

Queens College
URBST 265-002
Gentrification, Housing & Urban Restructuring
M/W 3-5:05 Room: TBD
Summer 2022



A mural by Alberto Serrano and The Royal Kingbee, located on Walton Avenue in the Mount Hope section of the Bronx, dramatizes gentrification. Credit: David Gonzalez/The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/30/nyregion/on-a-wall-in-the-west-bronx-a-gentrification-battle-rages.html>.

I. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION: Erin Lilli, M.Arch, MS,Arch; elilli@gradcenter.cuny.edu; office by appointment

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Gentrification is a hot button issue and has become a buzzword in popular culture. You're likely to know it when you see it and may be affected by it in your everyday life; but, what exactly is gentrification; what causes it, and why is it spreading? If we read beneath the surface of the *consumption* you see - like new luxury condos, artisan cheese shops, yuppies - we enter the sphere of *production* with highly mobile global capital, intercity competition, and unfettered market forces. Gentrification is a manifestation of neoliberal economic and social restructuring that contributes to the reproduction of urban inequalities and the displacement of marginalized and disadvantaged groups

who have a right to the city. It's a process rooted in (often racialized) class transformations, predicated on the commodification of housing, and attributed to the uneven spatial development inherent to advanced capitalism. Although gentrification is a complex and "chaotic" process as well as a contentious political topic, this course is designed to give students who have never heard the term 'gentrification' before a basic understanding of what it is, how it functions, and why we should be concerned about it. Furthermore, students need not already be familiar with concepts from political economy or Marxists perspectives - any terms we come across will be explained in our discussions or in lecture.

Through lectures, readings, class discussion, and four assignments; students will develop a richer understanding of how gentrification is defined, how it operates, and in what ways it has manifested and been resisted in the context of New York City and elsewhere. We will engage in various interrelated concepts such as: housing in its various forms, forms of zoning, rent regulations, and relevant city policies (eg. Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning) to learn how the production and consumption of the built environment, and housing specifically, are part of the larger dynamics of global capital accumulation and prevailing political ideologies.

The purpose of this course is three-fold:

1. to gain a foundational understanding of how gentrification is produced and manifests in urban space;
2. to critically assess the role of gentrification in perpetuating New York's housing crisis and urban inequality; and
3. be able to identify key actors promoting and resisting gentrification

How this course is organized:

This is a 6-week course with both undergraduate and graduate students in which you will develop a mini-case study of a gentrified neighborhood in New York City. Given the brevity of the term, the schedule will be more intense than a normal semester; each week you will be responsible for the following:

- Course readings (note: there will be additional readings for graduate students which are optional for undergraduates)
- Blog post
- Assignment
- Class discussion
- Attending lecture

III. COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

1. Describe how gentrification is understood in the context ongoing theoretical debates
2. Elevate your understanding of gentrification, beyond its hallmark visual indicators (eg. boutique shops, trendy bars), as a process of urban restructuring employed as a tactic of neoliberalism
3. Examine the role of gentrification in contemporary housing issues
4. Become familiar with grassroots anti-gentrification and equitable housing advocates in NYC
5. Improve reading, writing and presentation skills

IV. REQUIRED TEXT

This is an Open Education Resource course, thus there are no required texts to purchase for this course—all readings and lectures will be available on the course website

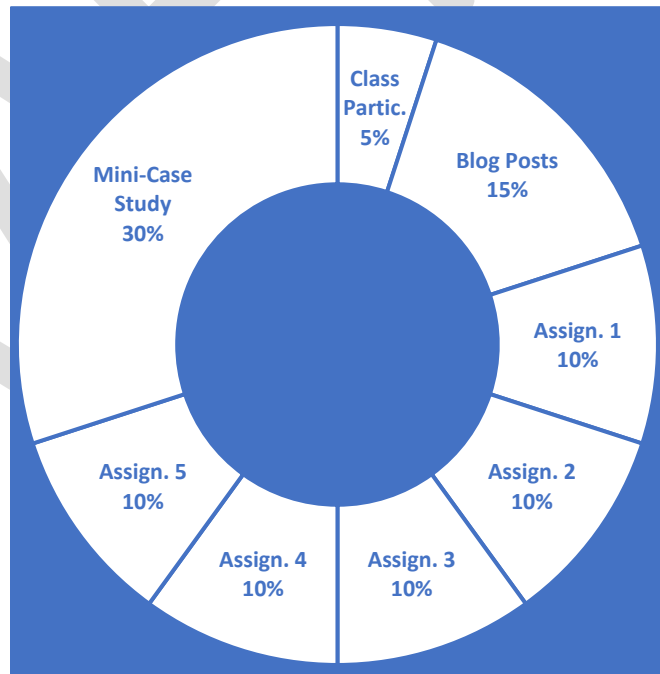
V. GRADING

This course has a total of 100 points you can earn in the following ways:

- Class Participation 10pts
- Blog Posts (3pts ea.) 15pts
- Assignments 1 -5 10pts each
- Mini-Case Study 30pts

Acceptance of late work is up to the discretion of the instructor and may result in points lost.

PLEASE make every effort to stay on top of your assignments—we only have 6-weeks for this course and it will be very difficult to help you get back on track if you fall behind.



VI. ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are due by the date and time listed in the course schedule.

- **Class Participation (10pts)**
 - Each student will be responsible for leading a portion of one of the class discussions. We will assign discussion leads at the start of the term.
 - Students are expected to regularly contribute to weekly discussions even when not leading.
- **Blog Posts (5 @ 3pts each =15 pts)**
 - Each week a different blog post assignment posted to the website's Blog link.

- **Assignment 1: Gentrification in the Media (Due Week 1; 10pts)**

This first assignment is designed as a start to learning about your assigned neighborhood and researching how it's gentrifying. Find 3 articles (*graduate students find 5 articles*) different news/media sources that discuss gentrification in your assigned neighborhood.

- Write 500-800 words (12pt font, double-spaced, sources cited) about of how the articles portray gentrification inclusive of answering the following questions:
 - How is gentrification manifesting in your neighborhood? What are the signs?
 - Is gentrification viewed in a negative or positive light? How is this indicated? Who benefits?
 - Is their resistance to the process, if so by who? What are their concerns?

Be sure to include at least 2 images of the neighborhood and highlight any points of disagreement/different views among the articles (if there are any).

- **Assignment 2: Production of Gentrification (Due Week 2; 10 pts)**

TBD.....

- **Assignment 3: Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning (Due Week 3; 10 pts)**

TBD.....

- **Assignment 4: Displacement Dilemma (Due Week 4; 10 pts)**

TBD.....

- **Assignment 5: Anti-Gentrification Activism (Due Week 5; 10 pts)**

TBD.....

- **Mini-Case Study: Anti-Gentrification Activism (Due May 22 @ 11:59p; 30 pts)**

TBD.....

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VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION DAY [Wed. 7/6]

- Review Syllabus
- Assign case study neighborhoods
- Assign discussion leaders
- Lecture: *Urban Research Methods*

WEEK 1 :: GENTRIFICATION: CLASSIC THEORIES & CRITIQUES

Monday 7/11

→BLOG post 1 DUE @ 12p

- Lecture 1
- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)

Readings

- Lees, L., Slater, T., & Wyly, E. (2007). *Gentrification* (1 edition). New York, NY: Routledge. [Chps. 2 & 3]
- [Additional for grads students]>>Smith, N. (1982). Gentrification and uneven development. *Economic Geography*, 58(2), 139–155.

Wednesday 7/13

→Assignment 1 DUE before class

- Share & Discuss Assignments
- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)

Readings

- Smith, N. (1996). *The new urban frontier: gentrification and the revanchist city*. Psychology Press. [Ch. 1 and 10]

WEEK 2 :: NEOLIBERAL URBAN RESTRUCTURING

Monday 7/18

→BLOG post 2 DUE @ 12p

- Lecture 2
- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)

Readings

- Lees, L., Slater, T., & Wyly, E. (2007). *Gentrification* (1 edition). New York, NY: Routledge. [Chp. 3]
- [Additional for grads students]>>Molotch, H. (1976). The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place. *American Journal of Sociology*, 82(2), 309–332.

Wednesday 7/20

→Assignment 2 DUE before class

- Share Assignments
- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)

Readings

- Harvey, D. (1989). From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: the transformation in urban governance in late capitalism. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 71(1), 3-17.

- Fainstein and Fainstein. (1987). Economic Restructuring and the Politics of Land Use Planning in New York City: Journal of the American Planning Association: Vol 53(2), 237-248.

WEEK 3 :: ZONING & AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Monday 7/25

→BLOG post 2 DUE @ 12p

- Lecture 3
- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)

Readings

- TBD

Wednesday 7/27

→Assignment 3 DUE before class

- Share Assignments
- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)

Readings

- TBD

WEEK 4 :: GENTRIFICATION: DISPLACEMENT & DISPOSESSION

Monday 8/1

→BLOG post 2 DUE @ 12p

- Lecture 4
- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)

Readings

- TBD

Wednesday 8/3

→Assignment 4 DUE before class

- Share Assignments
- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)

Readings

- TBD

WEEK 5 :: GENTRIFICATION: RESISTANCE & STRUGGLE

Monday 8/8

→BLOG post 2 DUE @ 12p

- Lecture 5
- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)

Readings

- TBD

Wednesday 8/10

→Assignment 5 DUE before class

- Share Assignments

- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)
Readings
 - TBD

WEEK 6 :: TBD

Monday 8/15

→BLOG post 2 DUE @ 12p

- Lecture 6
- Class Discussion (Discussion Leads: TBD)
Readings
 - TBD

MINI CASE STUDY DUE MONDAY 8/22 @ 11:59P

Week 4: What Causes Gentrification?: Consumption Theories

- **ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE**
- Lecture 4: Overview of consumption arguments: gender and race
- Discussion Points: 1) discuss/share thoughts on Assignment 1; 2) how do the consumption explanations differ from those of production?; 3) what are the strengths and weaknesses of the consumption theory?
- Discuss Assignment 2

Readings

1. Lees, L., Slater, T., & Wyly, E. (2007). Gentrification (1 edition). New York, NY: Routledge. [Chp. 3]
2. Butler, T., & Robson, G. (2003). Negotiating Their Way In: The Middle Classes, Gentrification and the Deployment of Capital in a Globalising Metropolis. *Urban Studies*, 40(9), 1791–1809.
3. Moore, K. S. (2009). Gentrification in Black face?: The return of the Black middle class to urban neighborhoods. *Urban Geography*, 30(2), 118-142.

Week 5: Critiques of the Debates

- Lecture 5: Overview of key criticism of the production-consumption debates
- Discussion Points: What are the key arguments in the debates, do you think they're justified?

Readings

1. Hamnett, C. (1991). The Blind Men and the Elephant: The Explanation of Gentrification. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 16(2), 173–189.
2. Clark, E. (1992). On blindness, centrepieces and complementarity in gentrification theory. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 17(3), 358-362.
3. Clark, E.. (2005). The order and simplicity of gentrification: a political challenge. *Gentrification in a Global Context: The New Urban Colonialism*, 261–269.
4. Wacquant, L. (2008). Relocating Gentrification: The Working Class, Science and the State in Recent Urban Research. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 32(1), 198–205.

Week 6: Contemporary Gentrification Research

- **ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE**
- Lecture 6: Calls for a “geography of gentrification”
- Discussion Points: 1) discuss/share thoughts on Assignment 2; 2) what is meant by a geography of gentrification and why are some scholars advocating for it?
- Discuss Assignment 3

Readings

1. Lees, L., Slater, T., & Wyly, E. (2007). *Gentrification* (1 edition). New York, NY: Routledge. [Chp. 4]
2. Hackworth, J., & Smith, N. (2001). The changing state of gentrification. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, 92(4), 464–477.
3. Slater, T. (2004). North American gentrification? Revanchist and emancipatory perspectives explored. *Environment and Planning A*, 36(7), 1191-1213.
4. Doucet, B. (2014). A Process of Change and a Changing Process: Introduction to the Special Issue on Contemporary Gentrification. *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, 105(2), 125–139.

**Choose one of the following articles on which to write a brief critique for Assignment 3

- Vigdor, Jacob L., Douglas S. Massey, and Alice M. Rivlin. “Does Gentrification Harm the Poor? [With Comments].” *Brookings-Wharton Papers on Urban Affairs*, 2002, 133–82.
- Byrne, J. P. (2002). Two Cheers for Gentrification Urban Poverty & Gentrification: An Exchange. *Howard Law Journal*, 46, 405–432.
- Duany, A. (2001) Three cheers for gentrification. *American Enterprise Magazine* April/May, 36–9.

Week 7: NYC's Affordable Housing Crisis

- Lecture 7: The decline of affordable housing in NYC
- Discussion Points: 1) what are the goals of DeBlasio's Ten-Year plan, is it a good plan? Why or why not?, 2) what are the forms of housing available in NYC and the organizations involved in the production of housing, 3) how does zoning influence housing production?

Readings

1. De Blasio, Bill. Housing New York [Executive Summary, pp. 5-12, Introduction, pp. 15-27.]
2. De Blasio, Bill. Housing New York: A Five Borough, Ten-Year Plan, Marcuse, Peter. Housing Policy and the Myth of the Benevolent State. In Bratt, Hartman and Meyerson. Critical Perspectives on Housing. Temple University Press. Pp. xx-263.
3. Angotti, T., & Morse, S. (Eds.). (2016). Zoned Out!: Race, Displacement, and City Planning in New York City. Terreform, Incorporated. [Preface, Intro., Ch. 1]
4. Stein, S. (2017). Progress for whom, toward what? Progressive politics and New York City's Mandatory Inclusionary Housing. Journal of Urban Affairs, 1–12

Week 8: Institutional Racism and Housing Exclusion: Conditions for Gentrification

- **PAPER TOPIC DUE**
- Lecture 8: Producing inequality through exclusionary housing
- Discussion Points: 1) how has the history of housing policy and practices created racial segregation in the US housing market.?, 2) how is zoning used as a tool to exploit minorities?, 3) describe how the Bronx's position after the fiscal crisis may have contributed to its current gentrification.

Readings

1. Angotti, T., & Morse, S. (Eds.). (2016). Zoned Out!: Race, Displacement, and City Planning in New York City. Terreform, Incorporated. [Ch. 2]
2. Somerville, Peter. (1998). Explanations of Social Exclusion: Where Does Housing Fit In?. Housing Studies, Vol. 13, No. 6, pp. 761-780.
3. Chronopoulos, T. (2017). The Rebuilding of the South Bronx after the Fiscal Crisis. Journal of Urban History, 43(6), 932–959.

Week 9: Positive Gentrification and the Neoliberal "Solution" Poverty

- **ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE**
- Discussion Points: 1) discuss/share Assignment 3; 2) how did social mix come to be a policy?; 3) does social mixing work, what are its pros and cons?

Readings

1. Bridge, G., Butler, T., & Lees, L. (Eds.). (2012). *Mixed communities: Gentrification by stealth?*. Policy Press. [Ch. 1 and 16]
2. Chaskin, R. J., & Joseph, M. L. (2013). "Positive" Gentrification, Social Control and the "Right to the City" in Mixed-Income Communities: Uses and Expectations of Space and Place. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37(2), 480–502.
3. Davidson, M. (2008). Spoiled Mixture: Where Does State-led 'Positive' Gentrification End? *Urban Studies*, 45(12), 2385–2405.

Week 10: Gentrification: Case Studies in NYC

- Discussion Points: 1) what are some of the different methods for examining gentrification, what are their limits? 2) how specifically do the theories we've studied support the cases in NYC?; 3) describe the different ways gentrification manifest within NYC; 4) what are some of the key trends indicated in the Furman Center Report?

Readings

1. Schaffer, R., & Smith, N. (1986). The Gentrification of Harlem? *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 76(3), 347–365.
2. Newman, K., & Wyly, E. K. (2006). The right to stay put, revisited: gentrification and resistance to displacement in New York City. *Urban Studies*, 43(1), 23–57.
3. The State of NYC's Housing and Neighborhoods 2015, NYU Furman Center Report [Parts 1 and 2, look at your neighborhood or pick one from Part 3]

Week 11: Displacement

- **DRAFT OUTLINE OF PAPER DUE**
- Lecture 11: Forms of gentrification-induced displacement
- Discussion Points: 1) what are some strengths and weaknesses of Freeman's argument?; 2) what are the different ways displacement manifests?; 3) why is there still disagreement on the connection between displacement and gentrification?

Readings

1. Freeman, L., & Braconi, F. (2004). Gentrification and displacement New York City in the 1990s. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 70(1), 39–52.
2. Atkinson R. (2015). Losing one's place: Narratives of neighbourhood change, market injustice and symbolic displacement. *Housing, Theory and Society*, 32(4), 373–388.
3. Wyly, E., Newman, K., Schafran, A., & Lee, E. (2010). Displacing New York. *Environment and Planning A*, 42(11), 2602–2623.

Week 12: Resistance and Gentrification

- Lecture 12: Anti-Gentrification movements in NYC and radical housing alternatives
- Discussion Points: 1) describe the different tactics undertaken by resident to fight gentrification; 2) how do gender and race intersect with oppositions to gentrification?

Readings

1. Lewis, Stone, Clark and Pearlstein. New Strategies for Housing Rights. Progressive Planning, Winter 2010, No. 182, pp. 18-32.
2. Boyd, M. (2008). Defensive Development: The Role of Racial Conflict in Gentrification. Urban Affairs Review, 43(6), 751–776.
3. Robinson, Tony. “Gentrification and Grassroots Resistance in San Francisco’s Tenderloin.” Urban Affairs Quarterly 30, no. 4 (March 1, 1995): 483–513.
4. Muniz, V. (1998). Resisting Gentrification and Displacement: Voices of Puerto Rican Women of the Barrio. Garland Publishing, Inc. [Ch. 2]

Week 13: Work Day

- Work Day: meet about papers

Week 14: Presentation of Final Papers

- Each student gives a 5-minute presentation of their final paper

Week 15: Presentation of Final Papers

- Each student gives a 5-minute presentation of their final paper

****ASSIGNMENT 4 DUE dd/mm by 5pm****

VI. FIELDWORK REQUIREMENTS

As part of your research for your final paper it might behoove you to contact an organization/institution or local residents and have an interview to inform your specific paper topic. While interviews are not required they are strongly encouraged.

VII. CUNY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Policy on Academic Integrity, as adopted by the Board is available to all candidates. Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. This policy and others related to candidates’ issues are available to you at:

<http://www.qc.cuny.edu/StudentLife/Documents/AcademicIntegrityPolicywithoutmemo.pdf>

VIII. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

Candidates with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: 1) register with and provide documentation to the Special Services Office, Frese Hall, Room 111; 2) bring a letter to me indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to Queens College candidates, contact: Special Service Office; Director, Miriam Detres-Hickey, Frese Hall, Room 111; 718-997-5870 (Monday – Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. & Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

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