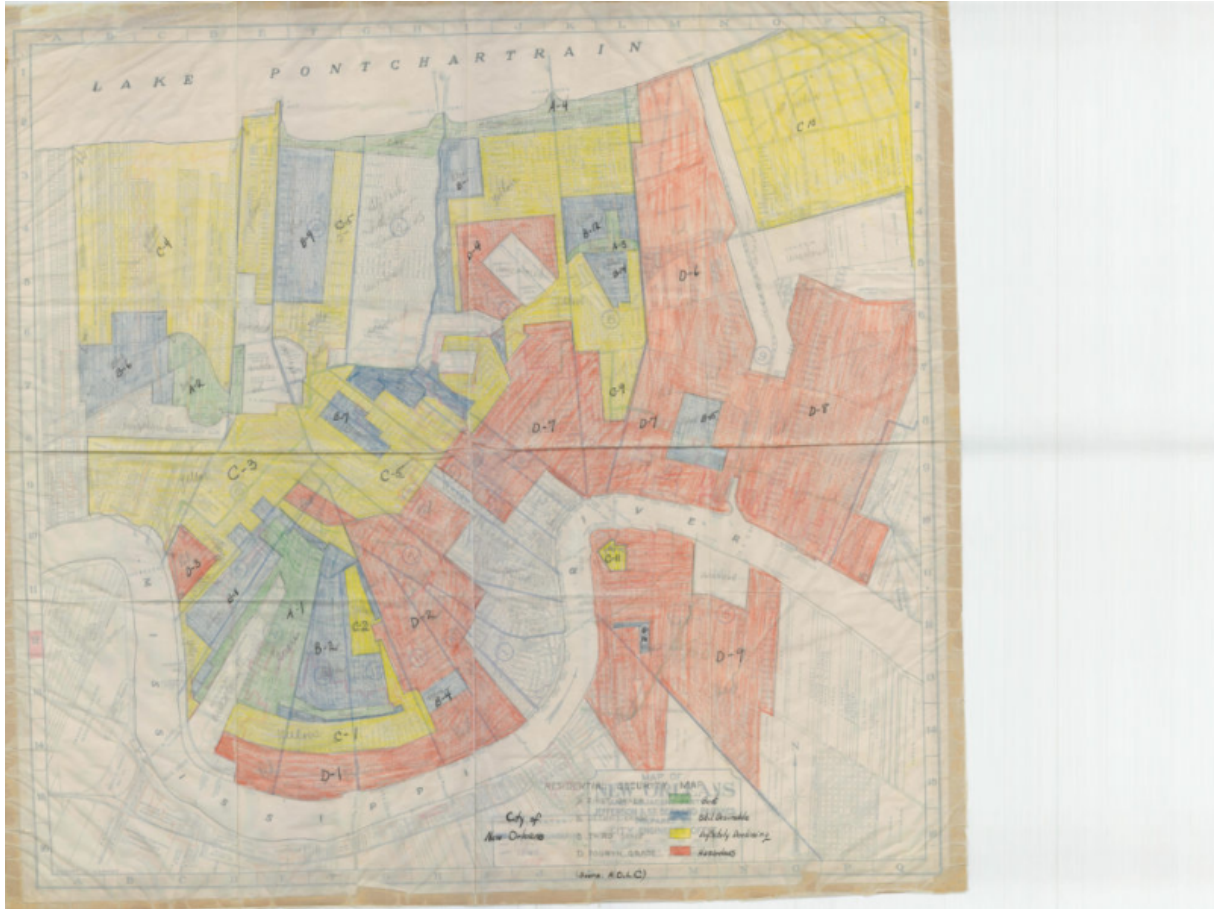


Blog Post 3: Fair Housing

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newcomb@tulane.edu

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The end of the summer is rapidly drawing near as I reflect on what I have learned so far during my internship. I have definitely noticed a marked increase in my confidence and public speaking ability, as I have conducted around 6-7 first-time homebuyer trainings around housing discrimination. Recently I had a challenging presentation, where one of the audience members asked a series of difficult questions. However, I was able to handle the situation without becoming flustered or upset, something that I likely wouldn't have been able to do at the beginning of the summer.

Also, there is no doubt that my sheer knowledge of fair housing laws has increased exponentially. I now have a strong understanding of history and present-day laws, and how the two are related. The Fair Housing Act will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2018, so it's important to reflect on how far we've come but how far we still have to go. Here is an image of one of the redlining maps from New Orleans in 1934. This gives context as to how the city got to be so segregated, and reminds us that laws and cities do not spring to existence out of nowhere. It's always important to look back at history.

Recently, I've been involved in a project that spans the entire United States. Banks often practice discrimination through failing to maintain foreclosed properties in Black neighborhoods, a practice that is seen in New Orleans and all across the country. This week, there will be press releases and articles published about this, and it will be happening on a national scale. I'm excited to see how it will spark dialogue on the importance of fair housing as an issue of social justice.

Speaking of, housing is not often thought of as an issue of gender. However, it is. For example, it is extremely common for a person experiencing domestic violence to be evicted because of the actions of their abuser. Also, people with children may find it more difficult to find a place to live. Women are much more likely to be in both these categories.

I am building many skills, such as communication and presentation skills, as well as graphic design, such as Photoshop and In-Design editing skills. I believe that all of these will be valuable to me in the future, whether for another internship or for an entry-level job. I'm excited to finish this internship!