

Understanding the phenomenon of gentrification

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Based on an article written by Saunders (2016), the textbook definition of gentrification is “ the movement into a formerly deteriorating community by middle-class or affluent residents, all of the above would be signs of a process that is well underway.” In other words, it may refer to as renovation by the influx of the wealthier people in a specific urban region, which links to an increase in rents and properties worth, and a shift in a community’s nature and culture. Some interpretation of the term seems to gear towards as negative. As mentioned by Grant (2003), this may in some point, replace the common needs of the community by wealthy newcomers; moreover, the outcome of gentrification is wide and conflicting and its certain effects are modified.

To further understand what gentrification is, an example would be provided. City X is inhabited mostly by residents who belong under the poverty line. For some reason, young urban professionals who work in major cities want to live close to their jobs; therefore, move to city X, gentrifying it. The result, the city properties are less than affordable than they once were. Once an area becomes unaffordable for its low-income residents, it tends to stay that way. Neighborhoods, then, are not just homes, but opportunities for profit and redevelopment.

This phenomenon is prevalent in United States where the rapid influx of young, well-to-do white people into once low-income neighborhoods, usually populated by people of color. The renewal fantasy that defines them hides an often racist history of deliberate and concentrated impoverishment, one that is inevitably copied wherever poor residents are forced to move next,

usually the isolated suburbs they were barred from occupying in the first place. As stated on an article by Leefeldt (2018):

For example, one such gentrified area in Philadelphia sits next to a City Hall. Even with the recent rise in home prices, renovated downtown properties are still considered a bargain by some homebuyers, as well as a way to avoid the traffic jams they would endure if they commuted to the suburbs.

Nonetheless, the properties became exorbitant that before. In Los Angeles, the cost of a home has skyrocketed from about \$52, 000 in 2000 to \$400, 000 in 2016. A significant 707 percent increase. In spite of this, the average income in the area has nearly doubled, yet it stands at around \$24, 000. This means more affluent residents are often living side-by-side with lower income Americans, who are often renters.