

history theatre

BEHIND THE SUN

By Stanley Kipper and Laura Drake
Directed by Richard D. Thompson

September 21–October 13, 2024

Obie Kipper has finally found the house of his dreams, but there's one problem: it's 1956 and Obie's dream for the future of his family lies outside his redlined neighborhood, in an all-white neighborhood. With help from an old friend and coworker, Obie puts in motion a sensational scheme to purchase the house. This may either land him in jail or help chart the future for his family and all of Minneapolis.

Based on the lives of playwright Stan Kipper's family, experience this story of community, family, and the lengths some had to go through to achieve the American Dream.



Tyler Kipper—14 year old all American 1950's teenager.



Obie Kipper, an independent, strong family man seeking the American Dream along with Mary Kipper a strong, intelligent and loving woman.

To read more on the making this play:

<https://www.startribune.com/how-a-black-family-integrated-a-white-minneapolis-neighborhood-in-1950s/506000212>

REDLINING AND RACIAL COVENANTS

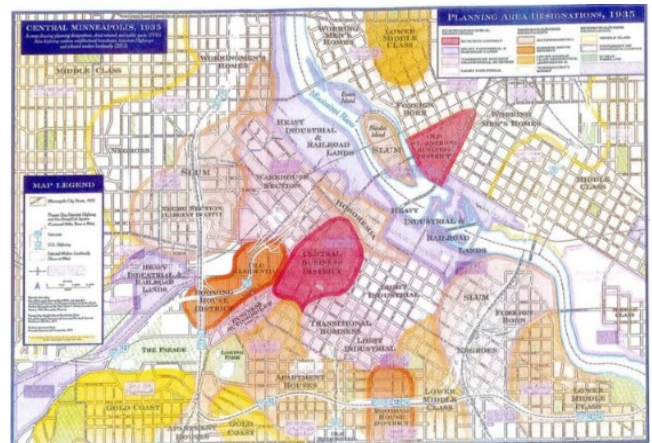
In 1885, Minnesota passed the Equal Accommodations Act, which guaranteed Black Americans equal access to public spaces and hotels. In 1897, Minnesota passed a civil rights law that ensured Black Americans' right to service in restaurants.

Racial covenants were inspired by changing ideas about race and urban space. Minneapolis real estate developers began writing racial covenants—race-based property ownership restrictions—into property deeds in 1910. Henry and Leonora Scott sold a property to Nels Anderson. The deed for that transaction stipulated that:

The premises hereby conveyed shall not at any time be conveyed, mortgaged or leased to any person or persons of Chinese, Japanese, Moorish, Turkish, Negro, Mongolian or African blood or descent. Said restrictions and covenants shall run with the land and any breach of any or either thereof shall work a forfeiture of title, which may be enforced by re-entry. Others simply banned non-Caucasians.

Black residents were in danger of racial violence if they attempted to move into a white neighborhood. This housing discrimination was institutionally enforced as well—restrictive covenants and discriminatory housing practices permeated the Twin Cities. Redlining resulted in a racialized urban setting that still exists today.

Redlining was a system of legalized segregation and categorized city neighborhoods in terms of “quality,” which was defined as the number of residents of color who lived in the area. These areas were drawn out and colored on maps: an area classified as “green,” was a homogeneously wealthy and white neighborhood, while a blue neighborhood may have been less wealthy and may have had a couple of residents who were people of color. A yellow or red neighborhood had even more black residents and were classified as “third” and “fourth grade.”



1935 Redlining map of Minneapolis

In Minnesota, elected officials recognized that action was necessary. The legislature banned new covenants in 1953. Then, in 1962, state lawmakers prohibited housing discrimination on the basis of race, religion and national origin. The federal government followed suit in 1968, when Congress passed the Fair Housing Act.

By the time that covenants were made illegal, the damage was already done. Covenants made it difficult for minority families to secure stable and affordable housing, which affected the health, educational opportunities and job prospects of generations of residents. And covenants created patterns of residential segregation that persist today.

RACIAL COVENANTS TIMELINE

1910 The first racial covenant is recorded in Minneapolis.

1919 The Minnesota State Legislature bans real estate discrimination based on religion

1924 The National Association of Real Estate Boards adopts a “code of ethics” that bars its members from “introducing into a neighborhood members of any race or nationality whose presence will clearly be detrimental to property values.”

1930s Covenants are endorsed by federal agencies charged with supporting homeownership. Most real estate developers adopt these restrictions in the hopes of receiving favorable financing terms.

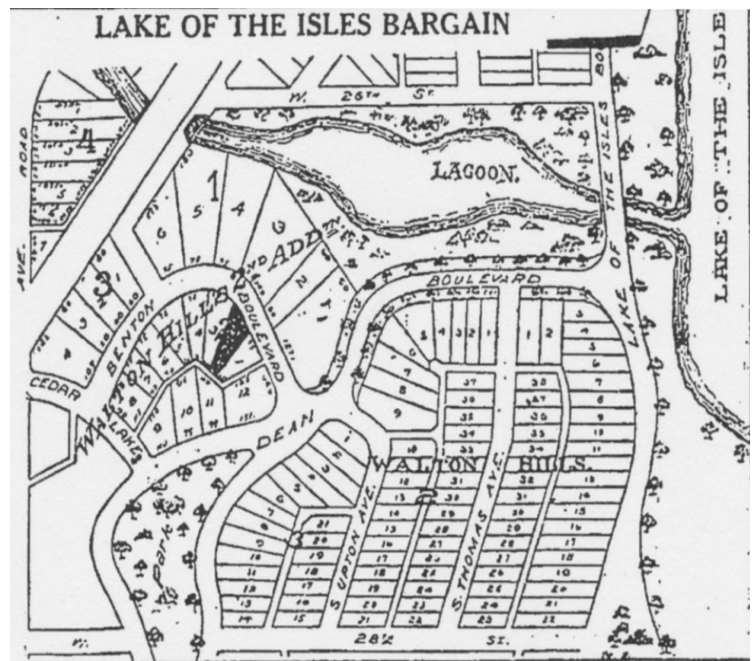
1940s The NAACP launches a legal campaign against covenants.

1948 The United States Supreme Court rules in *Shelley v Kramer* that covenants are unenforceable.

1953 The Minnesota Legislature bars new racial covenants.

1962 The Minnesota Legislature prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of race, religion, and national origin.

1968 Congress passes the Fair Housing Act, making covenants and other discriminatory housing practices illegal across the nation.



A fellow cannot interest the dollar without using dollar instincts, and this lot is purposely slashed in price to attract the dollar. The map shows you where it is and what it looks at. The lot has curb and gutter, stone sidewalk, city water, gas and electricity. It is a beautiful lot, high and commanding, with a frontage of 75 feet and a depth of 140 feet. Mr. Stiff lives next door, at 2815 Benton boulevard.

Old price \$4,000. Today's discount \$1,250. New price **\$2,750**. Terms, \$750 down, balance on or before 8 years; 6% interest.

I appeal to the instincts of those about to marry. Isn't this the most remarkable offering you ever heard of. Restrictions—

The party of the second part hereby agrees that the premises hereby conveyed shall not at any time be conveyed, mortgaged or leased to any person or persons of Chinese, Japanese, Moorish, Turkish, Negro, Mongolian, Semetic or African blood or descent. Said restrictions and covenants shall run with the land and any breach of any or either thereof shall work a forfeiture of title, which may be enforced by re-entry.

Lake Street Frontage

EXAMPLES OF COVENANTS

Example #1

E. No persons of any race other than the Aryan race shall use or occupy any building or any lot, except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race domiciled with an owner or tenant.

F. No trailer, basement, tent, shack, garage, barn or other outbuilding erected in the tract shall at any time be used as a residence temporarily or permanently, nor shall any structure of a temporary character be used as a residence.

Example #2

This conveyance is subject to the following provisions, the violation of which shall automatically revert the title herein in the vendors, their heirs or assigns, Party of the second part, his heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns, agrees not to sell or rent or permit said premises to be occupied by persons of African or Semitic race. According to the plat thereof on file and of record in the office of the Register of Deeds in and for the County of Hennepin and State of Minnesota.

Example #3

4. That no building shall be left with paper exposure or with the exterior incomplete.

5. That the said land or buildings thereon shall never be rented, leased or sold, transferred or conveyed to, nor shall same be occupied exclusively by person or persons other than of the Caucasian Race.

6. The forgoing covenant and restriction shall run with the land and shall bind the grantee herein and the heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns of said grantee until the first day of January A.D. Nineteen hundred and Forty.

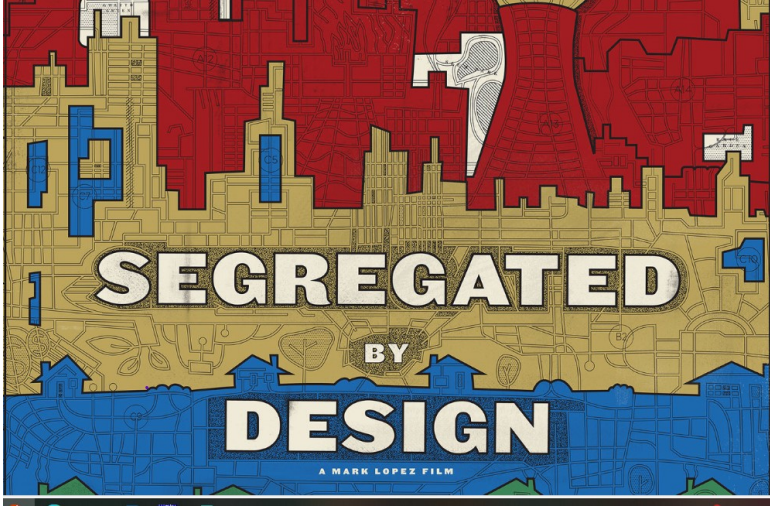
THE FAIR HOUSING ACT

The Fair Housing Act, 42 U.S.C. 3601 prohibits discrimination by direct providers of housing, such as landlords and real estate companies as well as other entities, such as municipalities, banks or other lending institutions and homeowners insurance companies whose discriminatory practices make housing unavailable to persons because of: race or color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, or disability. One of the central objectives of the Fair Housing Act, when Congress enacted it in 1968, was to prohibit race discrimination in sales and rentals of housing. Nevertheless, more than 30 years later, race discrimination in housing continues to be a problem. The majority of the Justice Department's pattern or practice cases involve claims of race discrimination. The Department of Justice has brought many cases alleging this kind of discrimination based on race or color. In addition, the Department's Fair Housing Testing Program seeks to uncover this kind of hidden discrimination and hold those responsible accountable. Some of the Department's cases have also alleged that municipalities and other local government entities violated the Fair Housing Act when they denied permits or zoning changes for housing developments, or relegated them to predominantly minority neighborhoods, because the prospective residents were expected to be predominantly African-Americans. To learn more about housing discrimination including the history of the Fair Housing Act, who is protected, what is prohibited, and additional resources go to: hud.gov and justice.gov

Read each scenario and identify any instances of housing discrimination. Explain which, if any, particular actions are illegal under the Fair Housing Act, or point out why an action was not discriminatory under the law or specify what additional information you may need to decide.

1. An apartment seeker who uses a wheelchair has found a second-floor apartment in an older walk-up building. He asks the landlord to put in an elevator so he can reach the unit, but the landlord refuses.
2. A woman with a ten-year-old son and a high credit score, excellent landlord references and adequate income from child support and Social Security disability benefits is denied housing in favor of an elderly, retired couple with lower credit scores, lower income and no references.
3. A mortgage lender reviews two home loan applications. One is from a Hispanic couple and the other is from a white couple. Both couples have approximately the same average credit scores, have similar incomes, are equally creditworthy, are borrowing roughly the same amount and are applying for the same type of 30-year fixed rate mortgage. Both couples are approved for their loans. However, the Hispanic couple is quoted a rate of 5.75%, while the white couple is quoted 5%.
4. An African American couple applies in person to rent a single-family home. The real estate agent tells them the unit is not available anymore, but the couple continues to see new ads for the home for six more weeks.
5. A woman with a Chinese accent calls regarding a home for sale in a predominantly white neighborhood. She leaves three messages but her call is never returned. Her niece, who was born in the U.S. and has no accent, calls and hears back from the real estate agent within 24 hours.
6. A Native American family puts in a full-price bid on a home in a predominantly white neighborhood. The real estate agent reveals that the seller is motivated, and there are no other bids on the property. The next day, the real estate agent informs the buyers that the seller has rejected their offer. The seller provides no reason and does not make a counter-offer.

Segregated by Design—Classroom Activity



To watch the movie go to:

Segregatedbydesign.com

Segregated by Design is an animated documentary on the history of how federal, state, and local governments unconstitutionally segregated major metropolitan areas in the United States through law and policy.

The 18-minute film is based on the book *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America* by Richard Rothstein who also narrates.

Film Contents

- I. A Forgotten History
- II. The Policies
- III. Racial Zoning
- IV. The Slums
- V. Slum Clearance
- VI. The Wealth Gap
- VII. Effects of Segregation
- IIX. Constitutional Remedy

After watching the video, use the following questions to guide your discussion!

1. What did you learn from this video that surprised you?
2. Discuss the difference between defacto and dejure segregation policies
3. How did the New Deal program assist in the creation of segregated housing?
4. Talk about redlining and how builders, realtors and landlords used this to keep people segregated. Talk about how student's neighborhoods may look different if these tactics were never in place.
5. Discuss how redlining has effected education.
6. Divide the class and have each group do a deeper dive into the glossary words on the following page and present to the class their findings.
7. Identify and discuss the three Constitutional provisions that now prohibit these types of actions.

Glossary of words

Blockbusting

Efforts of real estate agents to trigger turnover of white-owned homes to minorities. The agent purchases a white-owned home, sells it to a minority member, then spreads terrifying rumors among the neighbors. The worried homeowners quickly sell to the agent who reaps a high profit by inflating the price of the homes to minorities. Also called “panic selling.” Agents often hired a person of color to walk the neighborhood to exaggerate white fears.

Color Tax

Up to \$1,000 added to a property because a person of color is purchasing it. Can refer to higher mortgage and insurance rates.

Eminent Domain

The right of government to take private property for public purpose through condemnation and payment of fair value. A city can seize property for slum clearance or prevention.

Racially-Restrictive Deeds

Covenants embedded in property deeds to keep people who were not white from buying or even occupying land. Also called restrictive covenant.

Racial Steering

The practice by real estate agents of steering white home seekers into white areas, while steering equally creditworthy black prospects into black and racially changing areas.

Redlining

Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) instituted a redlining policy by developing color-coded maps of American cities using racial criteria to categorize lending and insurance risks. New, affluent, racially homogeneous housing areas received green lines while black and poor white neighborhoods were often circumscribed by red lines denoting their undesirability. Banks and insurers adopted HOLC's maps and practices to guide lending and underwriting decisions. The Federal Housing Administration used HOLC's methods to assess locations for federally insured new housing construction. Color-code maps often displayed in real estate offices.

Refusal to Show/Refusal to Sell

Real estate agent refuses to show or sell property to minority groups; shows a minority family a house for sale at night or a house that is in disrepair; say an “Open House” is “done for the day.”

Slum/Ghetto

A slum is characterized by its run-down status; a ghetto is characterized by the people who live there.

The Fair Housing Act of 1968

Signed by President Lyndon B Johnson. Refusal to sell or rent a dwelling to any person because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Declared neighborhood integration a national goal.

BEHIND THE SUN SCENIC DESIGN

This design makes use of the turntable to allow for transition from the older house of ACT I to the new house revealed at the end of ACT I. The new home plays for the entirety of ACT II. Various “in one” scenes are played in isolated areas of the stage and moat. There are door openings built into the masking stage right and stage left to allow for entrances to the “in one” scenes and for access to the two interiors without breaking the fourth wall.

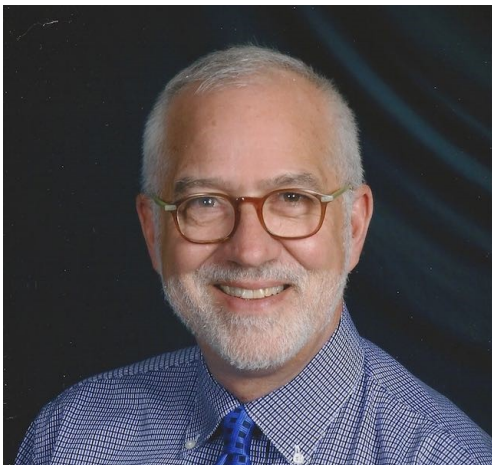


Act 1—Old apartment



Act 2—Birds Eye view

Meet the Scenic Designer—Rick Polenek



Rick Polenek has been active in the Twin Cities theatre and design communities for over 50 years. As an exhibit designer, Rick designed major exhibitions for the Science Museum of Minnesota, the Minnesota History Center and the Weisman Art Museum. He served as art director for VEE Corporation, producers of the Sesame Street Live! arena shows. In addition to History Theatre, Rick’s scenic and prop designs have appeared on many local stages, including: Ordway Center, Park Square, Six Points, Theatre Latte Da, and Artistry. Before retiring from Normandale College, Rick served as the theatre department scenic and lighting designer, as well as instructor in technical theatre.

Favorite designs on the Crawford Livingston stage include *Glensheen*, *Coco’s Diary*, and *Teen Idol* for History Theatre and *West Side Story*, *Godspell*, *Pygmalion*, and *South Pacific* for Chimera Theater. Rick’s first professional design was done on this stage 50 years ago for a production of *Time of Your Life*.

EXPLORE THE SET DESIGN PROCESS

This activity will go through the process of building a Set Model for a play. This activity can be done individually or in small groups.

Have your students watch the video on research on set design [Behind the Scenes Episode 3: Set Design Principles | Emil and the Detectives \(youtube.com\)](#)

Read and Analyze the Script

The first step in the process is to read the show, analyze the script, and conduct any research necessary so that the designer can make informed decisions on their design. Select a scene from a show that you would like to create a set design for. Once you have a copy of the script, read your scene a few times, and make notes and highlight the script. Read the script for sensory and physical needs, and make sure to take notes and annotate your script.

Brainstorm Ideas

After reading through your script and analyzing the scene, you will want to start brainstorming some ideas and doing some planning. Create a list of some of your initial ideas for your planning/brainstorming. This list of ideas will be a reference sheet for the next step.

Make some Thumbnail Sketches and a Rendering

By this point, you may have an idea for your set design. Start by making a sketch of one idea of how you think the set could look. Create 4 small thumbnail sketches with different ideas for how the set could be designed for this scene. The sketches do not have to be super detailed, as long as they visually convey your idea. Select your favorite idea to move forward with. Now, you will create a colored set rendering, or a more detailed drawing of your set design idea. While your rendering doesn't have to be perfect, it should include enough detail to convey your ideas clearly to someone else.

Before moving on to building a set model, watch the following video:

[Behind the Scenes Episode 4: Set Design Model Box | Emil and the Detectives \(youtube.com\)](#)

Building a Model

Now you are ready to craft a 3D model of your set design concept in a shoe box, or another small cardboard box that you have available. To create your set pieces, you can use paper or cardboard cut outs that are propped up or folded to stand up. You could also experiment with other disposable or recyclable materials. Put all of the set pieces that you built into your shoebox or cardboard box and make sure they look the way you want them to. Don't forget to add color or pattern to the floor and walls of the box if that is part of your design. Look at your model and make sure that all of the pieces you envisioned are there. Ask yourself –does your model represent and communicate your vision for the set?

Have the teams/individual show their models to the class and talk about the show and scene they picked and explain the choices they made for their model.

FOR FURTHER READING AND WORKS CITED

Books

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HELPFUL HINTS FOR THEATER AUDIENCES

As an audience member at the theater, you are part of the show! Just as you see and hear the actors onstage, they can see and hear you in the audience. To help the performers do their best, please remember the following:

- Arrive at least 15 minutes early
- Visit the restroom before the show starts
- Sit in the exact seat on your ticket. Ask the usher for help finding it
- Before the show begins, turn off your phone and any other electronic devices . If anything rings by accident, turn it off immediately
- Do not use your phone for texts, calls or games
- You cannot make recordings in the theater
- Do not talk, whisper, sing or hum, unless invited by the performers to do so
- Avoid getting up during the show. If you must leave, wait for a scene change and exit quietly and quickly



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