

Good urban studies essay example

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Essay A: 2

Two ways that have been developed to re-design the social and economic dynamics of a community are gentrification and urban renewal. Both programs have received positive and negative reviews and it is uncertain as to whether they are guaranteed to be effective. Though they have similarities, they are not one in the same. This essay will uncover the similarities, differences and impact of these two programs.

Gentrification is a form of construction designed to gravitate a financially higher class of residents. Historically, gentrification was present even in the pioneer and Native American settlements. Gentrification was considered, in old terms language, “ the meeting point between savagery and civilization” .

Beginning with the negatives, sometimes the gap between the older development and the new development is overwhelming to the current residents and this has been known to cause friction. Low income families and business can negatively be effective by being forced to move or close shop. Gentrification can occur in areas ranging from extremely low income to middle class. It's the drive to get into the ' low ground rent' to capitalize and grow the economy . Other negative impacts include; community resentment and conflict, secondary psychological costs of displacement, increased cost to local services and even homelessness . The positives are; there are also times when the new development is attainable and reasonable to the older residents and it increases the value of the community on a moderate and achievable level and no one gets hurt. Other positives include, stabilization of declining areas, increased property values and increases social mix . This

is usually accomplished when renovating. J. P. Byrnes, a gentrifier and professor, believes that increasing the value of a community, increases the amount of 'affluent and well educated residents'. Gentrification can go from one extreme to the other and in polar opposites of effectiveness. Moreover, in general, when high quality structures and homes are built or restored, the value of the community goes up. When this occurs, the 'rent gap' appears. "Smaller and smaller quantities of capital are being funneled into the maintenance and repair of the inner city building stock" and therefore more investors are rebuilding new structures that can significantly widen the rent gap.

Urban renewal is a program that utilizes city space and transforms it to a new use for city development. Again, this program has both positive and negative effects. Urban renewal is when spatial scale is viewed with the goal of balancing out capitalism and community. The purpose is to revitalize the space and use it to attract a certain level of residents and commerce. For example, a ghost town or an abandoned space with un-kept, fragile buildings could be used to re-build into a new community. Sometimes, cities perform urban renewal while tearing down a piece of history and this causes friction. However, when cities and developers, use space productively and wisely, the benefits can be astounding.

Gentrification and urban renewal both have the intentions to raise value and utilize positive space. Gentrification has a more profound impact on the actual resident, as the residents that were in the area previously, may be drastically affected. The impact on the area is more localized. Urban renewal has a larger impact scale because when developing or re-developing an

unused or uneven space, that re-development will impact the entire city. Gentrification is wealth specific and deals a lot with value and the community's quality of life. When an area seems to be getting worse and a new home is built, the value of that community slowly increases and if that continues, the poorer residents will slowly be pushed out, which is why gentrification has caused controversy. It is a bittersweet deal, most citizens' desire wholesome, safe communities but at the cost of pushing people into homelessness or worse areas doesn't seem all that fair and right.

Urban renewal can also have the same effect but on a grander scale. Let's say the city and developer builds space and creates a glorified shopping center. That shopping center is going to affect the entire zip code by increasing rent and home value. Therefore, the renter's that were there previously suddenly have a higher rent requested by the landlord.

It is the movement of capital into the construction of suburban landscapes that opens the opportunity for the reconstruction of inner city, urban space . This is the current cycle of urbanization, suburbanization, gentrification and urban renewal. All programs intend to revalorize the area but in order to get there, devalorization occurs.

Unfortunately, poverty is the main factor that affects the residents. What would be a good idea is to redevelop homes and communities that are just right, so that the gap is not so large. Is there such a community that does not have over sized homes that can be built efficient enough to attract the humble, good citizen that doesn't have to make over 100 thousand a year? In conclusion, gentrification and urban renewal have been identified as programs with both positive and negative effects. Both programs tend to

increase value in properties and areas and thus people who don't have a certain income level are affected. Overall, both programs should keep in mind the diversity and demographics when doing either program. The gap is a serious issue and no one should be pushed to a low quality of life because they don't make enough money to live in a re-developing place.

Essay 2:

Poverty, gentrification, housing, transportation, racial and ethnicity all play significant roles in American housing development. Often times, plans are not well thought out. Free Enterprise is also a driving factor at the change of development and community. It's the chase of the American dream that can cause blindness. I will be looking at two cities to suggest solutions for better community development with the goal that everyone benefits in some form. San Francisco experienced an economic boom with dot-com companies flocking in and this caused many long time residents to lose their homes and even a few lives were lost trying to stay. Another suggestion will be for Levittown. Levittown was America's first suburb and can hold a few keys to success in building and governing life and liberty in suburbia.

Boom: The Sound of Eviction

Let's look at the San Francisco e-commerce boom that occurred in the 1990s. The Mission district was a historical district that housed many hard working immigrants. Mission was first settled by the Italians and Irish but later, became inhabited by the Latinos. This community was not wealthy by any means but they had just enough hard earned money to live in a strong ethnic community and were able to flourish in their natural state. Here

comes the dot-com businesses with a strong venture capital backing and they sought to conduct their business in the Mission district. The property value in the Mission district was low cost and easy to purchase. This is a classic case of what W. E. B. Du Bois's commencement at Fisk University in 1938:

“ The most distressing fact about the world is poverty but poverty more poignant and discouraging because it comes after a dream of wealth; of riotous, wasteful and even vulgar accumulation of individual riches, which suddenly leaves the majority of mankind today without enough to eat; without proper shelter, without sufficient clothing.”

As a consultant entering San Francisco, I would conduct with a mediation approach. This country is based on more than just capital. This particular scenario introduces the possibility of a large rent gap, which leaves older residents with fewer options to find a new home. The question is; is there a way to land in the Mission district and conduct business without damaging the community that is already present? Could the dot-com businesses enhance the community and offer jobs or use what capital they earn to improve the community centers for residents to gather. A good focus is to look at how can their success can improve and preserve the local community instead of destroy it.

Urbanization is exaggerated with many factors including the fact that real estate is a major sector in the economy of capitalism. . The capital market of the dot-com businesses were a priority. And the dot-com industry thought because they were paying for it, they could do it all without putting morality into play. The United States did not intervene with immigration. The

immigrants were already in Mission, making a home and life. If the United States doesn't want a mass amount of immigrants, then secure the borders on a grander scale. Therefore, race and ethnicity should not be a factor.

Levittown: Building the American Dream

Levittown was one of the first suburbs built in America. The building of this suburb occurred right on the brink of the end of World War II. During the postwar an observer commented that some Americans desired "The economic benefits of urbanization while resisting the way of life usually associated with living in the city". Veterans came back from war needing a home. And consequentially, many Americans felt it most important to own a home. Mr. Levitt wanted a mass produced housing community because it was affordable and for the common man. Unfortunately, Levittown was a community in which only white people could purchase; however that has changed since then.

My recommendation for suburban areas are to build good homes and recreational centers and sell to the income range the homebuyers can afford and also to sell to buyers who have a genuine interest in having a healthy, safe and robust community no matter the price range. The most important factor is to ensure a safe and wholesome environment, regardless of income level. In order to make this happen, recreational centers need to be present so that residents can gather and get involved. Another point that would be successful is not have the long work week. Today, America considers full time work of 40 hours, not including the commute in heavy traffic. This time stuck in traffic and long hours takes away family time and causes mental and physical exhaustion. Companies should take advantage of technology and

allow more working from home opportunities or less working hours.

As a consultant, I would do nothing less than try to keep things on an even playing field. This country needs activists and leaders that are genuinely looking out for people's rights to live peacefully, securely and healthy without subjecting them by their income level. Many leaders are enamored with capital, money, luxury and over-consumption and these are all factors that cause long-term issues. These capital induced thinking patterns motivate leaders and sellers to make sudden decisions without looking at the bigger picture, which are the roots of poverty and gentrification. The humanity should be more important than the capital but it doesn't always work that way and that has been discovered through urban studies.

References

Beauregard, R. (2006). *When America Became Suburban*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota.

Bird, S. (Director). (1994). *Building the American Dream: Levittown, NY* [Motion Picture].

Bois, W. D. (1985). *Black Reconstruction in America*. New York: Atheneum .

Byrne, J. (2003). Two Cheers for Gentrification. *Capitol Hill of Washington D. C.*, pp. 405-406.

Campbell, S, Fainstein, S. (2002). *Reading Urban Theory*. Blackwell Publishing.

Cavanaugh, F., Liiv, A. M., & Wood, A. (Directors). (2001). *Boom: The Sound of Eviction* [Motion Picture].

Gildenblan, John. (2008). *Poverty, Housing and the New Urbanism*. University of Texas Press.

Gottienner, M. (1994). *The New Urban Sociology*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Hays, Allen R. (1995). *Government Urban Housing: Ideology and Change in Public Policy*.

New York: Albany State University Press.

Jennings, J., Kushnick, L., (1999). *A New Introduction to Poverty*. New York University Press.

Lee, L., Slator, T., & Wyly, E. (2008). *Gentrification: Positive or Negative?* Rutledge.

Miller, Randall M. (1997). *The Making of Urban America*. Wilmington

Scholarly Resources

Inc.

Smith, N. (2002). *Gentrification, the Frontier, and the Restructuring of Urban Space*. Blackwell Publishing.

Stratton, J. (1977). *Pioneering in the Urban Wilderness*. New York : Urizen Books.

Warner. (1968). *Real Estate Boom*. New York: Hamilton .