Linguistics before benefits

Continued from page 1A repeated bias in a number of areas, including Black testers not getting return phone calls, and being quoted higher rent prices and security deposits.

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"In Birmingham, a White tester was told that a \$150 security deposit and \$25 per adult application fee would be waived for her as a Hurricane Katrina victim. She was also told she needed to make 2.5 times the rent to qualify for the apartment. The African-American tester was told that she would have to pay \$150 for the security deposit and a \$25 application fee for each applicant. The African-American hurricane survivor was also told that she would have to make three times the rent to qualify for the apartment," the report stated

stated
The testing took place in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee and Texas, and showed instances of White testers being offered free televisions and partially refunded security deposits But those offers were not extended to Black testers, who were often saddled with additional administrative fees that were non-refundable
"It's a different kind of behavior in discrimination from the 70s until now where they

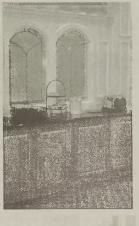
would just simply say we don't have anything available. Now they try not to trigger suspicion so they may say when do you need it or I won't know until the end of the month, when in fact, they may have three or four apartments available right now. But if you're the caller that sounds reasonable," Smith said.

Smith, whose organization has worked with Baugh since the 1990s, said another tactic is asking a potential renter or buyer for their name to be put on a waiting list and 'names that didn't sound middle America white, they didn't get the return emails about availability. Baugh has logged thousands of calls, since 1987, using testers of different races and backgrounds, including himself. Baugh, an African-American man, started studying the practice of linguistic profiling after his own personal experience when he was looking for an apartment in the San Francisco Bay Area.

T was calling various landlords to go look at a partments and in about two or three cases, I got there and they told me there had been some mistake and the apartments had already been rented. And it just didn't seem right to me and I speculated that they didn't realize I was African-American when they made the appointment with me."









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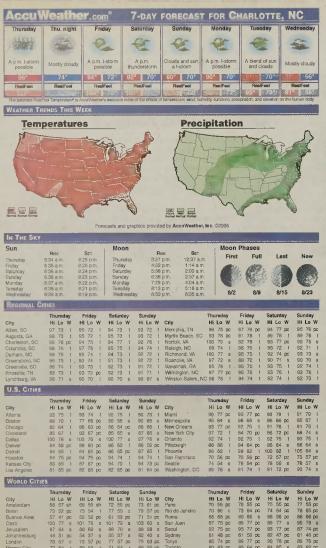
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