

# Segment One

What is Your Origin Story?

Norma Rosenberg

















Ashburton brick bungalow: Two bedrooms, two baths and finished attic. Asking price: \$28,500. The agent is not a block-buster.



# When a Negro Moves Next Door

By ELLSWORTH E. ROSEN with Arnold Nicholson

A Baltimore resident tells how his neighborhood welcomes Negro homeowners—and keeps white families from moving away.

I live in what is known as a “changing neighborhood” in Baltimore. In short, a Negro family has bought a house down the street.

The color of my neighbor’s skin does not bother me at all. His income and behavior are just about the same as mine. But the economic



The author (right) and his neighbor Sam Daniels, who is a director of Maryland’s Commission on Interracial Problems.



This three-bedroom brick colonial is typical of many Ashburton houses. Offered for sale at \$25,000 by an ethical real-estate firm.



White stucco and brick, ten rooms: \$29,000. One of the area's more luxurious homes, it is handled by a reputable Negro agency.



Estelle Sachs. As real-estate agent in nearby Windsor Hills she urges whites to buy in her area to keep the area biracial.

just about the same as mine. But the economic threat his presence has created for me, and for the entire community, is disturbing. A lot of people who live somewhere else have assumed that our pleasant, middle-class neighborhood is headed for all-Negro occupancy and rapid deterioration as properties pass from financially strong hands to less responsible ownership. The pattern is a familiar one in many big cities of the North.

We were enmeshed in the initial, frightening stages of this process just a year ago. "The dark cloud," we were told, "had descended." Our neighborhood, however, has refused to accept this verdict for the future. We believe that a mixture of white and Negro families is both inevitable and compatible with good living, and have succeeded, after quite a struggle, in proving our point to date. The all-Negro "cloud," we hope, may never descend simply because we and increasing numbers of Baltimoreans understand the forces at work, the threat to the future of the city and are agreed that some solution must be found.

The most heartening support for our acceptance of racial integration has come from the Greater Baltimore Committee, a group of nearly 100 of the city's business leaders. These men, until they were confronted with the problem of "changing neighborhoods," had concentrated their energies on the rebuilding of downtown. Now, thanks largely to G.B.C., a city-wide private agency is being created to work with neighborhoods like ours.

We do not think for a moment that all the members of G.B.C., or even a majority of Baltimore citizens, presently share our personal biracial views. But they are at least willing to listen and to consider our proposals for a solution. Neither can they deny that we have shown a

(Continued on Page 139)



Photographs by Larry Fried





Ashburton boys, after school. At present, only five per cent of the families are Negro.



The author's four-year-old daughter Joy (above, right) and neighborhood playmates.



"A mixture of white and Negro families is compatible with good living," says Rosen, whose son Danny (above, left) is shown here with Tyrone Carroll, a neighbor's child.





# Questions to Consider

1. What is YOUR story (from your early years) that defines you?
2. How has that influenced your life choices and experiences?
3. What gifts has this brought you?