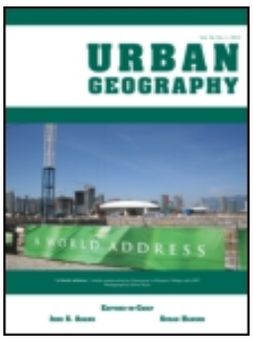

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GENTRIFICATION IN BLACK FACE?: THE RETURN OF THE BLACK MIDDLE CLASS TO URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS[1]

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Abstract: This article explores the historical, economic, and social factors that shape the recent migration of middle-class Blacks to low-income, urban, Black neighborhoods. It focuses on the meanings associated with this pattern of Black gentrification and the extent to which this residential pattern is consistent with previous models of urban gentrification. Using three years of ethnographic data from a low-income neighborhood in Philadelphia that has experienced an increase in Black middle-class residents, I conclude that this pattern of neighborhood change is distinct from previous models of urban gentrification. In this article, I argue that Black gentrification represents a unique set of opportunities and constraints that produce a group of middle-class African Americans willing to invest their social, economic, and cultural capital into improving the quality of life for low-income Black neighborhoods and their residents. [Key words: gentrification, Black middle class, urban neighborhoods, Philadelphia.]

Gentrification is commonly used to describe a class-based process of neighborhood transition in which affluent residents move into and upgrade lower-income neighborhoods, primarily through improvements in a neighborhood's housing stock (Buzar et al., 2007). This process of neighborhood change is often associated with heightened class conflict and the displacement of low-income residents (Betancur, 2002; Wilson et al., 2004). Furthermore, gentrification often has a racial component wherein the gentrifying residents are White and the lower-income residents are racial and/or ethnic minorities. Nonetheless, more recent studies have documented patterns of affluent Blacks moving into low-income urban neighborhoods (Taylor, 2002; Jackson, 2003; Moore, 2005; Hyra, 2006; Freeman, 2006; Pattillo, 2007). Is it appropriate to refer to this pattern of neighborhood change as Black gentrification? And if so, how does Black gentrification differ from previous models of gentrification?

The answers to the above questions depend on whether Black gentrification simply refers to the race of the gentrifiers, or if it suggests another model of gentrification shaped by the particular social, historical, and structural conditions faced by African Americans. My research reveals that race and ethnicity shape the processes of gentrification in more complex ways than relegating minorities to the dichotomous roles of victims of gentrification or emulators of White gentrifiers. In this article, I argue that Black gentrification is

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a distinctive process of urban transformation driven by patterns of racial and class stratification. *Black gentrification* is a product of the continued racial exclusion of African Americans and reflects a specific social justice agenda that challenges this system of racial and class stratification. Thus Black gentrification is not driven by the same factors and does not produce the same outcomes as the processes of gentrification observed among White gentrifiers.

Patricia Hill Collins (1991) asserts that the patterns of racial, gender, and class inequality, which pervade the entire social structure, completely masks the reality of Black women's lives and ideology. Yet the contours of this system of social stratification and the dynamics of inequality become more visible if we place Black women at the center of our focus and analysis. The theoretical and empirical research supporting Black feminist thought (Stephens and Phillips, 2005; White, 2006) challenges scholars to consider how our theoretical understanding of gentrification might broaden if we took race from the margins to the center of our analysis. I suggest that instead of framing gentrification as solely a class-driven concept, enacted by people of various races and ethnicities, we need to explore how race and class interact. Moreover, we need to understand how minority gentrifiers may be working with a different set of assumptions from White gentrifiers based on the particular circumstances of their race and class.

As the racial and ethnic composition of U.S. cities become more varied and complex (e.g., rising class and national-background differentiation within Latino and Asian immigrant communities; Massey, 1996), the importance of race and ethnicity in structuring patterns of urban gentrification are becoming more prominent. In this study, I review contemporary theoretical and empirical models of gentrification and discuss the ways in which the phenomenon of Black gentrification can enhance these models. I use census data to quantitatively describe changes in a neighborhood that qualify it as a gentrifying community. I also employ ethnographic data to describe the meanings, experiences, and outcomes associated with this increase of Black middle-class residents. These ethnographic data were collected for the 1997–2000 period for a low-income neighborhood in Philadelphia experiencing Black gentrification. Accordingly, I expand Van Criekingen and Decroly's (2003) model of urban neighborhood change in order to identify the similarities and differences between Black gentrification and previously documented forms of urban gentrification.

PATTERNS OF GENTRIFICATION

In this section, I review three major patterns of gentrification to provide both an overview of the variety of forms of urban gentrification and a framework for analyzing Black gentrification. The patterns of gentrification discussed below differ according to the resources of gentrifiers, population changes in a neighborhood, the process of improvement in the built environment, and community-level outcomes.

The first form of gentrification to emerge in the literature is known as *yuppification*: the process whereby a previously marginalized urban neighborhood experiences an influx of high-income and high-status residents and businesses (Van Criekingen and Decroly, 2003). These gentrifiers tend to be business service professionals, often without children, who are attracted to reside in the central city because of cultural amenities and have large amounts of discretionary income to spend on renovating their homes in ways that signify

"urban chic." In the yuppification model, new upper-middle-class residents and shops displace those already in the community (Brown and Wyly, 2000). Yuppification is most widely documented in cities with a concentration of global corporate and high-end financial services activities (e.g., New York, London), while alternative patterns prevail in cities with less of a yuppified economy (Van Criekingen and Decroly, 2003).

The second model, *marginal gentrification*, refers to middle-class households who are "richer in cultural capital than in economic capital" (Van Criekingen and Decroly, 2003, p. 2454). The transititory family and occupational positions of marginal gentrifiers produce a pattern of neighborhood change distinct from yuppification (Van Criekingen and Decroly, 2003). In Bridge's (2003) analysis, marginal gentrifiers represented a "constrained form of gentrification," because the limited schooling options for their children in the gentrified neighborhood forced them to either leave the neighborhood for more established middle-class communities or risk their ability to reproduce their class status among their children. Although highly educated, these students and young professionals do not have the economic resources or job stability of yuppies. As they settle into permanent and high-paying jobs and establish families (i.e., marry and have children), they often leave the neighborhood and are replaced by others like them (Smith and Holt, 2007). Although the marginal-gentrified communities experience a high degree of residential turnover, it is mostly the replacement of their middle-class population.

The final pattern of gentrification, *thirdwave gentrification*, emerged after the recession of the early 1990s, and differs both in magnitude and form from the earlier patterns. Thirdwave gentrification is usually initiated by corporate developers collaborating with government agencies, and the transformation of the neighborhood is more rapid and complete (Hackworth, 2002; Lees, 2003); these include both existing gentrified neighborhoods and neighborhoods that were once thought of as "too risky" for gentrification within the pool of potentially gentrifiable communities (Hackworth, 2002). Although both economic and cultural capital are essential for gentrification, the thirdwave gentrifiers are much more likely to use their economic capital to buy into fully gentrified neighborhoods rather than become involved in the process of creating gentrified neighborhoods through individual investments of economic and cultural capital (Hackworth, 2002).

It is important to note that the dynamics through which cultural capital operates in gentrification is undertheorized. College education Often is used as a proxy for cultural capital, but the comparison is usually between White college-educated gentrifiers without money (marginal gentrification) and college-educated White gentrifiers with money (yuppification and thirdwave gentrification). Such research underestimates the way in which race (i.e., whiteness) is implicated in our understanding of cultural capital. The following analysis of Black gentrification will identify some of the ways in which race works to signify cultural capital.

RACE AND GENTRIFICATION

In this article, I do not question the centrality of class-based processes across multiple manifestations of gentrification. Instead, I focus on the lack of attention to race in creating particular localized versions of gentrification and suggest further analysis of how race and class interact. The influence of race has been under-theorized in the gentrification

literature, and that gap becomes more glaring in our attempt to understand the dynamics associated with Black gentrification. Below I review the few studies that have explicitly explored the role of the Black middle-class in the process of gentrification in order to add complexity to our understanding of the role of race.

Bostic and Martin's (2003) research is the first longitudinal study of gentrification in U.S. cities that explicitly investigates the role of middle-class Black homeowners in the process. They found that Black middle-class residents were significantly involved in gentrification during the 1970s but not in the 1980s. These authors suggested that race-based housing restrictions may have limited the choices of the Black middle-class in the 1970s to gentrifiable neighborhoods,[3] and that the strengthening of fair housing practices may have substantially expanded the housing choices of the Black middle class by the 1980s.

Wyly and Hammel's (2004) study of post-2000 patterns of gentrification reveals that gentrification intensifies the racial and class exclusivity of gentrified neighborhoods. They further document a decrease in overall discrimination in lending to potential Black homeowners, but an increase in the exclusion of Black homeowners from gentrifying neighborhoods. In 1993, residence in a gentrified area made no difference for Black residents in their ability to obtain mortgage financing, but by 2000 Black applicants were 1.25 times more likely to be denied a mortgage if their home was in a gentrified neighborhood. Compared to identically qualified White applicants, Black applicants for mortgages in gentrified areas were 2.33 times more likely to be denied. This pattern of exclusion from gentrified neighborhoods is consistent for other minorities as well and is more frequent in Eastern and Southern cities.

Thus gentrification may intensify racial and class segregation for middle-class racial and ethnic minorities. The whitening of a neighborhood may be used by lenders and real estate professionals to promote capital accumulation. Therefore, lenders may be less likely to lend to middle-class Blacks in such areas because they detract from the racial exclusivity and may limit the willingness of other Whites to invest in the community (Farley et al., 1997; Charles, 2006). The continued presence of a racially stratified housing market (Massey and Fischer, 1999) suggests that Black middle-class gentrifiers may be responding to a different set of opportunities and constraints. Black gentrification emerged between 1990 and 2000, a decade during which racial and class exclusion intensified in gentrified neighborhoods.

Although Black gentrification has yet to be studied quantitatively, several qualitative studies document the emergence of this new pattern in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia (Boyd, 2000; Taylor, 2002; Jackson, 2003; Moore, 2005; Freeman, 2006; Hyra, 2006; Pattillo, 2007). These scholars all found race to be a significant variable in shaping the dynamics of Black gentrification in three ways: (1) motivations for moving into the neighborhood; (2) exclusion from other neighborhoods; and (3) ongoing interactions with residents in a community (Moore, 2005; Freeman, 2006; Hyra, 2006; Pattillo, 2007). Each of these studies revealed Black gentrifiers confronting and responding to structural conditions different from those encountered by Whites. Taken as a whole, this research on Black gentrification suggests that Black gentrifiers demonstrate more

[3]The authors defined gentrifiable areas as census tracts in which the median income is less than 50% of the median income for the MSA.

nuanced "constrained agency" than implied by the victim/oppressor binary presented in previous research. This study seeks to systematize the comparison of Black and White patterns of gentrification in order to reveal the role of race in structuring gentrification more generally.

METHODOLOGY

This study is an attempt to learn about Black gentrification and to determine whether and how it differs from other gentrification patterns. I focus on the neighborhood of Brickton[4] as a site of Black gentrification because it has experienced a substantial increase in housing sales volume and sales price as well as an increase in the proportion of middle-class homeowners within the neighborhood. Despite the fact that it meets accepted criteria for gentrification, Brickton is overlooked in other research on gentrification in Philadelphia (Wyly and Hammel, 2004). Such oversight reflects an important gap in our understanding of race and gentrification. In studying Brickton, I am not simply focusing on Black gentrifiers but on Black gentrifiers impacting a Black neighborhood who make claims that differ from those of White gentrifiers concerning their reasons for choosing Brickton.

Site Selection

Brickton has experienced a dramatic increase in sales volume and prices indicative of a community in the early phase of gentrification. In 2006, the housing sales price in Brickton increased more than four times above the sales price of 2002. This rate of increase far surpasses that of the city average (0.35) and even that of the most rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods in previous studies (2.67).Tables 1 and 2 compare Brickton to the gentrified neighborhoods identified by Wyly and Hammel (2004); their study included both core and fringe (marginal) gentrification, so the range of variation among these gentrified neighborhoods is fairly large. Table 1 presents the high, median, and low values in these gentrified neighborhoods for each variable in the table.

As seen in Table 1, Brickton has experienced dramatic growth in housing sales and price increases—much higher than in any of the other gentrifying neighborhoods. In 2006, the number of housing sales in Brickton increased more than three times over the number of sales in 2002. Brickton's rate of increase in housing sales (3.04) is higher than the highest gentrifying neighborhood (1.82). The rate of increase in the sales price of housing also increased in Brickton (4.25) at a pace almost double that of the highest rate of the other gentrifying neighborhoods (2.67). Although the median housing sales price for Brickton in 2006 ($52,500) was well below the average for the city ($130,000) and all

[4]Following the sociological tradition of community ethnographies, I chosen to use a pseudonym for the neighborhood in order to protect the confidentiality of the institutions and individuals who participated in this study. Likewise, the streets, community institutions, and residents are all referred to with pseudonyms. I recognize that this study is very much about "place" and therefore the identity of the neighborhood is valuable for informing the processes discussed in this research. I have tried as much as possible to provide data about the neighborhood context and its relationship to city without compromising the identity of my respondents.

TABLE 1. COMPARISON OF CHANGE IN VOLUME OF SALES AND HOUSING SALES PRICE AMONG PHILADELPHIA NEIGHBORHOODS EXPERIENCING GENTRIFICATION[a]

	Rate of change in sales volume	Beginning and ending sales volume[b]	Rate of change in housing sales price	Beginning and ending housing sales price*
Brickton	3.04	(23–93)	4.25	($10,000–$52,500)
Core and fringe gentrified neighborhoods				
High	1.82	(11–31)	2.67	($75,000–$275,050)
Median	–0.09	(58–53)	0.85	($302,500–$560,000)
Low	–0.83	(6–1)	0.15	($260,000–$299,900)
Philadelphia average	0.18	(69–82)	0.35	($85,363–$130,835)

[a]The numbers in this table represent the high, low, and median values for each variable.
[b]Data collected between 2002 and 2006 as reported in the Philadelphia Neighborhood Information System (NIS) neighborhood Base.

the other gentrified neighborhoods,[5] the rate of change has been exceptional. Moreover, the relatively low housing sales price in Brickton may reflect the efforts of community-based housing developers to promote homeownership among Brickton's current residents by keeping housing prices affordable.

Table 2 compares the race and class demographic characteristics of Brickton to other gentrifying neighborhoods and the city as a whole. Apart from the striking lack of middle-class White residents and the high proportion of Black residents, Brickton falls within the range of other gentrifying neighborhoods in Philadelphia. Although Brickton's proportion of residents below the poverty line (39%) is higher than the city average (23%) and its median household income ($14,826) is lower than the city average ($31,273), the poverty rate among gentrifying neighborhoods in Philadelphia varies from 6% to 47% and median income varies from $13,792 to $87,027. Brickton is also similar to other gentrifying neighborhoods in its percentage of owner-occupied residential units.

What distinguishes Brickton most clearly from the other gentrifying neighborhoods is its low presence of middle-class White residents and the fact that it remains a predominantly Black neighborhood. Most of the gentrifying neighborhoods in Philadelphia are gentrified by middle-class Whites. The median proportion of Whites within all the other gentrifying neighborhoods is 81%. Even those neighborhoods that are on the low end of the continuum in terms of percent of White residents are not as heavily Black as Brickton. As of the 2000 census, Brickton was 92 % Black, well above the citywide average (44%) and the highest Black gentrified neighborhood (58%). Moreover, the 2000 census data for Brickton did not document the presence of middle-class Whites. This stands in sharp

[5]Only one of the other gentrified neighborhoods is below the city average for 2006 with a median sales price of $90,000.

TABLE 2. COMPARISON OF BRICKTON TO OTHER GENTRIFYING NEIGHBORHOODS IN PHILADELPHIA AND THE CITY AVERAGE BASED ON 2000 CENSUS DATA

	Racial composition		White middle class		Black middle class		Class integration		Housing characteristics	
	% White	% Black	% White with BA	% White income >$50K	% Black with a BA	% Black income >$50K	% poverty	Median income	% vacancy	% owner occupancy
Brickton	7	92	0	0	11	17	39	$14,826	31	26
Core and fringe gentrified neighborhoods										
High	95	58	80	79	85	100	47	$87,027	0	1
Median	81	12	64	46	22	15	18	$41,000	9	30
Low	28	4	48	7	12	0	6	$13,792	29	73
Philadelphia average	46	44	15	36	7	23	23	$31,273	11	53

contrast to the city's other gentrifying neighborhoods, where the presence of White residents with a college degree ranges between 48 and 80%.

It is also important to note that the Black middle class is present within all the gentrifying neighborhoods. In some of the more exclusive gentrifying neighborhoods, the Black middle-class comprises virtually the entire Black population in that neighborhood—as is the case in the communities where 85% of the Black residents possess a college degree or 100% of the Black residents exhibit household incomes over $50,000. Brickton stands in contrast to these class-exclusive, somewhat racially integrated, gentrified neighborhoods by constituting a community that is a racially homogeneous Black neighborhood with class integration. The proportion of Black middle-class residents in Brickton is similar to the average for the city. Brickton has a slightly higher proportion of African Americans with a college degree (11%) than the citywide average and a slightly lower proportion of African American households with incomes above $50,000 (17%) than the city as a whole (23%). Although Brickton's proportion of Black middle-class residents falls within the median to low range among the other gentrified neighborhoods, Brickton contains a much higher percentage of Black residents than those neighborhoods. Thus Brickton displays a more intense form of Black cross-class integration.

Much of the increase in housing value can be attributed to Brickton's community development initiatives. These initiatives focus primarily on housing development, specifically rehabilitating and constructing mixed-income housing. The large brownstone homes within the neighborhood have been rehabilitated by the local community development corporation and marketed to the Black middle-class. In addition, there was a mixed-income housing project sponsored by a local church, a number of low-income houses developed by Habitat for Humanity, and a massive demolition and rebuilding of a local public housing development. All of these housing initiatives occurred during my three years of field work (1997–2000). These projects combined private and public support with a number of federal housing programs, including HOPE VI, Community Development Block Grant, and the Low Income Tax Credit. In addition to housing development, there also were efforts to improve the local business district, support community entrepreneurs, and beautify the neighborhood, as well as a number of youth arts and cultural programs. The explicit aims of all these community development activities were to change the physical *and* social composition of the neighborhood.

Gentrification in Philadelphia

The selection of Philadelphia and Brickton is critical because of the centrality of race in this study. Philadelphia has a long history of Black settlement and a sizeable Black middle-class population. It is also a city that continues to go through a postindustrial decline (Adams et al., 1991). Philadelphia exhibits common features with other postindustrial central cities likely to experience gentrification: for example, a bifurcated service economy, decreasing political and economic dominance of the city relative to the rest of the metropolitan area, an increasing proportion of lower-income residents and racial minorities, and overtaxing of limited municipal resources. Although most of the gentrification literature focuses on global cities (Abu-Lughod, 1994), this study provides an opportunity to observe gentrification in a far less globalized U.S. city. Thus the scale of gentrification in Philadelphia may provide more a more relevant and representative

TABLE 3. DEMOGRAPHICS OF INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS

	Middle class	Working class	Low-income
Male	5	2	2
Female	15	4	11

example of the process than is found in other second-tier cities (Hodos, 2007). In Wyly and Hammel's (2004) study of post-2000 urban gentrification, Philadelphia ranked seventh among the 23 highest gentrifying cities.[6] When comparing only established gentrified core neighborhoods, Philadelphia ranked fourth among these cities in terms of prevalence of gentrification (Wyly and Hammel, 2004). Although the number of gentrified core neighborhoods in Philadelphia lags well behind those of such global cities as New York and Chicago, gentrification in Philadelphia is well established and at a scale consistent with many other U.S. cities, including Washington, DC, Dallas, Atlanta, and Seattle (Wyly and Hammel, 2004).

The degree of racial segregation is another important contextual factor for this ethnographic study of Black gentrification in Philadelphia. The city has been described as one of the nation's most hypersegregated for African Americans (Metropolitan Racial and Ethnic Change, 2007). Black–White segregation in Philadelphia[7] stood at 76.8% in 2000, and ranged from 78% for poor Black residents to 81.2% for affluent Black residents (Metropolitan Racial and Ethnic Change, 2007). Thus, affluent Blacks in Philadelphia, as well as in many other U.S. cities, live in highly segregated communities. In addition to this general trend of hyper-segregation in the city, middle-class Black residents are more likely to be excluded from gentrifying neighborhoods (Wyly and Hammel, 2004). In fact, the rate of Black exclusion in gentrifying areas in Philadelphia (2.58) is higher than the national average (2.32; Wyly and Hammel, 2004). Thus, middle-class African Americans in Philadelphia operate in an even more restricted housing market that works to exclude them from participating in the more traditional forms of urban gentrification.

Field Work

Because I am interested in a process that has been overlooked by quantitative studies, this analysis draws upon three years of ethnographic data for Brickton. My analysis is informed by my role as a participant–observer in this community as well as my formal interviews with residents and community-based organizations. I interviewed middle-class residents, low-income residents, and representatives of various community institutions in the neighborhood (see Table 3).

As an ethnographer, I attempted to integrate myself as fully as possible into the life of the community by living in the neighborhood, volunteering with a number of local

[6]The ranking of cities excluded New York.
[7]This percentage includes data for both Philadelphia, PA, and its inner satellite city of Camden, NJ.

community organizations, attending worship services at local churches, and attending community festivals and events. This allowed me numerous opportunities to collect data as an "active" participant–observer (Adler and Adler, 1994). At times my role centered more on "observing" social life within the community, such as my attendance at Sunday religious services. At other times my role in the community was more "participatory," such as my involvement as a neighborhood resident and volunteer for a local community arts organization, and in recruiting neighbors to attend an antiviolence community forum. The participant–observation aspect of the ethnography is a critical component to "understanding the social meaning for those being studied" (Neuman, 2000, p. 358). Each of the activities I participated in provided me with a unique perspective on the make-up of Brickton as well as an opportunity to discuss my interest in the changing nature of the community with a diverse selection of residents and neighborhood stakeholders.

The strength of community studies rest on their ability to present a more holistic perspective on social phenomena and life in the neighborhood. My fieldwork evolved over three years and provided me with opportunities to interact with a variety of stakeholders and to adopt a variety of roles in the community from which to observe social dynamics. The community institutions I worked most closely with were two neighborhood churches, the local community development corporation, two other nonprofit housing agencies, and two cultural arts organizations. I selected each of these organizations because of their leadership role in promoting community development in the neighborhood. I used my involvement as an attendee and volunteer in these agencies to meet residents and have conversations with organization staffers and volunteers about life in the community. I informed people that I was generally interested in understanding what could be done to help rebuild low-income neighborhoods like this. Most of the respondents were more than happy to "teach" me the value of their initiatives and what else needed to be done. At times throughout the study, I was viewed by them as a student–researcher, volunteer, potential convert (i.e., a potential Black middle-class recruit for the Black American Dream), and neighbor. These relationships with neighborhood residents and institutions enabled me to learn the perspectives of multiple stakeholders in the community's development and enhanced the validity of the study.

The individuals who participated in the interviews were primarily involved in the neighborhood's redevelopment activities, including representatives of the community-based organizations and new middle-class residents. These interviews ranged from 90 minutes to 3 hours, and the data were collected in two sittings, from 1997–2000. The gender and class composition of the interview respondents are listed in Table 3. All of the interviews were conducted in the homes of respondents. The entire interview was tape recorded, fully transcribed, and coded using Nvivo software. The interviews and participant observation fieldnotes were coded using an open coding strategy (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), which allowed me to be sensitive to themes that emerged from the data rather than force the data to fit preconceived theoretical constructs. I started with line-by-line coding of my data using descriptive labels to summarize important themes (e.g., perceptions of the community persons/organizations involved in neighborhood development, reasons for residence in the neighborhood). I then organized the data into analytic domains that revealed respondents' cultural meaning systems associated with class and neighborhood change. The analytic domains represent a coding scheme that is more focused on analysis of the data than description. Some of the analytic domains that

emerged were: a typology of residents' class identities, the Black American Dream, and a master list of codes that related to the middle-class residents' motivations for entering the community. Following the grounded-theory approach, I shared my preliminary analysis with respondents as both a way of hypothesis testing and gathering additional data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

FINDINGS

Motivating Factors for Black Gentrification: Racial Segregation as Form of Oppression and Empowerment

I use a concept that I the Black American Dream to summarize the list of motivations, activities, and constraints from which Black gentrification emerges. My conversations with the middle-class residents in Brickton revealed their interest in building "something good" out of the historic and contemporary race-based discrimination in employment and residence experienced by Black families and communities. This something good reflects the differentials in goals and levels of success achievable in aspiring communities. Of all the middle-class residents I interviewed (20), 90% (18 respondents) expressed a desire to "give back" or "help our people" as a motivating factor in their decision to move to Brickton.

Community activists in Brickton frequently refer to the class-integrated neighborhoods produced by forced segregation as a model for their goals of neighborhood development. Pastor Simmons himself is a middle-class resident of the community. He moved to the neighborhood 20 years ago from an urban Black community in the South. Pastor Simmons has played an integral role in the community development process, including the building of both low-income and moderate-income housing in the neighborhood through his church. Here is his description of the model community that informs the neighborhood development work he is doing.

> I mean we were much better off in segregated communities than we are right now because in our town. You know when you go to Atlanta in Auburn Street, you know you see at the end of that street where Martin Luther King and the other well to do people lived on one side of the street. On the other side of the street you had a shotgun house, right across the street.… And on the other end of the street was doctors. But the community was together. And then there was a striving business district right in the community. And the role models were there. Well we need to kinda recapture that, recreate that.

Thus the collective and individual experience of residential segregation by race created mixed-income communities that are venerated within the imagination of Brickton activists and serve as a model for other Black communities.

Paulette, a middle-class resident of Brickton, explains her dream for this community:

> I feel that those are people who have invested time into this whole concept of community involvement and people understanding that everybody don't have to run away. You can have something good right here.

According to Paulette, the dream is to "have something good right here." Here she refutes the integrationist ideology that implies African Americans need to follow the residential patterns of their White peers in order to live in a "good" community. Both these quotes reveal disappointment with liberal promises of racial integration and suggest that the pursuit of such integration has in some way undermined the economic, political, and cultural strength of the Black community.

As I sit in the living room with Mike, a 36-year-old school administrator, I learned more about the power of the legacy of racial uplift in drawing "everyday" Black middle-class residents to Brickton. He lives in Brickton with his 30-year-old wife Brenda, who works as an elementary school teacher in a private school, and their 8-year-old daughter Stacia. Although Mike has served on the board of Brickton CDC, before moving into the neighborhood he did not have experience in housing or community activism. In fact, he only joined the board of Brickton CDC out of gratitude for the work they did in building his town home and to help support their mission. Mike, a middle-class resident, explains how and why he decided to move to Brickton:

> I learned from a co-worker that the neighborhood was being depleted of professional people and there was fear that the university would take over the housing stock. The residents were against this and development because they feared that our people would be taken out. I liked the idea of moving into a new house and helping to bring the neighborhood up.

Like many of the middle-class residents I interviewed in Brickton, Mike was recruited to this neighborhood by other middle-class residents. These recruiters successfully draw upon the patterns of racial discrimination in residential neighborhoods and the ethos of racial uplift to attract Black middle-class residents to Brickton. Although Mike does not describe himself as an "activist," his recruiters framed the discussion of Brickton in a manner that resonated with his historical, cultural, and political orientation. Mike's decision to move into the neighborhood provided an opportunity for him to demonstrate racial solidarity and work toward racial advancement. Many residents discussed choosing Brickton because they would have low-income Black neighbors and they saw it as a way of "giving back."

Tanya, another resident, describes the apparent discrepancy between her class status and that of her neighborhood:

> I live in a lower-class situation [neighborhood]. My income would be considered lower, middle income—but I don't show it. That's why, you know, physically I live in a lower-class environment. Financially, I make a very good salary and I don't drive new cars or buy new clothes and all that stuff. Mentally, I can be either lower-class, middle-, or upper-class.

Tanya's quote suggests two reasons why Brickton was attractive to her: its affordability and its affirmation of her image of herself as "classless." Tanya is a 30-year-old midlevel sales manager who prides herself on her "financial wisdom." She recognizes that she can afford a more expensive community, but her choice of Brickton like her choice of cars and clothes reflects her commitment not to "waste money" on the conspicuous consumption patterns associated with a middle-class lifestyle. However, Tanya does

spend a great deal of her discretionary income on (domestic and international) travel. Financially and symbolically, residence in Brickton enables Tanya to affirm her image of herself as a financially savvy world traveler who is still "down to earth." More than half of the middle-class residents I interviewed made statements such as Tanya's that affirmed their image of themselves as inhabiting multiple-class locations or being "classless." Thus I coined the term "multiclass" to describe their class identity. Tanya and the other multiclass residents interviewed saw their choice of neighborhood as an opportunity to affirm their multiclass status.[8] The multiclass identity observed among Black middle-class gentrifiers in Brickton helped to recruit participants in the community development of the neighborhood and reinforced its vision as a mixed-income community.

Both the commitment to racial uplift and the process of constructing this distinctive Black middle-class identity require a Black community that is diverse economically. Accordingly, most of the middle-class residents of Brickton are committed to maintaining a class-integrated neighborhood. The middle- and working-class residents who participate in the neighborhood's community development organizations are sensitive to this issue and intentionally work to limit the displacement of their low-income neighbors. The legacy of racial discrimination, commitment to racial uplift, and Black middle-class identity formation all help to shape the unique contours of Black gentrification.

Neighborhood Transformations: Promoting Development, Preventing Displacement

Ebenezer Housing Development Corporation describes itself as "a minority-controlled, professionally staffed institution" which builds houses, manages affordable rental apartments, starts businesses to create jobs, and provides human services. Since its founding in the mid-1980s, Ebenezer Housing has developed 250 new and rehabilitated houses in the neighborhood; in addition, the organization has developed 145 low-income rental units. The Brickton Community Development Corporation (CDC) also originated from the religious institutions of the community, emerging from the activities of a church-sponsored parents group in the neighborhood that was concerned about the safety of their children and the quality of education in Philadelphia's public schools. The fact that one of their members was having difficulty finding an affordable place to live sparked the group's interest in affordable housing. The following year, Brickton CDC was formed to "rehabilitate houses in the area." This was one of the first CDCs formed in Philadelphia and has now been in operation for over 40 years. During that time, Brickton CDC has built fifteen new homes for families on welfare, rehabbed 40 Victorian town homes, built 40 new construction homes, developed 25 apartments for formerly homeless individuals and families, and developed 40 new rental units. Brickton may be more successful at limiting the displacement of low-income residents because its development is managed by a few local housing development corporations with strong community management.

The following excerpt from my interview with Pastor Simmons shows the degree of concern and planning to limit displacement of low-income residents. Rev. Simmons is the

[8]The notion of multiclass identity and its relationship to neighborhood development is discussed further in Moore (2005).

pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church and the president of Ebenezer Housing Development Corporation. He maintains that the next step is to build luxury condominiums to help attract upper-income Black households to the community. When I questioned him about gentrification and displacement, he insisted that the goal of community development was not to replace lower-income Black residents with higher-income Black people, but to create a community that all could share and enjoy. Pastor Simmons argued passionately that gentrification and displacement was not an inevitable outcome of community development, and described his plan to prevent it:

> Now what we've been able to do is this. Those homes [he points to the new homes across the street that were built through a joint venture between his congregation and the city's community development agency] cost about $120,000. If you took the same house and put it in the suburbs that same house would cost you $200,000. You got a full basement, three-story house. It's nice, it's secure, everything you need is right there. Now to make it affordable. They [new homeowners] got a $120,000 house for $42,000. We agreed to sell it at that price. So they put $5,000 down and $300–$400 month and they gonna have a house that they can pass down to their family. But they also have a 5-year abatement on taxes. So their taxes won't go up for at least 5 years. The value of their home is not going to change.… And basically you'll have people who are essentially poor people who are now homeowners. So how can we add to that? So they're not going anywhere. They ain't gonna tear those houses down just cause some rich people move in. So you already have that mix there, we just need to take that next step.

As I rigorously questioned Pastor Simmons about his suggestion that luxury housing would not pose a problem for the community, I learned more about the thoughtfulness with which he approached this topic and the sincerity of his position. Unlike many political leaders who state that higher-income residents will improve the community, Rev. Simmons spent a great deal of time strategizing about how to add middle-and upper-income (Black) residents into this neighborhood without promoting the displacement of its current low-income residents. For him, the solution was to have a staged development and to encourage asset accumulation (e.g., homeownership, entrepreneurship) among the low-income population. He sees the asset development of low-income and working-class residents as a critical goal of community development and a necessary prerequisite to having more expensive luxury housing. Thus far, Brickton has only experienced low- and moderate-income affordable housing construction. But Rev. Simmons would like to see more expensive housing construction in the future because it would expand the resources of the community and fulfill his vision of an economically and politically powerful Black community.

Black middle-class residents in Brickton are attracted to the community because the neighborhood has a large low-income Black population, and they work actively to maintain and protect that population from displacement. Yet Brickton is perceived by residents as being in "danger" of gentrifying. It is near downtown Philadelphia, close to a local university, and has easy access to public transportation and the metropolitan highway system. This neighborhood has been the site of many urban renewal initiatives to "develop" [gentrify] the neighborhood, but none have been "successful" because the

neighborhood remains primarily a poor Black community. These "failed" attempts make private speculators hesite to invest in the neighborhood but the threat of a takeover by White gentrifiers always looms in the background. A recent attempt by the adjacent university to expand into the neighborhood to build student housing reenergized the community's concern about gentrification, a concern that was incorporated into the community's recruitment efforts for Black middle-class residents.

Some of the middle-class residents I interviewed, like Paulette, have had personal experiences with displacement caused by gentrification. Paulette explains how this experience strengthens her resolve to protect the community from a similar fate:

> But when I grew up, I knew I was living quite well in South Philly. And when they [upper-middle class Whites who gentrified the neighborhood] ran us out, they did not let many of us back in. So I have no desire to be run out again just so that you can build it up and create *your world*.

Rather than seeing themselves as Black gentrifiers, these middle-class residents see their move to Brickton as an investment in the Black community and a means of protecting the neighborhood from gentrification. Some like Paulette had previous experience with White gentrification in which they were among those residents displaced. Others, although lacking personal experience, have heard romanticized stories of the solidarity and strength of the Black community under forced segregation as described by Rev. Simmons. Both these individual and collective experiences of segregation and displacement contribute to concerns about preventing displacement. Many middle-class residents work through local community-based organizations to limit displacement and ensure that Brickton becomes a class-integrated neighborhood. Unlike traditional gentrification, the outcome of neighborhood change is not the creation of a wealthy neighborhood to replace a lower-income community. From the perspective of the Black gentrifiers I interviewed, the intended outcome is a racially homogenous, class-integrated community similar to those existing during the era of forced segregation.

Outcomes: Increases in Income, But Not Status

The community residents and organizations of Brickton have accomplished the goal of increasing the class diversity of the neighborhood without diminishing the racial homogeneity of the community. However, these neighborhood transformations have not produced the sizeable increases in housing value or social status seen in other gentrifying neighborhoods. As Table 2 indicates, Brickton continues to have a vacancy rate higher than the city average and those of other gentrifying neighborhoods. This high vacancy rate suggests that the neighborhood is in less demand compared to those other gentrified communities, despite its increase in middle-class housing development. In addition, the 2006 housing sales prices listed in Table 2 show that Brickton's price is extremely low relative to other gentrifying neighborhoods. Although the community development activities in Brickton produced the highest rate of change in both sales volume and price, Brickton's median housing sales price ($52,500) was approximately 40% of the average for the city ($130,835). Moreover, the lowest price in the other neighborhoods ($275,050) was more than double the city average. Thus Brickton is a neighborhood experiencing

great change, including a significant increase in middle-class residents. Yet these Black gentrifiers are not impacting the housing value in the same way as their White counterparts, a matter to be discussed in the next section.

In addition to improving the built environment, Black gentrification shares with other forms of gentrification the goal of increasing the social status of the neighborhood. In fact, rising social status is a force that drives housing-value increases in gentrified neighborhoods. In my interviews with middle-class residents in Brickton, they often used comparisons to higher-income White neighborhoods to describe the kinds of amenities and status markers they were seeking. George, a 50-year-old small business owner who lives and works in the neighborhood, describes the kind of amenities he wishes he had in Brickton: "In extremely well-to-do neighborhoods that I've been in they have a Texaco service station, Gulf service station, and you can't even tell. You don't know what's a service station and what's a restaurant." Although some of the neighborhoods that George listed were White gentrified neighborhoods, he vigorously condemned the racial turnover and displacement that has accompanied gentrification in Philadelphia. George and many of the other Brickton residents I interviewed discussed goals of improving the physical infrastructure, social services, and social status of their neighborhood without the same exclusivity and racial turnover that accompanies White gentrification.

However, middle-class Black residents are not easily able to transfer their higher social status to the wider neighborhood. Despite significant class distinctions between them and previous residents, middle-class Black newcomers may not effectively provide a visible signal that the neighborhood is experiencing social mobility. Even though almost 20% of the residents in Brickton are members of the Black middle-class, it is still regarded as a poor Black community. In fact, the middle-class African Americans who reside in Brickton are often assumed to be poor or working class until they demonstrate their difference. This excerpt from my interview with Marlene shows the mistaken assumption that many people make about her class identity based on her residence in the neighborhood:

> *Marlene:* But I must confess that all of these years I've lived in Brickton, I do become sort of a shock thing when people come in [to the neighborhood] and they're afraid. And they see a person who's, I'll use that word, "cultured." She's [speaking about herself] cultured, she's intelligent. You know she's civilized. Yeah, so in a way I do carry that. You know I recognize that, I really recognize that. I've had a couple of White people come into my house and they be like [makes gestures of shock and amazement]
>
> *Interviewer:* So you're not the average person people would think of when they think of Brickton?
>
> *Marlene:* No. No. mm,mm. No. But I wish I was. I wish I was sort of like that.

In the minds of the people Marlene interacts with, only poor Black people live in Brickton, and all of the upwardly mobile Blacks live in the outer ring or suburbs of the city.

Although Marlene wishes to become the image of Brickton, she recognizes that she is not, in spite of her efforts to re-educate her friends and peers through visits to her

community. In my interview with Marlene, she identified other communities in the city and surrounding suburbs that were more consistent with a middle-class identity. These were the communities in which her peers live and the kind of communities in which they expect her to reside as well. Even though Marlene attempts to serve as a self-appointed ambassador for Brickton, working to change other people's image of the neighborhood, she does not believe that she is successful.

Not only are middle-class Black residents like Marlene unable to increase the social status of Brickton by their presence, but their proximity to their poor Black neighbors actually jeopardizes their ability to have their class status recognized. The disregard that outsiders have for Brickton and other poor Black neighborhoods can easily transfer onto its residents. As a resident of Brickton, I experienced first hand the way in which residence in this neighborhood made me more vulnerable to social slights from others.[9] As I was working at home, I received a phone call from a corporation soliciting financial support. The company was selling magazine subscriptions and donating part of the proceeds to "disadvantaged communities." I was informed that my community (Brickton) was selected as the recipient of the company's donations for this year and the company was calling to give me an "opportunity to save money and help out my community." I informed the salesperson that I was not interested in the magazines but I did want to know more about the donation process and how Brickton was selected as a recipient. Throughout the phone conversation, I was constantly interrupted by the solicitor and talked to in a patronizing manner when I asked to speak with a supervisor. The phone conversation ended with the supervisor yelling:

> Well we're just doing something to help *YOUR COMMUNITY.* If you didn't want help, why didn't you say something in the first PLACE? We're trying to be A PART of the solution but don't say anything when bullets start to fly over your head.

Before I could reply to these offensive comments, the supervisor hung up. The blatant disrespect I experienced from the phone solicitor contrasts sharply with the formality and courtesy I am used to experiencing in middle-class contexts. The fact that I was treated in such a manner by both the phone solicitor and her supervisor suggests a more shared perception that residents of Brickton are somehow exempt from the requirements of social niceties and professional protocol. While an affront to my middle-class sensibilities, my low-income neighbors recalled countless stories of such disrespect in their daily lives in their interactions with social workers at the welfare offices and medical practitioners at the clinics. Brickton is as class diverse as many other gentrifying neighborhoods in Philadelphia, yet I would find it hard to believe that such behavior would occur in one of the poor Black neighborhoods being gentrified by Whites. Because the middle-class gentrifiers in Brickton are Black, they fail to signify to many of the outsiders a change in the image of the neighborhood. For the phone solicitors I experienced as well as Marlene's peers, the image of Brickton remains that of a poor Black neighborhood

[9]This experience is taken from the journal of my fieldwork. In this instance I am participating in the "role" of Brickton resident and am treated as such. In fieldwork, "the researcher is the instrument" (Neuman, 2000, p. 355) and personal experiences while immersed in the social situation of the study are a part of data collection.

TABLE 4. COMPARISON OF URBAN GENTRIFICATION TYPOLOGY (X = CRITERION FULFILLED, O = CRITERION UNFULFILLED)

Aspects of gentrification	Traditional	Marginal	Third wave	Black
Initial community				
Low-income neighborhood	X	X	X	X
Motivations of gentrifiers				
Gentrification aesthetic	X	X	X	X
Middle-class identity formation	X	X	X	X
Less expensive housing	X	X	O	X
Social justice agenda	O	O	O	X
Neighborhood transformation				
Population changes				
Gentrifiers higher in cultural capital than economic capital[a]	O	X	O	X
Displacement of low-income residents	X	O	X	O
Displacement/turnover of middle-class	O	X	X	O
Improvement to built environment				
Individual investor	X	X	O	O
Public–private partnership	O	O	X	X
Community controlled development	O	O	O	X
Outcomes				
Social status growth[b]	X	X	X	O
Wealthy neighborhood (class transformation)	X	O	X	O
Racial/ethnic turnover	X	O	X	O

[a]Cultural capital is measured by education (B.A. degree) and economic capital is measured by income; thus individuals with BA with income below 50K would be higher in cultural capital than economic capital.
[b]Social status growth refers to the perceived prestige of the neighborhood.

regardless of the presence of middle-class Blacks. The perceived low social status of Brickton and the relatively low sales price of housing in spite of the dramatic increases in class composition of the neighborhood allow us to see how social status itself is racialized.

In Table 4, I present a revised version of Van Criekingen and Decroly's (2003) typology in order to compare Black gentrification to other forms of gentrification presented in the literature. Black gentrification shares with the other gentrification models the goal of transforming a low-income community by making improvements to the built environment and attempting to increase the social status of the neighborhood. However, the results of this analysis suggest that Black gentrification is different because the motivation of gentrifiers includes a social justice agenda and the outcomes are less extreme than other forms of gentrification. The ethnographic findings discussed above highlight the distinctiveness of Black gentrification in terms of the motivation of gentrifiers, the

process of neighborhood transformation, and the outcomes associated with this type of neighborhood change.

In conclusion, Black gentrification is a distinctive form of urban gentrification shaped by the larger context of racial and class stratification in the United States. First, the middle-class Black residents involved in gentrifying this neighborhood have fewer housing options, fewer economic resources, and lower social status than their White-gentrifier peers. Second, the Black middle-class residents studied here differ in that their migration to this neighborhood involved a social justice agenda and the expression of a particular Black, middle-class identity. Finally, the pattern of Black gentrification observed in this neighborhood produced less inequality of outcomes, but also less advancement of economic and social status than through other forms of gentrification.

DISCUSSION

Distinctive Characteristics of Black Gentrification

Similar to other forms of gentrification, Black gentrification involves physical, economic, and demographic changes to the community. Black gentrification shares with other forms of gentrification a focus on improvements to the built environment (most notably housing), but is unique in that its social justice agenda increases gentrifiers' concerns to avoid or limit displacement. Whereas Black gentrification shares the goal of transforming a neighborhood's status, it seems to be more limited in its ability to accomplish this because of the ways in which racial and class hierarchies shape the composition and status of urban neighborhoods.

Unlike other forms of gentrification, population turnover is not a central component of Black gentrification as experienced in Brickton. As Table 4 shows, Black gentrification and marginal gentrification are distinctive in that they do not show population turnover and displacement of low-income residents. In both marginal and Black gentrification, new middle-class residents move into lower-and working-class neighborhoods, but the number of low-income households remains fairly stable. However, in marginally gentrified neighborhoods, middle-class gentrifiers displace themselves. Marginal gentrifiers tend to move from the neighborhood as they experience changes in their professional status and/or family circumstances. Thirdwave gentrification also is accompanied by turnover among middle-class gentrifiers in that they are often displaced by higher-income and even upper-class gentrifiers. Unlike marginal and thirdwave gentrification, Black gentrification evinces a fairly stable presence of Black middle-class gentrifiers who have not displaced their long-term low-income neighbors. This is most likely the result of a neighborhood development process that is small-scale and community/minority-controlled, and the fact that the social status of the neighborhood has not changed.

Most types of gentrification, except for a form of third-wave gentrification known as "supergentrification" (Lees, 2003), occur in neighborhoods that primarily contain low- or moderate-income residents. The low cost of housing in these neighborhoods is often an attractive motivator for potential gentrifiers and developers. Like the gentrifiers involved in traditional and marginal gentrification, Black middle-class participants in Black gentrification are attracted to the lower cost of housing and the gentrification esthetic. However, Black gentrification is distinctive in that the middle-class gentrifiers are also

motivated to move into a neighborhood guided by a social justice agenda, with the express desire to live *with* low-income residents.

The Black gentrifiers in this study believe their community has been victimized by historic and contemporary forms of racism, and they seek to intervene in this process by investing in their neighborhood. Indeed, many of Brickton's gentrifiers explained its transformation into a ghetto consistent with the theory William Julius Wilson (1980) presented in the *Declining Significance of Race*. Marlene, George, and Paulette implicate middle-class White and Black residents' flight away from Brickton in the creation of the neighborhood's current problems. Yet they discuss their own presence in the community as an attempt to reverse the neighborhood's downward cycle by embracing the potential role of the Black middle class as a "social buffer" for low-income Black communities.

Although mixed-income housing is the buzzword for many housing developers, this form of development has been criticized for its practice of neglecting the housing needs of low-income residents in the interest of fulfilling the desires of more affluent residents. In Brickton, the focus on attracting middle-class residents through housing development has not prevented an emphasis on homeownership and rental housing for low-income families. The continued focus on the needs of current low-income residents underscores one of the unique dimensions of the Black American Dream and distinguishes it from typical models of urban gentrification. Although thirdwave gentrification is also financed through public–private partnerships, in Brickton the Black American Dream is managed by modestly sized, community-controlled institutions.

Middle-class migrants to Brickton are similar to those participating in marginal gentrification in that they have more cultural capital than economic capital. In marginal gentrification the gentrifiers' limited economic capital is based on the fact that they are in the beginning phase of their professional careers. However, Black middle-class residents in Brickton are well established in their careers but still have more limited income compared to that of traditional gentrifiers. The Black middle-class residents of this study are mostly employed in the human and social services industry; since they are well-established in their careers, it is unlikely that Brickton will experience the turnover in marginal gentrification associated with occupational mobility. Moreover, research on gentrification in London revealed a distinctive gentrification pattern of public service employees (Butler and Robson, 2001). Precisely because of their lower incomes relative to private-sector employees, public-sector workers are likely to be present in earlier phases of gentrification and more marginal gentrified neighborhoods. Public-sector gentrifiers are also more likely to work as community activists to gain improved services for the neighborhood (i.e., good schools), while private-sector gentrifiers are more likely to use their economic resources to purchase such commodities (i.e., tuition for private schools; Butler and Robson, 2001). I suggest that Black middle-class residents employed in the human and social services sector may be more aware of the problems of poor and working-class African Americans through their work experiences, education, and personal background. Thus they may be more aware of how building their lives in a poor or working-class community can have a positive impact on those who are less privileged. As reported by many of my multiclass respondents, living in a multiclass community is a valued legacy of their own childhood experiences that they seek to recreate

Another distinguishing trait of Black gentrification is that the middle-class residents' cultural capital and identity is grounded in a distinctively *Black habitus*. By that I mean

critical resistance to the logic and practices of racial domination, an emphasis on morality and respectable self-presentation as a strategy of racial resistance, and a more limited ability to successfully exchange one form of (social, economic, or cultural) capital for another (Craig, 2002; Moore, 2008). The Black middle-class residents of this study are attracted to Brickton because their cultural habitus privileges the knowledge and experiences of Black people. This cultural capital not only motivates them to migrate to the neighborhood, but also shapes their interactions with their neighbors and ultimately the success of the Black American Dream (Moore, 2008).

As indicated in Table 4, Black gentrification in Brickton is distinctive in that its outcome is neither a transformation of the neighborhood into a wealthy community nor a White neighborhood. Likewise, the status improvement of Brickton has been limited because that is probably a function of the lack of turnover in the racial and class composition of the neighborhood. It is therefore questionable whether these outcomes represent the success or failure of Black gentrification. Unlike White gentrifiers, Black middle-class residents are less able to signify community improvement. In the traditional pattern of gentrification, the differing class and racial characteristics of the new residents signals to outside observers that this neighborhood is undergoing a change. White middle-class residents are able to imbue a neighborhood with some of their higher social status, and the neighborhood begins to become distinguished from surrounding areas that are still predominantly poor and Black. A neighborhood's rise in social status is also usually accompanied by a name change, as well as improvements in public services (e.g., snow removal and garbage pick-up). The presence of White middle-class residents in these poor Black communities serves as a positive marker for financial investment and a rise in social status for the neighborhood (Wyly and Hammel, 2004). Even though the residents of Brickton are working hard to change the physical and social environment of their neighborhood, its status depends to a large degree on how the community is perceived by outsiders. Thus the invisibility of the middle-class Black residents of Brickton reinforces important differences between Black and White patterns of gentrification.

Importance of Race for Gentrification

This research emphasizes the centrality of racial and class dynamics in the process of neighborhood change. Gentrification has been described as a class-based colonization of urban land. It is intricately tied to the structure of the local economy as well as the class identity of residents. Ley's (1996) analysis of gentrification highlights the role of a particular form of middle-class identity in creating an "alternative urbanism to suburbanization." The middle-class migrants observed in this study are similar to Ley's "new middle class" in both vocation and the desire to create an alternative middle-class lifestyle. However, race operates as an overriding shaper of status when it come to occupational opportunities and identity.

Anderson (1990) discusses problems of mistaken identity that middle-class African Americans experience when living close to poor Black neighborhoods. Without blatant class markers, and sometimes in spite of them, middle-class Blacks are assumed to be of the same status group as their lower-income neighbors. And just like the low-income Blacks who live in these gentrifying areas, middle-class Blacks experience police harassment and anxious White neighbors fleeing from them (Anderson, 1990). When

middle-class Whites are unable or unwilling to acknowledge the differences between middle-class and poor African Americans, it is less likely that the middle-class status of Black gentrifiers will be recognized. Middle-class Black residents alone cannot imbue a poor Black community with the same degree of status as embodied by White gentrifiers. A Black middle-class presence is not enough to signal a marked change and visible increase in the neighborhood's social status. In this scenario, blackness is a master shaper of status and identity that is not able to be renegotiated by the presence of middle-class Blacks wearing office attire. In other words, class is minimized and race is dominant.

We know that racial stratification of the economy creates very different employment outcomes for Black and White workers (Stoll, 1999; Kim and Tamborini, 2006). We are also beginning to accumulate empirical evidence of differences in class identity of Black and White middle-class households (Cole and Omari, 2003; Lacy, 2004). Although both Black and White gentrification rely on the identity formation process of a new middle-class, Black gentrification involves a distinctive Black middle-class identity formation process (Moore, 2005). The findings of this study compel us to investigate more closely the class structure and identity of middle-class migrants because they strongly shape the dynamics associated with community change. Other ethnographic studies of communities experiencing Black gentrification affirm a distinctive meaning and structure of class identity within the Black community, the prevalence of a racial uplift ideology among Black gentrifiers, and a critique/concern of both Black middle-class and non–middle-class Black residents about White gentrification (Boyd, 2000; Taylor, 2002; Jackson, 2003; Moore, 2005; Freeman, 2006; Hyra, 2006; Pattillo, 2007). This research highlights internal factors that shape Black migration (motivations and outcomes), but must be situated in what we know about the structural context: growth of the Black middle class, expansion of gentrification to include places previously thought to be "ungentrifiable," increased willingness to lend money to Blacks and Black neighborhoods, and the increased exclusion of Black middle-class residents from gentrifying neighborhoods. Thus, the push-and-pull dynamics of Black gentrification are likely to vary according to the local context.

It is important to note that whereas Black gentrification in Philadelphia does not involve wide participation from Blacks employed in the finance industry and other higher-paying professions, case studies of Black gentrification in both New York City (Taylor, 2002; Jackson, 2003; Freeman, 2006; Hyra, 2006) and Chicago (Hyra, 2006; Pattillo, 2007) document a significant participation of these industries among the Black gentrifiers. Thus the scale and intensity of Black gentrification is also likely to vary according to the local urban context. To better understand variation in patterns of Black gentrification, we therefore should measure both the size and composition of the Black middle class as well as the local urban context.

Cities with a large Black middle-class population and a high degree of racial/class exclusion are likely to foster Black gentrification. It is possible that rising Black gentrification levels could produce displacement (as occurs with White gentrification) when a large enough proportion of Black residents with very high incomes is achieved. Cities evincing less racial/class exclusion in gentrified areas may fold some of the Black gentrifiers into the White gentrification process. But in cities with high rates of White capital that support supergentrification, Black-gentrified neighborhoods may be taken over, similar to what is now occurring in Manhattan's Harlem. Finally, we should consider the

history and cultural meanings of local communities in determining which neighborhoods get selected for Black gentrification. Boyd's (2000) study and Moore's (2005) findings suggest that those neighborhoods with ties to the historic ghetto are the more likely candidates for Black gentrification.

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