

Redlining within *A Raisin In The Sun*

By Jason Wang

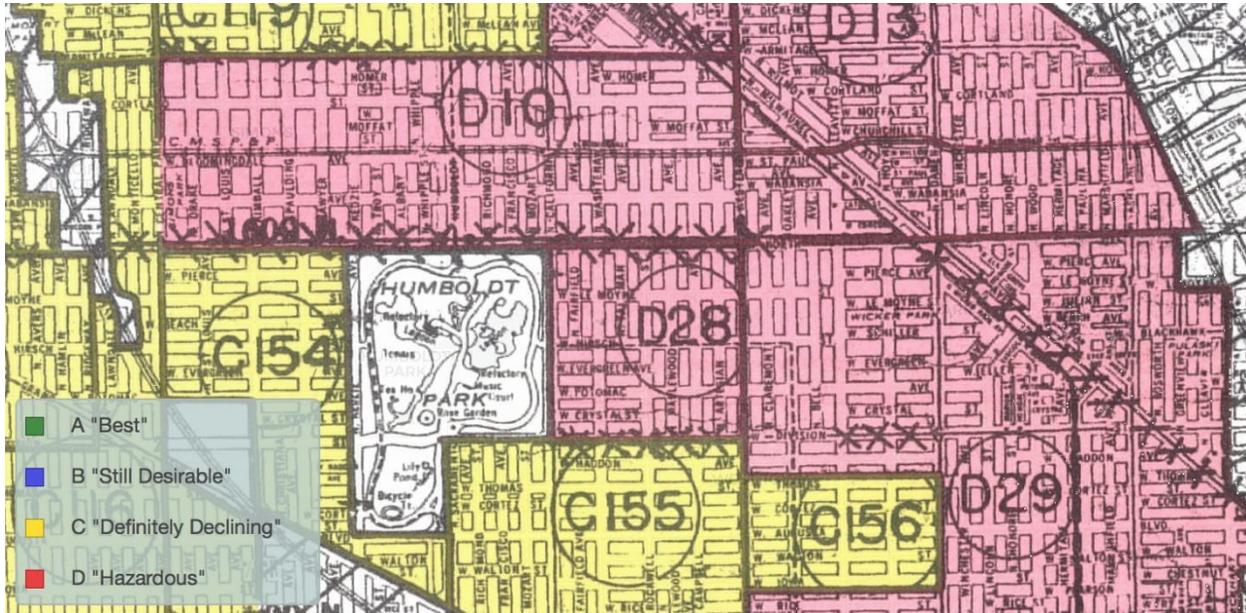


Image from Home Owners Loan Company Map (retrieved from Greer)

Redlining is the historic practice of denial of insurance or loans from banks to people living within a poor financial area. This practice was active from 1934 to 1968 and was caused by mortgage lending maps designating areas with color-coded images, with green being marked “best” and red marked “hazardous”. While poor white neighborhoods were also affected, it was particularly infamous in areas that had predominantly African American and minority communities, who suffered the most.

One perfect description is from *Historic Home Mortgage Redlining in Chicago*: “While white families moving to new housing in suburban areas enjoyed easy access to ample, affordable, and insured mortgage financing, African American families faced starkly different circumstances ” (Greer 211). Potential homeowners within these areas were unable to obtain loans, to actually buy property, and to attract businesses. This leads to the area being less developed compared to other areas that are able to increase wealth and enjoy the prosperity. In *A Raisin In The Sun*, set in Chicago, redlining is a concept that is subtly introduced with the Clybourne Park Improvement Association.

This concept of redlining is first introduced through Mama's dream of buying a house in a white neighborhood, as she knew it would be a better environment to grow up in. It is also shown when the neighborhood they tried to move in attempted to buy the Younger family off so they wouldn't move to their neighborhood. This is displayed through *A Raisin in the Sun*, where Karl Lindner says, "Our association is prepared, through the collective effort of our people, to buy the house from you at a financial gain to your family" (Hansbury 833). They did this in fear of how redlining that would affect their community, which would decrease their property value and wealth.

Redlining was eventually banned with the Fair Housing Act of 1968. However, the legacy it left behind is still seen today. Communities that many minorities live in have less wealth than white neighborhoods due to this period of redlining, causing fewer businesses to open up and fewer people able to buy houses there. This creates a cycle where communities get forever stuck in this trend, while affluent white neighborhoods have more wealth, better facilities, and amenities that lead to a better community.

Works Cited

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