929, ETHS officials cancelled the junior prom which was scheduled to be held at the all-white Evanston Country Club. The cancellation was made after a group of Black students insisted on their right to attend the dance. Thomas Lord, the country club’s president, announced that the dance could not be held at the club if Black students were allowed to attend. (“Cancel Evanston H.S. Prom Because of Negro Dispute,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 8, 1929.)

It was not until Federal legislation was passed in the 1960s that Evanston began efforts to desegregate schools. In 1965, several schools were targeted for desegregation, including

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Foster school (which had one hundred percent Black student enrollment) and Dewey school (which had sixty-seven percent Black student enrollment). School superintendent Oscar M. Chute announced the goal of achieving an “even mix in every school” within the district’s fifteen schools (which also included several schools in nearby Skokie, IL). (“Evanston Plan Given to Integrate Schools,” *Chicago Tribune*, May 18, 1965; Casey Banas, “O.K. Evanston School Quota,” *Chicago Tribune*, November 22, 1966). Chute retired before the desegregation process was implemented. His successor, Gregory Coffin, became the focal point of many angry critics as he sought to carry out desegregation efforts, including bussing students and transferring teachers to other schools. Evanston residents were divided over his efforts and they packed the school board meetings that became increasingly tense. Two years into his job, Coffin was all but fired by a divided school board. (His contract was not renewed.) (Seth S. King, “Affluent Evanston, Ill., Divided Over Move to Drop School Integration Leader,” *New York Times*, August 24, 1969.)

Northwestern University

While Northwestern University did not have an official policy banning Black students from enrollment, for years the miniscule number of Black students enrolled there, along with almost no Black faculty and administrators, meant that the university operated as a “predominantly white institution,” a fact that the Northwestern University administration formally admitted in May 1968.

Evidence of discrimination at Northwestern is voluminous. In 1906, for example, Northwestern President A. W. Harris made his view on the desirability of school segregation known when he stated that he was “shocked” whenever he saw Black and white students enrolled at the same school, arguing that separate schools were far more “wholesome.” (“Harris Favors Separate Schools for the Negroes,” *Chicago Tribune*, November 11, 1906.)

For decades, the small number of Black students faced discrimination in almost all aspects of their lives as students: they were barred from using the university bathing beach and swimming pool. Black female students were not allowed to take physical education classes, despite a university requirement that all students take gym in order to graduate. Black students were barred from joining the basketball and swimming teams (part of widespread discrimination against Black student athletes at predominantly white universities). And some amenities, such as the Goodrich Grill, a campus dining facility, reportedly refused service to Black students. And like at the high school, academic achievement was often derided:

“I had the same thing in my French class. I should have gotten all ‘A’s, and the kids used to come to me and say “I know you got an ‘A’ this time.” But he told me right flat out that I could -- that a black could not earn an ‘A’.” (Helen Cromer Cooper, Shorefront oral history collection, www.shorefrontvoice.org)

From 1903 to 1947, (with one exception) no Black students or visitors were allowed to live in any campus housing facilities at Northwestern University. Black students were forced to find

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lodgings elsewhere and for years students reported the difficulty and hardship of looking for housing in a deeply segregated city.

Poet, author, and professor Margaret Walker Alexander (1915-1998) was born in Birmingham, Alabama. She earned a BA from Northwestern in 1935. Forced to live off campus since the university would not allow Black students to live in campus housing, Alexander was one of 40 Black students who confronted a climate of discrimination and segregation of 1930s Northwestern and Evanston. On campus, Alexander recalled, “racism was rampant,” with professors telling “darky jokes openly in the classroom.” When white students laughed, she wrote, “you burned with shame but you could do nothing about it.” (quoted in *The Takeover* 1968, 27).

In 1943, Northwestern’s Business Manager, Harry L. Wells, offered one of the clearest statements on the university’s policy on housing: “It is the policy and the unwritten law of Northwestern University to prohibit all Negroes from living in any dormitory or house on the university campus,” he said. (“Northwestern Sued For \$50,000 in Dorm Ban,” *Chicago Defender*, December 11, 1943.)

In March 1964, the *Daily Northwestern* published information drawn from an interview with a former admissions office employee who revealed that during the time she worked in the office, from 1959-1961, one of her duties “had been to designate the religion and race of applicants.” She explained the procedure: A numerical code was used on each application: Number 1 designated a Protestant applicant, 2, Catholic, 3, Jewish, and 4, “Negro.” “If the applicant were either of the last two numbers,” Scarritt said, “they were circled.” In April 1964, Albert J. Weiss, head of the Anti-Defamation League of Chicago’s B’nai B’rith Foundation, revealed that he had “evidence that, as recently as the spring of 1964, Northwestern University was coding applicants as to whether they were Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, or Black,” thus limiting the enrollment of Black, Jewish, and Catholic students, who, for decades, had only been admitted in very small numbers. (*The Takeover*, 1968, 58-59). University officials pledged to reform and cease using the process of coding applicants (for years, they had also required applicants to state their religion on their applications for admission and to include a photograph of themselves.) Not too long after, the university removed its admissions director, hired a new director, and began efforts to integrate the university.

[Opal](#), an organization that tracks current racial disparities in Evanston who distilled data on their website, cites the following data:

- **Suspensions** – Although Black students made up only 22.4% of the District 65 student population, they made up 58% of suspension incidents. (Source: SY2018-19 Discipline Report, page 5.)
- **Discipline** – Only 6% of White students received 1 or more Office Discipline Referral (ODR) for a major infraction, compared to 23% of Black students. (Source: SY2018-19 Annual Discipline Report, page 6)

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- **Hiring** – Despite research showing positive impact of Black teachers on Black student achievement, the District's percentage of Black educators consistently lags behind its percentage of Black students and has barely changed since 2014. (Source: State Report Cards 2010-2019.)

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HOUSING AND ZONING POLICIES

Housing:

Until the 1910s, the majority of Black residents in Evanston lived in neighborhoods throughout the city. In the years just prior to World War I, the city's Black population began to expand and soon rapidly increased.

The increase in the Black population was part of the Great Migration (1910-1970), a movement of what amounted to over six million people leaving the South for cities and towns in the North, West, and Midwest. Many Black southerners moved to Evanston, with promises of a better life away from the violence and oppression of the Jim Crow South.

During the first years of the Great Migration, white Evanston residents began to enact some of the policies (both public and private) that would create a deeply segregated city, and whose patterns and effects are still apparent today. These policies evolved over time, and while there was some degree of opposition to them and in some cases public outcry, the opposition did not represent the majority of white city residents.

In 1925, the Urban League issued a “warning” to Chicago area residents owing to the “stream of Negro migration . . . still pouring steadily from the south.” There was, the organization stated, a stark need for “friendly cooperation between the races.” The Urban League reported widespread “friction” as Black people moved into cities and towns formerly occupied by a majority white population. (“Urban League Warns of Problem City Faces in Colored Migration,” *Chicago Tribune*, November 19, 1925).

A primary response to the influx of Black residents into Evanston was segregation. As early as 1918, there was evidence of a segregated Evanston. The *Chicago Tribune* referred to Evanston’s “negro section” which it identified as: west of the Chicago and Northwestern railroad. (“Evanston Negroes Plan to Be Neighbors of Evanston Elks,” *Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1918.) Indeed, this section was precisely located in the area that would be home to the vast majority of Black residents by 1940, the fifth ward. This was not by accident; it was by design.

In January 1918, the *Evanston News-Index* published an article with the headline: “Negroes Unable to Secure Homes Here.” The article reported that a Black real estate firm had conducted research into the housing conditions of Evanston’s Black residents. “With more than 400 tenantless residences in Evanston,” the article read, “insanitary conditions are developing in the negro sections here because of the congestion in many homes.” Nearly fifty Black families were crowded into too small residences because they were “unable to rent any of the hundreds of empty houses” in the city. The report explained that “owners and agents of vacant property plan to prevent the negroes from spreading from their own quarters.” There was an “alleged plan to ‘freeze out’ the negroes from all parts of Evanston except their own neighborhoods.” And this, the article stated, was done owing to “race prejudice.” (“Negroes Unable to Secure Homes Here,” *Evanston News-Index*, January 2, 1918.)

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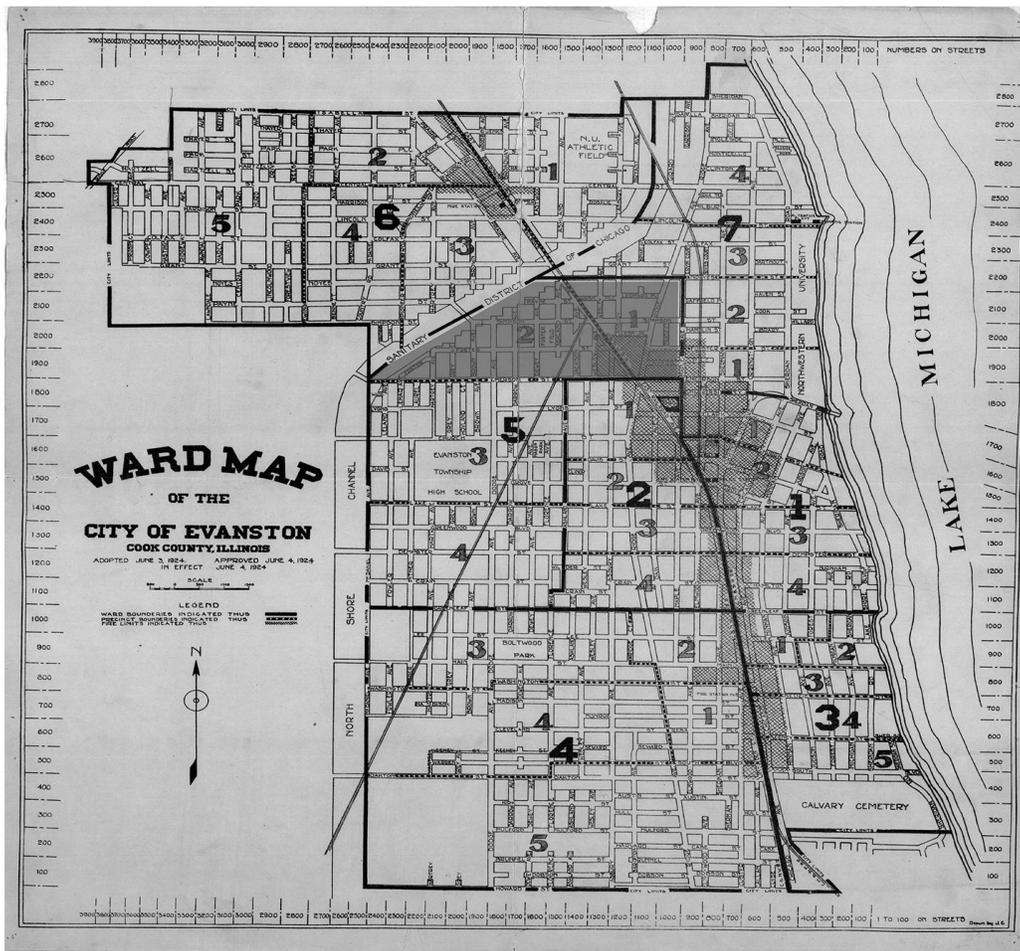
By 1940, Evanston had the largest Black suburban population in Illinois, with 6,026 Black residents in a total population of 64,000. “In response to black migration white Evanstonians erected a wall of segregation in public and private life, including the market for housing,” as historian Andrew Weise observed (436).

Black residents were steered toward buying and renting housing in the city’s Fifth Ward; attempts among Black residents to occupy areas beyond that ward were met with strong opposition.

“Classic Evanston will be invaded by Negroes” read the headline of the *Indiana Gazette* in 1918. The paper reported on the plan of a Black membership organization in Evanston to move into a clubhouse at 1326 Chicago Avenue because club members were unable to find appropriate accommodations in the “Negro section” of the city. The clubhouse was planned to be built in the so-called “white” section of the city, and thus Evanston would be “invaded,” as the paper reported. White residents responded that they would “not permit the invasion.” (*The Indiana Gazette*, February 23, 1918; “Negroes Plan to Be Neighbors of Evanston Elks,” *Chicago Tribune*, February 6, 1918)

Between the 1910s and 1940, as historian Andrew Weise has documented in great detail, as more Black people moved into the city, real estate agents working in Evanston developed a practice of informal racial zoning, which offered Black residents housing largely on the city’s west side, largely excluding Black residents from residing in all other parts of Evanston.

“Evanston is growing!” one Evanston bank proclaimed in an ad in an Evanston newspaper in 1922. “Plans are now underway for extending boundaries and developing the open land to the west.” (Advertisement, *Evanston New Index*, January 4, 1922). For developers and realtors, steering Black residents to the west side was a financial boon, especially because that area had more vacant land and housing could be built there on land that had previously been considered undesirable (i.e. the land was on a floodplain and relatively far from the city’s downtown and transportation). And thus a Black section of Evanston began to “spread out to the west into a remote and undeveloped portion of municipal territory.” (Bruner, 47). For many Black residents this was the only choice for a place to live since many white landlords and realtors blocked access to housing in other areas of Evanston.



1924 Ward map of Evanston

Between 1920 and 1929 more than 400 new homes were constructed in this area and they were built “explicitly” for Black residents (Weise, 442). As a result, by 1924, Black Evanston residents had a fairly high percentage of homeownership (about $\frac{2}{3}$ of Black residents owned their homes, according to David Bruner), largely due to the fact that they were unable to find rental housing that was open to them. As Bruner observed: “it is difficult for the colored man to get property anywhere; but many newcomers buy partly because they cannot find places to rent. One of the older colored residents of Evanston estimated that $\frac{2}{3}$ of those who have been long in Evanston own their homes . . . although until about 10 years ago few even of the older residents owned property: 60 to 75% of the homes owned have been purchased in the last 10 years, he says.” (Bruner, 35)

The percentage of Black home ownership would, however, decline by 1940, when just over one quarter of Black residents owned their own homes. (Evanston Committee on Postwar Planning, “Evanston Housing, Some Facts, Some Problems,” Evanston, 1940, np.)

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Owing to a tacit agreement among realtors and others, the informal process of steering Black residents into a single area, which began around 1910, translated into the fact that by 1940, 84% of Black Evanston residents lived within a single neighborhood, which was described as:

“To the West and North, the enclave ended at the banks of a broad sanitary canal. To the East, black neighborhoods halted at the tracks of the Chicago and Northwestern railroad, with the exception of one small node, which protruded eastward on 2 streets to the tracks of the L train. To the South, Church Street formed the recognized boundary.” (Wiese, 427-438)

In 1940, a total of 1,252 housing units citywide were occupied by Black residents. Of that number, 1,010 were located in the fifth ward, with 116 in the second ward. In the remaining 6 wards only 126 units were occupied by Black residents. (Evanston Committee on Postwar Planning, “Evanston Housing, Some Facts, Some Problems,” Evanston, 1940, np.)

Now, the majority of Black residents were crowded in the 5th Ward, an area in which residents often paid higher housing prices for, in many cases, substandard dwellings. In fact, when Black residents began to move to the area they found that much of the housing had no electricity, water, or sewers, and some of the streets had yet to be paved. Bruner described the area “to the West, near the drainage canal”: “Here is real urban homesteading: sewers and water, gas and electricity are in, but the streets are just being graded and often families move into their houses before sewer and water are connected. The houses often look amateurish, being in many cases built apparently from wreckage of other houses. All sorts of makeshifts are adopted. In one case on the records of the housing inspector a man had built a fairly good house, then rented it to two families and taken up his own residence in the barn at the rear of the lot with his horse. In another instance four adults were found living in a two room shed without water, light or sewer connections.” (Bruner, 36).

(As late as 1940, some units of housing occupied by Black Evanston tenants were documented as having no bathing facilities, no running water, and no private toilets; other units still used gas, kerosene or gasoline for lighting, while others had no cooking facilities. (Evanston Committee on Postwar Planning, “Evanston Housing, Some Facts, Some Problems,” Evanston, 1940, np.)

Also by 1940, Black families were reportedly paying higher rents for comparable properties rented by white tenants. (League of Women Voters, *This is Evanston*, 1949, 20.) Additionally, as Wiese documents, white bankers and mortgage lenders financed the mortgages of many Black-owned homes through discriminatory terms (charging higher interest rates than white mortgage holders were charged, for example.) John F. Hahn, Evanston City Clerk from 1899 to 1925 and president of the Commercial Trust and Savings Bank of Evanston, was active in financing mortgages for Black residents in Evanston. Hahn served as City Clerk at the time the city passed its first zoning ordinance, signed into law on January 19, 1921 by Mayor Harry P. Pearsons.

Zoning:

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Along with the private and tacit practices that shaped a segregated city, the City of Evanston also officially supported and enabled the practice of segregation.

In January 1921, the City of Evanston officially codified this practice when the Evanston City Council passed the city's first zoning ordinance, a key piece of legislation that tacitly served as an effort by city officials to segregate the city by race. (The ordinance was revised over the years after the initial legislation was passed.)

The ordinance was designed “to classify, regulate, and restrict the locations of trades and industries and the location of buildings designed for specified uses and to regulate and limit the height and bulk of buildings hereafter erected, to regulate and limit the intensity of the use of lot areas and to regulate and determining the area of yards, courts and other open spaces within and surrounding such buildings, and to establish the boundaries of districts for the said purposes and prescribing penalties for the violation of its provisions.” (Zoning Ordinance, Evanston, Illinois, 1921, 1.)

Evanston's zoning ordinance was created by a nine-person city Zoning Commission, which included the consultant Harland Bartholomew, whose firm Harland Bartholomew & Associates crafted similar ordinances across the United States in cities from Saint Louis, MO, to Oakland, CA. Bartholomew's work in creating zoning ordinances (along with concurrent efforts at crafting “comprehensive city plans”) has increasingly come under scrutiny by scholars and historians who argue that one of the primary impulses behind such ordinances was to enforce segregation. And today, many scholars now view zoning ordinances as deeply damaging to the cities and towns in which they were enacted.

Indeed, some of the first zoning ordinances were designed to explicitly enforce racial segregation. Primarily in the South, some cities' zoning ordinances established “race districts” (Atlanta) or codified “race segregation” (Dallas). (Mary T. Voorhees, “Zoning Progress in the United States,” *Engineering News-Record*, September 28, 1922, 519.)

This “racial zoning movement,” however, was impeded in 1917 when the U.S. Supreme Court declared a racial zoning ordinance in Louisville, Kentucky, to be unconstitutional. (Christopher Silver, “The Racial Origins Of Zoning In American Cities,” From: Manning Thomas, June and Marsha Ritzdorf eds. *Urban Planning and the African American Community: In the Shadows*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997, 1.)

Around 1921, the zoning movement in the United States was shifting its language, but the primary goal remained: to control land use. As historian Christopher Silver has shown, both “racial zoning practices” and their advocates were not solely located in the South. In cities in the North, Midwest, and West, “especially those where the Black population increased rapidly,” land control legislation was viewed as an “effective social control mechanism for Blacks and other ‘undesirables.’ ” And nearby Chicago, it should be noted, was “a bastion of racial zoning enthusiasts.” (Silver, 2)

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After the Chicago riot of 1919, Illinois governor Frank Lowden commissioned a report to study the riot and race relations in Chicago. The report, *The Negro in Chicago*, was issued in 1922 with Charles S. Johnson, a Ph.D. student in sociology at the University of Chicago and director of research at the Chicago Urban League, as one of the report's key authors.

“The report identified inadequate housing conditions and the city’s dramatic black population increase for shifting racial boundary lines, which stoked white racial resentment. The report also detailed roundly held suppositions, by real estate brokers and laypersons alike, that a more effective system of segregation with starker lines between black and white but better conditions in the black neighborhoods would reduce racial conflict.” (Winling and Michney, *The Roots of Redlining: Academic, Governmental, and Professional Networks in the Making of the New Deal Lending Regime*,. 7-8.)

As Winling and Michney argued “Chicago real estate leaders took on this challenge locally as the city simultaneously became a national hub for the real estate profession and the study of real estate economics. These two developments were closely linked with Chicago’s emergence as a racial tinderbox in which white realtors, lenders, and homeowners sought to maintain segregation as a constituent feature of residential real estate’s structure and value. Many cities were experimenting with administrative forms of segregation, such as racial zoning in Saint Louis and Baltimore, while others suffered major outbreaks of anti-black violence across the color line. The imperative for racial peace was essential for cities in the midst of chaotic changes in immigration, industrialization, and urban growth.” (Winling and Michney, 7-8.)

“Zoning is a means of directing the uses of land into a pattern that will best serve the needs of the entire city,” observed the firm of Harland Bartholomew and Associates in its “A Preliminary Report Upon the Proposed Zoning Ordinance (Evanston, Illinois, 1939, 2-3). With the aim of “protecting” property values and guarding against “deterioration,” zoning ordinances effectively controlled where and how city residents lived. The ordinances “sought to ensure control over the entire area of the city” and zoning itself “became an instrument that promoted spatial segregation, including racial segregation, but without directly mentioning the question of races.” (Ana Cláudia Castilho Barone, “Harland Bartholomew and Racially Informed Zoning: The Case of St. Louis,” *Estudos Urbanos e Regionais*, 20, 2018, 448, 454.)

In the 1920s, the practice of zoning was again challenged, most notably in the landmark 1926 U.S. Supreme Court case, *Euclid v. Ambler*, [272 US 365 \(1926\)](#). Ambler Realty filed suit against the village of Euclid, Ohio, claiming the city’s zoning ordinance violated the Fourteenth Amendment’s protections of liberty and property described in the due process and equal protection clauses. The court upheld the constitutionality of the zoning ordinance, which set a precedent for the constitutionality of zoning laws. “Racial zoning,” however, was still considered to be illegal.

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A 1922 study of zoning law offers insight into the ways in which zoning advocates could at once affirm the illegality of racial zoning, while still conveying decidedly racist views:

“In all countries people of the same race tend to live in the same locality. As a result, large cities have their well defined Italian, Jewish, Syrian, Chinese, negro, and other quarters,” observed the author of the study, Frank Backus Williams, a lawyer and influential city planner in New York. “Often the growth or change of districts inhabited by members of a race considered inferior, like the Chinese or negroes, or the desire of some of its members for betterment, brings them into contact with other peoples in the same block or multiple dwelling. This invasion of the inferior produces more or less discomfort and disorder, and has a distinct tendency to lower property values. As a result zoning on race lines has been attempted in various parts of our Southern States, where negroes are most numerous. Such zoning in this country, however, is illegal, and has never been attempted as a part of the zoning of any other country.” Frank Backus Williams, *The Law of City Planning and Zoning* (New York: Macmillan, 1922), 200.

In 1923-1924, Northwestern University student, David Bruner, undertook a study of Black Evanston residents. Bruner’s study included a survey of Black Evanston residents and an investigation of housing, aided by the work of Evanston’s sanitary inspector, R.J. Lindsay. Bruner’s study is valuable since it constitutes a detailed record of Black Evanston residents just three years after the city’s first zoning ordinance had been passed and as the segregated city was taking shape. Bruner’s approach to his work reflected the widespread attitude of many white Northerners to the influx of Black southerners. “The Negro population of Evanston,” Bruner observed, presents “a very real problem.” And, he asserted, “the white community regards it as such.” (Bruner, 2.)

The so-called “problem” stemmed, in part, from population growth, Bruner argued. In 1920, the U.S. census recorded 2,522 Black residents in Evanston. This figure represented a more than 50% increase since 1910 when 1,160 Black residents lived in Evanston. Projecting into the future, Bruner argued that the continued influx of Black residents could mean that as many as 8,000 Black residents could soon call Evanston home. (Bruner, 18.)

“If in the space of a decade there come into a northern city growing from a population of 25,000 to 37,000, members of a socially isolated and inferior race to the number of 1,362 there may be a problem arising,” wrote Bruner in 1924, “particularly when most of the number come during the last half of the decade. When the majority of the newcomers to the northern city arrive direct from the unexact life of Southern plantation or village without knowledge of the city and ways of living in crowds, and when at the same time little building is done and the area in which they may buy or rent is rigidly restricted, there is inevitably a problem.” (Bruner, 1.)

Bruner observed that thus far in Evanston, “race relations” had generally been positive (despite the fact that $\frac{7}{8}$ of the Black residents he surveyed said they encountered discrimination in Evanston). But Bruner also set forth an argument concerning why the Black population in Evanston had to be addressed as problematic. “The problem presented by the Negro population

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in Evanston is of course only a phase of the whole problem of the Negro in the United States,” he wrote, “and a part of the problem arising from the great northward migration of the Negro since the beginning of the recent war.” (Bruner, 4). The “problem” was in fact a problem belonging to racist white people who viewed Black people as inferior or dangerous, and believed that their presence in a given location would have a negative impact on the city itself; a large or growing Black population, therefore, was something that white people needed to control, according to Bruner; and as Bruner’s study makes clear, methods for control were found in a number of ways, from hiring practices to city zoning ordinances.

Referring to the “use map” of Evanston’s 1921 zoning plan, Bruner explained that the map “indicates the kind of territories the Negroes find open to them: largely commercial and light industrial areas along the tracks, and districts so remote from transportation facilities as to be comparatively undesirable. It will be seen that practically no Class ‘A’ residential district is occupied by Negroes and none is likely to be opened.” (Bruner, 35.)

Indeed, it must be understood that Evanston’s 1921 zoning ordinance imposed restrictions upon a city that was already, to some degree, unofficially zoned since a majority-Black neighborhood had already been established. The zoning ordinance essentially codified the process of limiting where Black residents could live, and ensured, as Bruner states clearly, that Black residents would not find “open” to them any of the areas zoned as Class A in the future. (The majority of Class A areas were found largely along the lakefront and extending several blocks west, and also in the northwest corner of Evanston. See Use Map.) “There can be no doubt that there are rather confined limits within which Negro may come to live in Evanston,” Bruner wrote. “This will be more and more true in the future. The Emerson Street district, especially in its eastern portion is most likely to be the permanent center.” (Bruner, 24-25.)

In a 1939 report of Evanston’s zoning ordinance, the firm of Harland Bartholomew observed: “Evanston has enjoyed the benefits of zoning for almost twenty years. These benefits include protection of residential areas from intrusion by commercial, industrial and apartment house uses.” (Harland Bartholomew and Associates, “A Preliminary Report Upon the Proposed Zoning Ordinance, Evanston, Illinois, 1939, 6). In fact, however, that statement did not embrace the reality that the areas in which the majority of Black residents lived (residential) were zoned to allow for the intrusion of both commercial and industrial uses.

“After you have been restricted to this area (quite unintentionally of course since the main intention is to get you out of town altogether) then your troubles begin,” wrote the editor of the *Newsette*, a Black newspaper in Evanston, about the push to segregate Black residents within the city’s Fifth Ward or the west side in general. “Zoning laws permit anything short of a garbage dump to be built next door to your home, if you find one. The West side, as you know it, is zoned for industrial and commercial use. You will live, as usual, in the least desirable section of Evanston.” (“Evanston’s Housing Problem,” *Newsette*, May 22, 1947).

In March 1939, the firm Harland Bartholomew and Associates, (which wrote Evanston’s first zoning ordinance), submitted, upon request of the City’s Zoning and Plan Commission, a plan

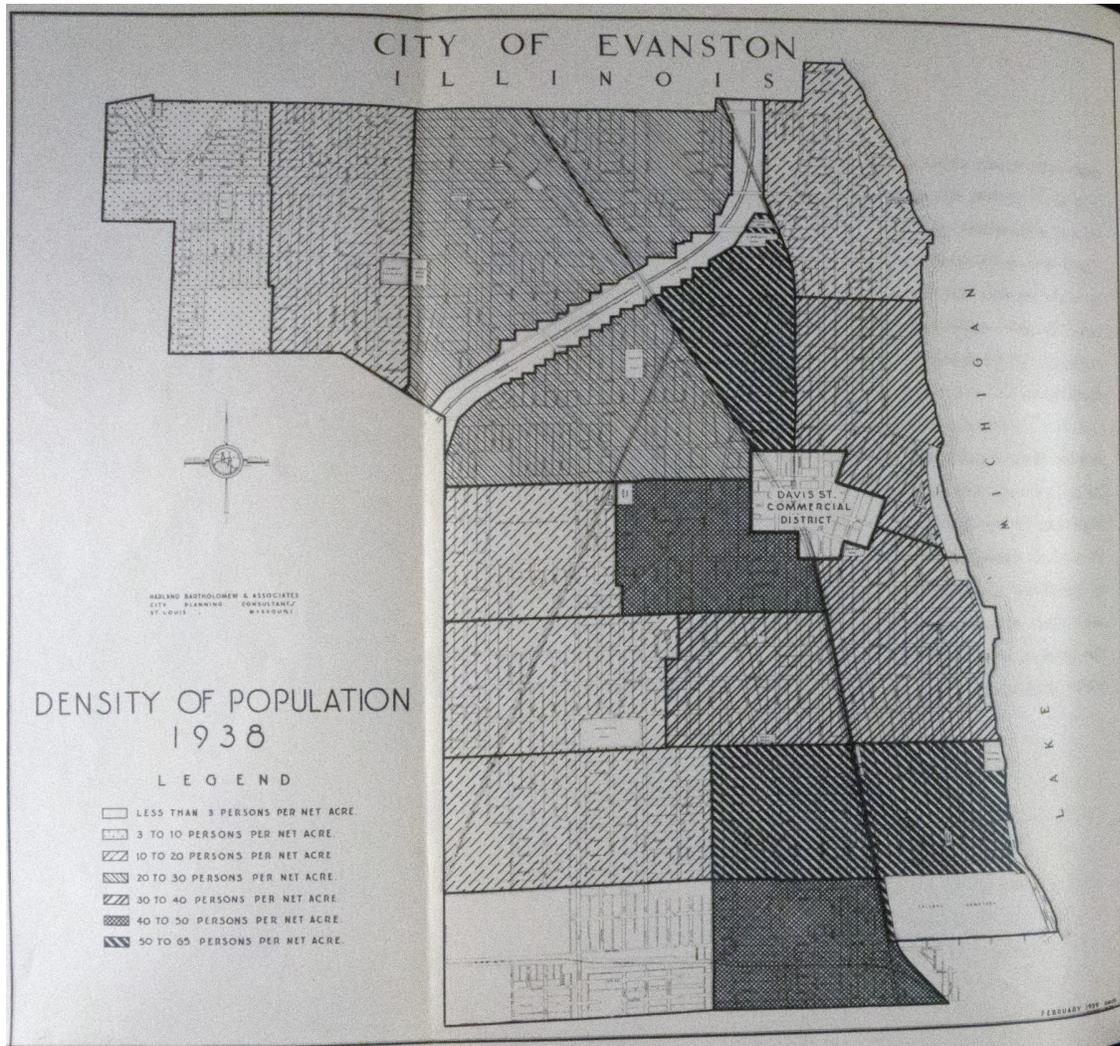
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for a revised Zoning Ordinance. The report included information on the City's density, noting that it had "a very spotty density pattern." This pattern was owing to past zoning ordinances. Indeed, the report observes: "In the 'A' or single-family residence districts densities are relatively low as most of the subdivisions provided lots of generous size. In the high value residential districts lot areas per family as high as 20,000 or more square feet are not infrequent. These very low densities occur generally along the lake-front; along Ridge Avenue; in the central part of the city; and to a lesser extent in the north-western part of the city." (Harland Bartholomew and Associates, *A Preliminary Report on the Proposed Zoning Ordinance*, March 1939, 22-23). Meanwhile, the report notes "concentration of population" in areas zoned for multiple-family development ... This is most apparent in the section between Ridge Avenue on the west, and the railroads on the east; the area west of the University; around the Davis Street commercial section; the south-eastern part of the city and certain small areas adjacent to Central Street." (26)

High density areas, which included the city's fifth ward, had as many as 50 to 65 people per acre" and some lots within those areas had "densities as high as 600 persons per acre." (29) "Such over-loading of the land creates serious municipal problems and should be discouraged," the report noted.

By 1939, however, the city had dramatically changed since the first zoning ordinance had been passed. The Great Depression had altered the trajectory of development and the needs for housing and commercial properties had shifted. A revised ordinance took into consideration these changes but also, in essence, affirmed the patterns established in the nearly two decades since the first zoning ordinance had been enacted.

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Map showing population density in Evanston, 1938. The 5th Ward, a majority Black ward, is one of most densely populated areas in the city. From Harland Bartholomew and Associates, *A Preliminary Report on the Proposed Zoning Ordinance*, March 1939.

After the passage of the 1921 zoning ordinance, segregation had been upheld through various practices. Some white landlords continued to restrict access to housing in the city through “racially restrictive covenants” that provided that homes “shall not be conveyed, leased to, or occupied by anyone not a Caucasian (servants excepted).” Such covenants were legally effective until 1948, when the U.S. Supreme Court held them unenforceable. (Larry Gavin, “Developing a Segregated Town, 1900-1960,” *Evanston Roundtable*, December 5, 2019).

- (e) No kitchen, garage, or service entrance to any house shall be through any wall which faces the rear building line of the lot on which such house is situated
- (f.) No fence or hedge exceeding three (3) feet in height, and no buildings or structures of any kind or character, and no walls, or posts, or poles shall be erected or maintained on any part of the area included within or between the rear building lines.
- (g.) Only persons of the Caucasian race may own, lease, occupy, or use any of said lots, except that any persons may be employed on said premises as domestic servants or chauffeurs.
- (h.) All of the foregoing restrictions contained in the foregoing paragraphs lettered (a.) to (g.) inclusive shall cease and shall become void and be of no further force or effect from and after January 1, A.D. 1958.

See "g" - Excerpt from restrictions for Burnham Park development in Evanston, Illinois, 1937. (Source: Digital Chicago, Lake Forest College, <https://digitalchicagohistory.org/exhibits/show/restricted-chicago/item/373>. Plat #12075390, Platbook 323, Page 8. Approved: October 15, 1937. Recorded: October 29, 1937. Expired: January 1, 1958)

The Evanston Real Estate Board, organized and incorporated in 1918 and boasting a membership that included "every broker in good standing in the city," also worked in tandem with others on restricting housing in the city. The board, led by seven white men, worked closely with Evanston city officials on various projects, including providing the zoning commission with "material assistance." (*Evanston*, Evanston, IL: Kiwanis Club of Evanston, 1924, 23, 59.)

After the vast majority of Black residents were living in a single area, the work to complete the process of segregation continued. And, in many ways, the 1940s can be seen as the second wave of housing segregation in Evanston.

Home Demolition and Evanston's Land Clearance Commission

By 1940, roughly 6,000 Black residents lived in Evanston, and some city officials saw fit to once again tackle the "problem" of "our non-white citizens." Evanston Mayor S. G. Ingraham appointed a committee on postwar planning. In the committee's report on Evanston housing, they outlined a list of "problems" associated with the housing of Black Evanston residents. (Evanston Committee on Postwar Planning, "Evanston Housing, Some Facts, Some Problems," Evanston, 1940.)

"Negro groups as well as whites of low incomes do not pay enough taxes to support the services they consume," advised the mayor's committee. "A too large proportion in this group would soon mean poorer schools, streets and municipal services," the members advised. "To conserve the white market for their services Negroes should maintain their proportion of population about where it is. Otherwise taxes will go up and whites will move out or taxes will remain as is and services will go down." (Evanston Committee on Postwar Planning, "Evanston Housing, Some Facts, Some Problems," Evanston, 1940.)

In order to protect property values, develop Evanston, and tackle the "problem" of Black housing, the city adopted a policy of home demolition, a means by which the city and private

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citizens attempted to control and remove Black citizens from certain neighborhoods that lay beyond the west side (“clearing” those areas for “economic development.”)

Often the argument was made that the housing to be demolished was “substandard” or “unsanitary” or that certain areas were “blighted” or “overcrowded.” “Blighted neighborhoods must be cut out of the city before they spread,” wrote the League of Women Voters in 1949. “Slum clearance and strict enforcement of zoning to prevent future overcrowding of the land must go hand in hand with rebuilding,” the group advised.

For decades, white observers had noted the presence of what they called “substandard” housing in the Black section of Evanston. “Many places in colored [*sic*] area in particular should be condemned,” wrote a white resident in 1941. “But no place for people to go.” (“What are the Present Housing Facilities,” 1941, Evanston History Center Archives.) But so-called “substandard” housing was the result of segregation itself. As mentioned above, many white landlords rented to Black tenants, charging more than white tenants would pay for comparable properties, and often failing to maintain the properties. Additionally, because there were so few opportunities for Black people to rent or own in the city beyond the west side, the area where the vast majority of Black residents lived became densely populated (and was zoned to allow that density). Many residents did not wish to live in housing that they considered overcrowded, too expensive, and lacking proper upkeep by landlords, but with nowhere else to go, they faced limited options.

In 1946, Council member Edwin B. Jourdain, Jr. addressed the city council stating that the “severe shortage of housing for Negro families serves to outline sharply additional factors which have existed for a number of years period one the arbitrary limitation of land available for Negroes’ occupancy.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, August 19, 1946, 10.) Citing a study on housing in Illinois, Jourdain acknowledged that in Evanston there were “too few units” for Black residents and most of those were “substandard.” “Overcrowding of these inadequate units makes bad situations worse,” Jourdain stated in one of his many attempts to urge the council to address the housing shortage, conditions, and restrictions (such as restrictive covenants) on Black residents.

Demolition of Black owned and occupied homes was seen as a boon to the city’s tax revenues. The destruction of Black homes had begun in earnest in the 1940s. In 1941, roughly fifteen homes owned and occupied by Black residents in the area near Haven School were destroyed. The demolition took place in order to make way for the construction of a football field. Several other homes on Sherman Avenue were also destroyed that year to make room for an apartment building; and in south Evanston, more homes owned by Black residents were destroyed.

The demolition of housing was taking place as one of the final acts of segregation. “Where will we move?” asked the editor of the *Newsette*, as the destruction was underway. “Where can we buy property? . . . Because of the massive squeeze play directed against Negroes, you can move into the area generally called the ‘west side,’ bounded by the canal and the railroad tracks.” “Eight to 10,000 of you are being herded into an area over which you can walk in less

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time than an hour,” the *Newsette* continued, warning Black Evanston residents. “You are compelled to live in kitchens, attics, basements, and, possibly, closets and bathrooms . . . If you do not buy, then you move out of town. That is just the exact purpose of the squeeze play against Negroes in Evanston. By their own admission, openly published, whites who are smoking Negroes out of town are interested in keeping Negroes who can serve them as maids, chauffeurs, butlers, [and] dishwashers.” (“Evanston’s Housing Problem,” *Newsette*, May 22, 1947).

For a dozen years, Edwin B. Jourdain, Jr. had advocated for the creation of a Housing Authority in Evanston. “We have a housing problem in Evanston that is woeful in the bad housing it sets up, particularly in the North and 5th Ward, where poor structures and overcrowding are at the worst,” he told other members of the City Council. (Evanston City Council Minutes, August 5, 1946, 7).

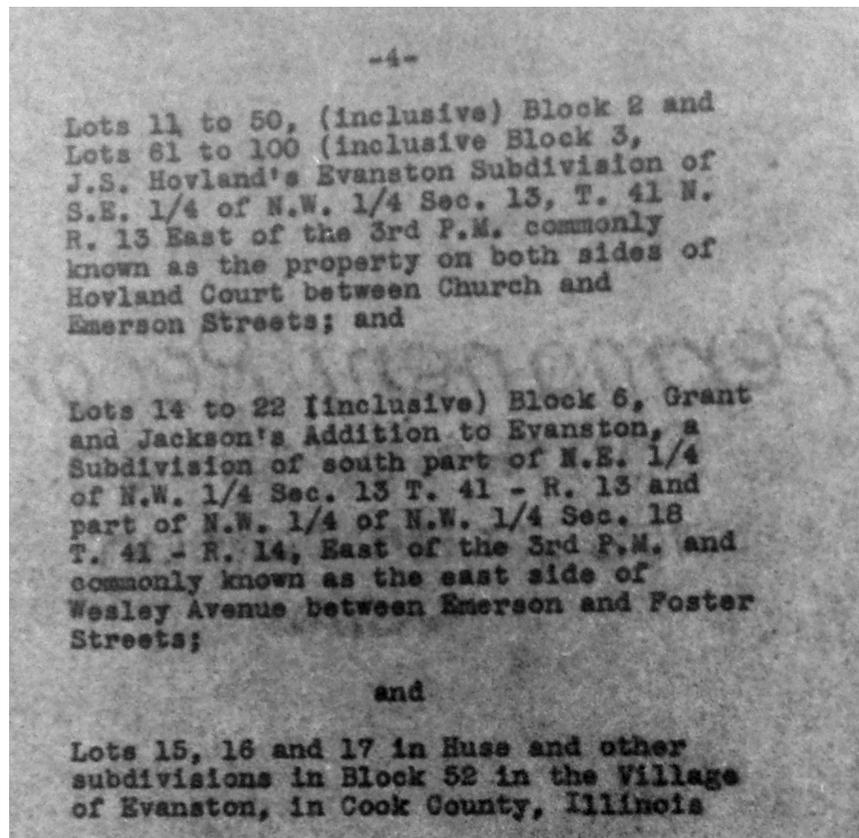
Jourdain was never able to convince the other members of the City Council to create such a body. And, on April 28, 1947, just two weeks after Jourdain left the Evanston City Council (he was defeated in his reelection attempt), the City Council issued a unanimously passed resolution creating the city’s Land Clearance Commission. The resolution read:

“Resolution declaring the need for land clearance Commission in the City of Evanston, Illinois, be resolved by the City Council of the city of Evanston, Cook County, Illinois: that the City Council of the city of Evanston, Cook County Illinois pursuant to the statutes of the state of Illinois, hereby fines, determines and makes the following declaration: that the city of Evanston, Illinois, has more than 25,000 inhabitants. That unsanitary and unsafe inhabited dwelling accommodations and buildings exist in the city of Evanston, Illinois ; That the number of families in the city of Evanston, Illinois has increased from 16,413 in 1930 to 19,177 in 1940 and probably exceeds 20,000 at the present time period that in 1940 there were 2884 dwelling units over 45 years old; that there were 32 houses without indoor toilets; That there were 444 houses in which more than one family shared a single toilet. That the census of 1940 disclosed that there were 1,092 houses, which at that time were in need of major repairs, and that this number as well as the dire necessity of repair or demolition’s since that time very material materially increased; The conditions revealed by the above statistics have not improved in the last five years but have increased within the city; That there are many buildings, houses and dwellings which, through continued neglect or over a long period of time, are in such condition as to require demolition, and that in the best interest of health and safety such dwelling should be torn down; That the existence of these unsanitary, unsafe and dilapidated structures constitutes a menace an hazard to the health and safety of the city and should be illuminated as soon as possible. That there is need for a Land Clearance Commission in the city of Evanston, Illinois. That a certified copy of this resolution, together with a certified copy of the statement of findings be forthwith forwarded to the city clerk of the city of Evanston, Illinois, to the state housing board of Illinois. Be it further resolved, that this resolution be effective immediately.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, April 28th 1947, 4.)

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With the establishment of the Land Clearance Commission, the demolition of homes was codified. The commission consisted of a five-member board appointed by the mayor with the consent of the City Council. (Evanston's future mayor, John Emery, chaired the commission at one point.) The commission's mandate was to focus on identifying so-called "substandard" housing in Evanston, purchase that housing, evict the tenants, and demolish the structures. This practice was presented as a means for city beautification and "redevelopment." This practice was similar to many other practices across the country variously known as "slum clearance" and "blighted neighborhood development." (In 1947, Illinois passed statewide legislation that legalized the demolition of private homes and businesses: the Blighted Areas Redevelopment Act of 1947. (315 ILCS 5/1)(from Ch. 67 1/2, par. 63.)

On June 14, 1948, Evanston's Land Clearance Commission issued a list of properties to be demolished. Those on the list were in the city's 5th Ward.



Land to be "cleared" in Evanston, Evanston City Council Minutes, June 14, 1948, 4

But what of those who were forced to move out of their homes only to have them destroyed? Evanston reportedly paid market costs to purchase the homes that were to be demolished, but those who were cast out did not necessarily have replacement housing made available to them. "Some cities have solved this dilemma," the League of Women Voters observed in 1949, "with temporary housing for the dispossessed. Evanston, as yet, has found no solution." (*This is Evanston*, 1949)

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In August 1948, a mass meeting of Black residents was held in Evanston to address the new land clearance program. Several speakers presented an analysis of the city's new commission and observed that Evanston had failed to do anything constructive towards housing for Black residents. ("Hold Mass Meeting In Evanston on Housing," *Chicago Defender*, August 14, 1948).

In the fall of 1948, properties were demolished in the following areas: "both sides of Hovland court between Church and Emerson streets; the east side of Wesley Ave, between Emerson and Foster streets; A portion of the east side of Elmwood Ave between Lake and Grove streets; Also both sides of Gray Ave between Church and Emerson streets." (*This is Evanston*, 1949.) This described area, it should be noted, lies within the city's Fifth Ward.

Some of the condemned areas were set aside to use as parking lots. As the city undertook this clearance project no plans were in place to finance the construction of new housing or to authorize any kind of government authority to oversee the process of land clearance. At one point the Evanston City Council reportedly undertook consideration of establishing a Housing Authority but did not take that action.

In 1949, the commission filed suit in circuit court to condemn eight lots on the 1800 block of Grey Avenue in what the city deemed to be a "run down" area of the city, which was, in fact, the fifth ward. This was reportedly the commission's first suit of the kind. The city announced that it hoped to encourage "private developers" to build "low cost housing" on the lots. ("Evanston Land Group Sues to Condemn 8 Lots," *Chicago Tribune*, December 25, 1949.)

The City of Evanston was not the sole entity pursuing land clearance policies. Northwestern University also adopted this strategy. Purchasing homes and buildings, the university would then demolish them in order to construct its own (tax free) buildings.

In 1967, Northwestern University petitioned the Evanston City Council to amend the city's zoning ordinance in order to allow the university to build a \$10,000,000 graduate student complex on a lot bounded by Emerson, Maple, and Foster streets and the CTA tracks (Again, this land was located in the City's 5th Ward). Most of that land was "taken up with residences and six small businesses" and many were owned and occupied by Black residents. In the announced plans for "clearance" of the land, only brief mention was made of the "hardship cases"- the current occupants and tenants who might need assistance in their "relocation effort." ("Northwestern U. Bids To Build Grad Flats: Evanston Zoning Laws Must Be Changed Though," *Chicago Defender*, October 24, 1967.)

"In order to make room for the graduate dormitories on Maple Ave between Emerson and Foster streets, Northwestern University demolished many apartment units and residential homes resulting in the displacement (removal) of over 70 families, 1/3 of which were black. The white families displaced simply moved to another area of town, but the Blacks, subject to racial discrimination, had no place to go and eventually left Evanston. In this sense the Blacks were

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'removed.' ” (“The Case Against Northwestern University,” Northwestern University Archives, ND.)

Before beginning construction, the university petitioned the City of Evanston to amend the zoning ordinance in order to authorize its planned design. In March 1968 the Evanston City Council agreed to authorize a new zoning classification that would allow Northwestern to build the graduate housing complex according to its plan. By August 1968, all of the existing buildings had been “cleared” (demolished) after the families and business owners were bought out, save for William Spencer and his wife who had operated their business, “Foster Street Pharmacy,” for 48 years. They were the last to leave. (Edith Herman, “N.U.’s Housing Project Delayed,” *Chicago Tribune* , August 18, 1968.)

Construction, however, was delayed after the Evanston City Council asked Northwestern University “to make a payment to the city for fire and police protection.” Because Northwestern University land is tax exempt, the university does not pay for the City's fire and police services, which are funded through taxes. In October 1968, the City Council voted to accept the university's offer of “the gift of a new \$30,000 fire engine as partial compensation for fire protection and other municipal services provided by the city.” The council also voted “to approve” another request from the university for the “rezoning of a tract of Northwestern University property bounded by Garnett Place, Foster St, Maple Ave and the L tracks for more graduate housing.” (“Council O.K’s Rezoning of N.U. Property,” *Chicago Tribune*, October, 8, 1968.)

Critics of Northwestern University's development methods and projects objected to what was seen as the university's encroachment on Black neighborhoods and displacement of Black residents and businesses. “Northwestern University is engaged in an effort to expand its boundaries into the Black community. Northwestern University is not expanding northward or southward into the white affluent community, but westward into Black and mixed communities,” critics observed. Further, they charged, owing to the tax exemption status enjoyed by Northwestern University, the tax burden to pay for city services was borne disproportionately by low-income residents, many of whom were Black. (“The Case against Northwestern University.”)

Additionally, critics objected to Northwestern's reported “sell and lease back” arrangements, producing “large, tax-exempt incomes, while taking that much more property off the tax rolls.” Such arrangements involved “wealthy homeowners, businessmen and corporations” selling their land to Northwestern University “which in turn leases the land back to the original owners for their disposition at a reasonable rate... Since the land is under the legal ownership of Northwestern University, the original owners no longer have to pay property taxes. Thus providing a ‘tax dodge.’ Consequently as property owned by the wealthy is removed from the tax rolls, the tax base is reduced creating a greater tax burden on low income families.” (“The Case against Northwestern University; U.S. House of Representative, Hearings Before the Committee on Ways and Means, 81st Congress, Revenue Revision of 1950, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 810).

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Finally, critics objected to Northwestern's often poor service as a landlord to some Black Evanston residents. In the area surrounding the new dormitory alone, Northwestern reportedly owned 25 dwelling units, all classified as income property and tax exempt, many of which reportedly had large numbers of code violations, along with defective plumbing, electrical, and heating systems, resulting in several fires. ("The Case against Northwestern University.")

[i] For more on housing, see: Andrew Wiese, "Black Housing, White Finance: African American Housing and Home Ownership in Evanston, Illinois, Before 1940," *Journal of Social History*, Winter 1999, 430.

Residential Housing:

Evanston African American residents had few options in purchasing a home. Evanston banks would not offer or provide home loans to Black families. Most families applied for mortgages in Chicago or had made arrangements with their employers.

A resident shared his experience dealing with banks:

Being in the mortgage business now, I look back, and when my parents bought their house, like, 99 percent of the black folks then, or African Americans at that point, got their mortgages from somewhere outside this community. No banks would [lend] money to minorities to buy houses. And so when the banks wouldn't lend money to do anything, so when I became president of the NAACP that was one of my goals is to knock down the discriminatory practices at the banks . . . That was in 1972. (Carl Davis. Shorefront oral history collection, www.shorefrontvoice.org)

Another resident who eventually served as 5th ward alderman shared an instance that took place in 1965:

"I just looked at the signs, found an apartment, and went to a local realtor, who is very much in business still to this day, and after going into the building with my wife, and being basically ignored for a long time as we were sitting sort of in, like, a little waiting room area, finally a man came out from a side office. . . And he walked up, and sort of drew in his breath . . . and asked if there was something that he could do for us, or what we wanted, -- it was nothing along the line of "may I help you". . . And when we told him that we had found an apartment in one of the buildings that his firm managed, and that we wanted to put in an application . . . He actually jumped back like a step, almost as if I had thrown something on the ground that had blown up and had suddenly startled him . . . he drew in his breath, and he said, "Why no. We don't rent to coloreds." (Mike Summers, Shorefront oral history collection, www.shorefrontvoice.org)

Housing segregation in Evanston was documented through the city's relationship with Northwestern University, which for years offered students a list of accredited off-campus rooming houses and rentals. Many owners of those private properties, it was known, "refuse[d]

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to rent to Negroes.” (“Discrimination Against Negro Students,” *Daily Northwestern*, December 15, 1936.) It was not until 1965, when, acting under pressure from students and others, that university officials finally agreed to remove from the university’s list of approved off-campus housing any landlord that was found to discriminate in renting to students. (Michael Whitney, “NU to Notify Landlords of its Policy,” *Daily Northwestern*, February 4, 1965.) But discrimination against Black renters would persist.

Fair Housing

For years, Evanston residents, Northwestern students, and others brought pressure to the university to desegregate its own real estate holdings in Evanston. And pressure on the Evanston City Council to pass fair housing legislation had been ongoing for years, with numerous petitions presented before the City Council to no avail.

In October 1967, the Evanston City Council finally passed an ordinance providing a penalty for real estate agents found practicing discrimination. The ordinance created a city-issued license for real estate brokers that could be revoked if they were found to be practicing discrimination in the rental, sale and advertising of housing. (“Vote on Open Housing is Set for Evanston.” *Chicago Tribune*, October 3, 1967; “New Housing Bill Urged,” *Chicago Tribune*. April 14, 1968.) The ordinance was largely seen as ineffective since it did not address the larger issues related to housing discrimination.

It was not until after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in April 1968, that the Federal Government signed into law the Fair Housing Act, expanding on existing laws and prohibiting discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, and national origin. In Evanston, the City Council still refused to pass a fair housing law. After students and hundreds of Evanston residents took part in marches, and the Fair Housing movement’s leaders stated “emphatically and unequivocally” that if an ordinance was not passed on or before April 29, 1968, they would move “from non-violent protest . . . to nonviolent resistance,” involving an “economic boycott of all Evanston businesses, transportation systems, and profit making operations within the city limit of Evanston,” that a law was finally passed. (“Statement of Intent,” Collection 57, Evanston Housing Records, 1900-1995, Evanston History Center Archives, Evanston History Center, Evanston, IL; John Maclean. “O.K. Stiffer Housing Law,” *Chicago Tribune*, April 30, 1968.)

The legislation did not solve the issue of housing discrimination in Evanston. By 1985, a study of Evanston real estate practices alleged that “racial steering” was being practiced by certain realtors, whereby Black renters and buyers were “steered” toward certain properties and away from other areas of the city. “Discrimination in Evanston’s real estate market is very subtle and not always apparent,” the report noted. Mayor James C. Lytle appointed a committee to investigate, pledging “to correct the problem.” (Robert Enstad, “Evanston Cites Realty Steering,” *Chicago Tribune*, March 27, 1985.)

The Postwar Housing Shortage and Veterans Housing:

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After World War II, the city of Evanston, like many cities and towns across the country, experienced a severe housing shortage owing to a halt on residential construction during the war.

In the years following World War II, the City of Evanston declared a “housing emergency” and granted permits for a variety of temporary housing construction projects throughout the city. The City Council granted requested building permits with certain conditions applied to the temporary construction projects. In the case of Northwestern University, the conditions applied to the granting of new permits were described in the following paragraph:

“A majority of committee on buildings recommends that this application be granted for the period of the housing emergency, the City Council to determine the duration of the emergency, but in no case to exceed five years; provided that the University will undertake to keep the buildings in repair and the property in a neat and orderly condition for the duration of the permit.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, April 29, 1946, 4.)

Northwestern University did not allow Black students or visitors to live in its housing, nor would Black students, including Black veterans, be allowed to live in the temporary housing constructed during this period; and so, especially in 1946-1947, the issue of housing segregation and the Evanston City Council’s role in allowing it, came to the forefront.

In the face of the extreme housing shortage, Northwestern University applied for several permits to build temporary housing. Some examples of these projects are listed below:

In April 1946, Northwestern applied for a permit to build fourteen steel craft houses for “temporary living quarters for students and faculty on the property of 1420 Isabella St.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, April 22, 1946, 2).

The university also requested “permission to erect 12 prefabricated metal buildings . . . at the south end of the Evanston campus (1845 -1875 Sheridan Rd) and 13 on the south end of the music campus (1801-1807 Sherman Ave and 701-733 Clark St) to be used for temporary living quarters for single students.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, April 29, 1946, 4.)

In May 1946, the university applied for a permit to build fifty “single family units to be erected on property . . . located on the north side of Central St. between Girard and Ridge Ave.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, May 27, 1946, 2.)

In February 1946, Northwestern applied for a city permit to build a 280-unit housing facility for returning (white only) veterans. (“Evanston Lets N.U. Build More Huts for Ex-GIs,” *Chicago Tribune*, February 5, 1946.)

Many people were outraged at the barring of Black veterans from Northwestern’s housing. City Council member Edwin B. Jourdain, Jr. urged the council to “demand that the school drop its

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color bar as a condition upon which permission would be granted” for any new structures. (“Northwestern Gets Ok on Jim Crow Dorm,” *Chicago Defender*, May 11, 1946.)

As Chairman of the city’s Building Committee, Jourdain engaged in correspondence with the National Housing Agency (NHA) to determine the legality of restrictions against Black veterans. “At this writing, nine Negro war veterans, — some with battle stars from the European and the South Pacific theaters, some drawing disabled war vets’ pensions,” he wrote, “are finding that their share in World War II means little to a university which today raises against them the very Hitler racist barriers they fought to destroy.” (Quoted in Beverly, Jr., *Edwin B. Jourdain*, 97.)

But the Evanston City Council would continue to approve Northwestern University’s applications for building permits. Council member Jourdain voted “nay” on each of the university’s applications for permits.

Given that the City Council granted building permits to Northwestern University with “conditions” attached, as Jourdain observed, its members had the power to attach any conditions that a majority of council members approved. Jourdain objected time and again to the City Council’s failure to add the condition that, in order to have a permit approved by the City Council, Northwestern must make the housing available to all- to both Black and white students. Jourdain took a strong stand in his opposition to the fact that these new housing facilities would be segregated (as was all Northwestern University housing). Further, he charged that by granting the permits to Northwestern, the City Council and the City of Evanston were complicit in acts of racial discrimination and segregation.

At the April 22, 1946 City Council meeting, Jourdain said, “It has been claimed that this Council is not involved in the University’s housing matters. But now, when we are asked to grant a special application for added housing, this council can and has tonight set up certain conditions to the granting of the application. One of these conditions can be and should be that housing be open to all university students, regardless of their race or their color.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, April 22, 1946, 2)

As Chairman of the Building Committee, Jourdain was required to present the applications for building permits from Northwestern University to the council, but each and every time he did so, he not only objected, but he also voted “nay.” He also called attention to the fact that Northwestern’s housing would not be open to Black students who had served in the war.

Jourdain pledged that he was “going to go on opposing every single one of these applications from Northwestern University. Just as long as this University insists on a Jim Crow housing policy, it has no right to come into the City Council asking these special favors. We represent the very citizens they bar. Northwestern shuts its dormitory doors on its own students. It turns from its houses the girls under its care, if they just happened to be colored. The University has no right to take special benefits from taxpayers’ money, and then bar some of the taxpayers. This City Council has no right to vote special permits increasing University housing facilities,

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without insisting that these facilities be open to all without color restrictions.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, April 29, 1946, 4.)

Jourdain asked that the legal position of the city in this matter be investigated and reported to the council. “The city of Evanston has no right to grant special permits for University facilities from which some of its citizens will be barred because of color,” he said. “I question how far you can go in extending facilities paid for by all taxpayers for uses from which some taxpayers are barred. I take the position that this City Council cannot be party to setting up Jim Crow housing facilities. I ask that this legal question be referred for report on the legality of our position to the Corporation Counsel.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, April 29, 1946, 4-5.)

According to the minutes of the Evanston City Council, Jourdain’s requests were not met. And Northwestern University continued to win approval for its requested building permits. On May 27, 1945, Jourdain addressed the council and submitted a “minority report” at the same time he presented “the report of the building committee on Northwestern University’s application for additional housing units.” “Some time ago, I stated on the floor of this council that I would continue to oppose every request of Northwestern University for additional housing, so long as this University continues to refuse to let people who happen to be colored use these housing facilities,” Jourdain stated. “Once more I am calling attention to the fact that this city has no right to go on issuing permits for housing from which our taxpayers are barred because of merely color. This city council has no right to make itself a partner to this university’s Jim Crow housing policy. I have informed the joint meeting tonight of the building and zoning committees of this stand and since these committees and joint meeting have not seen fit to adopt this position, I am bringing this to the floor of the council once more as a minority report. If Northwestern University draws a color line in housing this city cannot be a party to it.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, May 27, 1946, 2).

At numerous City Council meetings, Jourdain reiterated his concerns. On June 3, 1946, he once again called “the attention of the City Council to the city’s part in Northwestern University’s housing development.” Jourdain stated: “there are serious legal difficulties standing in the path of this city’s continuing to cooperate with Northwestern’s Jim Crow housing policy. We must definitely stop and face the legal question of how far we can afford to go in aiding and abetting race discrimination. There is a large question of public policy involved. Every city has real interest in the welfare of all its citizens. It certainly violates the decent interest we have in our citizens’ welfare for us to help Northwestern University erect Jim Crow housing projects. The University could not get permits for these discriminatory projects, if we withheld them. This city has noticed and for years has known the university’s long history of discriminating against its colored students. It should be the policy of this city, therefore, to refuse permits for any housing developments that bar any of our citizens, because of color it is against public policy of state and local governments to discriminate because of race. The city certainly has a clear right and duty to refuse to help a discrimination which is so strongly against public policy, against the constitution, against the Civil Rights Act of the Illinois statutes. In this housing shortage, houses are needed by everyone. This city should not issue permits for housing that bar so many

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people. The city must not go on record as standing idly by and tacitly aiding and erecting the Jim Crow housing units. Every taxpayer has definite interest in this. Northwestern University is a tax exempt body by virtue of its state charter. Taxes on the humblest home in Evanston are more burdensome, just by this exemption. Yet the very parents who thus contribute to the University cannot get for their children University facilities for which this city goes on issuing permits. This city ought not help the University do that discriminating which the city itself has no right to do. There is another aspect to this matter. The federal government has expressed concern over veterans housing. Certain federal agencies give priorities to aid veterans housing so that all who shared in this war might find housing, regardless of what color they happen to be. I am therefore, moving a reference to the Corporation Council to write asking the National Housing Agency how Northwestern can get priorities for Jim Crow housing here, and what is the policy of this agency as to aiding erection of housing that bars war veterans." (Evanston City Council Minutes, June 3 1946, 7).

Jourdain's motion was seconded, but "held over for one week on the question of what right the City Council had to authorize such inquiry." (Evanston City Council Minutes, June 3, 1946, 7). However, no progress was made on the issue and a few weeks later, Jourdain reiterated his request that the City Council "rule that we had no legal right to aid and abet segregation." (Evanston City Council Minutes, June 24, 1946, 5).

"The City Council held up my reference," he said. "The council raised the question, did we have a right to order the Corporation Counsel to write such a letter? While the council was making up its mind on that point, I wrote the letter myself. Tonight I report on that correspondence with the National Housing Agency [NHA]." (Evanston City Council Minutes, June 24, 1946, 5).

Jourdain presented a response from the NHA regarding the construction of housing that bars Black veterans. The NHA stated that it would "not issue priorities to Northwestern University for housing that bar Negro veterans." (Evanston City Council Minutes, June 24, 1946, 5). In answer to the idea of building a separate dormitory for Black veterans only (an idea that had not been formally proposed, but had circulated), the NHA wrote: "[T]his agency could not subject itself to charges that it supports occupancy patterns that will unfortunately result in racially unequal housing accommodations," the NHA wrote. "It is difficult to contemplate a racially separate dormitory, open only to a relatively small Negro veterans group as an equal housing accommodation, in view of the nature of an educational institution, and the facilities which must be inaccessible to its students." (Evanston City Council Minutes, June 24, 1946, 5).

The NHA correspondence was included in the minutes. Jourdain concluded: "So Evanston veterans will get protection from insult through the ruling of a federal agency. Our own citizens should have looked to the ruling of their own City Council for this protection. This council might have ruled, and should still rule, that we too will refuse to be used in a program of segregation and insult to our own citizens." (Evanston City Council Minutes, June 24, 1946, 5).

The NHA also informed Northwestern officials of its policy to "administer its functions with racial equity." All educational institutions that sought federal aid or support for emergency construction

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were required “to reply that in the administration of its temporary housing program, it will provide housing for racial minority groups substantially in accordance with its proportionate needs.” But university President Franklyn Bliss Snyder announced that the NHA’s policy would have no impact on planned, segregated construction projects. “It is not in my power to commit the university on the question of housing Negro veterans,” he said, “the university recommends that they stay with Negro families in Evanston and not on the campus.” This policy was, he explained, “determined by the board of trustees and the public sentiment of the community. There is no indication that it will change.” (R.B. Goldsberry, “Negro Vets Not Wanted in N.U. Dorms,” *Chicago Defender*, July 20, 1946).

Spencer Jourdain, Edwin’s youngest son, has written extensively on this subject. “The permit was issued, and university housing segregation would continue for several years thereafter. The city, the local builder, and the federal government had collaboratively authorized continued racial segregation.” (Spencer Jourdain, *Dream Dancers*, Vol III, 323.)

The issue of the Evanston City Council’s role in segregation of postwar housing was not limited to its dealings with Northwestern.

A veterans’ housing project in Evanston was the cause of controversy concerning charges that the housing was segregated and that housing was being assigned in a discriminatory way, with many of Evanston’s Black veterans disproportionately turned away. A total of thirty-seven buildings were allotted to the City of Evanston by the federal Public Housing Authority to be built on the shore of the sanitary district canal (on the city’s west side).

The new housing project was indeed segregated: A total of 111 four-room family units were built; the majority of which were open to white families only. Only a small number of the units, on one side of the canal, were set aside for Black families. The housing units were managed by an Evanston City official, the Veterans Housing Supervisor, a position created in 1946 by the Evanston City Council.

At a city council meeting on September 30, 1946, Jourdain stated: “War veterans are bringing me reports that the job of assigning GI housing units along the canal is not being fairly approached. That the yardstick is not simply need, but color. Only one rule should be used in allocating these veterans’ homes; the rule of the greatest need. But veterans say this is not the practice. They are telling me that Evanston boys back from battlefields are being told that only four houses are open to them if they are colored. This is being done not in Mississippi, but in Evanston.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, September 30, 1946, 5.)

Jourdain’s statement concerning the conditions faced by Black veterans in Evanston is worth quoting at length:

“Evanston knows Negroes have the accutest housing shortages, worst housing conditions, because Evanston made it that way. Some Evanstonians have seen to it that year by year. Families of Negro GI’s have been pushed back, crowded

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back, into a tight ghetto area where housing was not equal, where living could not be free. And living in a ghetto hurts just as much in Evanston as it hurts in Mississippi, or in Hitler's Germany . . . A GI with 39 months overseas, with battle stars from Tunisia, Africa campaigns, says that he applied [for Evanston's veteran housing] last August, and was told . . . that only 12 colored families would be taken care of. Here is the wife of a GI, two years in Guam. She applied three months ago and was told that the same limitations hurt her chances. But she's living with six people in one room- two babies and four adults. . . Here is another GI living so crowded that when he comes home from work Thursdays, they have to send the seven year old child out to stay with relatives so the GI can have a place to sleep. He sleeps home other nights because the wife works days while he works nights. His whole family lives in one room, 9 by 10, with no closets. In a one story house live 14 people. There's no furnace; Until August no gas. There's no hot water. When you draw water in the bathtub it runs on the kitchen floor. Wiring is so bad ironing boards chords burn out repeatedly. Water left on the stove in a pan overnight in the winter freezes. Yet this GI's wife was told . . . that only 12 south bank units were for Negroes; once those were filled, no Negro GI need hope to live on that canal bank, where 100 units were. In one room in the same house lives another vet, with his whole family, and the same Jim Crow bars him too from getting on this North side of the canal. But for four months without interruption, this vet was on the front lines, under fire, with the 7th Army, steadily, in hot fighting. He has battle stars for battles all the way from southern France to Germany, and a special star for crossing the Rhine River, and if he was good enough to cross the Rhine under that German shellfire, he's good enough to cross that little piece of canal out there, and live on the side with the most houses. These vets fought their way across Africa, across France, through South Pacific islands, for freedom and a decent life for your families, and they tell me now they are ready to fight for freedom and a decent living for their own families. They're ready, they tell me, to fight through the courts for freedom from segregation when they seek a roof over their families' heads - for freedom to live decently, without being insulted and humiliated - these men who themselves fought for human liberties, with undemocratic and shameful restrictions. You can save them from this fight, if you'll only vote now to stop all this segregation and discrimination, to give colored GI's an even chance at veterans housing on the simple basis of actual need, without first stacking the cards against them by limiting their chances to houses." (Evanston City Council Minutes, October 7, 1946, 4-A.)

Jourdain stated that because the Veterans Housing Supervisor was appointed by the Evanston City Council, the council must instruct the person serving in that role to "end immediately all segregation and discrimination in his housing allocation and handling. To end all plans for trying Negro veterans down to a quota of four houses, without any regard to the need of the other veterans, who will be left out." He continued: "If this City Council were to try to uphold . . .

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barring colored veterans from any homes, just because of color, this council would be flying in the face of the Constitution of the United States. The Constitution and the federal statutes and the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States all guarantee freedom from segregation at the hands of the city government. A municipality has absolutely no right to deal in residential segregation.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, September 30, 1946, 5.)

Jordain then moved that the City Council must instruct the Veterans Housing Supervisor that “he was acting as its agent, appointed by the council and that veterans must be admitted to these homes without any regard to color. That any segregation be dropped immediately because of the fact that it cannot legally be carried out and that any case be considered entirely on the basis of actual need.” The motion was seconded, but after discussion another council member (Mogg) “made a substitute motion that this matter be referred to the Mayor’s Special Committee on Housing.” The motion was seconded, while another council member (James) “expressed complete confidence in the method pursued” by the Veterans Housing Supervisor “and the committee in the allocation of the veterans housing.” All voted “aye” on the motion, with the exception of Jourdain and Rubin, who voted nay. (Evanston City Council Minutes, September 30, 1946, 6.)

On October 7, 1946, the Mayor’s Special Committee on Housing issued its report and categorically denied that the Veterans’ Housing Supervisor or his office engaged in any discrimination. (Evanston City Council Minutes, October 7, 1946, 4.) “There is, and has been, no intent on the part of the committee on veterans housing to discriminate against any particular race or minority group in the matter of housing facilities,” the report read. (Evanston City Council Minutes, October 7, 1946, 4.)

Jourdain countered: “The plain truth is one, that there is discrimination now; Two, that there has been discrimination aplenty; Three, that it is the Council’s appointed agent . . . and his assistant who are telling Negro veterans, and have been telling them, that only four houses are open to them, all segregated on one side of the canal. That when these four are gone for Negro GI’s all hope is gone.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, October 7, 1946, 4-A.)

At the City Council meeting on October 14, 1946, Jourdain presented a letter from an official at the Federal Public Housing Authority (FPHA) and telegram from a former FPHA official which, he stated, “plac[ed] every blame for segregation squarely on the city of Evanston.” Jourdain explained that the segregation of veterans housing units had been done at the request of Evanston’s Veteran Housing Supervisor. A portion of the FPHA letter read: “In reference to your project for temporary housing for returning veterans, ILL-V-11299, we would like to call your attention to a provision included in the project development program which requires that 12 units be provided for racial groups at the Darrow and Payne Avenue section. This was brought to our attention by Mr E. B. Jourdain, Councilman of the city of Evanston. Our records indicate this provision was made on the basis of a conversation between [Evanston’s Veterans’ Housing Supervisor] and Mr Robert H. Merriam of our office on May 10, and is no doubt based upon the specific request by [Evanston’s Veterans’ Housing Supervisor], in as much as this authority

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does not in any way wish to influence a locality as to the disposition of a racial problem in its community. We would like to point out to you that this office did not specifically request the segregation of housing for minority racial groups from the main portion of the project.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, October 14, 1946, 5-6.)

“Since this letter and telegram make it plain that the federal people are not asking for this,” Jourdain concluded, “it is now squarely up to this City Council to withdraw this Jim Crow arrangement, drop the color line and make need the sole measure of who gets housing. The law of the land is against your segregation policy . . . The law of decency is against it.” (Evanston City Council Minutes, October 14, 1946, 5-6.)

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POLICING

On October 10, 2015, 25-year-old Lawrence Crosby pulled over, got out of his car with his hands up, and was taken to the ground by Evanston law enforcement. Earlier in the evening, a female observer called the police to report what she thought was a car break-in, when in fact, what she saw was only Crosby getting into his own car. (Later, and caught on a recording, the caller said she was not sure that Crosby was breaking in.) After receiving the initial call and pulling Crosby over, Evanston police officers appeared to demand conflicting orders and, in the end, Crosby was taken to the ground and struck repeatedly. Crosby filed a civil lawsuit against the Evanston police and won a \$1.25 million settlement in 2019. No officers were disciplined following the stop nor was there an apology offered to Crosby. ([“Northwestern Ph.D. Student Accused of Stealing His Own Car Wins Civil Suit”](#), CBS News, January 20, 2019)

Countless incidents of over-policing Black residents in Evanston have occurred over the years, including:

In 2018 a minor was taken into custody for riding on the back pegs of a bike while his friend peddled in downtown Evanston. ([“Evanston police undergoing internal investigation following arrest of Black 12-year-old cyclist”](#), *Daily Northwestern*, August 20, 2017).

In November 2016, Evanston’s current (2020) city clerk was arrested by Evanston police in downtown Evanston as he was collecting signatures on a petition to get his name on the ballot for the race for city clerk. After an investigation, police announced the arrest “should never have happened.” (Genevieve Bookwalter, “Arrested Evanston City Clerk Has Candidacy Challenged,” *Pioneer Press*, December 9, 2016).

African-American residents are subject more often to be stopped and frisked by officers investigating crimes than any other racial or ethnic group in the city. Evanston’s African-American residents make up about 18 percent of the town’s population, but account for about 60 percent of the adult crime suspects identified by Evanston police, according to the city’s police chief and data from the Evanston Police Department. “They are over-represented as suspects.” ([“Black residents in Evanston subjected to more stop and frisk encounters than any other group, police chief says”](#), *Chicago Tribune*, March 27, 2018)

Statistics presented by Evanston police showed that of the adult suspects identified in 2017, 59.69 percent, or 1,479 people, were black; 29.22 percent, or 724 people, were white; and 4.8 percent, or 119 people, were Hispanic. The remaining suspects were of Asian, Indian or unknown descent. Of the adults who were arrested in 2017, 58.58 percent, or 782 people, were black; 24.27 percent, or 324 people, were white; and 11.99 percent, or 160 people, were Hispanic, police reported. (*Chicago Tribune*, March 27, 2018)

2018 Statistics continue to show percentages of stop and frisk activities in Evanston. 30.7% of drivers stopped were Black, 53% of drivers given citations were Black, 53% of drivers asked for a vehicle search were Black, 10 Black drivers were subjected to a dog sniff search, compared to

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0 White drivers, 64% of pedestrians stopped were Black, 65% of pedestrians given pat downs were Black, 60% of pedestrians searched beyond a pat down were Black, 73% of pedestrians arrested were Black. (Illinois Traffic and Pedestrian Stop Study for 2018)

Evidence of over policing can be found in earlier decades as well. In September 1945, Evanston's mayor, S. G. Ingraham, ordered all "professional gamblers to get out of town." The order came after Ingraham had warned of an "outbreak of crime" in the city. Additional police officers were ordered to "walk beats in residential areas." Three Evanston council members, including Edwin B. Jourdain, Jr., "denied a crime wave existed" and protested what they said was a "wholesale arrest of Negroes" within Evanston. ("Mayor Orders Gamblers Out of Evanston," *Chicago Tribune*, September 25, 1945.)

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LAWSUITS

Theaters

In 1912, Hellen Garnett, sued the Evanston Theater for the amount of \$500 because of discriminatory seating. In 1923, two Evanston residents brought a lawsuit against the owners of the New Evanston Theater because they had been denied equal access to the theater; they, like all other Black patrons, were forced to sit in the balcony of the theater and to use a separate entrance. (*Chicago Defender*, February 10, 1912)

Northwestern University

In 1937, Northwestern University student, William Yancy Bell, Jr. (c. 1914 -1967) brought a suit against Northwestern for \$5,000 in damages after he had purchased a token for admission to an Evanston bathing beach, operated by the university, and was refused entrance. According to *The Crisis* magazine, when Bell “presented himself for admission, he was told he could not enter because he was colored.” Bell insisted upon his right to enter and was told by the beach guard, (a player on Northwestern’s football team), that “he would be thrown out if he tried to enter.”¹²⁷ The lawsuit charged the university with violating Bell’s civil rights. University officials responded that the 1885 Civil Rights Act of Illinois was not applicable in this case since Northwestern was a “charitable” institution and, as such, exempt from the law. (“State-Wide Battle on Illinois Jim Crow,” *The Crisis*, February 1937, 43; *The Takeover 1968*, 35-36.)

In 1943, a visiting music student from Chicago, Robbie Shields (Terry), lodged a complaint against Northwestern University, charging that she had been barred from Willard Hall, a university dormitory, because she was Black. (Shields’ niece was Marian Shields Robinson, Michelle Obama’s mother.) Shields said she had been “humiliated, chagrined and insulted” when she arrived at Northwestern to take part in a music institute and was turned away by the dormitory director. Soon, her lawyers charged that the university had branded Shields “inferior to other normal young American women.” In December 1943, Shields sued Northwestern for \$50,000. (“Northwestern Sued For \$50,000 in Dorm Ban,” *Chicago Defender*, December 11, 1943; *The Takeover 1968*, 42-43).

Foster School Suit

The Evanston NAACP filed a class action lawsuit seeking to reopen the Foster-King Lab School. The suit charges District 65 School Board with racial bias in its school closing decisions. The suit further charges the school board’ decision to close Foster-King Lab was a “powerful” plan to discriminate against black students by bussing them away from their neighborhood school to schools in white neighborhoods. .. the “entire burden of desegregation” would be on the blacks, the suit said. (“Second racial bias suit filed”, *Evanston Review*, Pioneer Press, June 21, 1979. p. 5)

Two Real Estate Firms Fined in 1992

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A settlement between the City of Evanston against Baird & Warner and Century 21 Shoreline for the total amount of \$450,000, said to be the largest settlement ever delivered at that time. The funds were deposited in the City's general fund and payment made to the legal team in the amount of \$300,000. The three-year suit arose from a testing audit by the Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs and not from the direct complaint of a prospective renter/home buyer. ([National Fair Housing Advocate Online](#), 1992)

Between 2003 and 2012, there were 38 housing discrimination complaints filed with HUD. Of the 38, Race was the most common basis for complaint, cited in 28.8% of all filings. ("[Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice](#)", City of Evanston, IL, Revised Ed, April 2014)

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CURRENT PROTESTS AND POLICIES

Nationally, in 2020, peaceful protests against the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer and against the many other attacks and murders of Black Americans by both police and private citizens have expanded to include tearing down statues and statutes that symbolized white nationalist ideas. Historically, these white nationalist ideas fueled and supported policies that excluded people of other nationalities, but most explicitly, excluded those of African descent. These events have led a resurgence in initiatives addressing harm that has affected Black communities both nationally and locally.



Fight for Black Lives rally. Photo by Shorefront

Fight For Black Lives Rally: The Fight For Black Lives rally in Evanston took place on May 31, 2020 in response to police brutality on the Black population across the nation and in Evanston. Inspired by the events surrounding the deaths by police of George Floyd during an arrest in Minneapolis, MN where police pinned him to the ground by kneeling on his neck for 8.5 minutes; and Breonna Taylor in Louisville, KY during a “no-knock search warrant” and was shot eight times while in her sleep. The rally was organized by eight recent ETHS students (all of who were 20 years old), who organized the rally in just two days. The public protest attracted an estimated 3,000 participants and is considered the largest walking protest in Evanston’s recent history combating police brutality and racial inequity in Evanston, IL.

Race and Equity: Resolution 58-R-19, Commitment to end Structural Racism and Achieve Racial Equity unanimously passes on June 10, 2019. The City Council made an initial commitment to pursue equity with the FY 2017 Budget, approving the creation of the Equity and

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Empowerment Coordinator position to focus on implementation and action strategies to help make the City equitable for all residents of Evanston. In 2018, to strengthen its original commitment, the City Council identified equity as a council goal, approved the creation of the Equity & Empowerment Commission, supported City-wide staff training, and participated in diversity training as a Council.

While these efforts are beneficial, we see racial tensions escalating both nationally and locally including in our schools. Following successful racial equity initiatives modeled in other cities, the Kellogg Foundation's Truth, Healing, and Racial Reconciliation model, and other equity best practices, it is important to realize that all work done to achieve equity must come from leadership and include acknowledgment of intentional (and unintentional) harm done to communities of color. While the City Council understands this resolution will not repair harm or make a tangible change in individuals life experience, we desire to make a public commitment to doing the hard work needed to begin unifying the community. (Evanston City Council minutes, June 10, 2019)

Reparations: Resolution 43-R-02, in support of House Resolution 40, allowing the U.S. government to begin to investigate the issue of reparations. In support of 43-R-02, a great deal of time was spent at the city council with public comment from residents, scholars and historians on the subject of Reparations, what it looks like and how it would ever be adopted. (Evanston City Council minutes, June 10, 2002)



Alderman Robin Rue Simmons addressing the audience at the Reparations Town Hall gathering December 11, 2019. Photo by Shorefront

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Local Reparations and Funding: Resolution 126-R-19, establishing a City of Evanston Funding Source Devoted to Local Reparations. The City Council has discussed the funding of Reparations through the budget discussions held over the last two months. Through these discussions a \$10 million dollar goal was set and the Cannabis Retailers Tax was selected as the funding source.

The Cannabis Retailers Tax allows municipalities to set a rate of up to 3% on gross sales of cannabis in the City where cannabis dispensaries are located. Based on early projections this tax could provide an estimated \$500,000 to \$750,000 per year in tax revenue. The State of Illinois will allow municipalities to start applying this tax on July 1, 2020. Staff has estimated \$250,000 in revenue for the 6 months of 2020.

The Reparations Fund is also accepting donations from private businesses, organizations and individuals who wish to contribute. The Reparations Subcommittee started discussions on a variety of issues including: developing criteria for eligible individuals, a process for applicants, potential program funding, and evaluating how the money is allocated. (Evanston City Council Memorandum, November 25, 2019)

Illinois Historical Context: The Black Codes

(The excerpt below taken from “Slavery In The North” by Douglas Harper, <http://www.slavenorth.com/northwest.htm>):

“The new states that entered the union in the North after the gradual emancipation of northern slaves were just as concerned as the old ones with maintaining their racial purity. To do so, they turned to an old practice in the North: the exclusion law. Slaves could not be brought into the Northwest Territories, under the ordinance of 1787, but slaves already there remained in bondage. Once states began to emerge from the old territories, most of them explicitly barred blacks or permitted them only if they could prove their freedom and post bond. [Ohio](#) offered the first example, and those that followed her into the union followed her lead on race.

Both Indiana (1816) and Illinois (1818) abolished slavery by their constitutions. And both followed the Ohio policy of trying to prevent black immigration by passing laws requiring blacks who moved into the state to produce legal documents verifying that they were free and posting bond to guarantee their good behavior. The bond requirements ranged as high as \$1,000, which was prohibitive for a black American in those days. Anti-immigration legislation was passed in Illinois in 1819, 1829, and 1853. In Indiana, such laws were enacted in 1831 and 1852. Michigan Territory passed such a law in 1827; Iowa Territory passed one in 1839 and Iowa enacted another in 1851 after it became a state. Oregon Territory passed such a law in 1849.[1]

The evidence seems to support the theory that these rules were not uniformly enforced. But they were invoked against ‘troublesome’ black residents, or they could be used against whole communities when white citizens found the increase in black population had reached an unacceptable level. Blacks who violated the law faced punishments that included being advertised and sold at public auction (Illinois, 1853).

Like colonization, exclusion ordinances often were advanced by self-professed friends of the black race who saw only tragedy in attempts of the races to share the same land. Robert Dale Owen, speaking in Indiana in 1850, asked if any decent person desired ‘the continuance among us of a race to whom we are not willing to accord the most common protection against outrage and death.’ The rhetoric hardly is an exaggeration: during the constitutional debate in the state that year, one speaker had frankly acknowledged, ‘It would be better to kill them off at once, if there is no other way to get rid of them. ... We know how the Puritans did with the Indians, who were infinitely more magnanimous and less impudent than the colored race.’

Not content with mere legislation, Illinois, Indiana, and Oregon had anti-immigration provisions built into their constitutions. In Illinois (1848), in clause-by-clause voting, this clause was approved by voters by more than 2 to 1. Most of the opposition to it came from the northern counties of the state, where blacks were few. In Indiana (1851), it was approved by a larger margin than the constitution itself. In Oregon (1857), the vote for it was 8 to 1. The Illinois act stayed on the books until 1865. Such laws were seldom invoked, but they served blacks as

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grinding reminders of apartheid intentions and legal subjugation, and they offered white authorities and mobs excuses for harassment and violence against blacks.

The Black Codes dealt with more than just settlement. Oregon forbids blacks to hold real estate, make contracts, or bring lawsuits. Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, and California prohibited them from testifying in cases where a white man was a party. When the Illinois state constitution was adopted in 1818, it limited the vote to 'free white men' and excluded blacks from the militia.

Indiana's anti-immigration rule was challenged in the case of a black man convicted for bringing a black woman into the state to marry her. The state Supreme Court upheld the conviction, noting that, 'The policy of the state is ... clearly evolved. It is to exclude any further ingress of negroes, and to remove those already among us as speedily as possible.'

There was no legal segregation in Indiana's public schools: none was necessary. The white citizens of the state would keep the schools racially pure more thoroughly than any legal provision could. A court upheld the white-only Indiana public schools in 1850, finding that, in the eyes of the state, 'black children were deemed unfit associates of whites, as school companions.'

On closer examination, even the designation of 'free state' can be questioned in a case like that of Illinois. Illinois, as a territory where slaves were held, had been restricting the freedom of black residents since before it became a state. In December 1813, Illinois Territory prohibited free blacks to immigrate to the territory and decreed all who did must leave within 15 days after notice or receive 39 lashes. As a state, it maintained the black codes inherited when it had formed part of Indiana, and thus continued its system of what one historian has described as 'registered and indentured slavery.'^[2]

[S]he permitted non-resident slave-owners to hire their slaves to citizens of Illinois for a period of twelve months, yet not give the slave his freedom; and justified her act with the excuse that laborers were wanted to erect mills and open up the country, and that salt could not be profitably manufactured by white men.^[3]

When the legislature once attempted to alter the black law to strip out the provision that allowed slaves to be imported into the colony, the governor vetoed it.

Furthermore, Illinois wouldn't even emancipate the few old slaves who had been in the territory since before 1787. Every person bound to service or indenture in the territory was to continue as such under state government, though children born of such persons were to be emancipated -- the boys at 24, the girls at 18.

The first General Assembly under the constitution fastened slavery on Illinois more firmly than ever by re-enacting the old laws regarding free negroes, mulattoes, servants, and slaves, and by adopting what in the Southern States would have

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been a slave code. Thenceforth, no negro, no mulatto, either by himself or with his family, was to be suffered to live in the State unless he produced a certificate of freedom bearing the seal of some court of record of the State or Territory whence he came; nor until the certificate, with a long description of himself and of each member of his family, had been duly recorded in the county in which he proposed to live. Even then the overseers of the poor might expel him at any time they saw fit.[4]

As for blacks already living in Illinois in 1818, they were required to report to the circuit clerk before June 1, 1819, register their names, show evidence of their freedom, and have him issue a certificate. Any free black person in Illinois without such a certificate would be considered a slave and a runaway, and was liable to be arrested, arraigned before a justice, advertised in the newspapers for six weeks by the county sheriff. If no ‘owner’ came forth to claim the black person, the county still could sell him or her as an indentured servant for one year.

In other matters, too, the early law of Illinois was indistinguishable from a slave state code:

To employ an uncertified negro was to incur a fine of a dollar and a half for each day he labored; to harbor a slave or servant, or hinder his recapture, was felony, punishable by a fine of twice the value of the man and thirty stripes on the bare back; to sell to, or buy of, or trade with a slave or servant without consent of the master was absolutely forbidden. If a slave was found ten miles from home without a permit, he was liable to arrest and flogging. Should he appear at any house or farm without written permission from his master, the owner of the place to which he came might give him ten lashes well laid on. Should he commit any offense for which a white man would be fined, he was to be whipped at a rate of twenty lashes for every eight dollars of fine.[5]

‘To all intents and purposes,’ McMaster concludes, ‘slavery was thus as much a domestic institution of Illinois in 1820 as of Kentucky or Missouri’ And in fact a few years later, Illinois itself attempted to become a slave state.

After the Missouri Compromise, thousands of slave-holders migrated across the southern tier of Illinois on their way to the new slave state across the Mississippi. The Illinois settlers scattered across the prairie watched with envy these processions of rich, educated, ambitious men from the east and their trains of goods and slaves, wishing the immigrants would settle in Illinois instead, and knowing what prevented it was the ban on outright slave ownership in the state.

Many people in Illinois decided that the state should open itself entirely to slavery. The new sentiment got a test in the elections of 1822. The governor's contest was a four-way race: two of the candidates were outright advocates of slavery in Illinois. They got a combined 5,000 votes, but the winner, by a small plurality, was an anti-slavery candidate, Edward Coles, who had been

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born in Virginia and had freed the slaves he inherited. But the pro-slavery faction carried both houses of the state legislature.

Coles set out to persuade the state government to free the remaining slaves in the Illinois (those who had been in the land before the ordinance of 1787), loosen the harsh black codes, and crack down on kidnappings of free blacks. The legislature responded by refuting Coles and recommending instead that a referendum be put on the ballot at the next state election asking voters to decide whether Illinois should call a convention to amend its constitution and become a slave state.

This required a two-thirds majority in the legislature, and while the senate mustered it, in the state house it seemed destined to fall one vote short. But the pro-slavery forces unseated a man whose election had been disputed, and they replaced him with one who voted their way. The convention measure passed.

Citizens celebrated in the streets, holding processions, parades, and public dinners. At one, this toast was offered, 'The State of Illinois: the ground is good, prairie in abundance; give us plenty of negroes, a little industry, and she will distribute her treasures.'

The next election was Aug. 2, 1824. The political campaign that ensues was impassioned, fractious, and intense. The subject was preached tirelessly in the pulpits and the newspapers. The turnout on Aug. 2 was enormous. At the presidential election that fall, 4,532 voted in Illinois. On the slavery question, 11,612 went to the polls. When the votes were counted, the slavery faction had lost, 6,640 to 4,972."

(End excerpt from "Slavery in the North.")

1. Henry W. Farnam, *Chapters in the History of Social Legislation in the United States to 1860*, Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1938, pp.219-20.
2. John B. McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, N.Y.: D. Appleton & Co., 1900, vol. V, p.186.
3. *ibid.*
4. *ibid.*, p.187-8.
5. *ibid.*, p.188.

REDLINING

Portions of Larry Gavin's article, "Developing a Segregated Town, 1900-1960," *Evanston Roundtable*, December 5, 2019, appear below:

"Evanston's first African American residents arrived in the 1850s, and by 1880 there were approximately 125 African Americans in Evanston. The number grew to 737 in 1900. At that time, many of the African Americans in Evanston worked in domestic and personal service.

With the Great Migration of African Americans from the rural south to the urban north, the black population in Evanston grew to 6,026 in 1940.

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Unlike many suburbs that sought to exclude African Americans altogether, leading members of Evanston's real estate establishment played a role in the growth of Evanston's African American community, said historian Andrew Wiese in an article about segregation in Evanston published in the *Journal of Social History* in 1999.

He theorizes that Evanston was different in this respect from other suburbs, because Evanston was already home to a well-established African American community by the time of the Great Migration that began in about 1910. In addition, he says, African American workers supplied labor that was in demand by white elites in Evanston, and they had personal ties with white families all over town.

There was a major caveat, though. Mr. Wiese says, 'Evanston's white real estate brokers apparently developed a practice of informal racial zoning. In effect, they treated a section of west Evanston as open to African Americans, while excluding them from the rest of town.'

Impact

Evanston banks generally refused to make mortgage loans to black households seeking to buy homes on blocks that were not viewed as 'acceptable' for black people, said Mr. [Dino] Robinson. As an example, black people who owned vacant lots near the lake were denied loans to build on their properties, and were eventually forced to sell them.

Builders did not sell properties to black households if the homes were outside the area set aside for black people. Builders constructed more than 1,400 new homes in northwest Evanston during the 1920s and 1930s, none of which was sold to black households, according to Mr. Wiese.

White homeowners at times recorded racially restrictive covenants that provided that their homes 'shall not be conveyed, leased to, or occupied by anyone not a Caucasian (servants excepted).' These were effective until 1948, when the U.S. Supreme Court held them unenforceable.

South of Church Street and west of Asbury Avenue, white homeowners formed the West Side Improvement Association 'to preserve [the neighborhood] as a place for white people to live.' As part of the plan, they formed a syndicate to buy homes that were at risk of being sold to a black family. At times, white homeowners got together and offered to buy back homes that had just been sold to a black household.

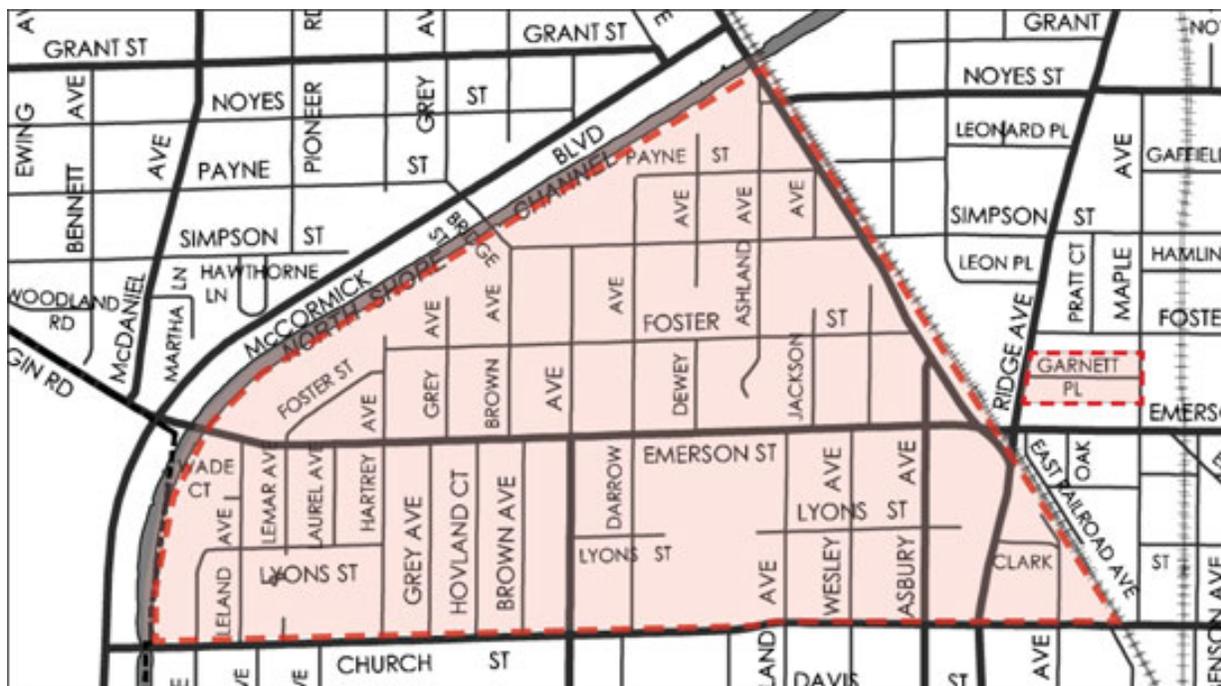
African American families were also displaced from neighborhoods outside the west side of Evanston. In 1921, the City passed a zoning ordinance that zoned for commercial use almost every block where black people lived outside of the west side of town. As these areas were converted to commercial use, 'black families were dislocated to the west,' said Mr. Wiese.

The effect of all these practices was stark. 'Between 1910 and 1940, there was not a single area of African American expansion outside of west Evanston, in spite of black population growth of

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almost 5,000,' said Mr. Wiese. 'To the contrary, public and private actions reduced the number of African American housing units outside these boundaries.'

By 1940, census data showed that 84% of black households in Evanston lived in the triangular area that is shaded light red in the map below. This area was highly segregated – 95% black. Beyond these bounds, black families lived on Garnett Place (then called Ayars) and in a few pockets of older homes purchased before 1900.



While black people were segregated into the triangular area (pictured above), Mr. Wiese points out that black Evanstonians 'were almost as likely to own their own homes as middle class and elite whites.' Some white members of the Evanston and the Chicago real estate establishments and some financial institutions from Evanston and Chicago provided mortgages and construction loans to black people who were building or purchasing homes in the triangular area and on Garnett Place.

To help with the purchase of their homes, many black households shared housing costs with extended families or rented rooms or apartments for extra income. In 1920, about 30% of black households in Evanston included multigenerational and extended family members. The percentage grew to about 50% by 1940.

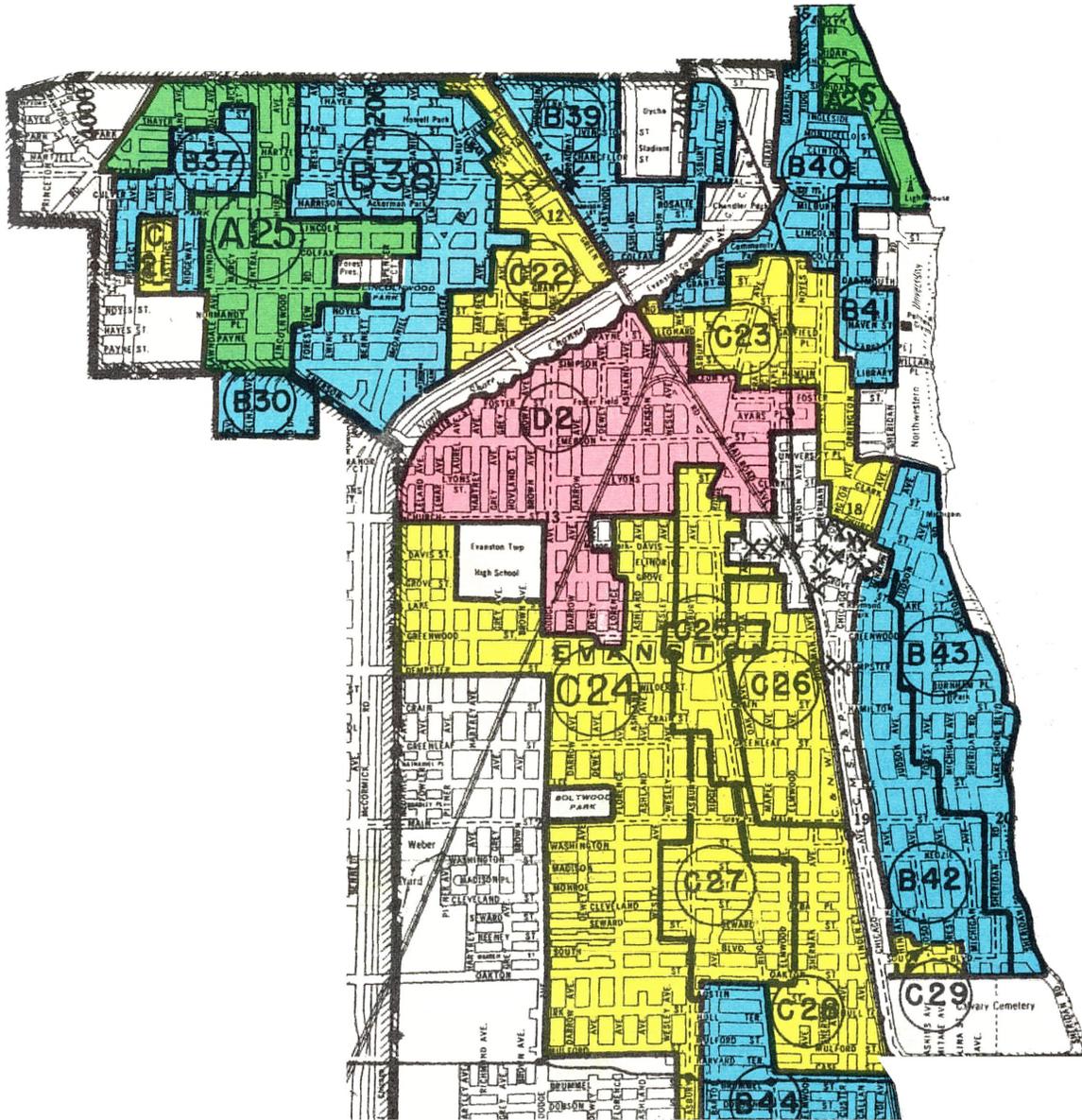
As in Chicago, segregation had the effect of limiting the supply of housing available to black families in Evanston. This resulted in over-crowding and higher housing prices. Mr. Wiese summed up the racial transition in Evanston through 1940 as follows:

'Ironically, evidence suggests that racial segregation in Evanston facilitated black suburbanization. Although the development of residential segregation in the suburb testifies to

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the unease local whites felt about black migration, the establishment of clear geographic limits to black community building appears to have calmed white fears. Race relations in Evanston were structured by a high degree of inequality that favored (and flattered) local whites and minimized conflict through patterns of paternalism and deference symbolized by the relationship of domestic service. Separated as they were by income, occupation, and power, as well as clear geographic barriers, such as railroad tracks and a wide sanitary channel, African Americans posed little threat to the social status or perceived property values of Evanston's economic elite. Meanwhile, as workers, they provided services that were in high demand. As a result, the dynamics of local race relations combined with the aspirations of black southerners to shape a housing market that both supported black home ownership and accommodated the growth of a large black community in an otherwise affluent and white suburb.'

In 1940, the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC), an arm of the Federal Loan Bank Board, prepared a map showing the risk of making mortgage loans in different neighborhoods in Evanston (pictured below). A portion of HOLC's Evanston map is shown below. The HOLC prepared this and similar maps for more than 200 cities in the United States to show the risk of making mortgage loans in different neighborhoods in these cities. The process took into account the age and quality of housing, the racial and ethnic makeup of the neighborhood and other factors.



The Home Owners Loan Corporation prepared the above map of Evanston's neighborhoods in 1940. The core black area of the City - shaded red by HOLC was graded "D."

Areas were given one of four grades: "A" areas – shaded green – were deemed "homogeneous" and in demand as residential areas; "B" areas – shaded blue – were "still desirable;" "C" areas – shaded yellow – were characterized as old and at risk of an "infiltration of a lower grade of population;" and "D" – shaded red – were said to have detrimental influences and an "undesirable population or an infiltration of it."

Black neighborhoods 'were invariably rated' in the D category, said researchers Kenneth Jackson and Jacob Krimmel.

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HOLC's map of Evanston rated the segregated black triangular area of Evanston in the "D" category.

Form 8 11-2-49
AREA DESCRIPTIONS - SECURITY MAP OF _____

1. POPULATION: a. Increasing _____ Decreasing _____ Static yes
 b. Class and Occupation Servant class - relief
 c. Foreign Families 5 % Nationalities Italian d. Negro 90 %
 e. Shifting or Infiltration negro

2. BUILDINGS:

	PREDOMINATING	OTHER TYPE
a. Type and Size	<u>one family - 5-6 rooms</u>	<u>Two family - 4-5 rooms</u>
b. Construction	<u>Frame - stucco</u>	<u>Frame - stucco</u>
c. Average Age	<u>20 - 25 years</u>	<u>20 - 25 years</u>
d. Repair	<u>Poor to fair</u>	<u>Poor to fair</u>
e. Occupancy	<u>100 - 150%</u>	<u>100%</u>
f. Owner-occupied	<u>50%</u>	<u>25%</u>
g. 1935 Price Bracket	<u>\$2000 - 3500</u> % Chge	<u>\$4000 - 6000</u> % Chge
h. 1937 Price Bracket	<u>\$2500 - 4500</u> <u>17</u> %	<u>\$4000 - 6000</u> <u>0</u> %
i. <u>1940 Jan</u> Price Bracket	<u>\$2500 - 4500</u> <u>0</u> %	<u>\$4000 - 6000</u> <u>0</u> %
j. Sales Demand	<u>Good - \$4000</u>	<u>Good</u>
k. Predicted Price Trend (next 6-12 months)	<u>Firm</u>	<u>Firm</u>
l. 1935 Rent Bracket	<u>\$25.00 - 30.00</u> % Chge	<u>\$25.00 - 30.00</u> % Chge
m. 1937 Rent Bracket	<u>\$25.00 - 30.00</u> <u>0</u> %	<u>\$25.00 - 30.00</u> <u>0</u> %
n. <u>1940 Jan</u> Rent Bracket	<u>\$25.00 - 30.00</u> <u>0</u> %	<u>\$25.00 - 30.00</u> <u>0</u> %
o. Rental Demand	<u>Good</u>	<u>Good</u>
p. Predicted Rent Trend (next 6-12 months)	<u>Firm</u>	<u>Firm</u>

3. NEW CONSTRCTN (past yr) No 0 Type & Price _____ How selling _____

4. OVERHANG OF HOME PROPERTIES: a. HOLC None b. Institutions Few

5. SALE OF HOME PROPERTIES (___yr) a. HOLC 9 b. Institutions _____

6. MORTGAGE FUNDS: none 7. Total Tax Rate per \$1000 (19__) \$ _____

8. DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF AREA: This neighborhood houses the large negro population living in Evanston. It is somewhat better than the average negro district in that the bulk of the houses are one family detached units in anything but a congested district for this class of population. Here live the servants for many of the families all along the north shore. There is not a vacant house in the territory, and occupancy, moreover, is about 150 per cent, for most houses have more than one family living in them. Sales have been very good where liberal financing terms are available, but on other sales mortgage financing is virtually impossible to obtain. This concentration of negroes in Evanston is quite a serious problem for the town as they seem to be growing steadily and encroaching into adjoining neighborhoods. The two family structures are in most cases converted singles and they likewise are overflowing with occupants; these buildings are rented as unheated units. The number of persons on relief in this district is probably heavier than in any other area along the north shore. Altho the area is unattractive to other than the class of occupants already here, it is difficult to say that the section is declining, for it is in constant demand because of the limited

9. LOCATION Evanston, Ill. SECURITY GRADE D AREA NO. 367 DATE Jan. 1940

number of areas available for negro occupancy in the north shore towns. I-311

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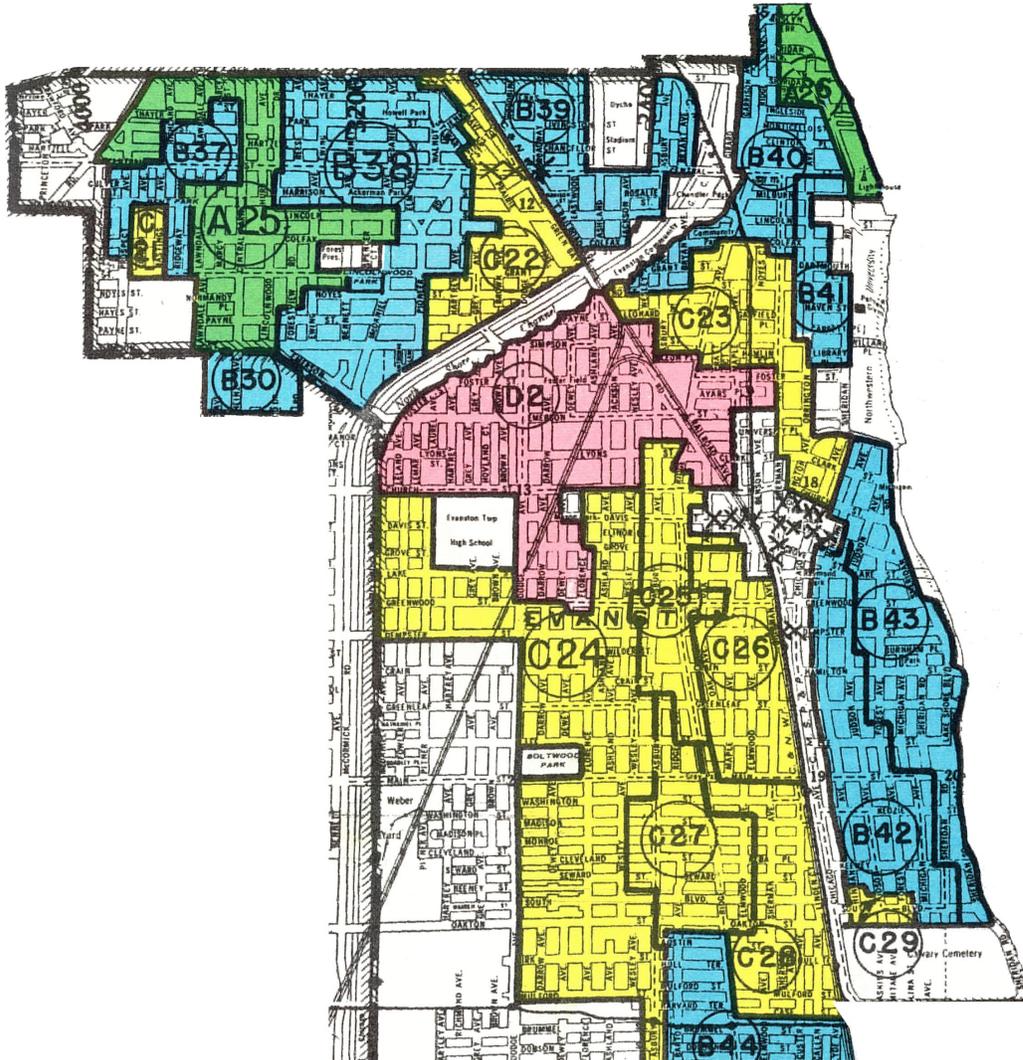
The HOLC also wrote a narrative description of the area shaded red in the Evanston map it prepared. The narrative ... said: ‘ This neighborhood houses the large negro population living in Evanston. It is somewhat better than the average negro district for this class of population. Here live the servants for many of the families all along the north shore. There is not a vacant house in the territory, and occupancy, moreover is about 150 per cent, for most houses have more than one family living in them. Sales have been very good where liberal financing terms are available, but on other sales mortgage financing is virtually impossible to obtain. This concentration of negroes in Evanston is quite a serious problem for the town as they seem to be growing steadily and encroaching into adjoining neighborhoods. The two-family structures are in most cases converted singles and they likewise are overflowing with occupants; these buildings are rented as unheated units. The number of persons on relief in this district is probably heavier than in any other area along the north shore. Altho the area is unattractive to other than the class of occupants already here, it is difficult to say that the section is declining, for it is in constant demand because of the limited number of areas available for negro occupancy in the north shore towns.’

HOLC’s description highlights several adverse economic impacts of segregation. It severely limited the supply of housing available to black people, which increased overcrowding to the point where occupancy was 150%. In addition, the demand for housing and the steadily growing population meant that the black population was, in HOLC’s words – the words of a federal agency – ‘encroaching into adjoining neighborhoods.’ ” (End excerpt from “Developing a Segregated Town, 1900-1960.”)

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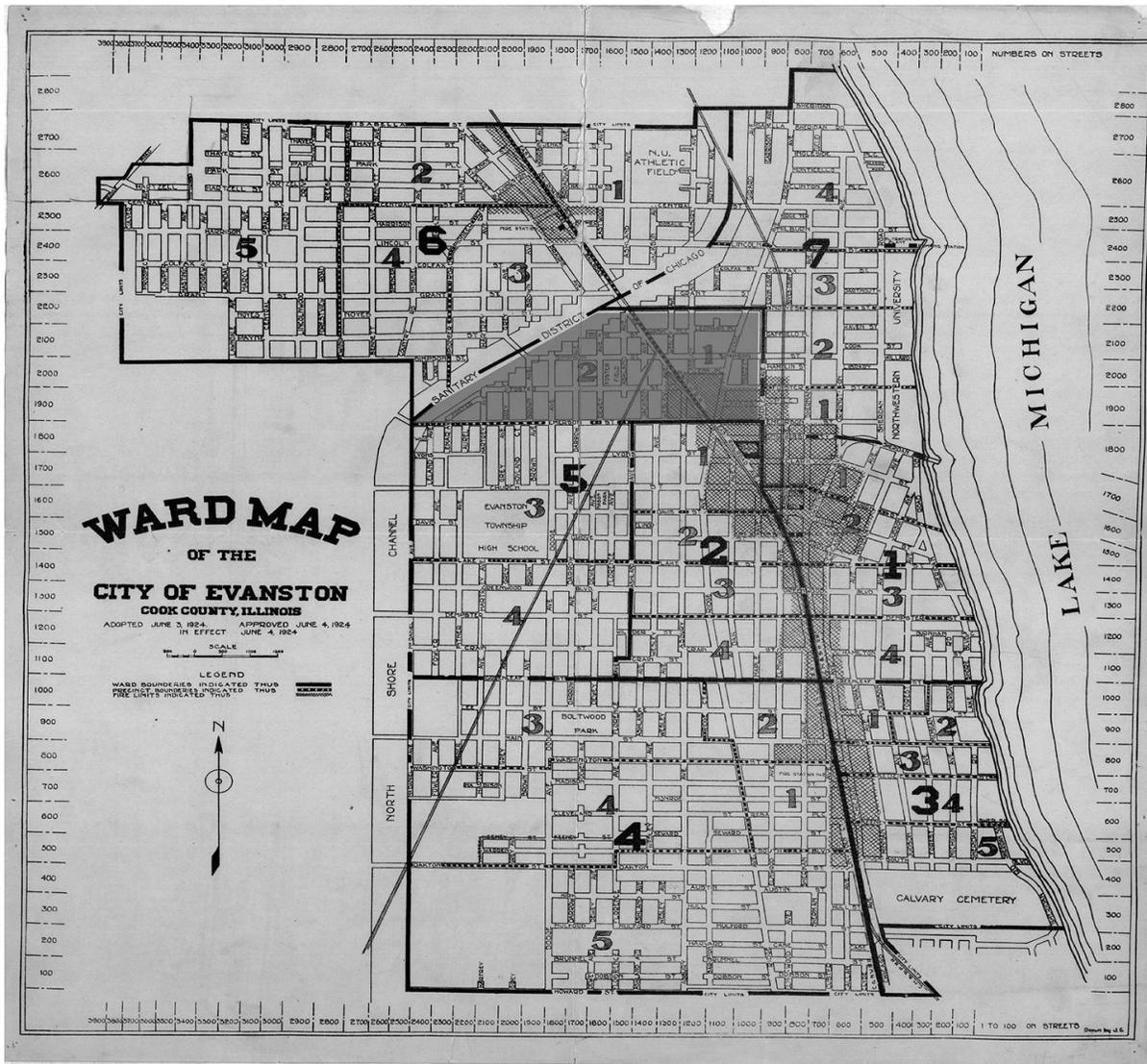
MAPS

The series of maps in the following pages show the changing borders of the fifth ward. Comparisons will show in comparison, the 1924 map, the 5th ward covers most of today's 5th and 2nd ward. The HOLC map D2 zone covers the 5th ward, precincts 1-8 compared to the 1942 Evanston ward map.



1940 HOLC map. D2 (in red) encompasses most of 5th ward
Source: Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America

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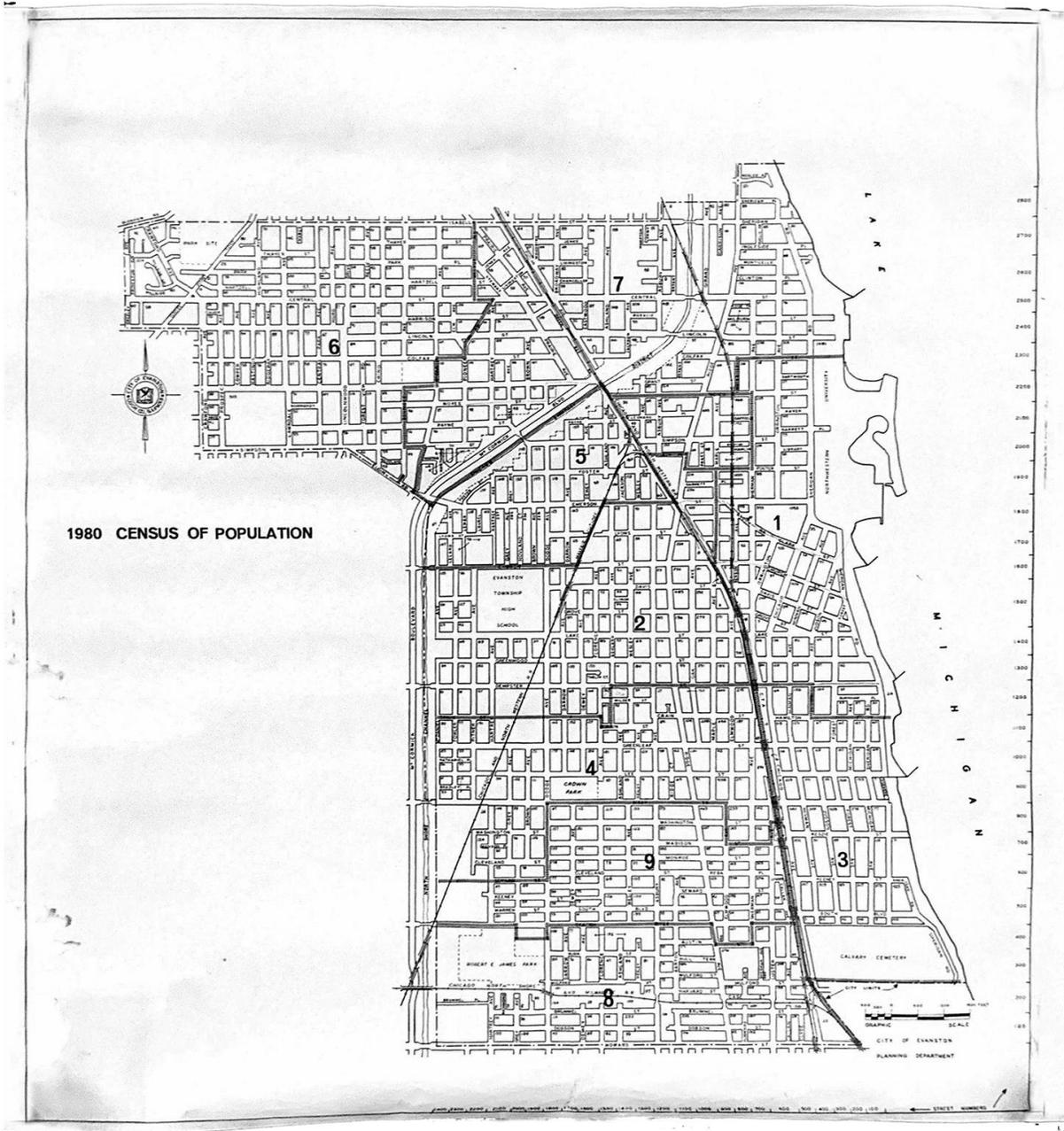


1924 Ward map (City of Evanston)



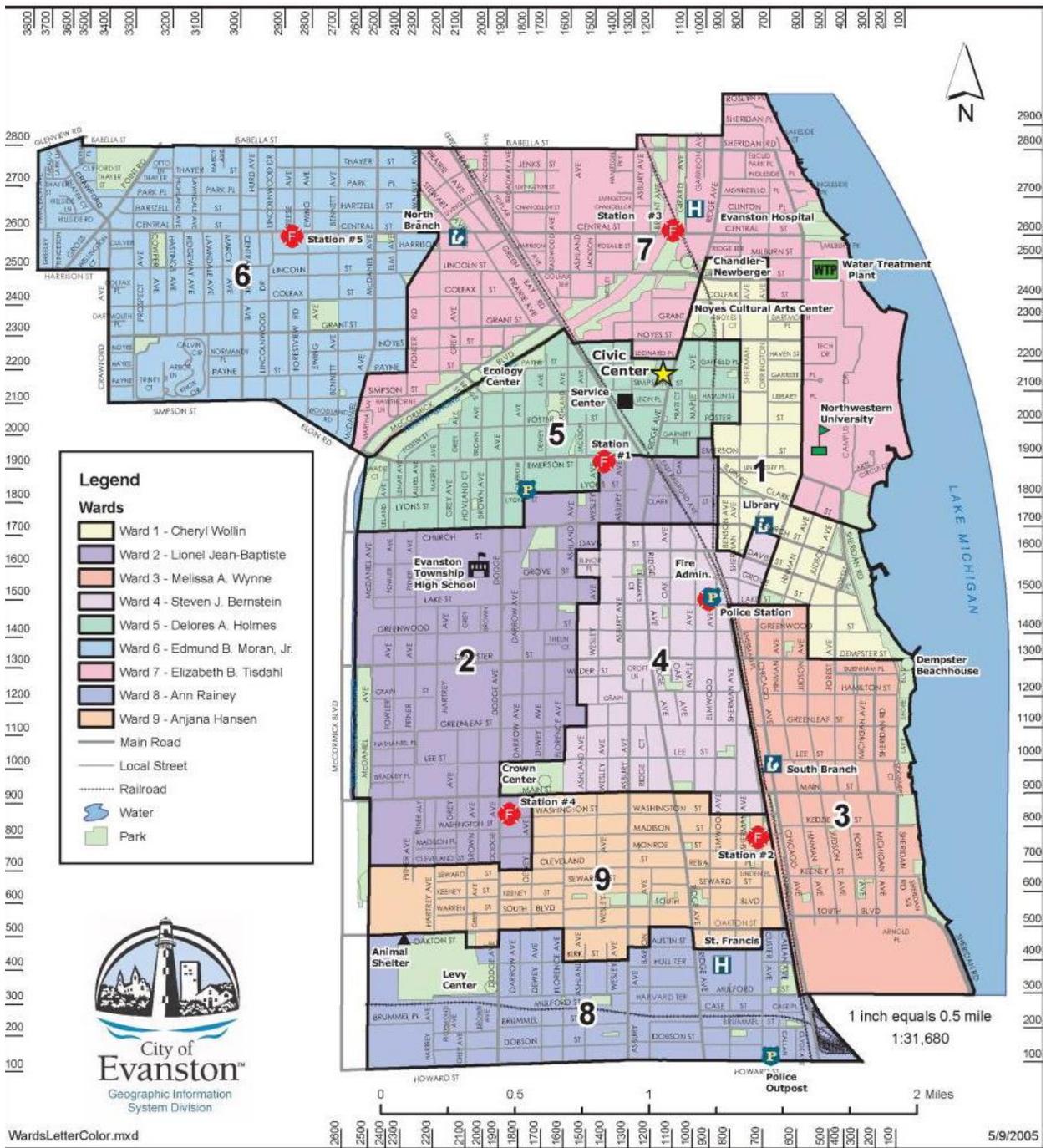
1942 ward map (City of Evanston)

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1980 Ward map (City of Evanston)

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2005 Ward map (City of Evanston)

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CONCLUSION

This report draws from research and resources compiled over many years by its respective authors. While it is intended to provide an overview of relevant issues related to Evanston's history, it is only a small sample of the vast amount of information and data concerning the various issues it outlines.

We hope this report provides insight into the policies and practices that have impacted Black Evanston residents over the decades. There is a plethora of historical evidence that clearly shows patterns and practices of discrimination and segregation in the city. And, we should note, these were neither rare nor unusual in the United States during the period described here. Indeed, Evanston, along with cities and towns across the country, backed by state and federal laws, enacted discriminatory policies that, when taken together, constitute a network of national patterns aimed at segregating Black Americans and denying Black Americans equal access to opportunities and services, among other goals. Evanston was one city of many, to be sure, but the policies and practices of that one city are no less insidious and destructive merely because it did not act alone.

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RESOURCES

Oral Histories

Both the Evanston History Center and the Shorefront Legacy Center have an extensive collection of audio oral histories from African American residents. The recordings took place as early as 1971 through present day, capturing over 150 audio hours of lived experiences in Evanston. In these recording, the consistent themes that presented themselves included 1) Housing issues and discrimination, 2) Foster School and its impact, 3) the Emerson Street Branch YMCA, a segregated branch of the Central (now McGaw) YMCA, 4) the Community Hospital, 5) Work, social and civic life, and 6) Engagement with members in the white community.

The oral history collections at the Evanston History Center are cataloged, many are transcribed and they all have been digitized. Specific to the African American experience, the recordings are mostly from the early 1970s as part of the Wayne Watson collection. Watson was employed at the Evanston Public Library while pursuing his Doctorate at Northwestern University. His resulting work included approximately 100 audio tapes, a transcript from a local radio station on Black issues, and indexed newspaper listings. The others are from the early 1980s and the early 1990s.

The oral history collections at Shorefront are available at the Shorefront Legacy Center. The bulk of the collection is in the process of being digitized. However, there is a select collection of 38 recordings that were primarily produced during the latter part of 1990s and is available online complete with transcriptions. (www.shorefrontvoice.org)

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