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Introduction to Sociology
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National Social Action Report

1. Write a paragraph of the mission of the organization. What are the organization's goals? What are their values? What do they do? (5 points)

The organization I chose is the Center on Poverty and Social Policy at Columbia University (CPSP). This is a national organization aiming to understand poverty through research and promoting opportunity for families and individuals. Since Columbia is based in NYC it focuses on both the wellbeing of those within NYC but also nationally as well. It researches employment, food, housing, tax credits, and paid family leave policies. They also have a "poverty tracker" that study a sample of 400 New Yorkers that collect data on poverty and topics associated with it. They even follow 1500 families with young children and look at childhood poverty and its effects. They also examine the monthly poverty rate within the US and the role that the government had in shrinking portions of it due to COVID relief, etc. The CPSP has hosted previous events such as social poverty seminars, events that focus on child tax credit and reducing child poverty, and their annual conferences held each May that cover frontiers in poverty research, and social policy for poverty both nationally and locally.

2. Pick a 1) review an archived webinar, 2) a live virtual event, 3) listen to a podcast episode (if they have one) or 4) read a resource document or report (any type of written document regarding the organization's research/advocacy, etc) and write 2 or three sentences about what it was about (5 points)

I reviewed a webinar titled "We Built This: How Federal Policy Segregated America" that CPSP hosted. This was led by Professor Jacob Faber of NYU who specializes in segregation research and racial geography. He mentions how many of us look at segregation as something that is a tragic part of history but don't realize how a lot of it still exists today and the manmade systems that put it into place. He mentions how neighborhoods are very much split over racial lines, how blacks make up 13% of the US population but yet they will typically live with a community that's 45% at least, 32% of NYC's population is white, yet their neighborhood will consist of about 61%. He also examines the housing market and how appraisers were focused on the presence of Black households and how it was the only racial category highlighted on these papers. These processes occurred less than a century ago with the aftermath of the Great Depression, so even though Jim Crow wasn't a thing up in the North, "redlining" occurred in many cities all over the United States. It led to fear of integration of cities, so they could be secure in their security, their mortgages. Previous policies and "redlining" has put us in this position of a segregated America. On a related note, you can see this even in NYC. Yes, we may be the melting pot of all these different cultures, but Flushing mainly is home to the Asian community, Jamaica to the Black community, Belle Harbor to the White community, Jackson

Heights to the Hispanic community, etc. While we may have the most cultures, segregation is still highly visible.

3. Relate what you learned from the webinar, event, podcast, or resource document or report from #2 back to course material. Make 3 separate connections. (5 points)

Throughout this video, the main thing that kept calling me was the iceberg metaphor that we heard in the beginning of class. There is so much hidden under the surface, and there truly is in this topic. We might see how different races are living in different areas of a particular neighborhood, but we don't see the real reasons behind it, the systems that were in place, the dark past. The segregation of America didn't just happen overnight, so too the poverty. The system in a way was built against them, by basing "safety" of lending money to a neighborhood based on its black population and other factors. It goes back to what is ignored by the average population, what, in a sense, is invisible. Through this knowledge though you can see how this can be perpetuated, however. There is housing discrimination here, less likely to get loans which makes them less likely to get out of a particular area. The city sees this as a "high-crime" area and then this will lead to higher incarceration rates. Instead of educating the young, the schools are underfunded, and the neighborhood is neglected—meaning those that are there sometimes resort to crime as the only means. But this is a system with deep underpinnings in our society.

Secondly, and this ties into the first, the issue about federal policy segregating us reminded me of learning about "People's History" and how it holds information that we don't learn in our regular history classes. We learn about the Great Depression and the New Deal, all these different organizations created to try to heal our broken economy, but we don't hear about the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC)—and how through it, "redlining" (the denial of mortgage credit) was one of its long-term impacts that stood in American society. In history, we hit the big overarching points, what were the causes of the Great Depression, what did the New Deal do, and then WWII. I also understand how a topic such as "redlining" is difficult for a kid to understand (heck it's hard for me to understand fully) but I feel that by not including something that affects the way our towns have been developed, to explain that things aren't the way they are just because they've always been that way is truly important. This is how we get to change systems, to explain that this doesn't have to be the status quo and make a better society for the next generation.

The third connection I saw relates closely to the first two, and it's when we discussed the "Four I's of Oppression" and how ideology is the basis of oppression. In order to oppress another person there has to be an ideology of thinking that one group is better than another, that they are more entitled, more deserving than another. Without this, the framing of the Constitution that we have today, capitalism where you have the capitalists on top and workers below, would cease to exist because it shows that some are more entitled than others. The ideology of racism sadly sticks around within our institutions as how it has infiltrated the housing market, it can also be seen in our schools, in our society at large.

4. Indicate what you thought about the webinar/podcast/resource document. Please tell me what you liked, what you think could be improved, and provide some suggestions on how they could have improved it. Your suggestions could be based on the content itself, delivery or presentation. (5 points)

I honestly really appreciated the webinar. I knew about slavery, about Jim Crow and the terrible atrocities that occurred in the South, but I didn't know that segregation was ongoing through policy, and the sad thing is all of this is manmade. It's very similar to what we spoke about in class today, race is a social construct, but regardless of that—we cannot negate that race is very real in our society and has consequences due to this. The truth is we are still dealing with these problems because we haven't gotten rid of ALL of the processes that led to this "segregation." Redlining still exists, living with people of your own race still exists. This continues to be exacerbated by gentrification of NYC, how we are pricing out the tenants that lived in Manhattan to be forced towards the projects or other areas where there are little opportunities. I don't believe I have any suggestions as to how it could be improved, I like how it incorporated both data from NYC and elsewhere, but I would have liked more external city data as well.