

## **Gentrification: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly**

Winter 2018

SOCI 28076

Mon-Wed 1:30-2:50

### **Instructor**

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Office Hours: Wednesdays by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Why are rents up? Where are all the people who *used* to live in this neighborhood? Why was your favorite coffee shop replaced by a bank? What exactly is a hipster? These are all questions swirling around the topic of gentrification. Ruth Glass coined the term “gentrification” in 1964 to describe changes she was seeing in London, in particular the fact that “one by one, many of the working class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle classes.” A physical and social transformation of urban neighborhoods, gentrification might have gotten its name in the 1960s, but it has its roots in social processes that run from the early twentieth century through today. In this class, we will explore the causes and consequences of gentrification, with a focus on the United States. In addition to thinking about what gentrification is, we will think about how urban theorists have conceived of gentrification, and how these conceptions shape debates on the contentious topic.

**COURSE GOALS:** The goals for this course are two-fold. First, it serves as an introduction to some of the substantive issues, and to a lesser extent, the methods, that have animated debates about gentrification and neighborhood change. The course will cover the historical background of gentrification in America in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as debates about its causes and consequences. These topics will be situated within the broader framework of the development of a theory of gentrification as a field of knowledge. In doing so, we will explore how the subfield of urban sociology generally, and gentrification studies specifically, consists of a number of narratives and frameworks in discourse with each other. In paying close attention to the way different topics in the gentrification literature do (or do not) speak to each other, we will explore the socially contingent and deeply historical nature of knowledge production itself, through the lens of urban theory.

### **REQUIRED BOOKS (available at Seminary Coop)**

Brown-Saracino, Japonica, ed. 2010. *The Gentrification Debates: A Reader*.

Greif, Mark, Kathleen Ross, and Dayna Tortotici, eds. 2010. *What Was The Hipster? A Sociological Investigation*.

Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. (2011 edition)

Articles from the Brown-Saracino reader in this syllabus are marked with an asterisk next to them. All readings outside the required books will be available in PDF format on the class Canvas site.

### ASSIGNMENTS

Class Participation	20%
Discussion Postings	20%
Pop Culture Artifact	20%
Midterm Proposal	10%
Final Paper	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Class Participation: You are required to attend class, and I expect you to participate in discussions. Participation means engaging with the text *and* with your classmates, so be prepared to both discuss your own ideas and to listen thoughtfully to others. In order to facilitate productive discussion in class, everyone is expected to read all of the weekly assigned material **BEFORE** the class meets (i.e. you will read all of the readings listed under Monday of Week Two *before* the class meets on Monday of Week Two).

Discussion Postings: In Weeks 2-9, you will be responsible for posting a 500 word (+/- 10%) response to the readings on Canvas. Please cut and paste your posting (with a word count) into the Canvas Discussion board. **Do not upload a Word document.**

It's okay to include a description of the argument the author is making, but I'm more interested in seeing you critically engage with the reading. Here are some questions you might think about as you write these responses:

- Does the author have an understanding of what the city or gentrification is in some essential way?
- Does the author's logic hold up? If it doesn't, where does it break down?
- Does the author's explanation of urban life resonate with your own experience of the city? If it doesn't, is it because you think the writer is wrong, or is there an important difference between urban life as you experience it and urban life as the author might have experienced it?
- How does the reading relate to other ways of thinking about gentrification we may have covered in class?

You don't need to cover *all* of these questions or all of the authors in any given response—they're pretty big questions, we'll be reading a lot of authors, and you only have 500 words, after all. Think of them as suggestions for how you might approach the writers we'll be reading.

If your last name begins with A-M, you will post on the readings for Mondays by 5pm SUNDAY. If your last name begins with N-Z, you will post on the readings for Wednesdays by 5pm TUESDAY. During weeks when there is only, ALL students should post on the readings by 5pm THE DAY BEFORE THE CLASS. **\*\* If you miss a posting deadline, you may respond, in 500 words (+/- 10%), to someone else's posting for the day you missed for partial credit. You have 24-hour window after**

**the time the assignment was originally due to complete this make-up assignment. By the end of the quarter, everyone should have posted eight responses. \*\***

Pop Culture Artifact: Much of what we understand about neighborhoods and gentrification comes not from books or articles, but from the realm of popular culture. You are required to choose a piece of popular culture—a song, a film, a play, an interpretive dance, etc.—and explain how it relates to the readings for a class in a one- to two-page (12-font, 1” margins, double- spaced) paper. In class, you will present this piece of popular culture in video or audio form—try to keep it around 5 minutes—and give a short explanation of why you chose it, and propose one major question it raises about gentrification and the readings we have done for the class to discuss. **Students should sign up for a class to present in at the beginning of the quarter, and presentations will be done at the beginning of each class. Papers will be due at the beginning of the class it is presented in.**

Midterm Proposal: You will be required to write one five-page proposal (12-font, 1” margins, double- spaced), due in Week 5. I’d like you to get started thinking about what your final paper will be early, so use the proposal to think about what you would like to work on. The proposal should include a thesis paragraph and an annotated list of at least five sources. Beyond that, use the paper to work out how your empirical paper is related to the theoretical issues we have covered in class. Topics for the final paper are subject to instructor approval. **The proposal will be due Sunday, February 4, 2018 by 11 pm. Submit paper to me by e-mail.**

Final Paper: You will also be required to write one 12-15 page paper (12-font, 1” margins, double-spaced) for this course, due in exam week. For the final, the topic is up to you, and can be anything related to gentrification and neighborhood change, but you must submit a (see above) to me for approval. **Papers will be due Monday, March 12, 2018 by 11 pm. Please submit to me by e-mail.** Each student is allowed one 48-hour extension, on either the midterm proposal or the final paper, which must be requested a further 24 hours in advance. Papers not turned in during class on the due date will be penalized 5 points per day.

#### **CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

My goal is for all students to feel included in the course. This means being respectful of other students, even while discussing issues that are complicated and controversial. I am committed to meeting the needs of all the students, and am readily accessible via email and office hours to address any concerns with the class or material that may arise. If you are unable to come to office hours at the scheduled time but would still like to meet, send me an e-mail and we can figure out another time. If you need any class-related accommodations, please visit: <http://disabilities.uchicago.edu/contacts/index.shtml>

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and any suspected cheating and/or plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students office. As a University of Chicago student, you are responsible for knowing and abiding by an academic code of conduct, and if you are

unclear on what it entails, please refer to the [Academic Policies and Requirements section of the Student Manual](#). Extensions must be requested 48 hours in advance. Papers not turned in during class on the due date will be penalized 5 points per day. I give incompletes for the course only in the case of a documented medical or family emergency.

## **I. Background: What Did the Metropolis Look Like at the Turn of the Century?**

### Week One: Early Conceptions of the City (Jan. 3)

*What did some of the earliest sociological theorists and other thinkers think about the city? In this section of the class, we'll focus on the work that was done on the city as a place distinct from towns and the country. In particular, we'll see some of the earliest understandings of the city as an alienating force.*

- Wednesday:
- Simmel, Georg. 1903. "The Metropolis and Mental Life."
  - Tönnies, Ferdinand. 1887. "A General Classification of Key Ideas" and "Theory of Gessellschaft." *Community and Civil Society*.
  - Wirth, Louis. 1938. "Urbanism as a Way of Life." *American Journal of Sociology* (Vol 44: No 1)
  - Wordsworth, William. 1888 "Book Seventh: Residence in London." *The Prelude*.

### Week Two: Growth and Decline (Jan. 8/10)

*How did early sociologists think the city grew, and how did later ones think it declined? In this section of the class we'll first focus on the development of ecological perceptions of the city in the early twentieth century. Then we'll discuss the macro shifts in urban demographics that occurred in the middle of the twentieth century, and look at what urban sociology has to say about places that aren't urban at all: the suburbs.*

- Monday:
- Burgess, Ernest W. 1925. "The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project." *The City: Suggestions for Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment*.
  - Hoyt, Homer. 1939. "The Patterns of Movement of Residential Rental Neighborhoods." *The Structure and Growth of Residential Neighborhoods in American Cities*.
  - Zorbaugh, Harvey Warren. 1929. "The Shadow of the Skyscraper." *The Gold Coast and the Slum: A Sociological Study of Chicago's Near North Side*.
- Wednesday:
- Gans, Herbert. 1967. "The Levittowners and Why They Came." *The Levittowners: Ways of Life and Politics in a New Suburban Community*.
  - Hirsch, Arnold. 1983. "A neighborhood on a hill: Hyde Park and the University of Chicago." *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago 1940-1960*.
  - Jackson, Kenneth. 1985. "The Loss of Community in Metropolitan America." *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*.

## II. Causes: What Has Caused Neighborhood Change in America?

### Week Three: It's the Economy, Stupid! (Jan. 15/17)

*Is it really just basic economic forces that create gentrification and neighborhood change? In this section of the class, we'll begin with Ruth Glass' coining of the term "gentrification" and then explore how various theorists used economic processes to explain what was going on in changing cities.*

Monday: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (NO CLASS MEETING)

Wednesday: - Glass, Ruth. 1964. "Aspects of Change."\*  
- Smith, Neil. "Toward a Theory of Gentrification- A Back to the City Movement by Capital, not People."\*  
- Logan, John R. and Harvey L. Molotch. 1987 (reprint 2007). "The City as a Growth Machine." *Urban Fortunes: the Political Economy of Place*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

### Week Four: It's not the Economy, Stupid! (Jan. 22/24)

*Is gentrification about something we can't explain with a rent gap chart? In this section of the class, we consider research that has challenged strictly economic explanations for urban processes. Consideration will be given to the roles of sentiment, reputation, and culture as explanatory factors.*

Monday: - Firey, Walter. 1945. "Sentiment and Symbolism as Ecological Variables." *American Sociological Review* 10: 140-148.  
- Suttles, Gerald D. 1972. "The Defended Neighborhood." *The Social Construction of Communities*.

Wednesday: - Brown-Saracino, Japonica. "Social Preservationists and the Quest for Authentic Community."\*  
- Ley, David. 2003. "Artists, aestheticisation and the field of gentrification." *Urban Studies* 40(12):2527-2544.  
- Zukin, Sharon. "The Creation of a 'Loft Lifestyle'."\*

### Week Five: Combining Perspectives (Jan. 29/31)

*Why can't economic and cultural explanations for gentrification exist side by side? In this section of the class, we think about the debate about the causes of gentrification and what they're rooted in. Then we look at some research that elegantly combines the two strands.*

Monday: - Hamnett, Chris. 1991. "The Blind Men and the Elephant: The Explanation of Gentrification." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 16(2):173-189  
- Mele, Christopher. "Forging the Link Between Culture and Real Estate: Urban Policy and Real Estate Development."\*

- Zukin, Sharon. 1987. "Gentrification: Culture and Capital in the Urban Core." *Annual Review of Sociology* 13:129-147

- Wednesday:
- Deener, Andrew. 2007. "Commerce as the structure and symbol of neighborhood life: Reshaping the meaning of community in Venice, California." *City & Community* 6(4):291-314.
  - Lloyd, Richard. 2006. "Grit as Glamor." *Neo-Bohemia: Art and Commerce in the Postindustrial City*.
  - Oejo, Richard E. 2011. "The Early Gentrifier: Weaving a Nostalgia Narrative on the Lower East Side." *City & Community* 10(3):285-310.
  - Zukin, Sharon. "From Arts Production to Housing Market."\*

**\* MIDTERM PROPOSAL IS DUE FEBRUARY 4, 2018 BY 11 PM \***

Week Six: What About Hipsters? (Feb. 5/7)

*Why do people keep insisting the hipster needs to die? The hipster is a contentious figure in the public imagination surrounding gentrification. Although undercovered in sociological literature, it is important to consider the figure that has, for many people, come to be a virtual stand-in for the process of gentrification and neighborhood change.*

- Monday:
- Greif, Mark. "Epitaph for the White Hipster." *What Was The Hipster? A Sociological Investigation*. Ed. Mark Greif, Kathleen Ross, and Dayna Tortotici. New York: n+1 Foundation, 2010.
  - Haddon, Douglas. "Hipster: The Dead End Of Western Civilization." *Adbusters*. July 29, 2008.
  - Horning, Rob. "The Death of the Hipster." In *What Was The Hipster? A Sociological Investigation*. Ed. Mark Greif, Kathleen Ross, and Dayna Tortotici. New York: n+1 Foundation, 2010. Originally published in "Marginal Utility," PopMatters.com (April 13, 2009).  
<<http://www.popmatters.com/pm/post/the-death-of-the-hipster-panel>>.
  - Lorentzen, Christian. 2007. "Why the Hipster Must Die: A Modest Proposal to Save New York Cool." *Time Out New York*. May 30, 2007.

- Wednesday:
- Lloyd, Richard. "Living Like An Artist."\*
  - Baumgardner, Jennifer. "Williamsburg Year Zero." *What Was The Hipster? A Sociological Investigation*. Ed. Mark Greif, Kathleen Ross, and Dayna Tortotici. New York: n+1 Foundation, 2010.
  - Clayton, Jace. "Vampires of Lima." *What Was The Hipster? A Sociological Investigation*. Ed. Mark Greif, Kathleen Ross, and Dayna Tortotici. New York: n+1 Foundation, 2010.
  - Lorentzen, Christian. "I Was Wrong." *What Was The Hipster? A Sociological Investigation*. Ed. Mark Greif, Kathleen Ross, and Dayna Tortotici. New York: n+1 Foundation, 2010.

### **III. Consequences: What Happens When a Neighborhood Changes?**

Week Seven: Increased Amenities and Public Safety (Feb 12/14)

*Are there benefits to gentrification? In this section, we consider why some people might feel positively about gentrification, even if they are residents at risk of displacement. Scholars are often adamant that gentrification is a universally negative process, but there are cases where people believe they benefit from it in ways not always predicted by the literature.*

- Monday:
- Jacobs, Jane. 1961. "The uses of sidewalks: safety." *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Vintage Books.
  - Jacobs, Jane. 1961. "Slumming and Unslumming" *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Vintage Books.
  - Freeman, Lance. "Neighborhood Effects in a Changing Hood."\*

Wednesday: **Special Guest Lecture: Japonica Brown-Saracino**

- Ellen, Ingrid Gould and Kathleen M. O'Regan. "How low income neighborhoods change: Entry, exit, and enhancement." *Regional Science and Urban Economics*. 41:89-97.
- Papachristos, Andrew V., Chris M. Smith, Mary L. Scherer, and Melissa A. Fugiero. 2011. "More Coffee, Less Crime? The Relationship between Gentrification and Neighborhood Crime Rates in Chicago, 1991 to 2005." *City & Community* 10 (3): 215-40. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6040.2011.01371.x.

Week Eight: Increased Segregation and Inequality (Feb. 19/21)

*Does gentrification make the city more unfair? American urban areas are marked by both massive residential segregation and massive income inequality, and gentrification can contribute to these conditions. We'll explore how these phenomena are connected and empirical cases of the connection at work.*

- Monday:
- Hwang, Jackelyn, and Robert J. Sampson. 2014. "Divergent Pathways of Gentrification: Racial Inequality and the Social Order of Renewal in Chicago Neighborhoods". *American Sociological Review* 79 (4):726-751.
  - Massey, Douglas. 1990. "American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the American Underclass." *American Journal of Sociology*. 92: 2
  - Pattillo, Mary. 1999. "The Black Middle Class: Who, When, and Where?" *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril Among the Black Middle Class*.
  - Quillian, Lincoln and Devah Pager. 2001. "Black Neighbors, Higher Crime? The Role of Racial Stereotypes in Evaluations of Neighborhood Crime." *American Journal of Sociology* 107 (3): 717-767.
- Wednesday:
- Hyra, Derek. 2017. "Black Branding." *Race, Class, and Politics in the Cappuccino City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Shaw, Samuel and Daniel M. Sullivan. 2011. "'White Night': Gentrification, Racial Exclusion, and Perceptions and Participation in the Arts." *City & Community* 10 (3): 241-64.
- MacLeod, G. 2002. "From Urban Entrepreneurialism to a 'Revanchist City'? On the Spatial Injustices of Glasgow's Renaissance." *Antipode* 34 (3): 602-24. doi:10.1111/1467-8330.00256.

#### IV. Challenges, For Residents and Scholars

##### Week Nine: Fight the Power? (Feb. 26/28)

*Is gentrification inevitable, or can people stop it, or at least its negative effects? In this section, we think about how opposition to gentrification and its effects might work on the ground, as well as how people have come to take advantage of the positive effects of neighborhood change.*

- Monday:
- Betancur, J. J. 2002. "The politics of gentrification the case of west town in Chicago." *Urban Affairs Review* 37(6):780-814.
  - Ley, David, and Cory Dobson. 2008. "Are there limits to gentrification? The contexts of impeded gentrification in Vancouver." *Urban Studies* 45(12):2471-2498.
  - Newman, Kathe, and Elvin K. Wyly. 2006. "The right to stay put, revisited: gentrification and resistance to displacement in New York City." *Urban Studies* 43(1):23-57.
  - Robinson, Tony. 1995. "Gentrification and grassroots resistance in San Francisco's Tenderloin." *Urban Affairs Review* 30(4):483-513.

- Wednesday:
- Florida, Richard. 2003. "Cities and the Creative Class." *City & Community* 2(1):3-19.
  - Peck, Jamie. 2005. "Struggling with the Creative Class." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. 29(4):740-770.
  - Wherry, Frederick F. 2011 "Culture at Work: The Arts, Branding, and Neighborhood Transformation." *The Philadelphia Barrio: The Arts, Branding, and Neighborhood Transformation*.

##### Week Ten: What Have We Missed? (Mar. 5/7)

*So what have scholars missed when looking at gentrification? In this section, we consider some recent scholarship about the nature of gentrification research, paying special attention to potential blind-spots. After a quarter studying these issues, what do you think we're getting wrong?*

- Monday:
- Brown-Saracino, Japonica. 2017. "Explicating Divided Approaches to Gentrification and Growing Income Inequality." *Annual Review of Sociology*. 43.
  - Schlichtman, John Joe and Jason Patch. 2014. "Gentrifier? Who, Me? Interrogating the Gentrifier in the Mirror." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. 38(4):1491-1508.

Wednesday: For the final class, there will be no reading assignments. We will have a broad discussion about the class as a whole, and students who would like to will make short presentations on their paper topics so they can get feedback from the class.

**\* FINAL PAPER IS DUE MARCH 12, 2018 BY 11 PM \***