

Urban sociology



Many times people are not aware of the urban issues in their neighborhoods. The field of Urban Sociology studies the interplay between social and spatial institutions. The general goal is to understand urban issues emerging in your own neighborhood and then compare it other areas. For my research, I developed different approaches to how I see my neighborhood and the changes that occur when diverse social groups mix. My analysis was based on Thornwood, New York, census tract 121. 02 Thornwood is a hamlet in the town of Mount Pleasant in Westchester County. It is approximately 30 miles north on New York City. The total area of the hamlet 1. 1 square miles In the early 1890s, real-estate developer Louis Smadbeck began buying up the area farms to subdivide into parcels, which were sold to working- and middle-class people looking to live outside the city. Thornwood once had a large and thriving Westchester marble quarry near its heart, the intersection of Route 141 and Kensico Road. The quarry pit was filled in during the mid 1980s, and the Town Center shopping center was constructed over it. Thornwood once had a station the Harlem Line of the Metro-North Railroad and was about a 48-minute ride to Grand Central Terminal. The station building remains on Commerce Street, but the stop was eliminated when the upper Harlem Line was electrified in the mid-1980s. Thornwood was the only stop eliminated as a result of the electrification process. While the station could accommodate diesel trains, the curvature of the tracks as proceeding north to made the construction at Thornwood of an elevated platform, necessary for electric trains, impractical. Though, there is no train station in Thornwood, I only need to drive 5 minutes to get to the train station in Hawthorne, the neighboring hamlet. Hawthorne is an unincorporated hamlet of Mount Pleasant as well, the village was originally known as Hammond's

Mills, and was part of Frederick Philipse's estate Philipsburgh. On September 23, 1780, Major John Andre stopped here on his way to New York to ask directions after meeting with Benedict Arnold. Both Thornwood and Hawthorne's population consisted mostly of farmers during the early 1980's. Based on the U. S Censes Bureau, which is based on the 2010 Demographic Profile Data, there is a total population of 4, 435 people living in Thornwood. Since 2000, it has had a population growth of -2. 89 percent. The majority of the population is white, about 90% in 2010. Without looking at the census demographics I could assume that my neighborhood is mostly made up of whites. The second largest racial group is Hispanics with 10% of the population in 2010. Since 2000, the population of Hispanics has grown about 15%, while the black and white population has decreased. There are only 154 Asians in Thornwood, which makes up 3. 5% of the population. Based on the 2000 census data, median age for residents in Thornwood, NY is 37. 5 (this is older than average age in the U. S.). I found it interesting that the median age is 42 for the total population in 2012; I assumed it would be a higher median age considering that I see a lot of older folks in my neighborhood. Also, I found it remarkable that it was 50/50 when it came to male and female population. When it comes to housing factors, there are a total of 1, 511 households. 80% of those households are family types. 72. 5% were married couples living together, 7. 2% had a female householder with no husband present, and 17. 3% were non-families. The average household size is 3. 03; I believe that this average is skewed because there are many of my peers in my neighborhood that have 2 or more siblings. The median home cost in Thornwood is \$507, 800. Compared to the rest of the country, Thornwood's cost of living is 83. 00% Higher than the U. S. average. It is

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more expensive to live in Thornwood than New York City. Some of the important social demographics involve the school system in Thornwood. Thornwood public schools spend \$13, 504 per student. The average school expenditure in the U. S. is \$5, 691. There is a ratio of about 13 students per teacher. In 1990 there were about 1, 500 students enrolled in the Mt. Pleasant school district, compared to the 2, 000 enrolled in 2010. There is no choice between what public high school and middle school students attend, since Thornwood is such a small town, there is only one middle and high school in the area. If parents would like they can send their children to private schools, though they would have to pay private tuition and still pay Thornwood school taxes. For the most part only a small number of students end up going to a private school, about 2. 5%. Westlake high school was ranked in the top 800 high schools in the nation in 2008. As of 2010, 90% of high school seniors graduate, with 30% of them going on and getting a 4-year college degree. I found out a great deal about the type of occupations people in my town has. Economic status is a key conductor of the social issues urban areas face. In Thornwood, there are 2, 518 people in the civilian labor force, who are 16 years of age or older. Females make up 1, 318 members of the labor force, this is a low number compared to neighboring towns. Only 122 of them are unemployed which is remarkable when you consider the economic status of our country. 74% of people commute to work using car, truck, or van. Only 5% of people on the labor force use public transportation. If you were to compare this to any of the boroughs I would speculate that's it's the total opposite for public transportation vs. people who use car, truck, or vans to commute to work.