

Harrison Neighborhood Association Anti-Racism Project Summary

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Conducted on behalf of Harrison Neighborhood Association
July, 2007**

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Anti-Racism Project Summary

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For: The Harrison Neighborhood Association

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Executive Summary

- Initially, the Harrison Neighborhood Association wanted 6 completed institutionalized racism cases for the community of Harrison according to an anti-racist theoretical framework. Over the course of the project, this was revised to 4 cases to allow for revisions. The cases were to include: a formal case analysis, an informal story, and an accompanying PowerPoint presentation. Later this was amended to include a glossary of terms occurring in the 4 case studies.
 - The 4 case studies were completed.
 - The 4 accompanying stories were completed.
 - The glossary was completed.
 - The PowerPoint presentation was completed.

- The cases were selected for this analysis by both Larry Hiscock, Executive Director for the Harrison Neighborhood Association and the Undoing Racism Taskforce (made-up of community volunteers, board members, and Harrison Neighborhood Association staff) The cases selected for this project were:
 - 1) The case of Bobby William's gas stations in Harrison;
 - 2) The history of segregation and the concentration of poverty in Harrison;
 - 3) The Hollman Decree;
 - 4) An anti-racist analysis of the Harrison Neighborhood Association itself.

- The data for this project was obtained from books, original newspaper articles and documents, interviews with community members, and research over the internet.

- The Harrison Neighborhood Association also requested that any relevant first-source information uncovered in the research process be photocopied and given to them to demonstrate how racism and segregation have affected their community.
 - Documents were obtained from the Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis;
 - Government documents and racism reports were obtained from the Minneapolis public library, including the source of a map that was of interest to the Harrison Neighborhood Association;
 - Photographs of Harrison and documents (such as newspaper articles from 1920-1960) were obtained from the Minnesota History Center and the Sumner Public Library;
 - Photographs were taken of community locations and documents with a digital camera.

Goals and Objectives

Project Goals

- 1) To develop 6 case studies of institutionalized racism (past and present) in the Harrison community using an anti-racism framework. These case studies will consist of 2 parts: 1) a brief narrative written in common language for assisting those both inside and outside of the community to understand how institutionalized racism affects the people of Harrison and 2) a factual account of events with all relevant references included to legitimate and substantiate the accompanying narratives.
- 2) To develop a PowerPoint presentation based on the 6 case studies that will be used for educational purposes both within the Harrison Neighborhood Association and to educate other community members, partners, and those interacting with the community of Harrison.
- 3) To meet with resident leadership, seek out first source documentation to support the case studies, and interview community members and/or relevant officials involved in the case studies.
- 4) The Research Assistant will also participate in the Undoing Racism Taskforce meetings and a People's Institute for Survival and Beyond anti-racism training in November.
- 5) Meet all deadlines as determined with resident leadership and Larry Hiscock, Executive Director of the Harrison Neighborhood Association.

Timeline

Tasks Necessary	Time Required
Get familiar with the Harrison community, resident leadership, and the workings of the Undoing Racism Taskforce	Through the middle of September
Case study #1	Completed by the end of September
Case study #2	Completed by the middle of October
Case study #3	Completed by the end of October
Participation in Anti-Racism training (the People's Institute)	November 9 and 10
Case study #4	Completed by the middle of November
Case study #5	Completed by the end of November
Case study #6	Completed by the middle of December
PowerPoint presentation	Completed by December 22
Ongoing	Participation in Undoing Racism Taskforce Meetings and involvement with staff and community members.

The Final Project Products

The final products from the project were determined to be:

- 1) 6 2-part case studies.
- 2) Copies of any relevant first source information.
- 3) A PowerPoint presentation based on the case studies.

The final product will have multiple uses that include but are not limited to the following:

1. *Organization-wide Undoing Racism Training:* In September of 2004, HNA had 35 resident and community leaders participate in a 2-day intensive anti-racism workshop conducted by People's Institute for Survival and Beyond. Well known anti-racism trainers from across the country conducted the workshop.

The Undoing Racism Task Force of the Harrison Neighborhood Association is planning to host another organization-wide training in January of 2007. Harrison leadership will be able to use the case studies to lead Harrison specific modules of the workshop. This will move the training from generalities to the concrete reality of their community. It will also be a tremendous opportunity for community leaders to work hand in hand with seasoned anti-racist organizers.

2. *Educating Harrison Residents and Allies:* The final product will be used to educate resident and allies through formal presentations, distribution of the final document, and HNA's new website. The most important use will be the internal storytelling that will build confidence of leadership, be shared over backyard fences, and build an organization culture that evaluates its surroundings through an Anti-Racist lens.
3. *Making the Case for Racial and Economic Equity:* HNA leadership and staff continually have to remind people about local history, and make the connection to the hardship currently being faced in North Minneapolis. Much of American history has been White washed and local history is almost entirely forgotten. Simple requests to participate in decision-making, and requests that public subsidy should benefit the community is easily disregarded (or aggressively challenged similar to this week's drama) when City staff, Developers and Policy-makers have a one-sided or no history.

Project Participants

The roles of everyone who will be working on the project were:

Toran Hansen	Research Assistant
Larry Hiscock	Direct Supervisor, provide several initial case studies to focus on.
Sandra Richardson	Oversee the project to see that it conforms with anti-racist principles. (Representative of the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, partnering on this project.
Members of the Undoing Racism Taskforce	Provide input on case studies, ideas for case studies, and information on anti-racism and potential community implications for the research.
Other community members	Will provide input on the project offering their insights and perspectives.

The Project Work and Methods

For this project I used a wide variety of methods to complete the case studies on institutionalized racism in Harrison. Much of the material on which the case studies were based came from a literature review. Literature came from electronic searches on the internet, library searches at the Minneapolis public library, the University of Minnesota library system, and the Sumner public library, and from the CURA website itself. I also went to the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul, to find some copies of photographs that the Harrison Neighborhood Association had photocopies of. I found all of the original photographs, which I took digital photos of. The end result of these literature searches was a variety of documents and photographs that were given to the Harrison Neighborhood Association for their records.

Data was also acquired for the project from qualitative interviews of the staff and board of directors at the Harrison Neighborhood Association, the residents (past and present) of Harrison, and other people who were concerned with battling racism in Harrison. The contacts were given to me by the Executive Director of the Harrison Neighborhood Association, Larry Hiscock. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured fashion, based on an interview guide, but discussion frequently did not unfold in as linear of a fashion as the guide would suggest. Frequently discussions were conversational in nature with many probes to draw out the perspectives of the interviewees in-depth.

Data and information came from some non-traditional sources as well. I attended monthly Undoing Racism Taskforce meetings while working on the project. Taskforce members offered input on the case studies and developing work, as well as ideas for research topics and methods. I also attended a two-day Anti-Racism workshop, hosted by the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond. The workshop was helpful to me personally in analyzing my feelings and perspective regarding racism in the United States but I also used many of the ideas explored in the workshop as part of my anti-racist analysis in the case studies.

For the most part, I worked on one case at a time. As I completed cases, I gave an electronic copy to Larry to review himself and give to other staff and board members for their review. Larry gave me feedback on the cases and in response to his feedback, I edited them to better meet the needs of the Harrison Neighborhood Association. In part due to the importance of this revision process, we decided to reduce the number of cases to be completed from 6 to 4. Larry felt that the Harrison Neighborhood Association would rather have 4 cases that were more complete and polished than 6 rougher cases. After the final drafts of the cited, research cases were completed, I completed 2-page stories on the cases in common language (eliminating jargon where possible) to be used in training events. Finally, I completed the PowerPoint presentation based on all the cases that will be used at training events.

The Harrison Neighborhood Association plan to use the cases and PowerPoint presentation for a training immediately following the project, in January 2007. They also

have copies of certain first source documents that I uncovered over the course of the training which can be used to demonstrate how institutionalized racism has affected their community either for training or for other purposes. These documents include certain reports that were used in the Hollman Decree, newspaper articles from the early to mid 1900s in the Sumner-Glenwood area, a report outlining Minneapolis city-planning from 1938, and photos from the Minnesota History Center, with permission to use them for training purposes.

Overall, this project demanded a great deal of creativity, flexibility, and initiative. Supervision was minimal. I met with Larry once every 2-3 weeks and we e-mailed back and forth about once per week. Racism taskforce meetings that also provided some oversight on the project occurred once per month. Because there was very minimal supervision on this project, I had to be resourceful in finding and interviewing contacts, locating first-source documents, and writing the research documents. This also meant that I was given a good deal of freedom in approaching the cases and doing the work that was assigned to me.

There was 195 hours allotted for this project. With 10 hours for holiday time and 15 hours allotted to the Undoing Racism Workshop that I attended November 9 and 10. With 175 hours remaining for finding sources, analyzing the data, and writing the case studies, 4 completed cases seemed more realistic than 6. The 4 cases that we chose to focus on for this project were:

- 1) The case of Bobby William's gas stations in Harrison;
- 2) The history of segregation and the concentration of poverty in Harrison;
- 3) The Hollman Decree;
- 4) An anti-racist analysis of the Harrison Neighborhood Association itself.

Ultimately, we decided to include a master glossary to accompany the cases, in order to ensure that people who might read and interpret them would be able to understand the terms used (see Appendix). This meant that the 4 cases would be even more complete and accessible to potential anti-racist trainees. While it was disappointing to complete only 4 cases when we originally intended to complete 6, I was pleased that the cases came out more polished for training purposes. If someone were to conduct any further cases though, I would recommend investigating cases that were less property focused. All of these cases focus directly on property ownership in Harrison. To round out the cases, it seems that institutions such as the criminal justice system, the school system, and other important community institutions should also be considered to provide a more complete racial analysis of the inequities in the community of Harrison.

Log of Assistantship Hours

Date:	Time (hrs):	Activities:
Friday, September 8	2:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Larry- background info. • Background research on Harrison
Monday, September 11	4:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read through background materials • Complete CURA forms
Wednesday, September 13	2:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undoing racism taskforce meeting • Type up notes re: internship
Thursday, September 14	1:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Kris, Larry, and Sandra
Wednesday, September 20	2:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-up questionnaire guide for gas station case • Preliminary research for gas station case • Contacts attempted in gas station case
Friday, September 22	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Went to city hall to look up gas station records • To HNA to print records and check in with Larry • To gas station sites to take photos • Downloaded PDF program • E-mailed Shellie
Saturday, September 23	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrote first half of case study
Monday, September 25	.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editing
Wednesday, September 28	3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formatting of case study • Call contact/e-mail Larry • Add references, etc. • Work on analysis
Friday, October 6	3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with Larry • Research on Bassett Creek • Find articles on environmental racism
Saturday, October 7	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line research
Sunday, October 8	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research
Friday, October 27	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research in school library
Saturday, October 28	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write most of history case
Sunday, October 29	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish history case
Thursday, November 2	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Larry
Saturday, November 4	4.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy historical society photos • Organize photos
Wednesday, November 8	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editing

Thursday, November 9	7.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undoing racism workshop
Friday, November 10	7.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undoing racism workshop
Wednesday, November 15	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Larry
Thursday, November 16	2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research at Sumner Library • Photocopy/Photos
Sunday, November 19	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on Hollman Case
Wednesday, November 22	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on Hollman Case • Photocopy documents
Saturday, November 25	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize photos from Sumner Library • Do outline for Hollman Case
Sunday, November 26	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start writing Hollman Case
Tuesday, November 28	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More Hollman writing
Wednesday, November 29	3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue writing Hollman
Thursday, November 30	5.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue writing Hollman
Friday, December 1	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proofread Hollman • E-mail Larry • Talk to Sunny
Sunday, December 3	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research HNA
Wednesday, December 6	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research HNA
Friday, December 8	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Institutionalized Racism
Sunday, December 10	3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start writing HNA case
Monday, December 11	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue writing HNA
Wednesday, December 13	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Larry • Continue writing HNA
Thursday, December 14	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with Malik
Friday, December 15	2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue writing HNA
Sunday, December 17	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Southeast Asians in Minneapolis: read Larry's book, find journal articles, read journal articles • Add Southeast Asian material to the History of Harrison case
Monday, December 18	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Larry • Interview with Annie
Tuesday, December 19	5.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on glossary for cases • Fix writing issues discussed yesterday with Larry • Call various interview prospects • Work on sample stories

Wednesday, December 20	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate primary documents: City Hall & Minneapolis Public Library • Continue writing sample stories • Add/change captions on two cases • Spoke with Tim
Thursday, December 21	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call interview prospects • Final touches on history story • Send final drafts of first 3 cases to Larry • Begin working on final CURA report
Friday, December 22	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with Mitch • Contact other interview prospects
Sunday, December 24	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin PPT presentation • Work on CURA report and HNA case
Wednesday, December 27	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call Larry and Sandra • Work on CURA report and HNA case
Thursday, December 28	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with Larry • Interview with Jaki • Work on CURA report, PowerPoint presentation, and HNA case and story • Research quotes for inclusion in first-source information sources • Research housing committee documents
Friday, December 29	6.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt to contact Sandra and Velva • Work on PowerPoint presentation • Work on HNA case • Touch-ups for history and gas station cases • Work on CURA report
Sunday, December 31	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touch-up CURA report and HNA case • Send case and report to Larry
Wednesday, January 3	.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to contact Sandra • Create Master CD for HNA
Thursday, January 4	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation] • Presentation Preparation • Meeting with Larry

The Final Documents

The Case of the Two Vacant Gas Stations

By Tory Hansen
September 23, 2006

Narrative

*This case illustrates many aspects of **institutionalized racism** on both the interpersonal and neighborhood levels. When Bobby Williams elects to run a successful gas station, in a wealthy, Caucasian neighborhood, while abandoning two service stations in neighboring, racially-diverse Harrison, he chooses to abandon the people of Harrison and their problems. He does not see the problems experienced by the people of Harrison as his own and will not take responsibility for them, in spite of his presence in the business community there. Instead, he chooses to support the people of Bryn Mawr, where he does seem to see himself as part of the community. In this way, he exhibits **institutionalized superiority**, in blaming the people of Harrison for their complex social problems (**victim-blaming**). Meanwhile, many of the people in Harrison, expect no better from their business leaders and, as such, demonstrate their **internalized inferiority**.*

Bobby Williams is an influential Caucasian businessman who has abandoned the community of Harrison. In leaving his two abandoned gas stations (on Girard Street and Penn Street) he has shown the racially diverse people of Harrison that it is OK to neglect his properties in their neighborhood. Meanwhile, he is running a successful gas station in the neighboring community of Bryn Mawr, a wealthy neighborhood made-up overwhelmingly of White people. The people of Harrison have internalized these messages and frequently do not even think that another possibility exists, new businesses replacing the eyesores that have become the backdrop for the people living their lives in Harrison.

Bobby's abandoned gas stations have devalued properties in the neighborhood, cost people business, and perhaps posed environmental and health risks to the people of Harrison. Neighbors seem to light-up when they picture a thriving business in place of the abandoned service station lots. The indefinite abandonment of the businesses has left the distressed with less hope and opportunity, of which they are in short supply. Bobby has a responsibility to the people of Harrison to restore his businesses or to sell them to another entrepreneur willing to participate more fully in the Harrison civic life and promote a thriving community.

It is evident that this is a case of institutionalized racism. Bobby is *blaming the people of Harrison* for their difficult circumstances, brought on by a complex web of *social, structural, and racial inequality*. He has shown the people of Harrison that *property neglect is "their" problem*, not including them in the "we" of the communities he has shown responsibility for, White communities. He has demonstrated his *feelings of superiority* by indicating that a neighborhood effort to improve their community is embarrassing the people of Harrison by drawing attention to their community. Bobby's

abandoning the Harrison service stations illustrates *institutionalized racism* because he has, knowingly or not, participated in the societal structures which continue to *perpetuate the oppression of the people of color* living and working in Harrison.

Intentions

Robert “Bobby” Williams is a well known Caucasian businessman in Minneapolis. He is also a councilman in Columbia Heights. Service and giving back to his community seem to be strong values for Bobby. For instance, Bobby and Steve’s Auto World sponsors an annual golf tournament to raise money for the Autism Society of Minnesota, the Red Cross, and the Columbia Heights Community Center (Bobby and Steve’s Auto World, 2006). He presumably has intentions to develop his community and enrich the lives of his customers stating, “I like serving people and there’s nothing greater than helping people (Bobby and Steve’s Auto World, 2006).” Clearly, he enjoys being a businessman and sees this role as a way to give something back. He indicates, “I’ve never worried about money. I was learning a lot [in his early days as a businessman] and having fun (Bobby and Steve’s Auto World, 2006).”

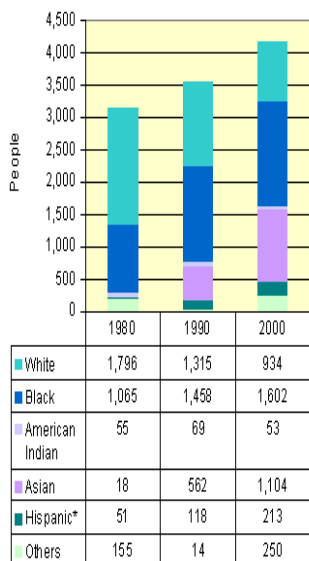
Bobby has owned numerous gas stations over the years. From 1975 to 1989 he grew his gas station business until he owned 12 stations. Then he had an accident and felt the need to downsize his business (Bobby and Steve’s Auto World, 2006). He says, “I had to get rid of the weak sisters [the less profitable stations] because eighty percent of my business came from twenty percent of my stations (Bobby and Steve’s Auto World, 2006).” At this time he sold eight of the stations and kept the most profitable four. It wasn’t until October 1996 that the idea for Bobby and Steve’s Auto World came to fruition (Bobby and Steve’s Auto World, 2006). The philosophy of Bobby and Steve’s Auto World includes the principle that, “serving people is the most important part of Bobby and Steve’s Auto World (Bobby and Steve’s Auto World, 2006).”

The Present State of Affairs

Bobby Williams is the registered tax payer of a gas station and a garage in the community of Harrison, at 315 Penn Street and one at 1307 Glenwood Avenue North (at Glenwood and Girard), respectively (City of Minneapolis, 2006a). They were purchased by Bobby in the late 1970s (Olson, 2006). The buildings on both lots were built in 1961. They are currently assessed at \$97,000 and \$130,000. Bobby registered the Penn Street location as a vacant building in 2003. The Girard location is currently considered “inactive” though no vacant building permit has been registered. Bobby is also the registered owner and taxpayer at a successful gas station still operating in the neighboring community of Bryn Mawr, at 328 South Cedar Lake Road (City of Minneapolis, 2006a). It was purchased by Bobby in September 2003 (Bobby and Steve’s Auto World, 2006), after abandoning his service stations in Harrison. The building on this property was built in 1965. This Bobby and Steve’s Auto World location is currently valued at \$362,500 (City of Minneapolis, 2006a).

Harrison is a very diverse community. At the time of the 2000 census, Harrison had a population of 4,156 of whom 22% were Caucasian, 39% were African-American, 5.1% were Hispanic, and 27% were of Asian descent. 37% of the population was below the poverty line. Bryn Mawr had a population of 2,663 of whom 92% were Caucasian, 2.6% were African-American, 1% were Hispanic, and 2.4% were of Asian descent. Only 2% of the Bryn Mawr population was below the poverty line (City of Minneapolis, 2006b). Bobby also owns service stations in two other Minneapolis locations in the Downtown East area and in Windom (Bobby and Steve’s Auto World, 2006). Windom had a population of 4,984 of whom 70% were Caucasian 16.7% were African-American, 6% were Hispanic, and 2.5% were of Asian descent. 8% of the Windom population was below the poverty line. Downtown East however has a very atypical population base being in a commercial district with a population of only 128 (City of Minneapolis, 2006b).

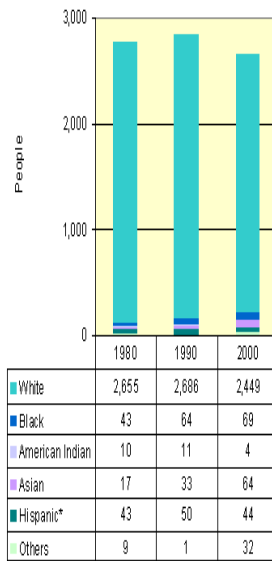
Harrison: Ethnic distribution



*Hispanics could be any race

Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development with data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing (SF1)

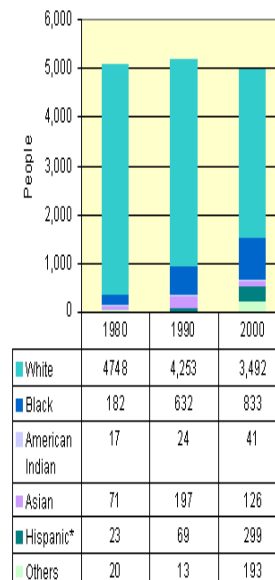
Bryn Mawr: Ethnic distribution



*Hispanics could be any race

Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development with data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing (SF1)

Windom: Ethnic Distribution



Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development with data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing (SF1)

Figure 1. Demographic comparisons between Harrison, Bryn Mawr, and Windom.

Bobby sees his Penn Street gas station as an “embarrassment”. He says that he bought the station in the late 1970s but he had to board it up in 1999 when federal regulations required him to upgrade the gas tanks (Olson, 2006). He admits, “it has been a headache for me, I want to sell it (Olson, 2006).” He says that it has been for sale for several years, though he also suggests that perhaps he could reinvest in the building and

restore it once again. Although, if he sells the property, he does not want it to become a gas station because it would compete with Bobby and Steve's Auto World in Bryn Mawr. Since its abandonment, *the station has been the target of graffiti and garbage has been strewn about the property*. In fact, garbage was ordered to be removed from the property by the city inspections department earlier this year. Bobby says that he has dealt with the garbage problem but that the garbage and graffiti keep on coming. Bobby says that his other service station on Girard Street is not for sale because he expects the city of Minneapolis to "clean up" the area to make room for a new stadium [presumably the property will be worth more at this time] (Olson, 2006).

The neighbors in Harrison residing and working near the abandoned service stations find them an eyesore. They wish to redevelop the area, to rekindle businesses in the area, and make the area *look nicer and more habitable* for their children. *The vacant service stations are an impediment* to these goals. For this reason, concerned citizens in the area have started **Neighbors Against Abandoned Gas Stations (NAAGS)**. Their motto for their campaign against the abandoned gas stations which has included sit-ins in their neighborhood is "clean it up or tear it down" (Olson, 2006). Larry Hiscock of the Harrison Neighborhood Association indicated his desire for the property to sell indicating that a lot nearby recently sold for \$25,000 (Olson, 2006).

Even Bobby indicates that he has been "neglectful" (Olson, 2006). He says, "I probably should've done something with that store [the Penn Street location] before this (Olson, 2006)". He does however seem to be *blaming the citizens of Harrison* for their plight suggesting, "I am not exactly lily white, but the house right next door is boarded up. It's not a very good neighborhood (Olson, 2006)." He's even gone so far as to state that the concerned citizens in the area are "embarrassing themselves" when they have exercised their right to free speech and voiced their displeasure with Bobby's service stations that have been abandoned in their neighborhood for years. He believes that it is in bad taste to, "[call] attention to a neighborhood that needs so much help (Olson, 2006)."

Consequences

Neighbors of Bobby's abandoned service stations have been affected by their presence in the community. Yee Vue is the owner/operator of Highland Oriental market, which is right next to the Girard Street station at 1315 Glenwood Avenue North. He believes that the abandoned service station is *artificially depressing the value of his property* and may make it harder sell if he wants to sell it one day. He is concerned about the tires and cars in the back of the property. He says that occasionally people walking by throw junk in there as well. Not knowing whether this might pose *an environmental hazard*, he called the city's environmental control board once to investigate. He thinks that having an abandoned building next door may even reduce his business volume a little bit. Mr. Vue thought that it would be great if he could buy the property and expand his business operations (2006).

Don Nanthavong, a property owner and resident two doors down from the Penn Street station at 2114 Glenwood Avenue North, *never really thought about the abandoned gas station* much before. He thought that fixing-up the gas station would make the area nicer but it doesn't bother him much as it is. He does think that it could be *diminishing the value of his property* and thought that it would be a great property to buy to put another business in its place. He thinks that the owner probably abandoned it because he was "scared it would be robbed or something (2006)."

Two other neighbors of the Penn Street station, Lynda and Opal Hall rent the apartment immediately beside the station at 2208 Glenwood Avenue North. They think that the gas station certainly looks "tacky." They say that neighborhood kids sometimes play at the station so *the gas station site being clean is very important*. They would like something to be done to *change the look* of the gas station. They believe that a new business like a barber shop or a restaurant would really spruce up the neighborhood and give people a place to meet up. They think that the gas station may have been abandoned because the owner was worried about "getting stuck-up." They state that they *do not feel the owner would leave the gas station abandoned this long in a White neighborhood*. They think that he wouldn't have the same *fear of crime* in a White neighborhood. Currently, the property where they reside is for sale because the owner "doesn't think it is worth fixing up (2006)."

It is clear then that the neighbors of these abandoned service stations believe that the stations are *adversely affecting the neighborhood and their lives*. They indicated that the service stations are *reducing property values and make it less attractive* to invest more in their properties. They all indicated that they'd like to see new businesses put in place of the abandoned stations and this would have a positive impact on the neighborhood. Furthermore, they had concerns about the immediate environment in and around the gas stations saying that they have various *safety concerns*. The neighbors of the Penn Street station felt that one factor in the owner leaving the gas station abandoned was his *perception of crime in the area because it was not a Caucasian neighborhood*.

Analysis

Institutionalized racism – Hillard defines racism as, an institutionalized system of power. It encompasses a web of economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systemize and ensure an unequal distribution of privilege, resources, and power in favor of the dominant group and at the expense of all other racial groups (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997, p.9).

This case of Bobby Williams abandoning his service stations in Harrison is a clear example of a wealthy Caucasian entrepreneur *exercising his privilege at the expense of a racially diverse community*. The fact that he has a successful gas station in Bryn Mawr, an overwhelmingly Caucasian wealthy suburb right next to Harrison, while neglecting his service stations in Harrison demonstrates his *distance from the community*. Particularly because, while he insists that he would like to sell his gas station on Penn Street, he does

not want another gas station there as it would compete with his establishment in Bryn Mawr. This may mean that the property takes longer to sell, to the detriment of the people of Harrison. This has *nothing to do with his intentions*, which may or may not be racist. “Racist behavior is measured by its outcomes for people of color, rather than its intentions (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997, p.22).”

Internalized superiority – The people’s institute defines internalized superiority as, the accepting and acting out of the definition of self, given you by yourself, rooted in a race construct that designated [the dominant] race as the superior race. It is a multigenerational empowerment process that internalizes and often makes invisible to the designated superior race their white skin privilege (The People’s Institute, 2006).

It is clear from his comments that Bobby a Caucasian male overtly exhibits internalized superiority over the racially diverse citizens of Harrison. Declaring that the concerned citizens in Harrison are “embarrassing themselves” when they address community concerns is a way of indicating that they *do not have the standing* to attempt to remedy some of the ills existing in their community.

Internalized oppression – Gloria Yamato, an anti-racist scholar says that internalized oppression is when, “the person in the group being targeted by oppression ends up believing many of the negative things that are said in the dominant culture...it leads to accepting racism in its many forms (Kaufman, 2003, p.137-138).” In this case, the *neighbors of the abandoned service stations never questioned the very presence of the stations*. They have come to view the presence of the service stations as natural and inevitable, rather than as problematic. The dominant culture has created the *belief that it is acceptable* to have buildings in the neighborhood that bring down property values and are potentially unsafe. Upon reflection, they realize that cleaning-up the gas stations and installing new businesses would benefit them and their neighborhood in a variety of ways. However, they have *internalized the message that the abandonment of the service stations is acceptable* in their neighborhood though they know that the same would not be true in the primarily Caucasian neighborhood of Bryn Mawr immediately beside them.

Victim-blaming- Ryan defines blaming the victim as “locat[ing] the origins of social problems in the victims of the problem rather than in any deficiency or structural defect in the social system (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997, p.16).” Bobby’s lack of acknowledgement that as *he is a landowner in Harrison and, as such, that he is a part of the community* means that he can continue to believe that “*they*” are suffering and he has *little or no responsibility* to do something about it as he distances himself from their collective “we”. In fact, he takes this a step further engaging in victim-blaming behavior, attempting to escape his responsibility to the neighborhood of Harrison when he suggests that because “the house right next door is boarded up [and] it’s not a very good neighborhood.” The innuendo he presents here is that it is *understandable that he has been “neglectful”*.

Addendum

On December 22, 2006, the gas station on Penn Street was demolished, due in part to pressure from the NAAGS campaign (Carney, 2006; Kare 11 News, 2006). A local developer, Jennifer Day hired contractor Ross Construction to demolish the structures on the site in front of several Harrison residents, after purchasing the property (Carney, 2006). Harrison residents are hopeful for what the site might now become as Ms. Day plans to turn it into a mixed use residential/commercial facility (Carney, 2006; Kare 11 News, 2006). The NAAGS campaign will continue though until Bobby's other gas station is 'cleaned up or torn down' (Kare 11 News, 2006).

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Sample Story – The Case of the Two Vacant Gas Stations
By Tory Hansen

Bobby Williams is a businessman who bought two gas stations in Harrison at 315 Penn Street and at 1307 Glenwood Avenue North (on Girard). He abandoned these gas stations without regard for the effect this action might have on the people of Harrison. Luckily, the people of Harrison banded together as Neighbors Against Abandoned Gas Stations (NAAGS) to get him to “clean them up or tear them down”.

Bobby Williams has a long history in Harrison as a business owner. He purchased his two gas stations in Harrison in the late 70s. When he opened them, they offered valuable services to the people of Harrison, who came to trust and rely on Bobby Williams as a contributing member to the Harrison business community. In fact, Bobby characterizes himself as an honest businessman who contributes to the economic vitality of the communities that his businesses operate in.

He ignored these principles and violated the trust of the people of Harrison when he abandoned the stations 20 years after opening them. It wasn't just that he abandoned them, he left them vacant! The stations quickly turned into eyesores that took up valuable commercial space in Harrison and were environmental and safety hazards. Graffiti and garbage accumulated in the properties over time. So much for Bobby valuing community service and the people of Harrison!

To add insult to injury, after closing the stations in Harrison, Bobby opened another station right down the street in Bryn Mawr. Now, as anyone from the area knows, Bryn Mawr is “just over the tracks” from Harrison both literally and figuratively. Bryn Mawr is a community that is almost exclusively made up of White people, who are wealthier than the ethnically and racially diverse people of Harrison. Perhaps Bobby thinks of “community” in his vision of community service as the White people in Bryn Mawr whose business community he chose to participate in.

Bobby chose not to sell the stations to someone else for a couple of reasons: 1) He didn't want anyone to put up a gas station and compete with his Bryn Mawr station, taking away business simply through honest business competition, and 2) He wanted to wait until the property values of his Harrison stations rose. Now if this sounds selfish to you, it is! Furthermore, it is racist. It is not a coincidence that Bobby felt more at home serving the people of Bryn Mawr than the people of Harrison. It is also not a coincidence that Bobby felt no urgency in cleaning-up or selling his service stations. If the stations were in a wealthier White neighborhood you better believe that Bobby would be cleaning-up the stations or selling them. How many times have you seen abandoned gas stations in the suburbs?

Let's look a little closer at Bobby's views of the people of Harrison based on some things that he said publicly about them:

Bobby sees his Penn Street gas station as an “embarrassment”.

Bobby says that his service station on Girard Street is not for sale because he expects the city of Minneapolis to “clean up” the area to make room for a new stadium [presumably the property will be worth more at this time].

Even Bobby indicates that he has been “neglectful”. He says, “I probably should’ve done something with that store [the Penn Street location] before this.”

Perhaps the worst thing that Bobby has suggested though is that the concerned citizens in the area are “embarrassing themselves” when they have exercised their right to free speech and voiced their displeasure with Bobby’s service stations. He believes that it is in bad taste to, “[call] attention to a neighborhood that needs so much help.”

It is clear that Bobby holds some very racist attitudes toward the people of Harrison. He doesn’t believe that they should be able to voice displeasure for his self-admitted negligence in their community. The people of Harrison have suffered as a result. Their business district continues to be less vibrant than it could be and the years of people facing his abandoned gas stations have diminish neighborhood people’s hopes for the area to improve. He also thinks that the people of Harrison are responsible for their community difficulties. Many of the problems faced by the diverse members of Harrison are obviously the result of years of racial segregation and institutionalized racism in Minneapolis, and have not been created by the people in Harrison themselves as he seems to suggest.

The other important thing to remember here is that this story illustrates something bigger and more important than Bobby Williams. It shows us how racist business practices are a part of the landscape in Minneapolis. Bobby was able to sit on his properties with no pressure to do sell them or clean them up until the people of Harrison told the rest of Minneapolis that this was not acceptable with their NAAGS campaign. Such practices are not tolerated in wealthier White neighborhoods in Minneapolis.

Happily this campaign had a positive result and on December 22, 2006, the Penn Street Station was demolished by a new developer who bought the property! The power of the people of Harrison was demonstrated. The Girard Street station remains vacant though. Time will tell if the people of Harrison will be again respected and the second gas station will be torn down.

The History of Harrison
By Tory Hansen
October 28, 2006

Narrative

*This case describes how the community of Harrison has hosted successive ethnic enclaves over the past 150 years or so. **Racial segregation** was used as a societal strategy to compartmentalize and concentrate poor ethnic immigrants to the area. The current economically disadvantaged African American, Hmong, and Lao populations are currently struggling with the barriers to their success established by this residential pattern, and is finding it particularly difficult to escape the cycle of poverty as previous ethnic groups have been able to do. Overarching changes to the economy established by globalization have meant that it is even harder for the residents of Harrison to find living wage jobs and climb the socio-economic ladder. **Unemployment patterns are connected to racial segregation and racial discrimination.** Perhaps an even greater concern is **the increasing gap in assets between African Americans and Caucasians** in the United States. **A lack of economic, social, natural, and human assets in Harrison**, further depresses the ability of the people of Harrison to withstand times of hardship and improve their lot in life. Furthermore, Minnesotans, who traditionally, do not talk openly about sensitive issues such as racial segregation and discrimination in public, **exhibiting “Minnesota nice” communication**, put up another obstacle to changing the tradition of racial segregation in Minneapolis.*

The history of Harrison is the history of compartmentalizing and segregating *undesirable ethnic enclaves* and their problems in the Near North. Early settlers, who were Caucasian immigrants, moved *to the area as a means to climb the socio-economic ladder*, after which they moved on to other communities. *The Jewish settlers who came to the area next met with prejudice and were segregated*, but managed to escape the cycle of poverty and oppression that they faced as they gained wider acceptance in Minneapolis. The African American population who came to the area in large numbers in the 1950s and the 1960s were not as fortunate.

African Americans in Harrison have not been able to access higher rungs on the socio-economic ladder in the same way that earlier settlers in the community did. There are *institutionalized barriers in Minneapolis* and in the wider American society that effectively *bar the African American population from access to higher levels of socio-economic status and societal assets*. Economic patterns, employment patterns, housing patterns, and an aversion of Minnesotans to discussing and challenging racism all contribute to creating societal obstacles to success for the African American residents of Harrison. *Greater access to societal assets and wider societal acceptance would help the African American residents of Harrison to escape the cycle of poverty and achieve success. Until these societal patterns are changed, it is unlikely that the residents of Harrison will be able to change their socio-economic status* in the same way that previous residents have been able to do. It will be interesting to *see how the newest ethnic groups to inhabit Harrison, the Hmong and Lao will fare* in Minneapolis.

The Distant Past - Intentions

Most of Sumner-Glenwood, along with other Near North Areas, developed into a solidly middle-class residential district around the turn of the century. Throughout the early twentieth century Lyndale Avenue remained a distinct social and physical boundary between the working-class area to the East and Sumner-Glenwood and other middle class areas to the west (Martin & Lanegran, 1983).

Historically, the Harrison-Glenwood-Summer area was a new immigrant enclave where residents could *move into, climb the socio-economic ladder, and move out of, escaping the cycle of poverty* (Edwards & Jessen, 2002). From the late 1800s to the 1920s, immigrants from places such as Finland, Germany, and Eastern Europe moved to the area, providing a support network for subsequent migrants from their countries of origin (Borchert et. al., 1983; Edwards & Jessen, 2002) Slowly these ethnic groups moved on and *a large Jewish community replaced them* (Borchert et. al., 1983). It became a commercial and religious center for the Jewish community, who numbered 43,700 in 1937, across Minneapolis (Berman and Schloff, 2002).

The Depression changed the climate in the Harrison area somewhat. While *buildings began to decay in the 1920s, social problems deepened and infrastructure deteriorated* at this time (Martin & Lanegran, 1983). In 1925, the Sumner-Field housing project was initiated to assist low income families. This project was to become “the standard” for low income housing in its day. The community “began to serve as a way station for immigrants with limited housing options, primarily Jews and Blacks (Martin & Lanegran, 1983, p.51).” Eventually, this community deterioration spread to other parts of the Near North. *By the late 1940s much of the area was being considered for public renewal* (Martin & Lanegran, 1983). Urban renewal was the term given to projects stemming from *the Housing Act of 1949*, which sought to “clear the slums” in order to attract middle-class residents and revitalize. “Urban renewal came to be known as “Negro removal” and was criticized for bulldozing low-income neighborhoods (Green & Haines, 2002, p. 22).” The deterioration resulted in migration from the region by wealthier families and the area began to decline in population (Martin & Lanegran, 1983).

In the 1950s and 1960s, another population shift took place as the Jewish community migrated north and west (eventually moving out to the suburbs) while *the African-American population grew in the area* (Borchert et. al., 1983; Berman and Schloff, 2002; Martin & Lanegran, 1983). This migration was motivated in part by economic and commercial success by Jewish families and in part by “pressures from the growing Black population (Berman and Schloff, 2002, p.14).” African-American business owners developed businesses on Broadway at this time (Black Relocation Association, Inc., 1996).

In the 1960s, a major renewal plan was undertaken in the Near North area to restore the deteriorating infrastructure. Most of the area’s buildings were saved and brought up to building code standards, other buildings were cleared, and new

construction took place. Many of the improvement projects were successful in reclaiming failing structures but, *in the community as a whole, there were large pockets of people requiring ongoing economic assistance and the physical deterioration of the cityscape continued.* This need ultimately drove *the building of public housing units, resulting in the area having one of the largest concentrations of public housing, and hence, poverty, in Minneapolis.* Many families were grateful for the available public housing in such a distressed area. The Glenwood project for example, which occurred from 1955 to 1968 provided low income family housing and housing for the elderly with low or moderate incomes. Most housing in the area became subsidized and frequently it was well maintained (Martin & Lanegran, 1983).

It is important to note that *Bryn Mawr was a significant exception* to the overall settlement pattern of ethnic groups replacing one another in the area. Bryn Mawr developed slowly over the course of time (Borchert et. al., 1983). “Because it is isolated from the rest of the Near North - separated by the railroad tracks and the meadows - this area has been far more stable than most of the Near North community (Borchert et. al., 1983, p.91).” Thus, with the exception of Bryn Mawr, the area’s history is *a history of successive ethnic enclaves.*

Segregationist Sentiments from the 1930s (excerpts taken from Schmid, 1938)

The Oak Lake Addition on the Near North Side, near Sixth and Lyndale, once a prosperous section of the near well-to-do, has been overrun by alien cultural and racial groups of relatively low-income and social status. The early pride and the solidarity of the community-conscious citizens was interrupted by the Jewish immigrants who began to settle there in 1890. Bitter opposition to the Jews was gradually overcome, as more and more Jews settled, and alarmed citizens sold or rented their property. Many of the former citizens of the area moved out of the area and let them go to ruin.

With the area becoming seedy and rents dropping, the Negroes around Seven Corners, finding their rents too high, began to move into houses in the Jewish area. The Negro immigration to the area reached its peak in 1910. It was now the turn of the Jews to become alarmed, and they began to sell out and move further north to Plymouth Avenue (p.19).

The population is either attracted to the outer districts [of Minneapolis] or driven out... People are driven out by (1) the expansion of commerce and industry; (2) the proximity of large ethnic or racial groups, such as Jews and Negroes, (3) noise and confusion of the increased traffic, and (4) the invasion of vice and its concomitant factors (p. 16).

In spite of the large northward migration of the Negro after the World War, the proportion of Negroes in Minneapolis has remained small. Most of the migrators [sic] settled in the large industrial centers of the North. The Negro population of Chicago increased itself six times from 1910 to 1930, and increased itself twenty times in Detroit

from 1910 to 1930. Fortunately, Minneapolis has, up to the present time, avoided many serious problems of racial adjustment with which so many Northern cities have to contend (p.39).

The Negroes are more or less involuntarily segregated in certain sections of the city [Minneapolis] by the pressure of public opinion, the low economic status of the Negro, and the desire to live where there is the least opposition to their presence. Although the Negro settlements are not static, they shift about less to other parts of the city than other races and classes of people. When Negroes invade a white neighborhood, usually considerable resentment and antipathy are exerted against the intruders. This resentment may take the form of chilling aloofness, or possibly might result in bombing, incendiarism [sic], and other forms of intimidation. Sometimes restrictive covenants or compacts are drawn up by the property holders, in which they agree not to sell or rent to Negroes. Attempts have also been made to segregate the Negroes in certain parts of the city by ordinances, but such laws have been declared unconstitutional (p.41).

The largest Negro communities are characteristically located in the marginal areas of the city, in which vice, crime, disease, bad housing, dependency, and other forms of personal and social disorganization are prevalent... It is said that when a Negro moves to a white neighborhood, the property value of the neighborhood decreases... When Negroes move into a white residential section, property owners very often become hysterical and are willing to dispose of their holdings at a great sacrifice (p.41).

Recent History

Segregation and exclusion [have] hardened as dominant determinants of residential patterns... Whites now have little contact with blacks... 86% of suburban White people live in suburban populations that have African American populations of less than 1% (Murphy & Cunningham, 2003).

In spite of the best of intentions of city officials and community members to stop or slow the deterioration, *the public came to associate the area with "the projects" and consider it run down and blighted* (Martin & Lanegran, 1983). Slum clearance and urban renewal, instead of positively affecting community restructuring, has tended to result in the *displacement of residents and businesses* (Murphy and Cunningham, 2003). The area became home to renters of property rather than owners, and *maintenance of buildings suffered* as a consequence. There were many *small business owners* in the early 1960s but the physical deterioration in the community *led many of them to leave*. As well, Olson highway was upgraded (becoming more like a freeway) and traffic patterns on that thoroughfare no longer supported the business community. With the commercial decline, *the area quickly became industrial*. The area became one to move out of as quickly as possible but *many families remained, trapped by the cycle of poverty* (Martin & Lanegran, 1983).

The Harrison community came to include *many of the poorest and least skilled people in Minneapolis, many of whom were African-American*. To be sure it was a refuge of sorts where people learned to trust and to rely on one another but this residential pattern also *concentrated some of the city's most disadvantaged by creating pockets of public housing units tended to collect many social problems in the Harrison area and exacerbate many of the problems associated with poverty*. In fact, *many of the public housing units were substandard and quickly fell into disrepair*. The Girard Terrace townhomes, built in 1965 provide a good example of a project plagued by poor construction and poor upkeep. Flooding from Basset creek ultimately caused the project to be boarded-up and abandoned (Martin & Lanegran, 1983).

It is important to stress how *racial and ethnic discrimination* have contributed to the deterioration of the Harrison community. Prior to World War II, *the Jewish community was stigmatized, and prejudice against them was pronounced*. It is in part this prejudice that led them to congregate in the Harrison area, to provide one another with social support networks in a hostile Minneapolis. Jews in Minneapolis had very limited housing options at that time. In this same way, the African American population had very few residential options when they started migrating to the region in the 1950s and 1960s (Martin & Lanegran, 1983). Thus *poor African Americans have been isolated from mainstream society, creating greater disparities between them and the Caucasian community* (Murphy & Cunningham, 2003). Racism may have led to political gerrymandering as well, when the Jewish community in Humboldt Heights was prevented from establishing itself as a separate township, for instance (Edwards & Jessen, 2002).

In July of 1967, frustration with the racial obstacles (relating to poverty, deteriorating infrastructure, lack of employment opportunities, racial segregation, etc.) that were preventing Near North citizens from escaping the cycle of poverty led to *race riots on Plymouth Avenue*. At that time 175 National Guardsmen were called into the region to respond to two nights of firebombing and other disturbances (Black Relocation Association, Inc., 1996). Local historian Mahmoud El Kati (2006) refers to the race riots as a "*rebellion*". He believes that this is an important distinction because it throws light on the *political dimensions of the uprising designed to overcome the patriarchy associated with the "inherited oppression"* felt by the Near North's African American population. Ultimately, the goal of the race riots were to raise the consciousness of the surrounding Minneapolis communities to the problems of discrimination experienced by the African American population in the Near North. This rebellion was *part of a wider national movement to achieve African American civil rights and a raised societal consciousness* in urban centers around the United States.

The riots were initiated by several African American youth on Knox and Plymouth Avenue. The youths were spending time near a local shop when some younger children entered it. They were chased out by the shop owner (not an African American), who was promptly challenged by the youth. The police then came and were challenged by the youth, as well. They were clearly acting out in response to long-term frustration

with their plight in the Near North. Ultimately rioting broke out, with youth throwing rocks at local shops until police roadblocks were set-up and the police broke up the rioting (Robinson, 2006).

This was a call to action for Harrison and surrounding communities, with African American leaders meeting with police and city officials to address the problem the following day. The local leaders shared their concerns about *the lack of community facilities, the lack of parks, the decaying infrastructure, and the lack of jobs in the area*. This broadened to a community-wide discussion of the problems and residents demonstrated their *concerns about the lack of access to recreation, public assistance, employment, street maintenance, employment, and the like*. In response to these concerns, The Way, a non-profit organization was established to assist the community with their employment and recreation concerns (Robinson, 2006).

It is often difficult for Minnesotans to acknowledge the racial dimensions of social concerns. *Minnesotans attempting to put on a “nice” public face, have avoided discussing how exclusionary and racial discrimination have left the people in the Harrison community with fewer opportunities*. It wasn't until the 1960s, with the election of a Jewish mayor, Mayor Naftlin, that the Minnesota Club, for instance, accepted Jewish members (Robinson, 2006). “Racism is something Minneapolis does not like to talk about or admit... “Nice” Minnesotans don't talk about it, but the ugly fact is that racism is alive (Edwards and Jessen, 2002, p.57).” *This lack of overt acknowledgement of the racial dimensions of social problems and poverty, creates perhaps a more insidious form of racism in Minneapolis, covert racism*. “Although many speak to the need to embrace diversity and multiculturalism[,] the infrastructure (e.g., policies, laws, beliefs, norms, media, language) is still in place supporting personal and institutional prejudice, oppression, and racism (Murphy and Cunningham, 2003, p.3)” It will be interesting to see how these racial overtones affect *the latest wave of immigrants to the Harrison community, the Hmong and Lao* (Edwards and Jessen, 2002).

The most recent immigrants to the Harrison community have been the Hmong and Lao communities (Geotz, 2002). The Twin Cities, in fact has the largest Hmong community in the United States, estimated between 60-75,000 people (Tsai, 2001). They came in large numbers to the United States after supporting the Americans in the Vietnam War, as the military had pledged to look after them after the war (Fadiman, 1997; Tsai, 2001). Frequently, their voyage to the United States was arduous and fraught with great peril (Moua & Rolland, 1994; Yang, 2001). This meant that *many of them suffered from mental health disorders and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* upon arriving to the United States (Tsai, 2001). They were *frequently taken advantage of en route to the United States by officials and entrepreneurs offering “help”* in escaping Laos, so many of them came with a distrust of American officials and social services, who frequently were *paternalistic and dismissed their cultural practices and values* (Fadiman, 1997; Moua & Rolland, 1994).

The Hmong and Lao communities are *very pluralistic*, with differences between them and within their own ethnic groups. The Lao community believes that the Hmong

community has a louder “bark” and is thus more able to access services and get public attention for their concerns (Chanthoung, 2006). As well, there are significant differences in how individuals identify themselves, as Asian or American. Frequently, *youth or people that were born in the United States, identify to a greater extent with American values and practices* than older or foreign-born individuals (Detzner; Tsai, 2001). This, coupled with differences in language acquisition, can result in *a reversal in intergenerational power* (with the younger family members holding power over the older ones) and, consequently, *family conflict* (Detzner, 1996; Fadiman, 1997).

The Hmong and Lao face many obstacles in attempting to integrate into Harrison. Beyond the challenges resulting from their difficult past, they face *language barriers, challenges in adapting to American cultural mores, and stigmatization as “primitive” people* (Fadiman, 1997). A lack of English language skills often results in individuals being *taken advantage of by authorities and business people* (Chanthoung, 2006). Many of the immigrants were agricultural cultivators in their homes and must quickly acquire skills to succeed in an urban environment (Fadiman, 1997; Moua & Rolland, 1994). Basic skills required for cooking dinner, crossing the street, and going to school had to be re-learned in an English-speaking environment (Fadiman, 1997). Frequently, this culture clash led to *crime or violence directed at the immigrants* (Fadiman, 1997; Yang, 2001). They were also *stigmatized by the welfare system and found it difficult to compete with Americans in the job market* (Fadiman, 1997). Compared to other Asian immigrants, the Hmong tend to be *less satisfied with their lives* in the United States and many of the older members of the community long to return home (Fadiman, 1997; Tsai, 2001). We must always remember that the Hmong are non-voluntary refugees, who have been displaced from their homeland (Tsai, 2001).

Excerpts from Minneapolis Legal Aid Society Documents proving racial segregation in housing development in Minneapolis

He [Chairman Stolte of the Housing Committee] also pointed out that the [Minneapolis Housing] Authority is going to work in the slums, but that this work requires years of long-range planning and it is also necessary to have the 1,000 units of low-rent housing as a slack to accommodate some of the persons displaced by slum clearance work.

He deplored the influence in certain statements that families living in blighted areas were different and inferior people who must be kept there and not given a chance to live in better outlying areas. Mr. Stolte stressed that the city cannot have a public housing program within the present terms of its agreement for federal aid if the projects are restricted to land no one else will use (Meeting Minutes, 1950. p.4).

The [Housing and Redevelopment] Authority shortly thereafter [1950], submitted to the City Council a program and site locations for the authorized 1,000 units of low-rent housing, developed after statistical surveys, conferences with federal officials, and consultation with civic groups. Said program was based on the considered judgment of the Authority that it was good social planning and in the best interest of the community to

integrate families of low-income, by location of the several housing projects prepared on unoccupied areas in buffer zones between existing residential and industrial use, without concentration in any one district of the city.

Local opposition to low-rent housing was spearheaded by certain members of the Hennepin County senate delegation state officials, stata officials, and the minority of “conservative” group of the City Council, sided by “liberal” council members influenced by local antagonism to any project designed to house families of low income in their community. This opposition took exception to the program of the Authority and sincerely or otherwise, advocated segregation of all new low-income families in a slum area, preferably in the vicinity of the existing 464 units at Sumner Field Homes (Godward, 1953, p, 1-2).

The third party complaint seeks declaratory and injunctive relief against HUD and MRHA. It is the District’s theory [Special School District #1, Minneapolis] that HUD and MHRA are liable in whole or in part to it for building and subsidizing low income housing projects on the near North side of Minneapolis which, the claim goes, resulted in an unlawful concentration of minority group members in that area, thereby frustrating the District’s efforts to comply with Court ordered desegregation (United States District Court, 1979).

In fact, the USHA [United states Housing Authority] had institutionalized the practice of racially segregated public housing projects, and integrated separate lines on the application form provided by USHA to Minneapolis, which had separate lines on the application for white projects, nonwhite projects, and integrated projects...

Following its discriminatory practices at Sumner-Field, the federal government then approved the discriminatory siting of Northside projects by the Minneapolis HRA [Housing and Redevelopment Authority] in the early 1950’s.... Despite knowledge that requiring Minneapolis City Council approval of HRA siting would prevent placement of public housing in white neighborhoods, the public Housing Administration insisted on local city veto power over siting (Thompson, 1993, p.2).

Through the late 1960’s and early 1970’s, HUD continued to approve and fund discriminatory practices by local defendants [in the Hollman case], including as overemphasis on white dominated senior housing to the exclusion of much more minority housing, and scattered site placement decisions which were limited to areas with the highest minority concentrations (Thompson, 1993, p.2).

Consequences

One of the greatest challenges to America’s urban future is the persistent concentration and isolation of poor people and minorities in the central cites of our great metropolitan areas (Henry Cisneros in Goetz, 2002, p.22).

As evidenced by the Plymouth Avenue race riots in the 1960s, *even if Minnesotans do not like to discuss racial segregation and discrimination, the people of Harrison feel its impacts*. “Explanations of concentrated poverty must take into account the racial character of urban ghettos and the legacy of housing discrimination and segregation that created them (Goetz, 2002, p.24).” Almost uniformly, there are high proportions of minority residents, particularly African Americans, in poor, distressed, urban neighborhoods across the United States (Goetz, 2002).

Public housing, accompanied by the dual effects of racial segregation and the concentration of poverty has served to hasten the decline and disinvestment in distressed areas like Harrison. Frequently, these housing projects become “vertical ghettos” isolating and compartmentalizing the social problems associated with racial discrimination and poverty, negatively impacting their community. Disinvestment has been systematic and strategies to assist distressed areas have been fragmented and led to further economic polarization. *Disinvestment means that the quality and quantity of housing stock and commercial buildings, declines as people withdraw their capital from the area*. Housing policies have exacerbated the problem. For example, *the Fair Housing Act of 1968* provided incentives for middle-class African Americans to leave urban areas for the suburbs, further isolating urban areas from economic growth. (The Fair Housing Act brought national attention to the issue of housing segregation and made discrimination in renting or buying property and segregating neighborhoods, opening up *new residential prospects for middle-class African Americans*.) Many zoning regulations (putting undesirable things such as *industrial development in poor communities*) and tax incentives (for instance the capital gains tax, which allows *sellers to defer payments when purchasing a home of equal or greater value*) support this strategy of disinvestment in urban areas, exclusionary employment and housing policies, and lack of economic growth in distressed communities. This leaves minorities, particularly African Americans with *fewer employment and housing choices* (Goetz, 2002; Murphy and Cunningham, 2003).

Further limiting the options of inner city residents has been the *changing global and local economic patterns*. Globalization has meant that *many jobs previously available to inner city residents have moved to other countries*. As well, the world has moved from an industrial-based economy to the information age, and *many jobs have subsequently moved from the inner city to the suburbs*. This change has also meant that access to education is even more critical in ensuring one’s employability (Goetz, 2002). In inner cities, the *lower access to high-quality educational prospects* further limits the ability of inner city residents to compete for jobs (Goetz, 2002; Kozol, 1991). These limited options ensure that it is harder for the residents of Harrison to escape the cycle of poverty and climb the socio-economic ladder, as the community has historically permitted.

The people of Harrison live in a racist society that perpetuates inequality at their expense. Continually bombarded with *messages institutionalizing Whiteness and deinstitutionalizing Blackness*, the African American community has had to struggle for

basic acknowledgement. In the 60s, the African American rebellion to struggle for Civil Rights was deeply felt by the citizens of the Near North, who were part of the efforts to get African American mannequins in department stores, get African Americans on holiday cards, and African American models in catalogues. Even battles such as these demonstrated *a need to assert the African American identity and to challenge prevailing stereotypes and mythology in a society of White controlled institutions*. This led to a *greater sense of pride* among the African American citizens of the Near North *but did little to change the institutionalized power relationships resulting in housing segregation and decreased access to educational and employment opportunities* (El Kati, 2006). In this system of racial discrimination, “nice people do mean things (El Kati, 2006).”

Analysis

Segregation and poverty have created in the racial ghetto a destructive environment totally unknown to most White Americans. What white Americans have never fully understood- but what the Negro can never forget- is that White society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, White institutions maintain it, and White society condones it (The National Commission on Civil Disorders in 1968 “The Kerner Report”, Edwards & Jessen, 2002, pm.271).

The asset gap – Access to assets may be more important than income in determining one’s life chances. Assets provide security in difficult economic times and can be leveraged to produce greater societal opportunities. Assets can be economic (such as a house), human (such as knowledge and skills), social (networks of social support), or natural (access to natural resources). *Modest changes in one’s assets can create great changes in one’s stability, security, and self-reliance* (Miller-Addams, 2002). *Lack of access to economic, human, and social capital directly diminishes access to societal opportunities* (good jobs, a good education, and the like). Old-boy networks and tight-knit Caucasian neighborhoods can effectively bar racial minorities from such opportunities, even if unintentionally (Murphy & Cunningham, 2003).

There are even *greater disparities between African American and Caucasian access to assets than in terms of income per capita*. While African Americans on average earn 70 cents for every dollar made by Caucasians, they possess only 15 cents for every dollar owned by Caucasians (Miller-Addams, 2002). “The unequal distribution of assets by race arose in part from policies that prevented racial minorities from holding and developing assets (Miller-Addams, 2002, p.6).” While there is evidence that the income gap between Caucasians and African Americans may be diminishing, asset poverty is in fact increasing. Meanwhile, policies endorsing asset acquisition such as 401K plans and home interest mortgage tax deductions favor the middle-class and Caucasians, who tend to hold jobs with better benefits and live in homes that they own (Miller-Addams, 2002).

The Harrison community and the Near North are suffering directly this asset racial disparity. Renters in Harrison do not benefit from the mortgage tax deductions available to the suburban, largely Caucasian, middle-class. Likewise, 401K benefit plans

are largely inaccessible to unemployed community members or to the working poor. Compartmentalizing Minneapolis' poor has resulted in diminishing the life chances of Harrison residents. With living wage jobs leaving the inner city and systematic disinvestment, residents in *Harrison have fewer assets with which to rebuild their lives and escape the cycle of poverty* as historical Near North residents have been able to do.

Racial apathy – In Minnesota being “nice” has meant largely ignoring problems associated with race. Urban renewal policies directed at poor communities have disproportionately affected African American families. Such policies have further fragmented and displaced local residents and businesses leading to additional distress. This lack of attention to the racial dimension of policy is called “racial apathy” (Murphy & Cunningham, 2003, p.3). *This racial apathy leads to covert forms of racial discrimination that exacerbate community problems by ignoring race* as an important contributing factor to poverty. This encourages disinvestment in the community by privileging the economic needs of wealthier members of society, frequently Caucasian, and ignoring the social and physical neglect of communities of color (Murphy & Cunningham, 2003).

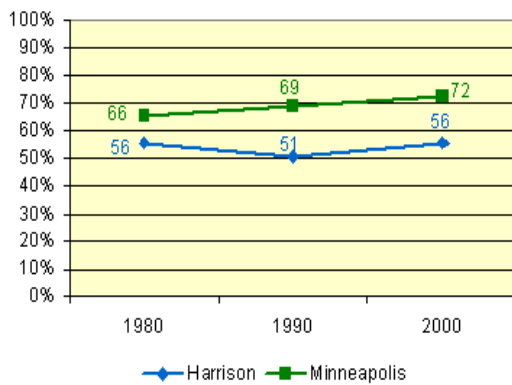
The racial dimensions related to housing segregation and community disinvestment need to be acknowledged and more fully understood. To combat this tendency towards racial apathy, however, communities can benefit from greater socio-economic and racial diversity. Increasing the economic and racial diversity in a community can give rise to more innovative solutions to community problems. Integrated communities require integrated solutions. The question is *how to attract and retain the right mix of middle and upper-class residents, along with supporting businesses*. It is difficult to *balance this ideal with the need for a community to avoid gentrification and the wholesale displacement of its poor population* (Murphy & Cunningham, 2003). Harrison will be struggling with a new racial balance over the years to come with the new wave of Hmong and Lao immigrants, but still needs to find ways to attract the right mix of middle and upper-class residents and businesses to the community.

The relationship between unemployment and race – There is a very strong relationship between patterns of unemployment, patterns of housing, and the underlying racial relations embedded in each. *African Americans, particularly in urban settings, are frequently excluded from employment opportunities available to Caucasians, particularly those opportunities existing in the suburbs*. The social networks available to African Americans are often not conducive to finding and maintaining livable wage work. When poor African Americans are isolated by society, they do not interact with people that could help them find jobs in areas outside of their residential districts as easily. There are *more negative perceptions of the qualifications and work ethic of African Americans than other racial groups* (Wilson, 1996). African Americans are also more likely to be *deeper in the cycle of poverty relying on the social welfare net for longer periods of time* than other ethnic groups. This makes finding work even more challenging, because *these long-term poor are much harder to employ* (Blank, 1997).

When businesses disappear from neighborhoods like Harrison, as has taken place, and the poor are isolated from social networks out of their community, the obstacles to finding living wage labor are greater. In Harrison, this pattern has resulted in higher unemployment rates than the city-wide average, making it harder for people to survive, as well as making it particularly difficult to purchase or maintain assets such as a home or paying for a college education. More directly, a lack of access to employment negatively impacts one's income. As is illustrated by the following graphs, the laborforce participation and median household income are lower in Harrison than the citywide average, while the unemployment rate is much higher (almost 3x as high).

Harrison / Minneapolis

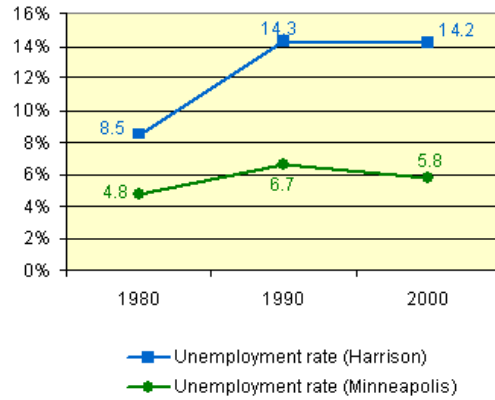
Labor force participation



Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development with data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing (SF3)

Harrison / Minneapolis

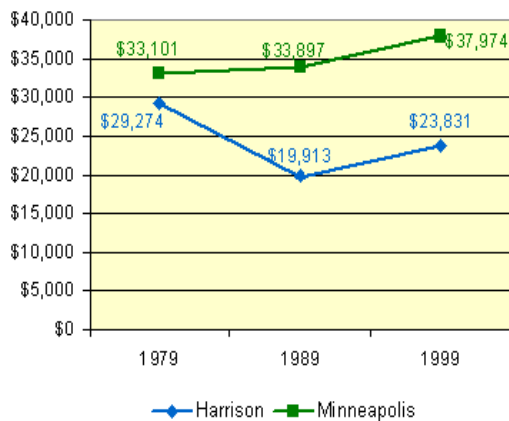
Unemployment trends



Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development with data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing (SF3)

Harrison / Minneapolis

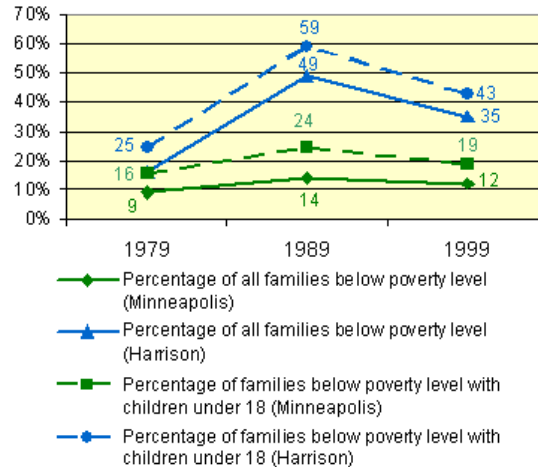
Median household income (in 1999 dollars)



Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development with data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing (SF3)

Harrison / Minneapolis

Poverty status of all families and families with children under 18



Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development with data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing (SF3)

Figure 1. Harrison statistics.

Racial Segregation –Harrison suffers from racial segregation whereby *problems associated with poverty are concentrated in the community and life chances are consequently lower*. The history of the area consists of ethnic enclaves that came to the area in order to have a home from which to climb the socio-economic ladder. This strategy was successful for early Caucasian immigrants who managed to work their way out of poverty and move to other communities. The strategy was again successful for the Jewish community who managed to overcome ethnic discrimination and gain wider acceptance in Minneapolis. The strategy has not yet worked for the African American community, however. *The effective isolation of the population and the concentration of social problems experienced by the African American population in Harrison, has limited the possibility that the residents in Harrison can escape the cycle of poverty.*

The African American population has demonstrated their frustration in the form of rioting in the late 1960s but to no avail. *Rates of unemployment and poverty (illustrated above) continue to be much higher than the Minneapolis average*. The typical threshold for determining whether a community is considered to be a high-poverty area, is when *the poverty rate is above 40%* (Geotz, 2002). **The percentage of all people in Harrison falls just below this threshold at 35% while the percentage of families with children under 18 is above it at 43%.** This is consistent with the experience of other inner-city African Americans across the United States, the challenges that they face in their communities are much greater than most Caucasians, particularly in the suburbs. *Societal racism enforces this overall pattern*. It will be interesting to see if the latest wave of migrants to the area, the Hmong and Lao, will find the same problems accessing opportunities in Minneapolis as have been faced by the African American residents of Harrison.

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Sample Story – The History of Harrison
By Tory Hansen

The history of Harrison is a complex and interesting succession of ethnic enclaves. The common historical thread is the resilience of the residents of Harrison who were thought of as undesirables in Minneapolis. People in Harrison have traditionally moved there because it was an affordable area. Traditionally, these ethnic groups have slowly made their way out of Harrison as they gained status in Minneapolis and could afford to live elsewhere. The majority of people living in Harrison have always been immigrants or ethnic minorities though. When it was first became a community in the 1800s, these immigrants were Finnish, German, and Eastern European. Many moved out of Harrison when they became more prosperous.

In the early 20th Century, more and more Jewish people started moving to the area. Now anybody familiar with Jewish history from that era will tell you that it wasn't just Hitler that disliked the Jews. They were persecuted across Europe and here in the United States, as well. They faced tremendous discrimination and, in part, this is why they ended up in Harrison. By about the 1920s, the infrastructure in Harrison began to deteriorate and at this same time public housing (the Sumner-Field housing project) came to the community. These developments meant that Harrison was left to be, and intended to be a slum. It was clear even at this early time that slum neighborhoods were frequently minority neighborhoods, as was the case in Harrison and its Jewish community.

Eventually, the Jewish residents were able to prosper and get out of the slum to other parts of Minneapolis. The African-American community moved to Harrison in their place, starting in the 1950s. By this time, the community of Harrison was already thought of as the location for public housing in Minneapolis and deteriorating buildings were common. One reason for this deterioration was that much of the soil in the community is not suitable for building due to its location on a Bassett Creek floodplain. This, of course, was not accidental and in an area labeled a slum was considered normal.

In the 1960s, there was a major effort to bring buildings in the area up to code. There were further public housing projects brought to the area at this time. Sadly, many of the housing units that were built at this time were substandard and quickly fell into disrepair. The planners just tried to concentrate all of the poverty and its associated social problems in one part of the city, so the wealthy White people in Minneapolis could ignore the poor, marginalized residents of the city and their problems. Concentrating poverty like this not only segregated Minneapolis, as the African American community were the primary residents in these projects, but it also meant that the social problems actually got worse. They were isolated from the best opportunities in Minneapolis!

In a community where unemployment was sky high, people lacked education and skills, and most people were contending with living on social assistance there was little hope, and escaping the cycle of poverty became more and more difficult. Any healthy community needs some thriving businesses. In the 1960s, the business community was leaving the area. They could not live with the area's "blight" and the physical

deterioration of infrastructure occurring in Harrison. At the same time, Olson Highway became more like a freeway and less conducive to having store fronts and businesses.

Ultimately, the racial segregation, discrimination, and abandonment of the people of Near North led the African American community to rebel. In July 1967, National Guardsmen had to be called out to quell riots on Plymouth Avenue as the African American community used the occasion to demonstrate their frustration with racism keeping them from opportunities in Minneapolis, ensuring the perpetuation of the cycle of poverty. This clearly was part of the national civil rights movement and African American discontent with racism across the United States! This brought attention to the racial barriers to escaping poverty and racial segregation but Minneapolis proved to be very slow to change its racist ways.

After the Vietnam War, American allies in the war from Asia started immigrating to Minneapolis, the Hmong and the Lao. Harrison and the Near North again became a depot for these newly stigmatized residents of Minneapolis to be housed, away from the wealthier and Whiter parts of the city. The Hmong and Lao communities faced incredible challenges in trying to integrate in Minneapolis. Very few came here with a high level of English language proficiency and most were completely unfamiliar with American customs, laws, and social norms. Frequently, this meant that they were taken advantage of by officials or the business community.

Many of them became dependent on social assistance and a lot of them were not only treated poorly by the social service workers but they were also stigmatized as welfare recipients. People with limited English proficiency and comfort with American customs and norms were unable to compete with long-time Americans for jobs. Often, they were also targets of racial violence and crime. Their experiences being discriminated against and having few opportunities to escape poverty made them very much like the previous racial and ethnic groups to inhabit Harrison, though their experience of this racism has been quite different because they are immigrants to the United States.

It is quite obvious that Harrison has traditionally been a dumping ground for undesirable racial and ethnic minorities in Minneapolis. This has resulted in a community with extremely high rates of poverty and unemployment, with all of the social problems associated with those conditions. Rather than dispersing housing opportunities for poor racial and ethnic minorities around the city so they could have more choice in where to live and giving them greater access to educational, employment, and other opportunities, the city has deserted them in Harrison where the destitution and challenges mount correspondingly.

The people of Harrison have demonstrated great resilience in spite of their being discarded by Minneapolis. Many have been able to “move up and out” of Harrison, though many more have elected to stay enjoying the ethnic diversity and neighborhood feel. The residents of Harrison have a culturally rich and diverse community, giving the community a tremendous amount of social capital. This social capital is perhaps the greatest asset in Harrison and will be the bedrock of further efforts to enhance it.

The Hollman Decree
By Tory Hansen
November 30, 2006

Narrative

The [Hollman Decree] settlement was the most important thing that's happened in the 5th ward and North Minneapolis in the last 30 years. This represents a real opportunity to rebuild North Minneapolis – Jackie Cherryhomes (Goetz, 2002b, p.9).

*In this case, there were several ways that the Hollman Decree and its implementation illustrated dimensions of internalized racial superiority in supporting ongoing racial power differentials. The implementation of the Decree was **paternalistic** with outsiders determining the fate of the residents of Sumner-Glenwood. The implementation was driven by **ignorance** as it did not address the complex needs of the residents or create replacement housing fast enough for them. Those implementing the Hollman Decree attempted to **escape responsibility** for dealing with many concerns faced by the residents of Sumner-Glenwood and, to this end, many **issues were silenced** as were the low-income renters of Minneapolis. In fact, the Harrison Neighborhood Association attempted to **escape responsibility** for supporting the citizens of Sumner-Glenwood and was **silent on numerous issues** for which they could have advocated on behalf of those residents.*

The Hollman Decree was an attempt by the city of Minneapolis to de-concentrate poverty in Minneapolis by breaking up the Sumner-Glenwood public housing block. In implementing the Decree, however, city officials *failed to acknowledge and effectively deal with many racially-related concerns* of the Sumner-Glenwood community. Many residents, particularly elderly Southeast Asian residents, *did not want to leave* their homes but were forced to. Many felt that the planning process gave citizens of Sumner-Glenwood *only token representation*, and was instead controlled by affluent, Caucasian city officials, to the benefit developers and suburbanites rather than the citizens of Sumner-Glenwood. Particularly troubling was the slated *demolition of the public housing* in Sumner-Glenwood when Minneapolis was facing *a crisis in available low-income rental housing* and *widespread racial discrimination* by landlords.

Details of the Hollman Decree

A new mixed income community will emerge- a vital, diverse community in which public housing is interspersed with market rate housing. This new development will surround a 36-acre park, part of the city's world-renowned park system. A new parkway will achieve an historic link between residential communities in North and South Minneapolis (City of Minneapolis in Goetz, 2002b, p.16).

The Hollman Decree was passed in response to a lawsuit undertaken by the Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis (LASM) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), representing 17 citizens (14 African American and 3 Asian) from the Sumner-Glenwood public housing projects, against the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Minneapolis Community Development Agency (MCDA). The Minneapolis Metropolitan Council (MMC) was later added as an additional defendant. The plaintiffs in the case *alleged that public housing and the section 8 system for subsidizing housing in Minneapolis perpetuated existing patterns of racial segregation* in the city. These patterns also reinforced the concentration of poverty in the Sumner-Glenwood community.

The Hollman Decree was an agreement signed by all parties to the case in 1995, in an effort to *desegregate Minneapolis and to de-concentrate poverty*. The determination of the court was that the public and subsidized housing system needed to be fundamentally altered. The specific mandates of the Decree were: 1) public housing in Sumner-Glenwood was to be demolished after a thorough review of the historical importance of the buildings, 2) up to 770 new housing units (350 at the Sumner Field public housing site, 220 at the Glenwood/Lyndale site, 66 at the Olson site, 86 at the Lyndale site, and 48 in scattered sites around Minneapolis) were to be created to replace the demolished structures with approximately \$117 million to be provided by HUD (\$116 million) and the city of Minneapolis (\$615,000) 3) any displaced residents were to be provided with relocation counseling services, 4) housing subsidies were to be made available for current residents, 5) the section 8 system was to be overhauled giving low-income people more choice in housing options (900 section 8 certificates were to be issued), and 6) an affordable housing clearinghouse was to be created to provide low-income people in Minneapolis assistance in finding affordable housing.

[Citations for previous section: (Goetz, 2002a; Thompson & Carroll, 1998a, 1998c, 1998d)]

Intentions

We know that poverty by itself doesn't cause urban problems. It's the concentration... that eventually strangles those neighborhoods economically, making it impossible for residents to have access good jobs, good schools, health care, transportation. These are living condition that can, and too often do, foster hopelessness despair, and antisocial behavior (Kevin Diaz in Goetz, 2002b, p.4).

There were a variety of motivations for the Hollman lawsuit. It was clear that Sumner-Glenwood was a "*high poverty area*" with over 40% of the population living below the poverty line (Goetz, 2002a). In fact, more than 70% of the neighborhood was living below the poverty level (more than 6 times the Minneapolis average) and *94% of the population was non-white* (compared to a city average of 22%). *The housing patterns in Minneapolis were clearly reinforcing segregation and racial stereotypes*, as was the case in inner-city areas around the United States. The Near North had the highest rate of

residence in public and section 8 housing in Minneapolis. The *public housing was rife with problems* from infestations of pests, housing was overcrowded, there were cracks in the foundations of the buildings which were thought to rest on poor soil and the community of Sumner-Glenwood was *devoid of employment opportunities and commercial activity*, while there were *rampant social problems* (Goetz, 2002a; Thompson & Carroll, 1998c). *Young residents were socialized* to find this state of affairs acceptable, perpetuating the *cycle of poverty* (Goetz, 2002a). The negative effects from the concentration of poverty in the community were obvious.

There were many hopes that could be realized in modifying the existing public and section 8 housing system for low-income, minority residents in the Near North. Certainly they hoped to gain fair and affordable housing. But also they hoped to have more choice in deciding where to locate and have good access to the rest of Minneapolis from wherever that was. They wished to live in areas with commercial activity and available services (No Author, 1997). Ultimately, this meant that *residents wanted not only better housing, but a better neighborhood and more options to choose where and how they would like to live their lives, free from discrimination and segregationist policies* (Thompson & Carroll, 1998b).

That was the goal of the Hollman Decree, to de-concentrate poverty and desegregate housing in Minneapolis, improve housing in Sumner-Glenwood, and give the residents there more life options. *Public housing and zoning decisions had been traditionally made by Caucasian politicians and government officials in Minneapolis, for less affluent minorities* (Thompson & Carroll, 1998c). With this in mind, the 17 residents in the lawsuit provided community input during the lawsuit, and they were joined by other community members to give input into the Decree's implementation process through interviews and public comments. The plan was to create improved housing in Sumner-Glenwood, on better soil, scatter low-income residents to different parts of the city, create a community center and parkland, and revitalize commercial activity in the community (Thompson & Carroll, 1998b). This community vision was later to become Heritage Park, along with the smaller sites scattered around Minneapolis.

Consequences

Such a “groundbreaking experiment in the deconcentration of poverty,” as the Hollman agreement was called, was bound to elicit some degree of political opposition. The scope and nature of the changes to be wrought by the agreement—including the remaking of a 73-acre site situated where the historic center of the city's Black community and its downtown meet, the loss of over 700 units of public housing, and the development of replacement units on a scattered-site basis throughout the metropolitan area—span the entire range of housing and community development issues facing metropolitan areas (Goetz, 2002b, p.17).

There were *4 main streams of criticism* coming from different members of the community resulting from the implementation of the Hollman Decree: the General Community, the Southeast Asian Community, the NAACP, and the Minneapolis

Tenant's Union along with the Northside Neighbors for Justice. These criticisms all stem from manifestations of racial superiority: *ignorance, paternalism, escapism, and silence at the expense of the people of color* affected by the Hollman Decree by the dominant society (People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, 2006). Prior to the Hollman Decree, the Sumner-Glenwood community was 50% Hmong, 30% African-American, and 15% Lao (Thompson & Carroll, 1998c).

The General Community

Many community members were disappointed in the implementation process itself. There was general agreement that the *housing that was promised to replace demolished buildings was slow in coming*, while at the same time *recruiting landlords to participate in section 8 housing initiatives proved difficult*, which the Legal Aid Society blamed on the MPHA (Bauerlein, 1997; Thompson & Carroll, 1998c). By Spring of 1998, 22 replacement units were completed, 10 more had subsequently been closed, and 267 were in various stages of 'pre-development' (Thompson & Carroll, 1998c). Every housing unit was supposed to be replaced within 6 years of its demolition approval (Thompson & Carroll, 1998d). The suburbs were slow to provide sites to develop with Washington county agreeing to take 60 units, Carver county agreeing to 50, Chaska agreeing to 5, and Minnetonka agreeing to 9 (Diaz, 1997). The process was slowed by the historical building review process and resident resistance to demolition of buildings (Furst, 1997; Goetz, 2002b).

The relocation effort, finding new homes for displaced families, was criticized by some of the families. While people who moved generally reported a higher sense of safety, they found it *difficult to find employment and did not always like the neighborhood* that they were moved into. Families who had to move due to demolition, were less likely to be pleased with their new homes than people that volunteered for mobility certificates earlier in the process (Goetz, 2002c). Overall, families who relocated gave mixed reviews of their new housing (Diaz, 1997; Goetz, 2002b; Goetz, 2002c). In addition to mobility certificates, the families were provided with counseling and a clearinghouse of affordable housing was created to assist them (Thompson & Carroll, 1998a; Thompson & Carroll, 1998d). The process was criticized for leaving already stigmatized residents, who did not want to leave and wished to have more voice in the relocation process, with *little or no voice or choice in the relocation efforts* (Diaz, 1997; Hill, 1997a).

Consensus between community members and city council in planning the implementation of Hollman proved difficult to achieve (Goetz, 2002b). In particular, deciding on the appropriate mix of public, low-income (to support the working poor), and market-rate housing was a great challenge. City council had mandated that 25% of the housing units were to be public and 75% were to be market-rate. The community favored 25% public housing, 25% low-income, and 50% market-rate housing (Brandt, 1998a; Goetz, 2002b; Thompson & Carroll, 1998b). Eventually, *the city council made the decision to settle* on the creation of 800 housing units, 25% of which were to be public,

25% subsidized (110 owned and 90 rented), rather than designed to be specifically low income, and 50% sold at the market-rate (Goetz, 2002b).

The concerns of the general community illustrate how, in different ways, those implementing the Hollman Decree were *ignorant* of many of the concerns faced by the people of color that were affected by it and *paternalistic*. While the Decree was designed to create a stronger community in the long-term, *the immediate needs of the residents of Sumner-Glenwood were less of a concern*. The slow pace of developing the replacement housing, showed a real *lack of understanding* for how the displaced residents would cope with the inevitability of having to leave their homes and their communities. In many respects, people found it difficult to move out of their communities of color and into predominantly Caucasian communities or simply into different communities. They were *forced to assimilate* in their new circumstances after establishing community ties in Sumner-Glenwood. The *communities that they moved into were often unprepared* for them and received little or no support in learning how to incorporate them into their community. Caucasian communities are *frequently ignorant of differences* in societal power due to race and need to be educated on racial inequality and discrimination (People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, 2006). As well, residents were supposed to be given a voice in deciding the future of their community and, in the end, they may have *lacked sufficient influence* over the officials in the city who decided their fate by controlling the planning process and who were predominantly Caucasians from affluent communities.

The Southeast Asian Community

There were also major concerns among Hmong (50% of residents) and Lao (15% of residents) community members, the largest group affected by the Hollman Decree (Thompson & Carroll, 1998c). For instance, of the 1,350 residents of Sumner Field when the Hollman Decree was issued, 950 were of South East Asian descent (Furst, 1996). While 52% of the residents in the affected area wanted to move, 48%, *many of whom were Southeast Asian, wanted to stay* (Goetz, 2002b). Many displaced residents enjoyed moving to the suburbs (about ½ of the displaced families moved to areas that did not have concentrated poverty) but many others enjoyed living in Sumner-Glenwood and wanted to stay (Diaz, 1997).

Discontent by the Southeast Asians being *forced to move* was expressed in public demonstrations by them in 1996. In May, 30 people demonstrated. (Goetz 2002b) and in June, 40 more demonstrated (Vogel, 1996). They expressed the wishes of many Sumner-Glenwood residents who wanted to stay in their housing units but have them repaired and the area cleaned up (at that point 200 of 260 families in Sumner Field had already moved on). Zoun Xiong expressed the views of many of the protesters stating, "I would rather die than relocate" (Vogel, 1996). The residents, most of them older, *depended on agencies that were within walking distance and their ethnic kinship network* in the area (Furst, 1996). Many of them saw the relocation process as *breaking-up their ethnic community* (Furst, 1997).

The concerns brought up by the Southeast Asian community also attempted to expose the racial *paternalism* and *ignorance* that they faced due to the implementation of the Hollman Decree. Many people in the Southeast Asian community clearly *did not want to leave* Sumner-Glenwood, particularly the community elders. This desire was based on *complex needs*, many arising from their sense of community and proximity to available services. Due to *ignorance and a lack of understanding*, their desires were not addressed and their fears were not allayed by the predominantly Caucasian city officials in charge of implementing the Hollman Decree. While one of the principle goals of the Hollman Decree was to give low-income people of color more choice in housing, *the choices of these community elders were ignored and invalidated*. The choice to stay was frequently not given. It is interesting that their needs were not anticipated considering that it was understood that a sizable minority of residents (48%) did not wish to leave Sumner-Glenwood. Again, the wishes of the Southeast Asian community may have been noted but they were *not given influence* in deciding their own fate. This form of *paternalism* may have been particularly detrimental to the mental health of community elders, who are traditionally granted status in deciding their family's fate.

The NAACP

After the Hollman Decree was issued in 1995, the NAACP had a falling out with the Minneapolis Legal Aid Society over its implementation. The NAACP's chief concern was that the introduction of market-rate housing to Sumner-Glenwood would *support suburbanites* who wished to move closer to the city and the developers creating new housing units but would *do little for the current residents* (Brandt, 1998b; Woods, 1998). They wished, rather, to revitalize and develop the Near North, serving the current population, rather than outsiders from other communities (Goetz, 2002b; Hill, 1996; Woods, 1998). The NAACP was also concerned about the *lack of representation by community members in Hollman decision-making* (Brandt, 1998b), believing that, "white people controlled all the money and the community planning process" and participation to that point was token (Goetz, 2002b).

The NAACP created an alternative to the Hollman plan called "the self-sufficiency project", asking for \$20 million to implement it (Brandt, 1998b). The NAACP argued that the Hollman plan was not holistic in that it dealt *almost exclusively with housing-related concerns*. The self-sufficiency plan, in contrast, would attempt to reduce the poverty experienced by current residents in Sumner-Glenwood by promoting home ownership among them, providing education, and promoting the diversification of the businesses in the area. The goal was to provide 250 living wage jobs, training to 1500 people, and 25 new businesses, in addition to 500 housing units (Brandt, 1998b; Woods, 1998).

The NAACP's concerns with the implementation of the Hollman Decree bring forth other examples of *paternalism* and *ignorance*. They directly addressed the *lack of influence and control* that the communities of color and the residents of Sumner-Glenwood had on the Hollman planning process. They clearly illustrated how the Hollman Decree would *benefit community outsiders, city officials, and suburbanites*,

more than the current residents of Sumner-Glenwood, many of whom would be displaced. They also showed how the nature of the initial Hollman planning was flawed by considering the buildings that would be modified more than the needs of the people that would occupy them; complicated needs based on a long-history of racial segregation and discrimination in Minneapolis. The needs of the community included their need for living wage work and their need for educational opportunities, among many others, which should have been addressed by the Hollman plan to improve the prospects of community residents. The plan was not designed to benefit the current residents and their immediate needs per se however, but rather was designed to change community planning trends over the long-term in Minneapolis.

The Minnesota Tenant's Union and the Northside Neighbors for Justice

The Minnesota Tenant's Union and the Northside Neighbors for Justice felt that the premise of the Hollman Decree was flawed. The Minnesota Tenant's Union argued that the prospect of *demolishing low income housing in the midst of a crisis in the availability of affordable housing*, with only the promise of replacement housing to come, was absurd (Hill, 1997a; Johnson, 1997). The vacancy rate of affordable housing was hovering between 0 and 2% and landlords were reluctant to accept the section 8 definition of "market-rate" for the rent that they received (Bauerlein, 1997; Carlson, 1997; Family Housing Tenants Fund).

It was particularly troubling that much the *affordable rental housing* being dealt with in the Hollman Decree was being replaced with units that *would be owner-occupied*, further exacerbating the crisis (Johnson, 1997). *Widespread housing discrimination* against minorities occurring in Minneapolis made the rental housing market worse for many displaced by the Hollman Decree (Renschler, 1997). Many went so far as to say that the Legal Aid Society recruited people for the Hollman Decree to *displace poor families in favor of more affluent home-owners, making money for the Minneapolis Community Development Agency in the demolition process* (Rawson, 1996). The Minnesota Tenant's Union also stated that the soil underneath the buildings that were slated to be demolished was not as bad as was stated in court and there was no evidence to suggest that Sumner-Glenwood had an inordinate amount of crime prior to the Hollman Decree (Hill, 1997a; Minnesota Tenant's Union, 1996).

The Neighbors for Neighborhood Justice, much like the NAACP wanted to see the residents that were affected by the Hollman Decree and others in the Near North gain access to living wage employment and have meaningful involvement in the Hollman planning process (Goetz, 2002b). Like the Minnesota Tenant's Union, they felt that the Hollman Decree had *the potential to gentrify Sumner-Glenwood* by displacing low-income residents in favor of suburbanites who could afford to buy the new Hollman properties (Goetz, 2002b). Both the Minnesota Tenant's Union and the Northside Neighbors for Justice then fought the demolition of the Hollman properties. The Northside Neighbors for Justice, in fact, organized 3 protests (of 15, 80, and 150 people) to halt or slow down the demolition of the properties (Goetz, 2002b).

The concerns voiced by the Minnesota Tenant's Union and the Northside Neighbors for Justice exemplify how *silence* and *escapism* were manifested in the Hollman implementation. *The needs of low-income renters, who were disproportionately people of color, were not addressed by the Hollman Decree* and furthermore, *their needs were invisible* during the court case and into the planning process. In fact, the Minnesota Tenant's Union suggested that *people of color were divided by the Hollman Decree to work against one another*. "It's a shame when the faces of black children are used against black interests (Johnson, 1997)." The *low-income renters had no voice* in Hollman implementation in spite of a city-wide affordable rental housing shortage. The demolition of affordable housing in Sumner-Glenwood was inevitable even when the housing crisis was brought to the attention of city officials. In addition to attempting to *escape addressing the needs* of low-income renters, the Hollman planners were *silent in addressing other important concerns* like creating living wage employment in Sumner-Glenwood, addressing widespread housing discrimination in Minneapolis, and the prospect of potentially gentrifying Sumner-Glenwood. Rather than engaging people of color and the agencies representing them on these important issues, *city officials evaded thoughtful discussion* by intimating that they were doing enough by carrying out the intent of the Hollman Decree.

The Position of the Harrison Neighborhood Association

The Harrison Community is not a collection of buildings. Harrison has always been a neighborhood of working class people of multiple nationalities, not upscale people, not the privileged gentry. It is the Housing Committee's intention to keep it so (Harrison Housing Committee, 1998).

The Housing Committee of the Harrison Neighborhood Association (HNA) issued a "Housing Policy Statement" (1998) in response to many of these concerns. They indicated that the community of Harrison had only 51% owner-occupied residences compared to a city-wide average of 79% (according to the 1990 census) and a "strong majority" of home owners were required to maintain and improve their neighborhood. Therefore, *they wished to increase home ownership in Harrison and they did not support an increase in the number of public housing units in Harrison*. Rather, they felt that public housing should be more equitably balanced around Minneapolis, requiring greater participation from wealthier communities. They did, however, support the rehabilitation of existing public housing units where possible, a reduction in abandoned buildings, promoting responsible rental units, and the creation of affordable housing stock in areas not facing the effects of concentrated poverty. *They felt that the Hollman Decree would likely make property values rise in their community* (Stock, 1998).

The Housing Committee of the Harrison Neighborhood Association provides a further example of how *silence* and *escapism* impacted the implementation of the Hollman Decree. While the policy statement did state HNA's position on property ownership in Harrison and the need for wealthier communities to participate in the implementation of the Hollman Decree, *they did not address many important issues. They did not suggest how Harrison could participate in taking responsibility for the displaced*

residents of Sumner-Glenwood or low-income renters in the housing crisis, they did not discuss the importance of living wage work and education in addressing racial inequity or illuminate the racial dimensions of poverty, and they did not mention the possibility of giving the residents of Sumner-Glenwood more voice in their relocations or the Hollman planning process. HNA was in a position to represent the affected people of color, many of whom were residing in their community, and advocate for their needs. Instead, they chose to support their own position of increasing home ownership to increase property values in Harrison, even if this was to the detriment of the Sumner-Glenwood residents.

Analysis

Internalized Racial Superiority

The acceptance of and acting out of a superior definition of self given is rooted in the historical designation of one's race. Over many generations, this process of empowerment and access expresses itself as unearned privileges, access to institutional power and invisible advantages based upon race (The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, 2006).

According to the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (2006), internalized racial superiority can manifest itself in a multitude of ways. The implementation of the Hollman decree represents several of these manifestations very clearly. *Paternalism, ignorance, escapism, and silence were used both inadvertently and strategically to reinforce the racial and ethnic status quo with the racially diverse Sumner-Glenwood community and low-income renters paying the price. Their collective lack of influence, their lack of choice in the relocation process, particularly for those hoping to stay in their own community, and the lack of a plan that would holistically address their numerous concerns, reinforced the ongoing power differentials experienced by communities of color in Minneapolis.*

Paternalism – The Hollman Decree was *paternalistic*. The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (2006) defines *paternalism* as Caucasian communities going into communities of color to help “them”, in a missionary-like fashion. That is exactly what the Hollman Decree did when city officials planned the Sumner-Glenwood community for the residents there with only token citizen representation. When the Hollman implementation placed residents elsewhere, particularly Southeast Asian residents that had come to rely on the community, *the Decree took the choice to stay in their community away from them*. They were forced to move. Also, *the communities that accepted the displaced residents were given little support* in assisting these new residents with unique needs. In fact, *the Hollman Decree may have assisted outsiders (people residing outside of the community) more than it did the residents of Sumner-Glenwood*.

Ignorance – The implementation of the Hollman Decree demonstrated a great deal of *ignorance*. The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (2006) defines racial *ignorance* as the Caucasian community ignoring the racial dimensions of a social problem and not seeing racially-related problems as their problem. The *slow rate of replacement housing* is a clear example of the ignorance of the problems faced by people

living in poverty, particularly in a low-income housing shortage. The extra challenges faced by the non-Caucasian Sumner-Glenwood community in *finding new housing, while there was widespread housing discrimination in a housing crisis were not well understood nor acted upon*. The Hollman Decree in general *did little to address concerns of Sumner-Glenwood community beyond housing considerations* (such as the problems of unemployment and low education levels among residents), and therefore demonstrated *little understanding of the complexity of social problems* faced by the non-Caucasian Sumner-Glenwood residents.

Escapism – The Hollman Decree *allowed city officials to escape responsibility* for dealing with the low-income housing crisis. The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond defines racial *escapism* as avoiding responsibility for racial inequity. Hollman Decree focused the attention of the city on de-concentrating poverty and, meanwhile, *exacerbated a crisis in low-income housing availability*. The low-income renters who were disproportionately people of color were *given no voice* in decisions that affected them greatly, as *their needs were invisible* because of how the discussion related to Hollman was framed. *The Harrison Neighborhood Association also attempted to escape responsibility* for supporting its citizens of color that were affected by the Hollman Decree instead of advocating for them. Their position was that more low-income housing in Harrison would decrease property values and that the suburbs needed to take on a greater share of the responsibility for low-income housing. This position meant that *they prioritized the needs of certain citizens (home owners, in particular) while turning their backs on the people of color in Sumner-Glenwood* who wanted to stay within their community.

Silence – *Certain issues remained invisible and were silenced* due to the way the Hollman Decree was framed. The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond defines racially-related *silence* as refusing to recognize and discuss the racial dimensions of social problems. *The Hollman Decree itself never acknowledged the racial dimension of poverty* faced by the residents of Sumner-Glenwood, instead focusing on de-concentrating poverty as if it had nothing to do with racial inequity. Issues such as the *lack of living wage work for racial and ethnic minorities were not addressed* by the Decree and discussion of these issues was avoided for the most part. The NAACP and the Northside Neighbors for Justice brought this issue up, but their initiatives effectively went nowhere. Again, *the Harrison Neighborhood Association was noticeably silent, attempting to be neutral on issues related to racial injustice*. The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond does not recognize *silence* as a neutral position, but rather, *silence in the face of racial oppression is a position siding with that of the oppressors* (2006).

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Sample Story – The Hollman Decree
By Tory Hansen

The Hollman Decree was considered to be a landmark court decision in Minneapolis. The legal case was an effort to hold officials accountable for the intentional and unintentional racial segregation which occurred throughout Minneapolis' history. Since the 1800s, the poorest and least skilled residents of Minneapolis (principally people of color) have been concentrated in the Near North by placing the majority of Minneapolis' public housing there, isolating the residents from economic and social opportunities. The case was brought forth by the Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis and the NAACP, who represented 17 residents of Sumner-Glenwood public housing projects (14 African American and 3 Asian).

The lawsuit sought to hold 4 agencies accountable for this history of segregation: the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Minneapolis Community Development Agency, and The Minneapolis Metropolitan Council. By signing the Decree these agencies agreed to reduce the public housing load in Sumner-Glenwood, in the hopes that wealthier communities would share the responsibility for housing Minneapolis' poor. In this way, the lawsuit sought to give public housing residents more choice in deciding where they could live while creating a healthy, integrated Minneapolis.

A lot of people were pleased when the Hollman Decree was signed. It established a precedent that other American cities would look carefully at. The Decree was an admission by city officials that there was a history of segregation in the city and, even more startling, they admitted that the segregationist city planning in Minneapolis was intentional! Furthermore, the Decree forced housing officials to overhaul the section 8 housing system, as well as demolish and rebuild the largest block of public housing in the city, in the community of Sumner-Glenwood.

The residents of Sumner-Glenwood were some of the most unfortunate in the city, facing extremely high rates of poverty and unemployment. They were also, as the lawsuit contended, predominantly people of color. The community was made up of 50% Hmong, 30% African-American, and 15% Lao residents. The Hollman Decree meant that these residents would all have to leave their homes and that most would be located to other communities.

Forcing people to move led a variety of problems. To begin with, many people within the Southeast Asian community (about 2/3 of all Sumner-Glenwood residents) wanted to stay. Many of them had limited English proficiency and were reliant on their ethnic enclave and the established social service network in Sumner-Glenwood. Certain individuals even said that they'd rather die than relocate. Many of the people that wanted to stay were community elders who, culturally, are typically charged with determining their family's fate. The city officials now took on that role, much to their disappointment. So they staged several unsuccessful protests against the demolition of their homes.

Certain groups representing low-income renters were also disturbed by the Decree. The Minnesota Tenant's Union and the Northside Neighbors for Justice were distressed that, in the midst of one of the greatest crises in low-income housing in the history of Minneapolis, that the largest block of public housing in the city was demolished. There was almost no low-income housing available in Minneapolis! The problem was even worse for people of color in Minneapolis who were frequently discriminated against by landlords. The Minnesota Tenant's Union and the Northside Neighbors for Justice even suggested that the people who might benefit the most from the Decree were the developers from outside the community and suburbanites, who wanted to scoop up some property closer to the city, while the residents were booted out of their community. In this way, the Hollman Decree supported gentrifying Sumner-Glenwood.

There were other complaints too. The replacement housing came too slow. There was not enough money to complete it. Families were often not happy with the communities that they moved to. The communities themselves felt unprepared to receive them. There were also people who were disappointed with the lack of community participation in the planning process and their lack of authority in decision-making. Community participation was either non-existent, token, or resulted in squabbling.

This latter concern led the NAACP to split away from the position of Legal Aid, requesting money to do a redevelopment project of their own; "the self-sufficiency project". The NAACP did not want White people to be controlling the implementation of the Decree or the planning process, which they saw as repeating the same problems that led to the Decree in the first place. They felt that not only should the affected people of color be in charge of their own fate but the plan to assist them should be more holistic, providing residents with training, living wage jobs, and business opportunities in their neighborhood. Bringing wealthier Whites to the community wasn't the solution, bringing jobs, training, and decision-making power to the current residents was.

For the most part, the Harrison Neighborhood Association stayed out of the disagreements over the implementation of the Hollman Decree. They liked the fact that the Decree would bring more integrated housing to the area and remained noticeably silent on many of the issues of discontent. They also did not want to take on any more public housing because, at the time only 51% of the houses in Harrison were owner occupied, much below the citywide average of 79%. Instead, they supported renovating rental properties where possible (rather than demolishing them) and having wealthier communities take their fair share of the public housing in Minneapolis.

The effects of the Hollman Decree are not clear but they draw attention to how complex fixing the long history of racial segregation and oppression in Minneapolis will be. Is the Hollman Decree's implementation in the best interests of people of color? Were they given a real voice in the process? Were the people that were forced to leave their homes treated fairly? Were different cultural values respected in the implementation? Were the full-range of problems facing people of color considered (unemployment, poverty, social problems)? Was the implementation of the Decree paternalistic or did it represent a real step forward in desegregating Minneapolis? There are no clear answers.

The Harrison Neighborhood Association

By Tory Hansen

December 15, 2006

Narrative

*This case discusses the evolution of the Harrison Neighborhood Association (HNA) from a community agency that was aware of racism and its general impact on community housing issues to an agency explicitly addressing racism with an anti-racist framework. Initially, HNA attempted to tackle housing concerns centering poverty as the main obstacle in promoting homeownership and addressing neighborhood problems. After inviting the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond to participate as a guide to uncover **not only racist practices in the community, but also allowing HNA staff, board members, and volunteers to reflect on their own relationships with racism** HNA is addressing what they see as **the largest obstacle to conducting anti-poverty work, racism.***

This transition has allowed HNA to take a stronger position against racism and inequality in Harrison. The *transition is **developmental*** and unfolds in a non-linear manner. Though with the anti-racist paradigm clearly articulated by the People's Institute through trainings, *HNA stakeholders have been able to probe deeper into the causes of poverty, exploring how racism has exacerbated social and economic injustice* in Harrison. New trainings in communication and cross-cultural skills could further the abilities of community residents to solve their community concerns and build community partnerships. The anti-racist paradigm has also revealed *how important it is to get involvement by **all segments** of the community in decision-making and community planning* if HNA would truly like to reflect the values of anti-racism. It is an ongoing struggle to *ensure that participation is representative* but HNA is improving in this regard.

There is still much more that HNA can do to promote anti-racist principles. Continuing to get **greater participation** from wider segments of the community is an important step but it is also clear that HNA could do more to confront racist institutions in the community. It is perhaps a sense of **racial inferiority that holds HNA back in confronting** the real estate industry, the financial institutions, and other community institutions reinforcing societal injustice with racist practices. HNA has demonstrated that it can be successful leading a campaign against neighborhood racism in its Neighbors Against Abandoned Gas Stations campaign and could perhaps build off of this experience. This work will require *tremendous courage, perseverance, and strength* if it is to be sustained to promote racial and ethnic justice over the long-term.

Intentions

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial “outside agitator” idea. Anyone who lives in the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere within its bounds (King, 1992, p.115).

The Harrison Neighborhood Association was organized in 1983. At this time the structure of the organization was set. There were 3 staff members and a board made up of community members with a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and 2 representatives with 2 alternates for each of 6 regions in Harrison. They divided up work into tasks related to environmental issues, the revitalization of Glenwood Avenue (the commercial district), housing concerns, youth and family issues, crime and safety efforts, and developmental issues in establishing and implementing a neighborhood revitalization plan which was completed in 1997. Some important early successes were: establishing a master plan for Bassett Creek restoration, creating partnerships to revitalize Glenwood avenue, completing the neighborhood revitalization plan, working on a variety of housing-related concerns, the creation of the Harrison Community and Education Center, the Lao Assistance Center, and Harrison Park, having a family day in Harrison Park, addressing lighting concerns on Glenwood Avenue, creating a stronger social network in the community, and creating a Harrison neighborhood stroll patrol and working with the 4th Precinct of the Minneapolis Police Department to make the community safer (Harrison Neighborhood Association, 2005; Harrison Neighborhood Association, 2002).

The HNA original mission statement:

We the people of the Harrison Neighborhood will improve the quality of life by creating a cohesive, stable, and economically vibrant community in which all people can safely coexist. We take pride in our neighborhood by building trust, enhancing understanding among cultures, and creating a community in which all members can thrive (Harrison Neighborhood Association, 2002).

In much of HNA’s early work, *there was very little explicit attention given to racial and ethnic inequities* and how they could be impacting community members. While there was a ***tacit awareness*** of racism and its affect on the community, this was *not clearly articulated* by HNA and there were few overt efforts to combat racism in the community (Thompson, 2006b). The focus of much of the work was on creating a strong neighborhood with higher property values. In many of the projects it was *assumed* that attention to the best interests of the community *naturally addressed many of the racial and ethnic inequities* in the community.

In 2003, HNA underwent a *transition* to an organization focused on property-related issues targeting poverty in the community to *considering the racial dimensions of poverty and taking a more active, anti-racist position* (Thompson, 2006a). This led HNA

to reach out to different organizations to attempt to address the racial and ethnic inequities in their neighborhood and the wider society which they live in. At this time, HNA contracted with the *People's Institute for Survival and Beyond* to teach HNA staff, the board, and members of the community to live anti-racist principles in their work and life in Harrison. HNA also began cultivating *relationships with the Hmong and Lao communities*, in order to incorporate their points of view into neighborhood decision-making (Chanthouvang, 2006).

An early effort in this transition towards an anti-racist approach was HNA's housing committee's efforts to work with the *Cross Cultural Homeownership Alliance (CCHOA)*. The impetus for this proposed alliance was the lack of homeownership among racial and ethnic minorities in Harrison. For instance, there were *only 99 African-American homeowners in the community* at that time, ***substantially disproportionate*** to their population (Housing Coordinator, 2003). The meeting with CCHOA involved many differences of opinion, "prejudicial comments", and did not ultimately lead to an alliance. The two groups disagreed on how much money, if any at all, a property owner should make when selling to a person of color (Housing Committee, 2003). At this point, *the ground was fertile for discussions about racism's role* in disproportionately providing housing opportunities in Harrison, though the framework for the discussion was not yet clearly articulated.

This shift in ideology towards an anti-racist framework prompted HNA to adopt a new approach to its organizing work captured in the following mission and vision statements:

The new HNA mission statement, unanimously accepted by approximately 160 community members (70% people of color, half of them Asian, and a large number of renters) on October 11, 2005:

To foster community awareness; to improve the quality of life within our community; to educate residents in the use of effective procedures for resolving problems or initiating improvements, and to unite all efforts within the community in raising and acting on issues of common concern (Harrison Neighborhood Association, 2006b).

The HNA vision statement which was also unanimously accepted by the Harrison community on October 11, 2005:

We are creating a prosperous and peaceful community that equitably benefits all Harrison neighborhood's diverse racial, cultural, and economic groups.

We will combat racism and the other forms of oppression by establishing an environment of stewardship where all individuals can participate through shared power and mutual accountability (Harrison Neighborhood Association, 2006a).

With this new guiding philosophy, the HNA continues to address community concerns in a new way. Many of the community issues continue to be property related, but *they analyze and address these issues with an anti-racist framework*. The current HNA programs are: environmental programs (beautification and environmental justice), economic development, housing, crime and safety, Glenwood Avenue streetscape and lighting revitalization, the Neighbor's Against Abandoned Gas Stations campaign, and the work by the Undoing Racism Taskforce that is connected to all of the different programs (Harrison Neighborhood Association, 2006c).

The Present State of Affairs

I am sure that none of you would rest content with the kind of superficial kind of social analysis that deals merely with effects and does not grapple with underlying causes. It is unfortunate that demonstrations are taking place in Birmingham, but it is even more unfortunate that the city's white power structure left the Negro community with no alternative (King, 1992, p. 115).

HNA is considered by other neighborhood associations in Minneapolis as *a leader in anti-racist work* in the community that it represents (Shabazz-Holt, 2006; Young, 2006). It is a commendable and difficult road that HNA has embarked upon. The staff and board members use *anti-racist principles to guide their behavior and communication patterns*, in addition to using this perspective to guide their work (Bailey, 2006; Shabazz-Holt, 2006; Thompson, 2006b; Young, 2006). For example, the members of the board are able to *label racist behavior or terminology* in task force meetings from a shared anti-racist framework (Shabazz-Holt, 2006). In this way, all of the actions conducted by HNA's staff and volunteers are ***now scrutinized using an anti-racist lens*** (Thompson, 2006b; Young, 2006). However, HNA is also reliant on community ties and must be careful in confronting potential allies in the community and risk alienating them (Thompson, 2006b).

HNA's transition on its path towards becoming an anti-racist organization can be seen in *the difference between the Phase I and Phase II of the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan*, designed to support the health and economic vitality of the Harrison neighborhood. A draft of Phase I of the plan, completed in 1997, acknowledged the cultural diversity of the neighborhood but *beyond this general acknowledgement, the goal of the plan all revolved around restoring health and economic vitality to the community in general* (Harrison Neighborhood Association, 1997). Community input was solicited for the plan, with translation provided for Hmong and Lao community members, but this process was clearly *secondary to the end product of the plan itself*. Goals of the plan centered around the following areas of focus: housing, crime and safety, creating a safer community, social services, creating a sense of community, environmental concerns, and business and economic development, with housing as the single most prominent concern (Harrison Neighborhood Association, 1997).

A draft of Phase II of the plan was completed in 2005. By contrast, it was *endorsed by approximately 160 diverse community members* of Harrison on October 11

of that year (Harrison Neighborhood Association, 2005). Phase II of the program was markedly different from Phase I in 2 important respects: 1) *a clear and active effort was made to solicit community input* reviewing Phase I, preparing Phase II, and adopting Phase II, placing a greater emphasis on the process of creating the plan and soliciting community input (through focus groups, interviews, and surveys) instead of just the final product of the plan itself, and 2) *issues of racial and ethnic inequities were more explicitly stated* in the plan and addressed by it.

The goals of Phase II of the plan were broadly similar with 2 notable exceptions. There were *goals specifically related to Undoing Racism and goals specifically relating to community engagement*. The community engagement objective to, “encourage greater participation by underrepresented groups in the Harrison community,” was met by funding partnerships with ethnic-based organizations (Harrison Neighborhood Association, 2005). In an effort to, “incorporate an anti-racism stance into the mission and vision of the Harrison Neighborhood Association,” Undoing Racism objectives included *educating HNA leadership on anti-racist principles*, as well as holding Undoing Racism trainings and cultural celebrations. The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond has conducted most of the Undoing Racism trainings. However, HNA demonstrated their progress in developing anti-racist leadership when they were able to *conduct their own anti-racist training* when a facilitator from the People’s Institute was unable to participate in one of the trainings (Thompson, 2006b).

HNA still sees poverty as the principle issue of concern for the residents of Harrison but *racism is the single greatest obstacle to addressing poverty by impeding the social capital of community residents*. In fact, *an anti-racist position is seen as essential* in alleviating poverty in Harrison, to avoid gentrifying the community and assure that all people in Harrison receive the benefits of anti-poverty work (Thompson, 2006a). An example of the anti-racist work recently undertaken by the Harrison Neighborhood Association was an Undoing Racism training led by the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond, called “Freedom School (Community Planning and Economic Development Department, 2006).” 10 youth from Harrison were provided with \$6,000 in scholarships to attend the 25-hour training.

An anti-racist analysis is *now present in the ongoing work at HNA, rather than requiring special anti-racist projects* (Thompson, 2006b; Young, 2006). In this way, HNA is starting to reflect a “critical consciousness” of racial and ethnic concerns in Harrison. *Critical consciousness* is a level of understanding of society that allows people to challenge societal norms reinforcing oppression and help them to perceive alternate norms that do not reinforce oppression (Friere, 1997). HNA has also incorporated HNA principles into its ongoing work by providing community members opportunities to voice concerns, talk out contentious issues, and *promoting dialogue* in general, thus tacitly promoting conflict resolution skills and cross-cultural discussion among community members (Shabazz-Holt, 2006). The discussions can now be deeper, uncovering how racial inequity can impede progress out of poverty, in the hopes that such causative factors in the struggle against poverty can be reduced in Harrison (Bailey, 2006, Thompson, 2006b). This takes homeowners beyond superficial concerns (like speeding

on the roads) to more *underlying issues* affecting community residents (like African-Americans struggling to find living wage employment) (Shabazz-Holt, 2006; Thompson, 2006a).

For instance, in community meetings to discuss the development of Bassett Creek, an active effort was made to *recruit community of members of color and solicit their input*. Half of the input in 2 meetings to discuss development was from people of color and a third came from immigrants and refugees (Thompson, 2006a). In getting this input from diverse members of Harrison, HNA compiled a *Community Benefits Agreement (CBA)* (Shabazz-Holt, 2006; Thompson, 2006a). In getting diverse community viewpoints to plan the CBA, HNA is truly *changing the traditional top-down approach to planning and they will be able to make decisions that better reflect the pluralistic viewpoints* of the community that are less likely to reflect oppressive societal norms (Shabazz-Holt, 2006). In this way, HNA has ceased to see Harrison as facing the common problem of poverty, but rather, they now recognize that *poverty is experienced differently by the different racial and ethnic groups* in the community.

However, *getting participation from diverse groups in planning and working on HNA activities can be difficult* (Bailey, 2006; Thompson, 2006b; Young, 2006). Hmong and Lao with **language barriers** are particularly difficult to reach (Young, 2006), though improvements in Asian participation have been significant in the past year (Bailey, 2006). Getting other people of color to participate as leaders within the organization can be quite difficult, as well (Bailey, 2006; Thompson, 2006b; Young, 2006). For instance, HNA could do more to encourage Somali participation (Bailey, 2006). More involvement by *people of color on the board of directors* is also a central concern that still requires HNA attention (Bailey, 2006; Thompson, 2006b). People with no experience on such boards can be intimidated by the culture of the board and the structure of board meetings (Bailey, 2006).

Anti-racist work can be difficult both emotionally and it can add to an already full workload further dissuading people from participating (Young, 2006). People must both deal with their own emotional responses to the work and find new and innovative ways to encourage people of color to participate. For instance, more work can be done by HNA to get housing and grant information to people of color in Harrison ensuring that they benefit from such initiatives (Bailey, 2006). It is clear that that participation from diverse members of the community is crucial if HNA wants to truly conduct its work through an anti-racist lens and *HNA has more to do to get more involvement from people of color* in Harrison (Bailey, 2006; Shabazz-Holt, 2006; Thompson, 2006b; Young, 2006).

HNA is currently in the process of *building a coalition of anti-racist leaders* among the residents of Harrison (Shabazz-Holt, 2006). This process of **coalition-building** is critical because, as a small community agency, HNA might not have the institutional power to affect change without the support from diverse community members (Thompson, 2006b). These trained anti-racist leaders are now *using that lens to view their community problems, employing shared terminology to discuss community concerns, and taking on responsibility for addressing racism* in the community. But progress in

community development projects is slow. Many such projects have a 5-10 year timeline and the impact of much of the early anti-racist work remains hidden (Shabazz-Holt, 2006). Much of the work in bringing in diverse viewpoints and critically analyzing social issues from an anti-racist paradigm will *ultimately be evident upon completion of many projects*, though in the interim the process is surely to be *a different kind of experience* for community members in the meantime.

The Future

There is a type of constructive, non-violent tension which is necessary for growth. Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, so must we see the need for non-violent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood (King, 1992, p.116).

The future of HNA's anti-racist work is quite promising, but ***HNA must continue to develop as an anti-racist organization***. There are some important dimensions to anti-racist work that HNA is not yet engaging in to a great extent, that represent important future activities for the organization. For instance, an anti-racist organization must commit itself to ***activism***. This will be an ongoing challenge because HNA requires support from its potential community allies (Thompson, 2006b). HNA is only in the very early stages of engaging in confronting racism in the community of Harrison. The work of Neighbors Against Abandoned Gas Stations (NAAGS) represents a notable move in that direction (Harrison Neighborhood Association, 2005). *Confronting racist systems* is part of the anti-racist paradigm and, with housing as the HNA focus, HNA is in a leadership position to confront racist financial, real estate, and commercial institutions. In fact, they have stated their intention to do so (Thompson, 2006b). HNA's housing focus would also lend itself to confronting racist practices in the school system, the police force, the media, and other related social institutions. *These systems are all complicit and interconnected in dominating the people of color* in Harrison (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; People's Institute, 2006b) and HNA is in an excellent position to confront them.

Perhaps HNA has been reluctant to confront racist institutions in Harrison due to ***internalized racial inferiority***. Internalized racial inferiority exists when people of color and those representing them settle for lower expectations, tolerate racist practices, hide behind a "professional" identity, or attempt to assimilate rather than challenging the status quo (People's Institute, 2006b). These all seem to be dimensions of HNA's reluctance to confront racist institutions. If they represented homeowners *in a wealthier Caucasian neighborhood, undoubtedly they would have more institutional power to confront manifestations of institutionalized racism* in their community (Thompson, 2006b). Undoubtedly, however, this is a developmental issue too. Confronting powerful institutions in Harrison *requires that a strong coalition be built* of residents who understand the anti-racist framework before they will likely support HNA in such confrontational efforts (Shabazz-Holt, 2006; Thompson, 2006b).

HNA has successfully conducted numerous anti-racist trainings for the residents of Harrison. In the future, HNA could also conduct *more anti-racist trainings* (hopefully reaching even broader segments of Harrison), but they *could also conduct conflict resolution skills trainings, cross-cultural communications trainings, language trainings, and other kinds of trainings* to encourage community discussion and resolution of community problems (Shabazz-Holt, 2006). Ultimately the more people that HNA can engage in such efforts, the *more social capital* that will exist in Harrison to challenge racism. However, developing trust among the residents of Harrison, particularly the people of color, can be a great challenge because the community residents have an extensive history of being disappointed by community agencies (Shabazz-Holt, 2006; Young, 2006).

Analysis

Development of an Anti-Racist Identity –

Personal change, if it is to be sustained over time, and not subject to repeated manipulation from outside sources, must be autonomously and intentionally embraced and integrated into the self. Just as a value consensus within a society is a necessary prerequisite to viable political and structural change, only change in people can change the culture which “cultivates” the values in society (Reardon, 1992, p.402)

The development of an anti-racist identity *does not occur quickly nor in a linear fashion* (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997). As one acquires a new anti-racist identity, they generally pass through *a series of phases* that correspond to new understandings of oneself and the world around them. For members of the dominant Caucasian society, typically this means *internalizing a societal identity of “White”, then engaging in an ongoing pursuit for information and self-reflection, and finally learning how to work effectively in a multi-cultural setting* (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997). One must then, move from gaining knowledge about the ‘self’ to *applying that knowledge* to gaining new information, *de-centering one’s own worldview to empathize* with people from other races, and finally leading to becoming *an active change agent*, challenging the inequality existing in the world around them (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; People’s Institute, 2006a). For people of color, this typically means transitioning from an acceptance of an oppressive societal ideology to taking on *a new anti-racist identity* and working against oppressive societal institutions (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997).

A general set of stages that people of color and Caucasian’s pass through in developing an anti-racist identity is included below in order of occurrence (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997):

For People of Color –

1. **Pre-encounter**→ the individual accepts the dominant society's ideology, desiring to assimilate and be accepted by Caucasian society.
2. **Encounter**→ a shocking event opens the individual's eyes to oppression.
3. **Immersion and emersion**→ the individual learns more about their identity, while there is an internal struggle between the old identity and the new.
4. **Internalization**→ the individual takes on an anti-racist identity.
5. **Commitment**→ the individual becomes a change agent/activist.

For Caucasian's –

1. **Contact**→ the individual becomes aware that other races exist and have a distinct worldview and concerns.
2. **Disintegration**→ the individual becomes aware of racism and experiences feelings of guilt.
3. **Reintegration and further examination**→ the individual wrestles with a new identity between withdrawal and self-reflection.
4. **Pseudo Independence**→ the individual makes a conscious effort to disconnect from racist behavior and tolerance of the status quo.
5. **Autonomy**→ The individual is self-actualized and can join with people of color in their struggle for emancipation.

HNA seems somewhere between a 3 or a 4 on these scales measuring one's development towards an anti-racist identity. The individual staff members, volunteers, and leadership who have undergone anti-racist trainings have begun to internalize these messages and confront their own thoughts and feelings as they pertain to racism in Harrison. The leap from this stage to that of change agent/activist is an enormous one and one that will take time and come with great difficulty. HNA must first get as diverse of representation as possible in their planning and implementation efforts. They must develop and cultivate enough institutional power to be able to confront racist institutions in their community, which requires a strong, multi-ethnic coalition and ideally leadership from communities of color.

Activism and working as an agent of change –

[In addressing societal racism] There are no bystanders and neutral observers. Each person is either part of the problem or part of the solution (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997).

Recognizing that there is no neutral position when one is living in a racist society, *one is either actively working to change racist institutions or one is supporting them*, an anti-racist identity is an active one. It is clear that claiming "colorblindness" or conforming are ways of covertly accepting the dominant racist societal ideology. It is not possible to remove oneself from the racist society, to claim that one is anti-racist, one must influence and change racist systems (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; People's Institute, 2006a). Undoing racism involves *organizing in multi-racial coalitions* to

identify, analyze, and **challenge manifestations of societal racism and power** (People's Institute, 2006a). Challenging oppression demands that action be taken in alignment with guiding principles, *praxis*, and it is from this dynamic *praxis* that new understandings of the society arise (Friere, 1997). An active anti-racist is an individual that attempts to first unlearn racist patterns in preparation for an eventual effort to redistribute societal power and resources (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997).

HNA has had some initial success in attempting to work as a change agent for racial justice in Harrison. When Bobby William sold his property and it was sold to a local developer who demolished it, HNA demonstrated that their voice in challenging manifestations of racism in Harrison could be felt. This kind of success could be built upon by challenging other manifestations of racism, particularly with property-related concerns, the primary mandate of HNA. HNA has already made it clear that they would like to challenge racist financial practices in the community for instance (Thompson, 2006b), and this kind of activism would be accepting the enormous responsibility that HNA decided to undertake in addressing social and economic injustice in Harrison. Coalitions with other like-minded organizations in conducting this work could serve to strengthen the position of HNA and deflect some of the risk in conducting this work, though subtlety and tact may serve this function, as well. HNA takes on enormous risks when it overtly challenges powerful societal institutions, like financial institutions (Thompson, 2006b), but being a change agent means taking on risks.

Internalized Racial Inferiority –

The acceptance of and acting out of an inferior definition of self, given by the oppressor, is rooted in the historical designation of one's race. Over many generations, this process of disempowerment and disenfranchisement expresses itself in self-defeating behaviors (People's Institute, 2006a).

Internalized racial inferiority is thus when oppressed groups *take on the definition of themselves as dictated by their oppressor and intentionally or unintentionally subvert their pursuit for equality*. In this case, when racial and ethnic minorities in Harrison take on a definition of themselves as dictated by the dominant Caucasian culture they work against their interests in working towards gaining equality. There are many manifestations of internalized racial inferiority. Some common forms are: ***tolerance, having low expectations, assimilation, and protectionism***. ***Tolerance*** is when racial and ethnic minorities accept conditions of inequality to get by in life, ***having low expectations*** is when racial and ethnic minorities learn to accept disappointments in order to escape responsibility for challenging them, ***assimilation*** is when racial and ethnic minorities give up their life ways to blend in with the dominant Caucasian culture, and ***protectionism*** is when racial and ethnic minorities hide in their jobs taking on a "professional identity" in order to avoid opportunities to challenge the status quo (People's Institute, 2006b).

In avoiding direct confrontations with many racist societal institutions to date, HNA has exhibited racial inferiority. If, hypothetically, HNA would take a more

confrontational position if it were representing wealthier, Caucasian residents than the poorer, much more diverse community of Harrison, then they have given in to tolerance and having low expectations. In representing poorer communities of color, HNA has an additional responsibility to be an advocate for those residents, according to anti-racist principles. This does not mean fighting on behalf of residents but rather struggling with them, ideally behind them, but participating in struggles against economic and social injustice nonetheless.

Hope, courage, perseverance, and strength –

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have yet to engage in a direct-action campaign that was “well timed” in view of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word “Wait!” It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This “Wait” has almost always meant “Never.” We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that “justice too long delayed is justice denied” (King, 1992, p.117).

The time for the Harrison Neighborhood Association in addressing inequality in Harrison is Now! Clearly the work that lies ahead of the Harrison Neighborhood Association in promoting neighborhood equality and anti-racist principles will be ***challenging***. In addition to funding difficulties, eliciting support from diverse volunteers, and other such struggles faced by non-profit neighborhood associations, the Harrison Neighborhood Association has made ***a long-term commitment*** to rise-up against racism in Harrison institutions. A sustained effort is required, one that will be fraught with obstacles posed by those unfamiliar with anti-racist principles or those who do not agree with them (People’s Institute, 2006a). In order to sustain the effort in such an environment, anti-racist *trainees need to support one another and pledge that they will confront racism in their community*. It is particularly difficult to confront these issues on an interpersonal level with one’s neighbors rather than confronting them with people with whom we have more distant relationships (Young, 2006).

There are many successes in the struggle against societal racism though (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997) and ***racist institutions can be overturned*** (People’s Institute, 2006a). HNA must ***take time to celebrate successes*** in the ongoing struggle. Incidents like the destruction of Bobby William’s Penn Street gas station are inspirational and can sustain the tireless work of the volunteers, staff, and community members committed to this work. This will hopefully lead to *an ever widening network of community members dedicated to anti-racist principles and challenging the racist institutions in Harrison, Minneapolis, and the wider American society*.

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Sample Story- The Harrison Neighborhood Association

By Tory Hansen

The Harrison Neighborhood Association (HNA) has been flourishing as a non-profit agency serving the residents of Harrison and their property-related concerns since 1983. Since that time they have succeeded in establishing revitalization plans for the community, improving community safety, restoring Bassett Creek and its accompanying trails, hosting community events and trainings, and many other important tasks. Their primary mandate has always been to promote a vibrant and healthy community and challenge poverty.

HNA's approach to its work changed considerably twenty years after its inception, in 2003. At this time, HNA felt that they needed to overtly address racism in their work, to attack one of the primary underlying causes of poverty and one of the main obstacles to developing coalitions to fight it. They enlisted the guidance and support of the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond at this time to assist the staff, volunteers, and leadership of HNA in seeing the world through an anti-racist lens.

Through the People's Institute trainings, the people involved in HNA have come to embrace its philosophy and have become one of the leading neighborhood associations in Minneapolis in this regard. They periodically host such trainings in order to further their own explorations into personal and societal racism but also to share these understandings with more and more citizens of Harrison. In doing so, they are building a stronger community that understands anti-racism. In fact, they have been able to run their own training, without the assistance of the People's Institute, showing how far they have come. Future trainings could potentially go beyond the work that has been done and offer cross-cultural and conflict-resolution skills to residents to further their ability to communicate with one another and resolve inter-ethnic and inter-racial problems on their own.

In becoming anti-racist, HNA has to consider how the institutions in Harrison perpetuated racial injustice but it was also important for everyone involved with HNA to undergo self-reflection to figure out how their own personal beliefs fit into the racist society that we live in, the United States and, more specifically, Minneapolis. This personal development work, though difficult, allowed people involved with HNA to address problems related to racism and gave them a terminology and framework to use in describing them. These HNA stakeholders were then able to discuss concerns relating to racial and ethnic injustice on a much deeper level.

An anti-racist approach to work is difficult to achieve. It means that people have to be able to face their own racist thoughts and feelings. It also means that people from all races and ethnicities should be involved in community planning and decision-making. This is always a struggle at HNA, to ensure that the greatest number of groups in Harrison are represented in HNA events, trainings, programs, planning, and leadership. Getting more diversity in the leadership positions in the organization has been particularly difficult.

HNA has been relatively successful in the last year in gaining participation from the Hmong and Lao communities. The Somali community remains much more elusive, as can getting participation from African-Americans who are predominantly renters, not home owners in Harrison. The more groups that become involved in HNA planning and program implementation, the closer they will get to their vision of,

creating a prosperous and peaceful community that equitably benefits all Harrison neighborhood's diverse racial, cultural, and economic groups. We will combat racism and the other forms of oppression by establishing an environment of stewardship where all individuals can participate through shared power and mutual accountability (Harrison Neighborhood Association).

Gaining participation will be one key then in creating the kind of socially and economically just community that HNA would like to achieve.

Another important next step will occur when HNA more actively confronts racist institutions in Harrison. One successful recent effort, when the Neighbors Against Abandoned Gas Stations actively campaigned to get Bobby Williams to “clean up or tear down” his gas station, may lay the groundwork for further such campaigns in the future. It is important to recognize that in a racist society, saying nothing when confronted by racism and racist institutions is a position siding with the racist institutions. For HNA to live an anti-racist philosophy, they must be willing to take an active stance against racism in Harrison, particularly against the real estate industry, the financial institutions, and other property-related organizations.

This kind of work is very risky, particularly for a relatively small organization like HNA. Community and institutional support for its work are essential and perhaps some confrontations should be subtle and tactful in order to allow HNA to continue doing the wonderful work that they do for the community. However, HNA should be concerned if they are not choosing not to act because they are representing marginalized populations. This kind of silence and escapism is clearly a manifestation of racial inferiority. Hypothetically, if they would choose to take a more aggressive, confrontational role if they were representing residents of a wealthy, White neighborhood than the diverse neighborhood of Harrison then they are exhibiting racial inferiority.

All of this change takes time though, and since 2003 HNA has made remarkable progress. They are able to name racism and analyze how it plays a role in every social happening that occurs in a racist society. Power is always unequal between races in the United States and unless we consider its role overtly, it acts on all of us covertly. In making racism overt, HNA has made it possible to resist this societal power. This level of critical consciousness is a critical step in attempting to overcome oppression. The next step will be *praxis*, acting on this critical consciousness by confronting oppressive institutions. This is a massive responsibility. Developing in this way will take time and require strength, courage, and perseverance in an oppressive world that has not yet come to embrace anti-racist principles.

Appendix

Master Glossary for Harrison Neighborhood Association's Institutionalized Racism Cases

Activism and working as an agent of change – There are no bystanders and neutral observers in addressing racism. Each person is either part of the problem or part of the solution. There is no neutral position when one is living in a racist society, one is either actively working to change racist institutions or one is supporting them, an anti-racist identity is an active one. It is clear that claiming “colorblindness” or conforming are ways of covertly accepting the dominant racist societal ideology. It is not possible to remove oneself from the racist society, to claim that one is anti-racist, one must influence and change racist systems (Derman-Sparks & Phillips; People’s Institute).

The asset gap – Access to assets may be more important than income in determining one’s life chances. Assets provide security in difficult economic times and can be leveraged to produce greater societal opportunities. Assets can be economic (such as a house), human (such as knowledge and skills), social (networks of social support), or natural (access to natural resources). Modest changes in one’s assets can create great changes in one’s stability, security, and self-reliance. Lack of access to economic, human, and social capital directly diminishes access to societal opportunities (good jobs, a good education, and the like). There are even greater disparities between African American and Caucasian access to assets than in terms of income per capita (Miller-Addams).

Assimilation (racial inferiority) - When racial and ethnic minority individuals or communities give up their life ways to blend in with the dominant Caucasian culture, rather than challenging racist societal institutions (The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond).

Covert racism - The lack of overt acknowledgement of the racial dimensions of social problems and poverty, creates perhaps a more insidious form of racism. This means that although the language of diversity and multiculturalism is used, the social structure (e.g., policies, laws, beliefs, norms, media, language) is still in place supporting personal and institutional prejudice, oppression, and racism (Murphy and Cunningham, 2003, p.3) {see also racial apathy}.

Development of an Anti-Racist Identity – The development of an anti-racist identity does not occur quickly nor in a linear fashion. As one acquires a new anti-racist identity, they generally pass through a series of phases that correspond to new understandings of oneself and the world around them. For members of the dominant Caucasian society, typically this means internalizing a societal identity of “White”, then engaging in an ongoing pursuit for information and self-reflection, and finally learning how to work effectively in a multi-cultural setting.

For people of color, this typically means transitioning from an acceptance of an oppressive societal ideology to taking on a new anti-racist identity and working against oppressive societal institutions (Derman-Sparks & Phillips).

Escapism (racial superiority) – When officials or communities *escape their responsibility* for dealing with for racial inequity and its consequences (The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond).

Having low expectations (racial inferiority) - When racial and ethnic minority individuals or communities learn to accept disappointments in order to escape responsibility for challenging them (People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond).

Ignorance (racial superiority) – When officials or communities ignore the racial dimensions of a social problem and/or do not see racially-related problems as their problem (People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond).

Institutionalized racism – An institutionalized system of power. It encompasses a web of economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systemize and ensure an unequal distribution of privilege, resources, and power in favor of the dominant group and at the expense of all other racial groups (Derman-Sparks & Phillips).

Internalized Racial Inferiority/Internalized Oppression - The acceptance of and acting out of an inferior definition of self, given by the oppressor, is rooted in the historical designation of one’s race. Over many generations, this process of disempowerment and disenfranchisement expresses itself in self-defeating behaviors (People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond).

Internalized Racial Superiority- The acceptance of and acting out of an superior definition of self given is rooted in the historical designation of one’s race. Over many generations, this process of empowerment and access expresses itself as unearned privileges, access to institutional power and invisible advantages based upon race (People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond).

Paternalism (racial superiority) – When officials or communities go into communities of color to help “them” in a missionary-like fashion, rather than soliciting their input on project planning or implementation or generating planning from local leadership, incorporating the diverse perspectives of community members of color (People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond).

Protectionism (racial inferiority) - When racial and ethnic minority individuals or communities hide in their jobs taking on a “professional identity” in order to avoid opportunities to challenge the status quo (People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond).

Racial apathy – In Minnesota being “nice” has meant largely ignoring problems associated with race. This racial apathy leads to covert forms of racial discrimination that exacerbate community problems by ignoring race as an important contributing factor to poverty (Murphy & Cunningham) {see also covert racism}.

Racial Segregation – Racial segregation is not only the physical separation of racial and ethnic groups by neighborhood but segregation also means that the problems associated with poverty are concentrated in the community and life chances are consequently lower there (History of Harrison Case).

The relationship between unemployment and race – There is a very strong relationship between patterns of unemployment, patterns of housing, and the underlying racial relations embedded in each. African Americans, particularly in urban settings, are frequently excluded from employment opportunities available to Caucasians, particularly those opportunities existing in the suburbs (Wilson).

Silence (racial superiority) – When officials or communities refuse to recognize and discuss the racial dimensions of social problems, rendering them publicly invisible (People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond).

Tolerance (racial inferiority) - When racial and ethnic minority individuals or communities accept conditions of inequality to get by in life, rather than challenging unjust systems (People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond).

Victim-blaming - The origins of social problems are considered to be due to the victims of the problems themselves rather than as any deficiency or structural defect in the their neighborhood or the social system (Derman-Sparks & Phillips).