

Mapping Neoliberal American Urbanism



Million-dollar homes under construction within sight of the old towers of Cabrini-Green, Chicago, IL, July 1999.
Photograph by Elvin Wyly.

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Starbucks, Wal-Mart, and the Benevolent King

We are in the midst of a remarkable renaissance of interest in gentrification. As in the 1970s and 1980s, the transforming inner city is taken as a crucible of broader economic and cultural change. As in a previous generation, the scholarly literature is rich with impressive contributions to theory, method, policy, and politics (Hackworth, 2001, 2002a,b; Hamnett, 2002; Lambert and Boddy, 2002; Lees, 2000; Ley, 2002; Ley et al., 2002; Newman, 2003; Slater, 2002; N. Smith, 2002). And, as in the past, it's hard to walk through a city neighborhood or read the newspaper without encountering a flood of vivid illustrations of these theories in the urban landscape, in contingent intersections of culture and capital, transformation and tension. Not long ago, a Starbucks opened a few blocks from Cabrini-Green, a public housing project now almost completely surrounded by reinvestment north of downtown Chicago. In New Orleans the nation's largest private employer (Wal-Mart) is at the center of an effort to redevelop land where a public housing project once stood, with partial funding from the Federal government; intense opposition, including a lawsuit on behalf of the displaced tenants, has created a tangled storyline that one reporter dubs "A Streetcar Named No Thanks." (Hays, 2003).

The imagery is even more colorful in New York. Soho and the Village tamed, developers and art galleries are moving into Loho (a swath of the Lower East Side between East Houston and Canal) in pursuit of "the underground's underground, a radical alternative to most alternatives you can name," while newly-renovated studios rent for \$3,000 a month (Hamilton, 2000; Cotter, 2002, B29). Others venture farther out on the "trendy frontier," north to the new jazz and comedy clubs of SoHa (South of Harlem, the area above West 96th) or "Eastward Ho!" into Bushwick, Brooklyn (Barnes, 2000; Pogrebin, 2002). Meanwhile, in the old industrial lands down under the Manhattan Bridge overpass (Dumbo), Bob Vila finds the perfect dilapidated brownstone to renovate on his nationally-televised home improvement show; he walks through the old building with his son, and they laugh at the handiwork left behind by squatters ~ sheet rock partitions, an improvised bathroom, spare windows... "A real penthouse." Vila jokes that the squatters' work "gives you an indication about how desirable this part of New York is." (Cardwell, 2003, A18).

Vila discovered the building through a connection to its owner, David C. Walentas, a local developer who “may be the only person to have put a New York City neighborhood on the residential map himself” with well-timed building purchases, loft conversions, strategic benevolence to arts groups, and a payment of \$90,000 to persuade the Metropolitan Transit Authority to re-route a bus line (Hellman, 2002, D1). Walentas endured twenty years of false starts and failed deals in what he calls his “Stalingrad phase,” before the plan came together in the last few years with new commercial tenants, loft conversions, and million-dollar condos. Now the artists who lived in his buildings through the Stalingrad years are being forced out by doubled or tripled lease rates. When he appears at a sound check before a David Bowie concert in the neighborhood, Walentas is chided by the Director of Arts for the performance space. “It must be interesting to handpick your whole neighborhood,” she says. “But you can do it, David, because you’re the king of Dumbo.” (Hellman, 2002, D5). “I’m the mayor,” he replies, adding, “Well, maybe the benevolent king.” (ibid.) In a lengthy *New York Times* profile, Walentas is photographed with his wife Jane in their spacious loft in the top floor of Dumbo’s centerpiece 1915 building. David and Jane are standing in front of a bookcase, and one of the volumes on the shelf is a biography of another benevolent king of New York: Robert A. Caro’s *The Power Broker*.

[image removed because of the threat of Corporate Copyright Thugs®©™. The image shows David and Jayne Walentas in their top-floor penthouse, with the Manhattan Bridge visible in the window behind them; in the foreground is a bookshelf, and one of the volumes can be seen clearly: Robert Caro's *The Powerbroker*.]

Figure 1. David and Jane Walentas, in their loft in Dumbo (Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass). David “may be the only person to have put a New York City neighborhood on the residential map himself” (Hellman, 2002, D1). Copyright © Andrea Mohin/The New York Times. Reproduced by permission.

What is the new face of American gentrification? Are Starbucks and Wal-Mart the new urban pioneers, working with city and federal officials to spur a “renaissance” by erasing the old welfare-state landscapes of the 1960s? Is David Walentas a reincarnated, privatized Robert Moses? Thirty years of change have made gentrification a durable but dynamic facet of American urban landscapes. In urban theory, however, long-running debates over causes and definitions have finally boiled over into frustration. Liz Bondi (1999, 255) suggests that we abandon the subject, because of “its inability to open up new insights” and she wonders if “it is time to allow it to disintegrate under the weight of these burdens.” Working to move beyond the old entrenched dichotomies, Tom Slater (2003, 6), asks:

are we really to believe that Ley (1996) ignored the economy in his comprehensive account of the emergence of the post-industrial metropolis, or that Smith’s (1996) compelling assessment of the emergence of the revanchist metropolis was divorced from the impact of cultural studies?

In an even more troubling trend, important questions of theory and policy are clouded by rather mundane, straightforward empirical issues. Carrying on a tradition from the 1960s, for instance, many policy-oriented researchers are drawing sharp distinctions among physical types of reinvestment (classical ‘invasion-succession,’ new construction on old industrial lands, loft conversion, etc.) to reconcile their ethical concerns over a rich menu of new government programs to promote redevelopment, ‘new markets,’ and income-mixing in the inner city. Many want to support these policies so long as they avoid what has wrongly been used as the litmus test of gentrification ~ direct, conflict-ridden displacement of existing working-class or poor residents. No matter its physical form, gentrification is fundamentally about the reconstruction of the inner city to serve middle- and upper-class interests. When it avoids direct displacement, the process usually involves middle-class or developer subsidies that cannot be seen in isolation from cutbacks in housing assistance to the poor and other attacks on the remnants of the welfare state.

What are the different types of reinvestment in the gentrifying American city? How unequal are these different places? What has changed in the 1990s? Are other cities seeing the same

reactionary class politics and entrepreneurial vengeance portrayed in Mike Davis's Los Angeles and Neil Smith's New York? In this chapter we offer answers that are at once crassly empirical and theoretically relevant. Neoliberal policies in housing, social policy, and public space have created a complex new urban landscape ~ but it is possible to map this urban hierarchy and a few of its consequences.

Mapping the New Urban Frontier

In the last ten years we have assembled a simple database of gentrification in large U.S. cities. Our methods involve a combination of fieldwork, archival research, and multivariate statistical analysis (for detailed explanations see Hammel and Wyly, 1996 and Wyly and Hammel, 1999). We strive for comparable, consistent, and conservative measures to identify neighborhoods that a) endured disinvestment a generation ago, and b) have since undergone the changes that nearly all researchers would agree are worth studying under the label 'gentrification.' A key part of our fieldwork involves "ground-truthing" the census data so often used to describe urban growth and change; after several years of investigation we are now able to offer some comparative evidence from twenty-three metropolitan areas (Figure 2). Our list includes a wide variety of cities ~ places where reinvestment boomed in the 1970s or even earlier, and others where rapid changes have appeared more recently.

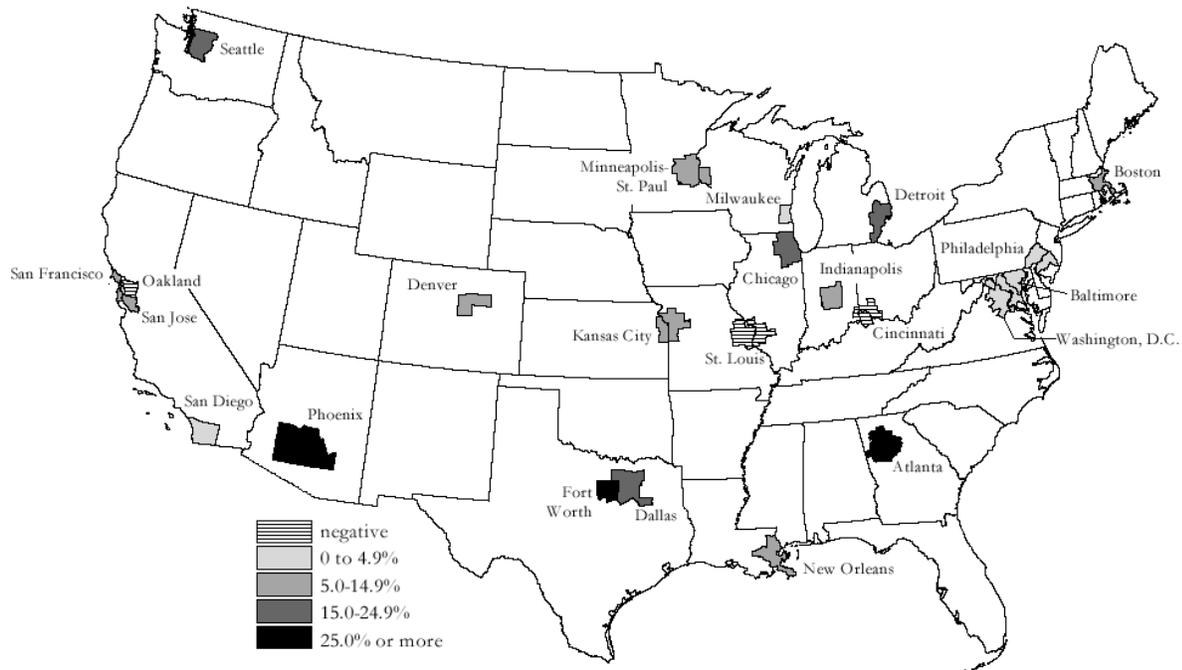


Figure 2. Population Change in Gentrified Neighborhoods, 1990-2000. The interaction of in-migration, displacement, and transitions in household composition inscribes complex variations in population growth. Yet almost all of the gentrified neighborhoods identified in our field surveys have enjoyed a remarkable resurgence in terms of their attractiveness to capital. Between 1993 and 2000, private, conventional mortgage capital to home-buyers in these neighborhoods expanded more than twice as fast as the suburban rate.

A New Urban System?

America's aggressive promotion of transnational corporate globalization and a domestic recipe of privatized, market-oriented social policy have created a new, "neoliberal" urbanism ~ a network of urban processes shaped by a paradoxical, state-driven "return to the original axioms of liberalism" in the tradition of eighteenth-century political economy (N. Smith, 2002, 429). Deep public-private subsidies are given to demonstrate the efficiency of unregulated markets, while substantial funds are spent to demolish the redistributive infrastructure built from the 1930s to the 1960s. Measuring the imprint of these changes in specific neighborhoods requires balancing the productive tensions among several literatures ~ not just critical social theory inquiry into questions of justice and difference (Harvey, 2000; Merrifield and Swyngedouw, 1997), but also the historical and positivist quantitative-revolution work on urban system development (Berry, 1964, 1972; Pred, 1977) and the richly-textured case studies of social and spatial relations in specific city

neighborhoods (Beauregard, 1990; Bennett, 1998; Hammel, 1999; Slater, 2003; Ley, 1981). We are certainly not the first to suggest such a synthesis. Don Mitchell (1997) offers the best example, in “The Annihilation of Space by Law: The Roots and Implications of Anti-Homeless Laws in the United States.” Mitchell argues that the widely-cited realities and myths of accelerated capital mobility have forced cities into fundamentally new ways of trying to attract investment in a world where places seem to be rendered interchangeable by wage competition and race-to-the-bottom subsidies:

...the ideology of globalization allows local officials, along with local business people and property owners, to argue that they have no choice but to prostrate themselves before the god Capital, offering not just tax and regulatory inducements, but also extravagant convention centers, downtown tourist amusements, up-market, gentrified restaurants and bar districts, and even occasional public investment in such amenities as museums, theaters, and concert halls.... When capital is seen to have no *need* for any particular place, then cities do what they can to make themselves so attractive that capital...will *want* to locate there (Mitchell, 1997, p. 304, emphasis added).

The implication is clear. In classical theories of urban system development, cities fought through constant product innovation to reap the profits of locally-distinctive exports and to thus claw their way up the urban hierarchy. Now the competition is an innovative race to create an interesting and attractive ~ and *safe and sanitized* ~ playground for the professional elites employed by global capital. “In city after city concerned with ‘livability,’ with, in other words, making urban centers attractive to both footloose capital and to the footloose middle classes, politicians and managers have turned to...a legal remedy that seeks to cleanse the streets of those left behind by globalization and other secular changes in the economy by simply erasing the spaces in which they must live....” (Mitchell, 1997, 305). Mitchell’s qualitative inquiry yields a magisterial theoretical analysis drawn from philosophies of justice and conceptions of the public, along with a critical examination of court decisions and legislation. But this perspective also has important lessons for quantitative empirical studies of neighborhood change. As urban politics has created the revanchist city ~ a

vengeful world marked by “a defense and reconstruction of the lines of identity privilege ... in the context of rising economic insecurity” among the white, Anglo bourgeoisie (N. Smith, 1997, 129) ~ we should expect to see a discernible regional geography in the backlash against the homeless, poor, and racialized minorities.

Part of this story can be captured in a simple comparison of the class character of gentrification and some of the more blatantly revanchist local policies documented by Mitchell (1997), N. Smith (1996, 1997), and Waldron (1991). Between 1993 and 2000, about 26 thousand high-income households filed requests for loans to buy homes in gentrified neighborhoods.¹ These inner-city elite are only a tiny fraction of wealthy buyers in the overall metropolitan housing market, but the new urban frontier accounts for a substantial share of those choosing the central city ~ more than a fifth in Chicago and Philadelphia, and half in Boston. To test whether elite gentrification worsens localized revanchist practices of discipline and surveillance, we turn to the extensive survey of homeless advocates and service providers conducted jointly by the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty and the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH/NLCHP, 2002). We matched our case study cities to the report’s Prohibited Conduct Chart, a depressing compendium of local ordinances codifying the kinds of principles and (often unconstitutional) legal mechanisms used to mask the state’s failure to deal with homelessness. Here, we focus on ordinances involving curfews, or banning the following activities: spitting, urination and defecation in public; begging in public places; “aggressive” panhandling; sleeping in public; camping in public; loitering, loafing, and vagrancy; and obstruction of sidewalks and public places.² As Mitchell points out, most of these activities are the kinds of things a homeless person simply *must do* in order to live ~ and yet this is precisely what inspires indignation and activism among the urban professional classes. Local authorities in any city usually move quickly against street people doing any of these things; but our reasoning is that the policies are formalized only

¹ We used mortgage disclosure data (FFIEC, 1994-2001) to identify the top tenth of the distribution of inflation-adjusted incomes reported by all home purchase applicants in our 23 metropolitan areas. Cutoffs for the 90th percentile range from \$100,000 in St. Louis (in 2000 dollars) to \$231,000 in San Francisco.

² Many municipalities have established ordinances banning one or more of these activities only in specified districts. To maintain the most conservative approach, our tabulations are restricted to *citywide* ordinances banning the specified activities.

under certain circumstances, and that gentrification is one of the processes that helps to broaden the base of support for explicit, city-wide ‘quality of life’ ordinances.

The criminalization of homelessness has become a powerful form of traveling urban theory (Table 1). All but one of our cities have explicit ordinances against two or more of the specified activities; the sole exception (Chicago) ranks as one of the nation’s “meanest cities” for homeless people, on the basis of anti-homeless practices not captured in formal ordinances.³ Six of the cities ban five of the specified activities, while one (Atlanta) bans six. There is a broad-brush correlation with the strength of elite gentrification. Of the cities ranked in the top ten according to elite reinvestment, seven also achieved top rank on local anti-homeless ordinances ~ defined here either as a “meanest city” designation or banning five or more of the specified activities. By contrast, the bottom thirteen cities include only three meeting the same criteria: Atlanta, Oakland, and Indianapolis. The latter seems to reflect an unusually severe political backlash against the poor,⁴ while Oakland’s

³ In Chicago, “police are using old, vague ordinances and charging people with vagrancy, begging, loitering, etc. ... The City has also closed and even destroyed many transient hotels as part of conscious gentrification plans to recreate neighborhoods. ... Sweeps of homeless individuals are conducted whenever there are major events in the downtown area.” (NCH/NLCHP, 2002, 133-134).

⁴ Six years ago, Indianapolis went so far as to ban the homeless from voting, before advocates managed to convince the state legislature to pass a law reaffirming voting rights. One homeless shelter requires those admitted to undress and don prison-style orange jumpsuits. (NCH/NLCHP, 2002, 135).

Table 1. Elite Locational Choice and Revanchist Municipal Policy.

	Share of affluent central-city buyers choosing gentrified neighborhoods	Prohibited Activities†									Ranked as "meanest city"
		minor curfew	spitting	urination or defecation	begging	"aggressive" panhandling	sleeping	camping	loitering, loafing, or vagrancy	obstruction of sidewalks or public places	
Boston	49.9%					x	x			x	2002
Philadelphia	23.9%	x	x	x		x				x	
Chicago	22.5%							x			1996, 2002
Milwaukee	18.8%					x		x		x	
Washington, DC	17.5%	x				x		x			1996, 2002
San Francisco	16.5%	x			x	x				x	
Seattle	14.8%			x		x				x	1996, 2002
Baltimore	13.3%		x	x		x		x		x	
Minneapolis-St. Paul*	11.7%	x	x		x				x	x	1996, 2002
St. Louis	9.7%	x	x			x		x		x	
Detroit	5.7%				x			x		x	1996, 2002
Cincinnati	4.9%					x				x	
Dallas	4.5%	x		x		x		x			1996, 2002
New Orleans	3.6%				x		x				
San Diego	3.5%				x	x				x	1996, 2002
Atlanta	3.4%	x	x	x		x		x		x	
Oakland	2.5%		x	x				x	x	x	1996, 2002
Denver	2.3%		x	x						x	
Kansas City**	1.1%	x	x			x				x	1996, 2002
Indianapolis	1.1%		x		x	x		x		x	
San Jose	0.6%	x		x						x	1996, 2002
Phoenix	0.1%					x	x	x		x	
Fort Worth	0.1%	x			x					x	1996, 2002

†Bans on begging, sleeping, camping, and loitering/loafing/vagrancy include only city-wide ordinances.

*Prohibited activities refer only to Minneapolis; St. Paul not included in NCH/NLCHP survey.

**Prohibited activities refer only to Kansas City, MO; Kansas City, KS not included in NCH/NLCHP survey.

Sources: Authors' fieldwork; FFIEC (1994-2001); NCH/NLCHP (2002).

bans must be seen in the context of intense housing inflation and a race-to-the-bottom in anti-homeless policies throughout the Bay Area. The other anomaly is famous for an ordinance tailored to the imperatives of a low-density, auto-reliant built environment. In Atlanta, it is a crime to cut across or loiter in a parking lot unless you have lawfully parked your own car there; an estimated 18,000 people are cited annually for assorted quality of life infractions (NCH/NLCHP, 2002, 15). If we set aside the residuals of Atlanta, Oakland, and Indianapolis, the pattern is fairly clear: gentrified enclaves claim a prominent place in elite housing markets where municipal policy incorporates provisions designed to cleanse the city of certain people and behaviors.

Atop the Revanchist Hierarchy

Our data and methods make it hazardous to draw clear causal links in the emergence of the new neoliberal American urbanism. But as a purely descriptive tool, the approach offers valuable

insights into the kinds of places created by reinvestment, uneven metropolitan development, and interactions of city, state, and federal policy. If we were to update Berry's (1972) *City Classification Handbook* for the neoliberal years of the 1990s, one way to begin is a standard multivariate numerical taxonomy. Consider a simple brew of contextual variables ~ measures of urban growth, housing affordability, segregation and inequality, the prevalence of anti-homeless ordinances ~ along with a few basic features of gentrified areas.⁵ Our choice of variables is certainly open to critique, and some of these measures are at the center of tempestuous debates over epistemology, methodology, policy, and politics. But the results of a simple cluster analysis do offer a systematic, empirical way to analyze one element of the revanchist city (Table 2).⁶ Boston, San Jose, and Detroit each stand out as distinctive centers in classes by themselves, shaped by uniquely extreme configurations of elite gentrification, housing inflation, or new development in close proximity to the gated communities for the poor (correctional facilities) portrayed by Harvey (2000, 155). In the well-established enclaves of Chicago, Philadelphia, and Washington, elite reinvestment falls short of Boston, but in the context of similarly sharp divisions of race and class. In other cities segregation is similarly pronounced, but metropolitan decentralization dilutes otherwise important inner-city changes (Atlanta, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, New Orleans, St. Louis). And the classification clearly highlights the racialized contours of the new urban frontier in cities segregated along white/black lines or anglo/latino divisions.

Nevertheless, anti-homeless ordinances have proliferated across all of these categories. As Atkinson (2003) has shown for the English case, urban policy entails an intricate and highly contextual fabric, with various "strands of revanchism" woven into governance structures at various scale. Gentrification is generally correlated with one strand ~ explicit anti-homeless laws ~

⁵ Unless otherwise noted in Table 2, all measures are calculated for central cities. The prohibited activities measure excludes curfew and spitting ordinances. The housing wage variable measures the hourly pay required for a full-time worker to afford the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in each metropolitan area.

⁶ Our taxonomy was developed using the FASTCLUS procedure in SAS, a non-hierarchical, iterative disjoint clustering procedure that minimizes within-group Euclidian distances based on orthogonal, standardized quantitative measures. The overall R-squared (measuring how well variables can be predicted from clusters) is 0.68; the ratio of between-cluster to within-cluster variance [$R^2/(1-R^2)$] is encouragingly high (above 2) for most variables, with the notable exception of prohibited activities (0.42). The low value for this indicator persists through dozens of alternative specifications with a variety of other variables, indicating that these types of ordinances have proliferated across many kinds of cities.

(using the rotated component scores) gives us a dozen distinct types among the 352 tracts identified in our field investigations (Table 4).⁹

Table 3. Principal Components Analysis of Gentrified Neighborhoods, 1990-2000.

Variable	Loadings on (varimax) rotated components					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
	African American <i>Interpretation</i> Segregation	Development	Housing Tenure	Institutions	Latino Segregation	Polarization
Change in Housing Units, 1990-2000		0.88				
Change in Population, 1990-2000		0.79				
Non-Hispanic African American, 1990	0.94					
Hispanic, 1990					0.94	
Group Quarters, 1990		0.52		0.58		-0.41
Correctional Institutions, 1990				0.91		
Homeless Population, 1990		0.80				
Poverty Rate, 1990	0.51	0.51				
White Per Capita Income, 1989 dollars						0.74
White-Black Ratio of Per Capita Income, 1989						0.68
Homeownership, 1990			0.86			
Vacancy Rate, 1990		0.61				
Non-Hispanic African American, 2000	0.95					
Hispanic, 2000					0.95	
Group Quarters, 1990				0.68		
Correctional Institutions, 2000				0.92		
White married couples without children, 2000	-0.54		0.63			
Homeownership, 2000			0.97			
White Renters, 2000			-0.93			
Black Renters, 2000	0.95					
Vacancy Rate, 2000						
Percentage of total variance	20.1	17.2	14.7	10.7	8.1	6.9

Notes:

1. All variables are percentages unless otherwise indicated.
2. Loadings -0.40 to +0.40 not shown.

Data Source: Geolytics (2003).

⁹ The overall R-squared is 0.68. The ratio of between- to within-cluster variance is over 2.0 for all components except III (housing tenure, with a ratio of 1.16) and VI (polarization, 1.25).

Table 4. A Market Segmentation of Gentrified Inequalities.

		(a) Main Clusters				
		Vanilla Playgrounds	Gold Coast Enclaves	Racialized Redevelopment	Precarious Diversity	Latino Frontier
<i>Sample Neighborhoods</i>		Capitol Hill, Denver Printer's Row, Chicago Wrigleyville, Chicago Western Addition, San Francisco	Capitol Hill, Washington DC Society Hill, Philadelphia Summit Hill, St. Paul Back Bay, Boston	Bolton Hill, Baltimore Shaw, Washington DC Downtown Detroit Corryville, Cincinnati	Eads Park, St. Louis Grant Park, Atlanta North Oakland Black Pearl, New Orleans	Naglee Park, San Jose Lower Greenville, Dallas Lincoln Park, Denver Mission District, San Francisco
<i>Cluster Number</i>		12	9	5	3	1
<i>Number of tracts</i>		137	94	46	24	24
		<i>Unweighted Mean Values</i>				
Change in Housing Units, 1990-2000		10	12	14	2.4	9.2
Change in Population, 1990-2000		15	13	17	2.0	10
Homeless Population, 1990		2.0	0.29	1.3	0.41	0.64
Poverty Rate, 1990		19	12	34	20	28
White Per Capita Income, 1989 (dollars)		21,526	33,168	20,883	23,373	15,810
White-Black Ratio of Per Capita Income, 1989		1.8	2.3	2.7	2.3	1.8
Non-Hispanic African American, 2000		13	9.0	55	55	9.0
Hispanic, 2000		8.4	6.2	6.8	3.8	43
Group Quarters, 1990		7.0	3.6	5.9	2.4	2.7
Correctional Institutions, 2000		0.10	0.27	0.85	0.31	0.04
Homeownership, 2000		17	42	21	49	23
White Renters, 2000		81	56	70	43	72
Vacancy Rate, 2000		7.3	7.3	12	8.9	7.1

Note: All figures are percentages except white per capita income and white-black income ratio.

		(b) Outliers / Small Clusters					
		Loft Lightning	Central Citadels	Cells and Apartments	Downtown Sweep	Yuppies in Training	Elite Polarization
<i>Neighborhoods</i>		West Loop Gate Chicago	Downtown Minneapolis Downtown Indianapolis	Renaissance Center / Creektown, Detroit SoMa, San Francisco Horton Plaza, San Diego	Creektown, Chicago Grand Ave. El, Chicago Downtown Philadelphia Downtown Washington	Longwood Medical / Academic area, Boston Boston University, Boston Georgetown, Washington Hyde Park, Chicago	Central City, New Orleans Mount Adams, Cincinnati Belltown, Seattle Downtown Dallas
<i>Cluster Number</i>		4	10	7	2	8	11
<i>Number of tracts</i>		1	1	2	3	4	11
		<i>Unweighted Mean Values</i>					
Change in Housing Units, 1990-2000		610	865	8.6	32	225	8.6
Change in Population, 1990-2000		684	535	77	23	108	15
Homeless Population, 1990		34	84	0.0	11	46	1.0
Poverty Rate, 1990		39	69	12	24	53	29
White Per Capita Income, 1989 dollars		30,670	14,946	45,358	20,222	10,053	10,103
White-Black Ratio of Per Capita Income, 1989		0.55	2.3	3.6	1.7	2.0	1.2
Non-Hispanic African American, 2000		7.7	28	33	40	20	13
Hispanic, 2000		5.0	4.7	3.1	15	5.5	7.8
Group Quarters, 1990		0.0	25	44	59	22	61
Correctional Institutions, 2000		0.0	0.0	35	51	0.0	0.0
Homeownership, 2000		88	61	26	17	44	26
White Renters, 2000		11	36	74	80	51	73
Vacancy Rate, 2000		21	13	13	12	16	6.9

Note: All figures are percentages except white per capita income and white-black income ratio.

In the target-marketing industry, of course, this kind of analysis is premised on consumption, market potential, and the commodification of place ~ distilled into catchy labels like ‘money and brains,’ ‘bohemian mix,’ or ‘single-city blues’ (a few categories in the consumer segmentation products offered by Claritas, Inc.). But this act of geographical objectification can also be used strategically to highlight the inequalities and dilemmas of gentrification. Our analysis reveals five main types of places inscribed by reinvestment, and seven smaller categories with unique, extreme configurations (Table 4). Almost two-fifths of neighborhoods in our study are dominated by dynamic retail and residential districts popular among young, mostly white renters. Another quarter are the classic gold-coast enclaves, such as Washington’s Capitol Hill, Philadelphia’s

Society Hill, and Boston's Back Bay. A generation of reinvestment has thoroughly reshaped vanilla playground and gold coast neighborhoods, so in most of these places there is no longer much concern over displacement of the poor, who were pushed out years ago; current tensions typically involve competitive struggles among various gentrifiers (Hackworth, 2002a, 2002b). The older, familiar lines of class conflict have moved deeper into the inner city. In about one-seventh of all neighborhoods, gentrification is best understood as racialized redevelopment, with greatly magnified race-class inequalities in African American communities (Figure 3). In another group of neighborhoods these changes are buffered and delayed by comparatively high rates of Black homeownership, sustaining what is often an uneasy community diversity. Reinvestment and class transformation involve white-Anglo/Latino divisions in about seven percent of the neighborhoods.

But it is in the exceptional neighborhoods, marked by extreme and dynamic social-statistical profiles, where revanchist neoliberalism inscribes the most vivid urban ecologies. In one place (the near west side of Chicago) centralized housing demand has turbocharged the redevelopment of a latter-day zone in transition, replacing a mixed area of small wholesalers, suppliers, and old apartment houses with a suddenly-trendy "West Loop Gate" of lofts, condo towers, and an upscale entertainment corridor. In a handful of other neighborhoods, downtown reinvestment coincides with county jails and other correctional facilities, a reminder that the creation of attractive middle-class living spaces is never entirely unrelated to the infrastructures of discipline required to protect (some) people from deindustrialization, poverty, discrimination, homelessness, and other externalities of contemporary neoliberal globalization (Gilmore, 2002). A similar but converse process is underway in a few places where homeless shelters, SROs, and dilapidated homes are replaced by new apartments and downtown office or retail districts. In some cases the affordable housing and social services are relocated with no net loss, but in the last decade this outcome has become quite rare. Elsewhere, reinvestment is tied to elite colleges and universities, many of them either private or dealing with government mandates to respond to short-term market imperatives. In a few places reinvestment has created truly extraordinary cases of polarization of wealth, poverty, and displacement (Figure 4).



Figure 3. We All Know the Term for this Trend. Gentrifying neighborhoods in Cincinnati are on the front lines between poverty and reinvestment, and local variants of neoliberal urban redevelopment shaped the context in which policing practices led to a violent uprising in April, 2001. Genesis Redevelopment, Inc. is across the street from the Laurel Homes, the city's oldest public housing project and a landmark of the West End; our quantitative analysis identifies the neighborhood as an instance of racialized redevelopment (see Table 4). Genesis began receiving federal funds through city government agencies in 1991 to redevelop 130 homes. Eight years and \$800,000 later they had rehabbed their own offices and 11 homes, some belonging to board members. The scandal reached all the way to the city council (Anglen and Curnutte, 2000; Osborne, 2000; Korte, 2001). Meanwhile, the Laurel Homes were targeted in a federally-funded redevelopment plan (HOPE VI, 'Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere') that facilitates the gentrification of severely distressed inner-city projects where local reinvestment boosts demand for market-rate units. The Laurel and adjoining Lincoln Court Homes are being upgraded to include 835 mixed-income rental units and 250 for-sale homes (Community Builders, 2002). A former middle school teacher whose students lived in the complex recalls telling them that "inner city communities like the West End and Over-the-Rhine are not valued by the city planners until a trend occurs, which brings the young, upwardly mobile, and professional back to the inner city as residents. We all know the term for this trend: it's called 'gentrification.'" (Mincey, 2001). Even the disinvested Over-the-Rhine neighborhood, the epicenter of the 2001 uprising, has seen incipient signs of gentrification. Population has continued to decline and abandoned buildings still mar the landscape, but displacement of long-time residents was cited as one of the background conditions that shaped local reactions to the police shooting of an unarmed teenager, Timothy Thomas. Policing and law involve an explicit spatiality, however, to discipline the neighborhood. The area was the focus of a unique city ordinance that allowed police to ban suspected drug users from a "drug exclusion zone." (Lazare, 2001). The ordinance was eventually overturned in federal court, but in five years of enforcement police used the law to ban more than 300 people, some of them residents (Grieco, Hills and Modic, 2001, p. A1). One homeless man accumulated about a year of jail time through his repeated returns to the area for food and shelter. The law also swept up a grandmother arrested on charges of marijuana trafficking; although her case was thrown out of court, the banishment from the drug-free zone remained, preventing her from walking her grandchildren to school. Police now lament the loss of the ordinance: one official says, "It worked, and they took it away." (ibid.) Over-the-Rhine has become a vivid example of contemporary neoliberal inequalities, "a neighborhood where farmers sell mushrooms for \$160 a pound at the Findlay Market within sight of drug dealers peddling their own herbs." (ibid.) *Photograph by Dan Hammel.*



Figure 4. From Freedmen's Town to Mars. Following the Civil War, freedmen's towns developed in many Texas cities as places where former slaves could live in relative safety, albeit horrendous squalor. In Dallas and Houston, these areas evolved into poor but vibrant centers for Black culture and business, and after the 1920s they were often compared to Manhattan's Harlem. Recent gentrification pressures have wrought substantial changes in these communities. In the State-Thomas area of Dallas, most evidence of the history of African American settlement has been obliterated, and most of the residents who lived there before 1990 are long gone. Many of the (mostly white) gentrifiers moving in during the late 1980s feared overdevelopment and the loss of the area's historic character, and thus worked closely with the city planning office to draft detailed guidelines and restrictions. A historian who worked on the guidelines reported measuring setbacks on Manhattan's Upper West Side, and the planning office borrowed heavily from similar plans in Seattle and Toronto (Griffin, 2002). Yet much of the neighborhood resembles an eerie attempt to recreate Philadelphia's Society Hill at a larger architectural scale. For its part the city made State-Thomas its first tax increment financing district in 1989, pouring in \$18 million in public infrastructure subsidies to leverage a remarkable quarter-billion of private investment (City of Dallas, 2001). The development shown here (Drexel Court) is one of the few that did *not* involve direct public funds. Our quantitative analysis identifies this neighborhood as an instance of elite polarization (see Table 4). The scale and pace of change have stunned recent arrivals and longtime observers alike. One ninety-six year old lifetime resident said "It feels like I woke up one morning on Mars." (Griffin, 2002). *Photograph by Dan Hammel.*

Each of these categories, and indeed each place, deserves the kind of politically and geographically intimate analysis of Atkinson (2003), or Beauregard (1990), Bennett (1998), Ley (1981), or Slater (2003). But even our superficial sketch of the comparative outlines of inner-city transformation is illuminating. Moreover, this neighborhood analysis is closely linked to the metropolitan view provided earlier (Table 2). Chicago and San Francisco, both distinguished by particularly strict anti-homeless regimes, have the largest and most diverse mix of gentrified neighborhoods. Elite revanchist cities tend to the extremes, with over-representation of gold coast enclaves and racial redevelopment or downtown sweep neighborhoods (while in Boston elite university districts compete with gold coast environments). In cities of disciplined decentralization, we find fewer gold coasts, but more areas of racialized redevelopment and precarious diversity. Not surprisingly, Latino-segregated cities have more Latino frontier gentrified areas, but several also have a mix of gold coast enclaves and vanilla playgrounds.

Conclusions

A decade ago, the onset of recession prompted speculation that gentrification was dead. The subsequent boom proved once again that gentrification endures as an empirically limited but theoretically indispensable reflection of contemporary urbanization. The 1990s thus wove gentrification more tightly together with privatization, globalized city competition, welfare reform, and all other parts of the fabric of neoliberal governance. And more than ever before, gentrification has been woven into public policy, as reason to obey market forces or as a tool to direct them in hopes of restructuring the urban landscape. Trumpled under the friendly banners of regeneration, renewal, or revitalization, many of these placebo policies fail in their boosterish goals; but even successful leverage of private capital tends worsens housing affordability in a neoliberal climate of strategic deregulation. Even when gentrifiers have genuinely inclusive intentions in their newfound inner-city homes, their arrival accelerates local market pressures interacting with urban policy in a climate of austerity, economic discipline, and a consistent preference for spatial mechanisms that avoid questioning underlying societal inequalities (Mitchell, 1997). In short, the triumph of neoliberalism has altered the context and consequences of

gentrification, creating new inequalities and locally-distinctive strands of revanchism (Atkinson, 2003).

Our effort to map a neoliberal urban system is a deliberate provocation, with serious risks. As in the world-cities literature, the approach is “poised somewhere on a conceptual and epistemological borderland where positivism, structuralism, and essentialism meet.” (M.P. Smith, 1999, 119). And it is built on the shaky foundations of partitional thinking. The choice of variables defines the mathematical space that is then mechanistically partitioned, so the process “reminds one of a lunatic hacking apart a pumpkin with a broadaxe” only to be astonished that “no matter what clustering routine is applied, points close together in the space (pumpkin) will often appear in the same groups (pieces hacked apart).” (Gould, 1999, 298). But that’s the point. If we are to avoid constructing American gentrification as an “objectified and essentialized reality, a ‘thing’ operating outside the social construction of meaning” (M.P. Smith, 1999, 119), then we must deliberately contest and construct this meaning, to define a taxonomic space that reveals the context of cities shaped by distinctive configurations of neoliberal housing and social policy, federal-local relations, intersections of capital investment and disinvestment, and regional geographies of homelessness and racial-ethnic inequality. Our sketch of a revanchist urban hierarchy is a primitive first step towards understanding gentrification in its new political-economic context ~ and also to mapping alternative urban futures.

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