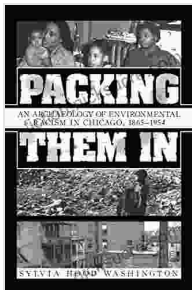


# An Archaeology of Environmental Racism in Chicago, 1865-1954

Environmental racism is the intentional or unintentional placement of polluting industries and other environmental hazards in minority and low-income communities. This practice has a long history in the United States, dating back to the 19th century. In Chicago, environmental racism was a key factor in the development of the city's segregated neighborhoods and it continues to have a negative impact on the health and well-being of black and brown residents today.



## Packing Them In: An Archaeology of Environmental Racism in Chicago, 1865–1954 by Sylvia Hood Washington

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1641 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 254 pages



The first major wave of industrialization in Chicago occurred after the Civil War. As factories and other industries sprang up, they were often located in close proximity to black and immigrant neighborhoods. This was due in part to the fact that these neighborhoods were often located near waterways and transportation hubs, which were essential for industrial development. However, it was also due to the fact that black and immigrant communities

were seen as less desirable and therefore more expendable than white communities.

The concentration of industrial pollution in black and immigrant neighborhoods had a devastating impact on the health of these communities. Residents were exposed to high levels of air and water pollution, which led to increased rates of respiratory illnesses, cancer, and other health problems. In addition, the pollution made it difficult to grow food and keep homes clean, which further contributed to the health problems of these communities.

In the early 20th century, Chicago's black and immigrant neighborhoods were further isolated by the practice of redlining. Redlining was a system of lending discrimination that made it difficult for black and immigrant families to obtain mortgages in white neighborhoods. This practice helped to create and maintain segregated neighborhoods and it also made it more difficult for black and immigrant families to move away from polluted areas.

The legacy of environmental racism in Chicago is still felt today. Black and brown residents continue to be disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards, such as air pollution, water pollution, and lead poisoning. These hazards contribute to the health disparities that exist between black and white residents in Chicago.

Archaeology can provide valuable insights into the history of environmental racism in Chicago. By studying the physical remains of industrial pollution and other environmental hazards, archaeologists can document the ways in which these hazards were concentrated in black and immigrant neighborhoods. This evidence can help to raise awareness of the problem

of environmental racism and to advocate for policies that will protect the health and well-being of all Chicago residents.

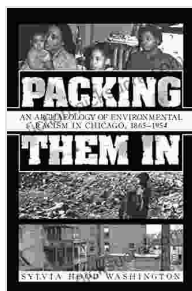
## **Case Studies**

The following case studies provide specific examples of environmental racism in Chicago from 1865 to 1954:

- **The Union Stock Yards:** The Union Stock Yards was a massive meatpacking complex located on the South Side of Chicago. The stockyards were a major source of air and water pollution, and they also attracted a large number of rats and other pests. The pollution from the stockyards had a devastating impact on the health of the surrounding black and immigrant neighborhoods.
- **The Bubbly Creek:** The Bubbly Creek is a tributary of the Chicago River that was once heavily polluted by industrial waste. The creek was so polluted that it was often covered in a thick layer of foam, which gave it its name. The pollution from the Bubbly Creek had a negative impact on the health of the surrounding black and immigrant neighborhoods.
- **The South Works:** The South Works was a steel mill located on the Southeast Side of Chicago. The mill was a major source of air and water pollution, and it also produced a large amount of hazardous waste. The pollution from the South Works had a devastating impact on the health of the surrounding black and immigrant neighborhoods.

Environmental racism is a serious problem that has had a devastating impact on the health and well-being of black and brown communities in Chicago. Archaeology can provide valuable insights into the history of

environmental racism and help to raise awareness of this problem. By documenting the ways in which industrial pollution and other environmental hazards were concentrated in black and immigrant neighborhoods, archaeologists can help to advocate for policies that will protect the health and well-being of all Chicago residents.



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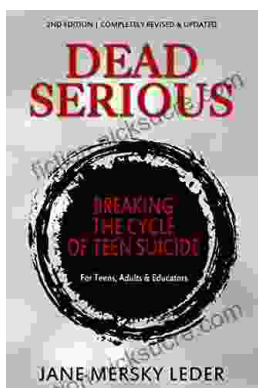
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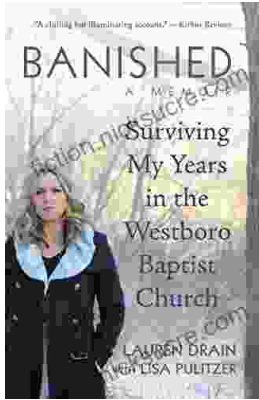
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