

Years of unfair laws and practices have brought us to the current state of our country, but what went wrong to get us here? Through the ages, there are many examples of these unfair practices and laws such as institutionalized racism, housing history and generational wealth.

Since the end of slavery, institutionalized racism has crippled our modern day society, making getting jobs and doing well difficult for people of color. Through the 1880's to the 1920's, 35-37 races were categorized within white people. At the time, America was predominantly European, so if you weren't European you were considered a "race invader" infecting pure America. At a point in time, Asians, Jews and Italians could gain citizenship but were placed at the lower end of the hierarchy. They were considered citizens but still lacked the same rights as a white person. Asian, Jewish and Italian immigrants were forced to work low paying, labor-intensive jobs. Most immigrants weren't even considered for a "normal" job. To summarize, the end of slavery wasn't the end of racism. Institutionalized racism is everywhere, it's even carried its way into the housing industry.

Housing prices have been rising, and with the average black family earning 1/8th the average white family, blacks are being pushed out of their long time homes. After the suburbs were constructed, the amount of blacks living in a neighborhood was a deciding factor in the value of a home. People of color were treated like pests. Urban renewal destroyed 90% of inner city housing. 19% of blacks' housing was never rebuilt, leaving that 19% homeless. Racism in housing has evolved itself into what we now know as gentrification.

Since the early 2000's, rent prices have skyrocketed past what used to be thought of as even considerable. Mariah Alyn-Claire (a Portland resident), has stated that she fears that she'll soon

be homeless as a result of ever rising rent prices. White people aren't struggling with finding money for housing anywhere near as much as the average black family because of their generational wealth. In the 1970's, public outcry against urban renewal caused the city to remain residential. With rising rent prices, blacks couldn't afford proper housing, forcing them out, making space for white people who can better afford it. Racism has an affect on every aspect of a person of colors' life.

Unfair laws and practices have formed a somewhat traumatized society. Institutionalized racism, generational wealth and housing history are all aspects of our current society that have carried us to this point. Racism hasn't gone anywhere so we should stop acting like it has.

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