

## Racial Restrictive Covenants

**What's In Your Deed?** The language of segregation still haunts Seattle. It lurks in the deeds of tens of thousands of homeowners living in neighborhoods outside of the Central Area and the International District. Look deep in the fine print. Many Queen Anne residents, for instance, have this clause in their deeds: *"No person or persons of Asiatic, African or Negro blood, lineage, or extraction shall be permitted to occupy a portion of said property."*

Racial deed restrictions became common after 1926 when the U.S. Supreme Court validated their use. The restrictions were an enforceable contract and an owner who violated them risked forfeiting the property. Many neighborhoods prohibited the sale or rental of property to Asian Americans and Jews as well as Blacks. In 1948, the court changed its mind, declaring that racial restrictions would no longer be enforced, but the decision did nothing to alter the informal structures of segregation. It remained perfectly legal for realtors and property owners to discriminate on the basis of race. Only after Congress passed the Housing Rights Act in 1968 were there measurable openings in Seattle's system of housing segregation.

Below is part of our database of racial restrictive covenants. Combing through the files of the King County Recorder's Office, we have uncovered 415 deeds and covenants containing racial restrictions that apply to scores of neighborhoods in Seattle and the suburbs north, south, and east of the city. This is just a sample of the restrictions that once shaped the housing options for King County residents.

Look at the list of neighborhoods. North of the ship canal most neighborhoods were restricted, as was Capitol Hill, Madison Park, Queen Anne, and Magnolia. We have found a few restrictive deeds in Beacon Hill and Rainier Valley, more in the lakeside neighborhoods from Madronna to Rainier Beach. Racial restrictions were still more common in the suburbs. People of color had little chance of finding housing except in the central neighborhoods of Seattle.

Look also at the language of restriction in these deeds. Some specify that neighborhoods are reserved for "Whites," while others enumerate the prohibited racial groups. And the wording is curious. In the terminology of the 1920s-1940s "Hebrews" meant Jews; "Ethiopians" meant African ancestry; "Malays" meant Filipinos. Most shocking is the "**Aryans only**" restriction imposed on a subdivision in Clyde Hill. That racial concept, favored by Adolph Hitler, was written into deeds as late as 1946.

The simplified database is below. You may also explore the full [database of 415 deeds](#). Here is how to read the table below. When a neighborhood or subdivision is **highlighted in red**, it means that we have found multiple copies of a restriction and have reason to believe that it covered all properties in an area.

### How this project helped change state law

On March 15, 2006, Gov. Christine Gregoire signed into law Senate Bill 6169, which makes it easier for neighborhoods governed by homeowners associations to rid themselves of racial restrictive covenants. Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles, D-Seattle, introduced the measure after this project focused attention on the lingering effects of these covenants. First the *Seattle Times* picked up the story:

["Homeowners find records still hold blot of racism"](#)  
by Lornet Turnbull (*Seattle Times*, June 3, 2005)

The newspaper then published an editorial asking the state legislature to "authorize the courts to expunge racial covenants from all properties covered by homeowner associations."

["An ugly stain of racism exposed"](#) editorial (June 6, 2005)

Here is a follow-up about the project and the new law:

["Stain of Racism Still Haunts Seattle Neighborhoods"](#)  
by James Gregory (*Seattle Times*, April 6, 2006)

This database is the work of two teams of UW students. Carolyn Lind is section coordinator and has located more than half of these deeds. In Spring 2005, she was joined by Karen Oliver, Pauline Chardoul-Sutter, Susan Frost, Dien Luu, and Doug Marcoux who sampled deeds registered between 1925 and 1935 as a class project for HSTAA 353.

In Spring 2006, BreeAnn Larios, Marco Vargas, Rebecca Gray, Tracie Newbins, Amber Price, Nichole Murray, and Jonathan Brooks collected restrictions that had been registered between 1941 and 1948. Additional cases were drawn from Katharine I. Grant Pankey, "Restrictive Covenants in Seattle: A Case Study in Race Relations," a student research project conducted in 1947 [UW Special Collections Library].

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**In city neighborhoods:**

neighborhood	plat name	restriction
Alki	<b>Williams Alki Addition</b>	<i>The lot, nor any part thereof, shall not be sold to any person either of whole or part blood, of the <b>Mongolian, Malay, or Ethiopian races</b>, nor shall the same nor any part thereof be rented to persons of such races.</i>
Ballard/Sunset Hill	<b>Westhaven</b>	<i>No part of said property hereby conveyed shall ever be used or occupied by any person of the <b>Ethiopian, Malay, or any Asiatic race</b>, and the grantee, his heirs, personal representatives or assigns, shall never place any such person in the possession or occupancy of said property</i>
Beacon Hill	<b>Jefferson Park Addition, Ladd's 2nd Addition, Jefferson Park Addition #2</b>	<i>No person other than one of the <b>Caucasian race</b> shall be permitted to occupy any portion of any lot in said plat or any building thereon except a domestic servant actually employed by a Caucasian occupant of said lot or building.</i>
Bitter Lake	<b>Quigley's Northend Tracts</b>	<i>And that the property covered by this contract shall not be conveyed to any other than one of the <b>Caucasian Race</b>;</i>
<b>Blue Ridge</b>	all	<i>No residence property shall at any time, directly or indirectly, be sold, conveyed, rented or leased in whole or in part to any person or persons not of the white or <b>Caucasian race</b>.</i>
<b>Broadmoor</b>	<b>Broadmoor</b>	<i>No part of said property hereby conveyed shall ever be used or occupied by any <b>Hebrew or by any person of the Ethiopian, Malay or any Asiatic Race</b>...excepting only employees in the domestic service on the premises of persons qualified hereunder as occupants and users and residing on the premises.</i>
Broadview	<b>Bonnie Vista</b>	<i>No persons of any race other than the <b>white race</b> 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.</i>
	<b>Haggardt's Addition</b>	<i>no lot or portion of a lot shall be sold to, leased to or occupied by any person other than that of the <b>White or Caucasian Race</b>, except this shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race or nationality actually employed in good faith by the owners or tenants.</i>
	<b>Northend soundview tracts</b>	<i>Further that the property shall not be conveyed to any other than one of the <b>Caucasian race</b>.</i>
	<b>Schroepel Park</b>	<i>No part of the property hereby platted, shall be used for trade, manufacture or business purposes of any kind, but shall be used for residential purposes only by <b>white persons</b>, except that servants, not of the white race but actually employed by white occupant, may reside on said premises.</i>
	Bonnie Brae	<i>No one, other than a white person of the <b>Caucasian race</b>, shall own any interest directly or indirectly, in the above described property, or any part thereof, nor shall the purchaser herein let said premises, or any part thereof, for any term whatsoever, to one other than a white person of the Caucasian race...(but this clause shall not apply to bonafide domestic servants).</i>
	<b>Elford Park</b>	<i>Tracts or parcels of land in this plat shall be used or occupied only by members of the <b>white or Caucasian race, excluding Semites</b>, and no other persons shall be permitted to use or occupy said tracts or parcels, except employees may occupy the premises where their employer resides.</i>
Bryant	<b>University Gardens</b>	<i>The purchaser covenants, and said covenants shall run with said land, that no part of said described premises shall ever be used or occupied by any person not of the <b>White or Caucasian race</b>.</i>
	<b>Viewhome Addition</b>	<i>No race or nationality other than those of the <b>White or Caucasian race</b> shall use or occupy any dwelling on any lot except that this covenant does not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race or nationality employed by an owner or tenant.</i>
<b>Capitol Hill</b>	<b>38 blocks, 935 properties</b>	<i>That no part of said premises shall ever be used or occupied by or sold conveyed, leased, rented, or given to <b>negroes or any person or persons of negro blood</b>,</i>
Central District-Minor Neighborhood	<b>Squire Park</b>	<i>The parties hereto signing and executing this instrument and the several like instruments relating to their several properties in said district, hereby mutually covenant, promise and agree each with the others, and for their respective heirs and assigns, that no part of said lands owned by them as described following their signatures to this instrument, shall never be used, occupied by or sold, conveyed, leased, rented or given to <b>Negroes, or any person or persons of the Negro blood</b>.</i>
Duwamish	<b>Gordon's Addition #2</b>	<i>No person of any race other than the <b>white race</b> shall use or occupy any building or any lot, except this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race domiciled with an owner or tenant.</i>
Eastlake	Greene's Addition	<i>Said lot or lots shall not be sold, conveyed, or rented nor leased, in whole or in part, to any person not of the <b>White race</b>; nor shall any person not of the White race be permitted to occupy any portion of said lot or lots or of any building thereon, except a domestic servant actually employed by a White occupant of such building.</i>
Greenlake	Greenlake Circle	<i>Said tract shall not be sold, leased, or rented to any person or persons other than of white race nor shall any person or persons other than of <b>white race</b> use or occupy said tract.</i>
	<b>Hayes Park No 2</b>	<i>None of said lots shall be sold conveyed, rented or leased in whole or in part to any person not of the white race nor shall any person not of the <b>white race</b> permitted to occupy any portion of such lot or of any building thereon except ****to servant actually employed by a white occupant of such building.</i>
Greenwood	<b>Marine Highlands Addition</b>	<i>That neither the said premises or any house building or improvement thereon erected shall at any time be occupied by persons of the <b>Ethiopian race or by Japanese or Chinese or any other Malay or Asiatic race</b> save and except as domestic servants in the employ of person not coming within that restriction.</i>
	<b>Winchester Heights</b>	<i>None of said lots shall be conveyed, leased, or given to and no building erected thereon shall be used, owned or occupied, by any person not of the <b>White race</b>.</i>
Haller Lake	<b>Golfcrest</b>	<i>No race or nationality other than those of the <b>Caucasian race</b> shall use or occupy any dwelling or lot, except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race or nationality employed by an owner or tenant.</i>

	Huntoon's Haller Lake	No person or any race other than the <b>White race</b> shall use any building or any lot but this shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race domiciled with an owner or tenant.
	North Seattle Heights Division #2	That no part of said described premises shall be used or occupied by any person not of the <b>white or Caucasian race</b> ; except a domestic servant actually employed by a white occupant of such building.
	Marine Highlands	That neither the said premises or any house, building or improvement thereon erected, shall at any time be occupied by persons of the <b>Ethiopian race, or by Japanese or Chinese, or any other Malay or Asiatic race</b> , save except as domestic servants in the employ of persons not coming within this restriction.
	Overland Park	That the said lots or buildings thereon shall never be rented, leased, or sold, transferred or conveyed to, nor shall the same be occupied by any <b>negro or colored person or person of negro blood, or persons of the Mongolian Race</b> .
Hawthorne Hills	Hawthorne Hills	Said lot or lots shall not be sold, conveyed, or rented nor leased, in whole or in part, to any person not of the <b>White race</b> ; nor shall any person not of the <b>White race</b> be permitted to occupy any portion of said lot or lots or of any building thereon, except a domestic servant actually employed by a <b>White occupant</b> of such building.
	Hawthorne Homes	No person of any race other than the <b>White or Caucasian race</b> shall use or occupy any building or any lot, except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants or a different race domiciled with an owner or tenant.
Lake City	University Lake Shore	The party of the second part can transfer and sell this contract to any desirable people of the <b>Caucasian race</b> only.
Lakeridge	all	Said lot or lots shall not be sold, conveyed, or rented nor leased, in whole or in part, to any person not of the <b>White race</b> ; nor shall any person not of the <b>White race</b> be permitted to occupy any portion of said lot or lots or of any building thereon, exc
Laurelhurst	Laurelhurst Crest	No property in said plat shall at any time, directly or indirectly be sold, conveyed, rented or leased in whole or in part to any person not of the <b>White Race</b> . No person other than one of the <b>White Race</b> shall be permitted to occupy any portion of any lot in said plat or of any building at any time thereon, except a domestic servant actually employed by a <b>White occupant</b> of such building.
	Montlake Tracts, Montlake Tracts Addition	No person or persons of <b>Asiatic, African or Negro blood, lineage or extraction</b> shall be permitted to occupy a portion of said property, or any building thereon, except, domestic servant or servants may be actually and in good faith employed by <b>White occupant</b> of such premises.
Loyal Heights	Loyal View	No part of said property hereby conveyed shall ever be used or occupied by any person of the <b>Ethiopian, Malay, or any Asiatic race...</b>
Madrona	Buchanan's Addition	Said land shall not be occupied by or sold, conveyed, rented or given to <b>negroes</b> or any person of the <b>negro blood</b> .
	McKenzie & Dempsey's Lake Washington Addition and Lewis & Fehrens Addition	The parties hereto signing and executing this instrument ... hereby mutually covenant, promise and agree each with the others, and for their respective heirs and assigns, that no part of said lands owned by them as described following their signatures to this instrument, shall never be used, occupied by or sold, conveyed, leased, rented or given to <b>Negroes, or any person or persons of the Negro blood</b> .
	Washington Heights	Said premises shall not be leased, sold, devised or conveyed to or acquired to occupied by any person than one of the <b>white or Caucasian race</b> , provided however, that a person not of the <b>white or Caucasian race</b> may become an occupant in the capacity of a servant.
Magnolia	Magnolia, Magnolia View, Magnolia Manor, Carlton Park, Carlton Park Addition, Magnolia View Addition	No person or persons of <b>Asiatic, African or Negro blood, lineage, or extraction</b> shall be permitted to occupy a portion of said property, or any building thereon; except domestic servants may actually and in good faith be employed by <b>white occupants</b> of such premises.
	sec. 22, township 25. range 3	That no part of said property hereby conveyed shall ever be used or occupied by the <b>Hebrew, Ethiopian, Malay, or any Asiatic race</b>
Maple Leaf	Maple Leaf addition to Green Lake Circle	No portion of the tract shall be sold, leased or rented to any person or persons other than one of the <b>white race</b> , nor shall any person or persons other than of <b>white race</b> use or occupy said tract.
Matthews Beach	Lake Washington Addition	Said property or any part thereof shall not be covered, sold rented, leased or otherwise disposed of in whole or in part to, or to e occupied by, any person or persons except of the <b>white race</b> , except however, of the case of servant actually employed by the owner and occupant thereof.
	Replat of North Half Lot 1 of Block 4 of Lake City	No lot or portion of a lot shall be sold to, leased to or occupied by any person other than of the <b>Caucasian race</b> , but this restriction does not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race or nationality actually employed in good faith by the owners or tenants.
Montlake	Montlake Park	Subject to an agreement between various owners of the Montlake District, dated November 9, 1929, and recorded in Volume 1443 of Deeds, page 89, wherein they mutually agreed with the others, and for their respective heirs and assigns, that no part of the lands owned by them as described as following their signatures to said instrument shall ever be used or occupied by or sold, conveyed, leased, rented or given to <b>Negroes, or any person or persons of the Negro blood</b> , any provides that this covenant shall run with the land and bind the respective heirs and assigns of the parties thereto, and of the several like instruments in said district, for a period of 21 years, from and after the date of said instrument...
	North Broadway	No person other than one of the <b>white or Caucasian race</b> shall use or occupy any portion of

	<b>Addition</b>	<i>said described tract or of any building thereon, except a domestic servant actually employed by a white occupant of such tract and /or building.</i>
	Union City 2nd Addition	<i>This property is sold under the express condition that neither the land or any part thereof, nor any building thereon, shall ever be leased, rented or loaned, in any manner whatsoever, to a person or persons of other than <b>Caucasian race</b>, nor shall any person or persons of other than a Caucasian race be permitted to occupy said premises, or any part thereof in any manner whatsoever.</i>
North Beach/Blue Ridge	<b>WM Twigg's Addition to North Beach</b>	<i>All lots in this plat are restricted to R-1 residence district use including <b>white people</b> only.</i>
North College Park	<b>Gunderson Addition</b>	<i>No person of any race other than the <b>Caucasian race</b> shall use or occupy any building or lot in said addition, except such persons of another race shall not be prevented from occupancy as domestic servants when domiciled with an owner or tenant.</i>
	<b>Licton Springs Park</b>	<i>that no part of the premises herein described shall at any time be leased, mortgaged, or conveyed in law or in equity to any person of <b>Chinese, Japanese, African or Hindu descent</b> or to any person, company or trustee for their use and benefit...</i>
	<b>Oak Lake Villa, Oak Lake Villa tracts #2</b>	<i>This property shall never be sold to nor occupied by any person of any descent other than <b>Caucasian</b>, not used for any unlawful or immoral purposes.</i>
Northgate	<b>Victory Heights</b>	<i>Said tract shall not be sold, leased, or rented to any person or persons other than of <b>Caucasian race</b> nor shall any person or persons other than of Caucasian race use or occupy said tract.</i>
Olympic Hills	<b>Olympic Hills</b>	<i>Said lot or lots shall not be sold, conveyed, or rented nor leased, in whole or in part, to any person not of the <b>White race</b>; nor shall any person not of the White race be permitted to occupy any portion of said lot or lots or of any building thereon, except as domestic servant actually employed by a White occupant of such building.</i>
Pinehurst	<b>H.E. Orr Park</b>	<i>No persons of any race other than the <b>white race</b> 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.</i>
Queen Anne	Gilman Addition	<i>That neither said premises nor any interest therein shall at any time be leased, sold, devised or conveyed to or inherited by or otherwise acquired by, become property of, used of occupied by any person other than one of the <b>White of Caucasian Race</b>, provided however, that persons not of the Caucasian Race may be kept thereon by such a Caucasian occupant strictly in the capacity of servants of such occupants</i>
	<b>Queen Anne Park</b>	<i>No person or persons of <b>Asiatic, African or Negro blood, lineage, or extraction</b> shall be permitted to occupy a portion of said property, or any building thereon; except domestic servants may actually and in good faith be employed by white occupants of such premises</i>
Queen Anne, lower	<b>Comstock Supplemental Addition, Northern Addition and G. Kinnear's Supplemental Addition</b>	<i>The parties hereto signing and executing this instrument do for themselves and with each other mutually covenant and agree with each other and for their personal representatives, heirs and assigns as follows: That the said property herein described shall not be sold, conveyed, leased or given to any person or persons other than of the <b>Caucasian race</b>, nor shall any person or persons other than of the Caucasian race be permitted to occupy or use the property excepting only employees in the domestic service on the premises of persons qualified hereunder as occupants or users and residing on the premises.</i>
Queen Anne, North	Prosch's Queen Anne	<i>No person or persons of <b>Asiatic, African or Negro blood, lineage or extraction</b> shall be permitted to occupy a portion of said property or any building thereof, except domestic servants or servant may be actually and in good faith employed by white occupants of such premises.</i>
Rainier valley	C.D. Hillmans City Addition	<i>Other than <b>Caucasian Race</b>, any of the land or property, the description of which appears after their respective signatures hereto.</i>
	near Columbian way	<i>Said property shall not be conveyed to or occupancy thereof given to any person other than of the <b>Caucasian Race</b>.</i>
Ravenna	<b>Hayes Park</b>	<i>No person other than one of the <b>white race</b> shall be permitted to occupy any portion of any lot in said plat or of any building thereon, except a domestic servant actually employed by a white occupant of such building.</i>
	<b>Homeacres</b>	<i>No person of any other than the <b>White or Caucasian race</b> shall use or occupy any building or lot, except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race domiciled with an owner or tenant.</i>
S. Lake City	<b>Lake Washington</b>	<i>No person of <b>African, Japanese, Chinese, or of any other Mongolian descent</b> shall be allowed to purchase, own or lease said real property or any part thereof.</i>
Sandpoint	Weshthaven Division #2	<i>No part of said property hereby conveyed shall ever be used or occupied by any person of the <b>Ethiopian, Malay, or any Asiatic race</b>...</i>
	<b>Aviation Heights</b>	<i>No race or nationality other than those of the <b>White or Caucasian race</b> shall use or occupy any dwelling on any lot except that this covenant does not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race or nationality employed by an owner or tenant.</i>
Sheridan Beach	<b>Sheridan Beach</b>	<i>It is a condition of this sale that above described property shall be used for residential purposes only and cannot be resold to aliens, disorderly persons, or persons not of the <b>Caucasian race</b>.</i>

Victory Heights	Victory Heights Division 2	Said tracts shall not be sold, leased, or rented to any person or persons other than of <b>Caucasian race</b> nor shall any person other than of Caucasian race use or occupy said tract.
View Ridge	Sand Point Country Club	No tract shall be sold, conveyed, rented or leased, in whole or in part, to any <b>Hebrew or to any person of the Malay, Ethiopian or any other negro or any Asiatic race</b> ; or any descendant of any thereof, except only employees in the domestic service on ht premises of persons qualifies as herein provided as occupants.
	View Ridge, Norris Sandpoint Addition, Rose May Addition	No race or nationality other than those of the <b>White or Caucasian race</b> shall use or occupy any dwelling or lot, except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race or nationality employed by an owner or tenant.
Wedgewood	Fir Crest	No race or nationality other than <b>white or Caucasian</b> shall use or occupy any building on any lot, except that this covenant shall not prevent occupancy by domestic servants of a different race or nationality employed by an owner or tenant.
	Wedgwood Rock Addition	No persons of any race other than the <b>white race</b> 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.
West Seattle/ High Point	High Point	The purchaser covenants, and said covenants shall run with said land, that no part of said described premises shall ever be used or occupied by any person not of the <b>White or Caucasian race</b> .
Windermere	Laguna Vista	No person or persons of <b>Asiatic, African or Negro blood, lineage, or extraction</b> shall be permitted to occupy a portion of said property, or any building thereon except a domestic servant or servants who may actually and in good faith be employed by white occupants of such premises
	Rayvilla	No person or persons of <b>Asiatic, African or Negro blood, lineage, or extraction</b> shall be permitted to occupy a portion of said property, or any building thereon except a domestic servant or servants who may actually and in good faith be employed by white occupants of such premises
	Windermere (unrecorded plat)	Said property shall not be conveyed, sold, rented or otherwise disposed of, in whole or in part, or otherwise occupied by any person or persons except of <b>white and Gentile race</b> , except, however a domestic servant actually employed by the lawful owner or occupant thereof.

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For full database of 415 restrictive covenants go to: <http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/covenants.htm>