

WEEK 13: Gentrification: Displacement & Resistance

Brainstorm...

- Why is displacement hard to measure?
 - What are the challenges and limitations?
- What are some ways we can try to measure or approximate the degree of displacement?

Forms of Displacement

- **Direct:** from a household that is currently occupied, this includes physical and economic forms of displacement.
 - What are some examples of physical and economic forms?
- **Exclusionary:** occurs when any household is not permitted to move into a dwelling, by a change in conditions that affects the dwelling or its immediate surroundings (one can be excluded from a neighborhood because of high rents).
- **Displacement Pressure:** changes in neighborhood and loss of social ties and services.
 - What are some examples that might constitute displacement pressure?
- **Symbolic:** "...sense of subordination, discomfort and unease with trying to stay-put while the visible and sensed changes of the physical and social fabric of the neighborhood and its symbolic order shifted dramatically as rapid gentrification took place" (Atkinson, 2015, p. 382).

Displacement "occurs when any household is forced to move from its residence by conditions that affect the dwelling or its immediate surroundings, and that: 1) are beyond the household's reasonable ability to control or prevent; 2) occur despite the household's having met all previously imposed conditions of occupancy; and 3) make continued occupancy by that household impossible, hazardous, or unaffordable". (Marcuse, 1985, p. 205)

Gentrification & Displacement

“... ‘gentrification’ is many things and almost never all at once, and a common position in scholarship and in the public sphere is that the term cannot be stably defined...Yet... the process involves a locale with privileged newcomers and the displacement of marginalized residents”. (Jesse Mumm, 2017, p.104-5)

- Economistic and heavily quantitative studies of gentrification depoliticize the issue with concepts like:
 - “willingness-to-pay” for improved neighborhood quality (Vigdor, 2010)
 - likelihood of exiting a gentrifying area (Vigdor, 2002),
 - relations between mobility and displacement (Freeman, 2005; Ding et al., 2016), and
 - relations between increased property tax and displacement (Martin and Beck, 2018).
- These perspectives ignore the lived experience of gentrification and at best superficially acknowledge negative socio-political outcomes, while at worst reproduce free-market thinking.



Pushed Out: Displacement Today and Lasting Impacts



Watch later

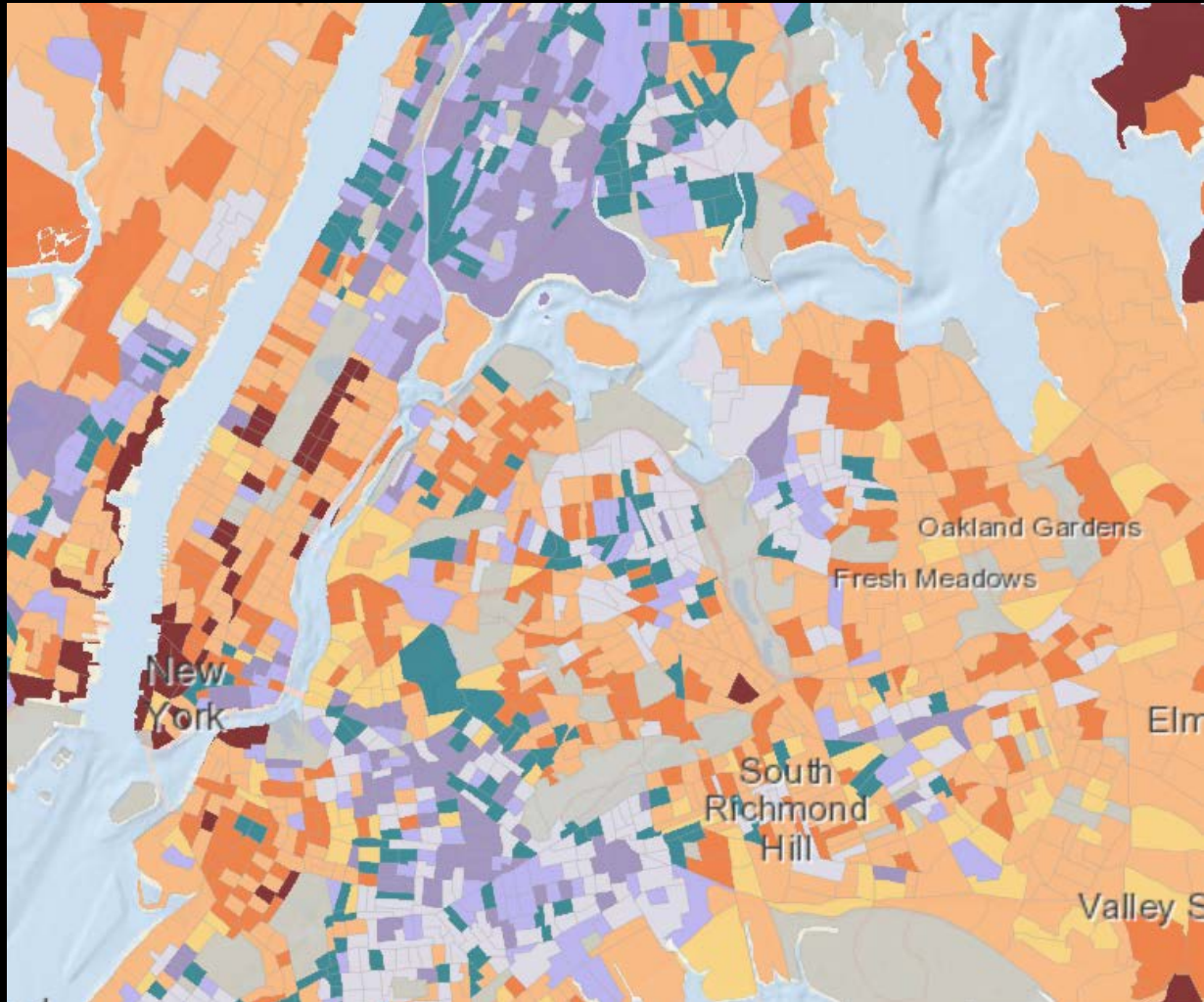


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Tracking Displacement



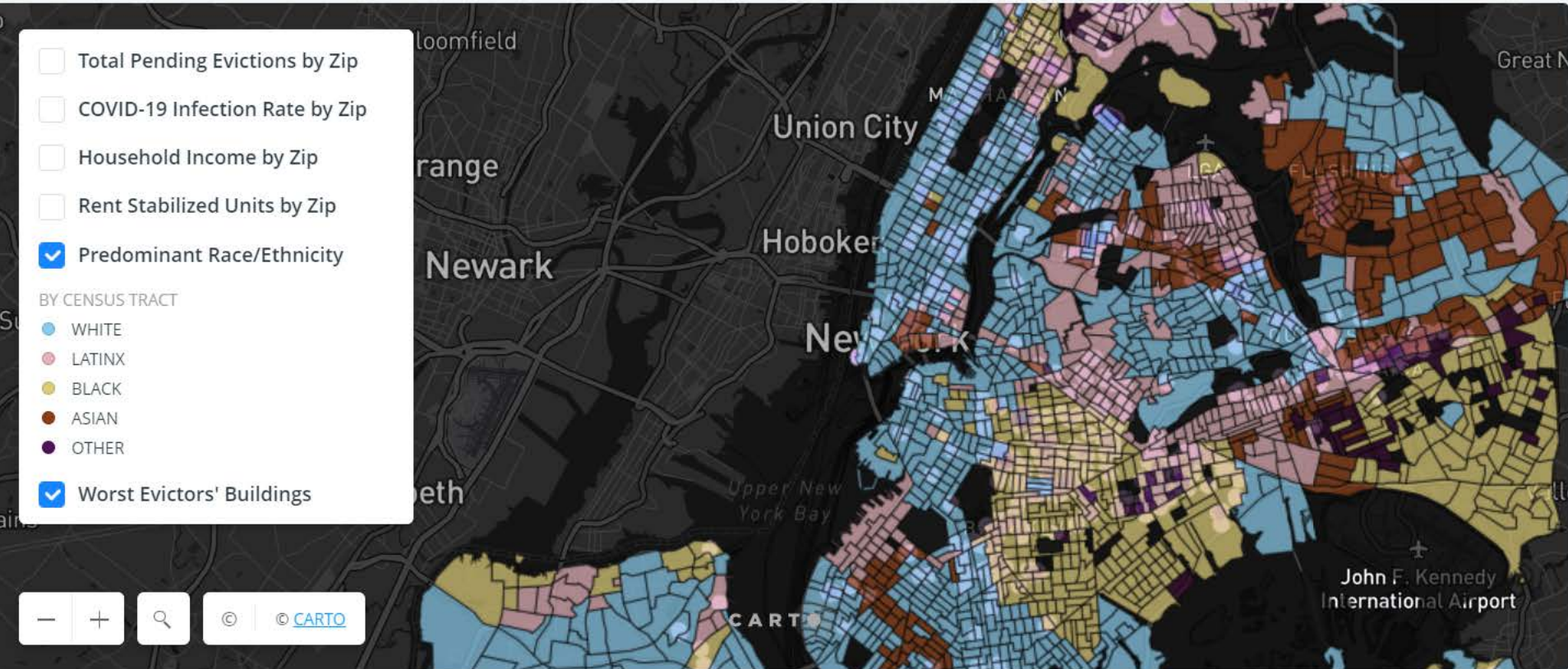
<https://www.urbandisplacement.org/maps/ny>

Displacement and Gentrification Census Tract Typologies

Typology (tract income level)	Typology Criteria
Not Losing Low-Income Households (Low Income)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop in 2000 > 500 • Low Income Tract in 2016 • Not classified as At Risk or Ongoing Gentrification or Displacement
At Risk of Gentrification (Low Income)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop in 2016 > 500 • Low Income Tract in 2016 • Vulnerable in 2016 (Defined in Appendix) • "Hot market" from 2000 to 2016 • Not currently undergoing displacement or ongoing gentrification
Ongoing Displacement of Low-Income Households (Low Income)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop in 2000 > 500 • Low Income Tract in 2016 • Loss of LI households 2000-2016 (absolute loss) • Few signs of gentrification occurring
Ongoing Gentrification (Low Income)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop in 2000 or 2016 > 500 • Low Income Tract in 2016 • Gentrified in 1990-2000 or 2000-2016 (Defined in Appendix)
Advanced Gentrification (Moderate to High Income)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop in 2000 or 2016 > 500 • Moderate to High Income Tract in 2015 • Gentrified in 1990-2000 or 2000-2016 (Defined by Appendix)
Stable Exclusion (Moderate to High Income)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop in 2000 > 500 • Moderate to High Income Tract in 2016 • Not classified as Ongoing Exclusion
Ongoing Exclusion (Moderate to High Income)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop in 2000 > 500 • Moderate to High Income Tract in 2016 • Loss of LI households 2000-2016 (absolute loss) • LI migration rate (percent of all migration to tract that was LI) in 2016 < in 2009
Super Gentrification or Exclusion (Very High Income)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop in 2000 > 500 • Median household income > 200% of regional median in 2016 • Indicators of Gentrification or Exclusion

<https://www.urbandisplacement.org/maps/new-york-gentrification-and-displacement/>

Eviction lawsuits from March 2020 to September 2021



Select a Worst Evictor:  

Worst Evictor	Filings
ALL SELECTED	
RICHARD LEFRAK, JOSEPH RO...	Filings: 2.6k
JAY ROSENFELD	Filings: 852
LABE TWERSKI	Filings: 596
ALAN SULLIVAN	Filings: 570
ILSOO KIM, ROBERT CORSO	Filings: 554
OTHER	Filings: 460

[SEARCH IN 20 CATEGORIES](#)

MENU

VOICES

GENTRIFICATION &
DISPLACEMENT

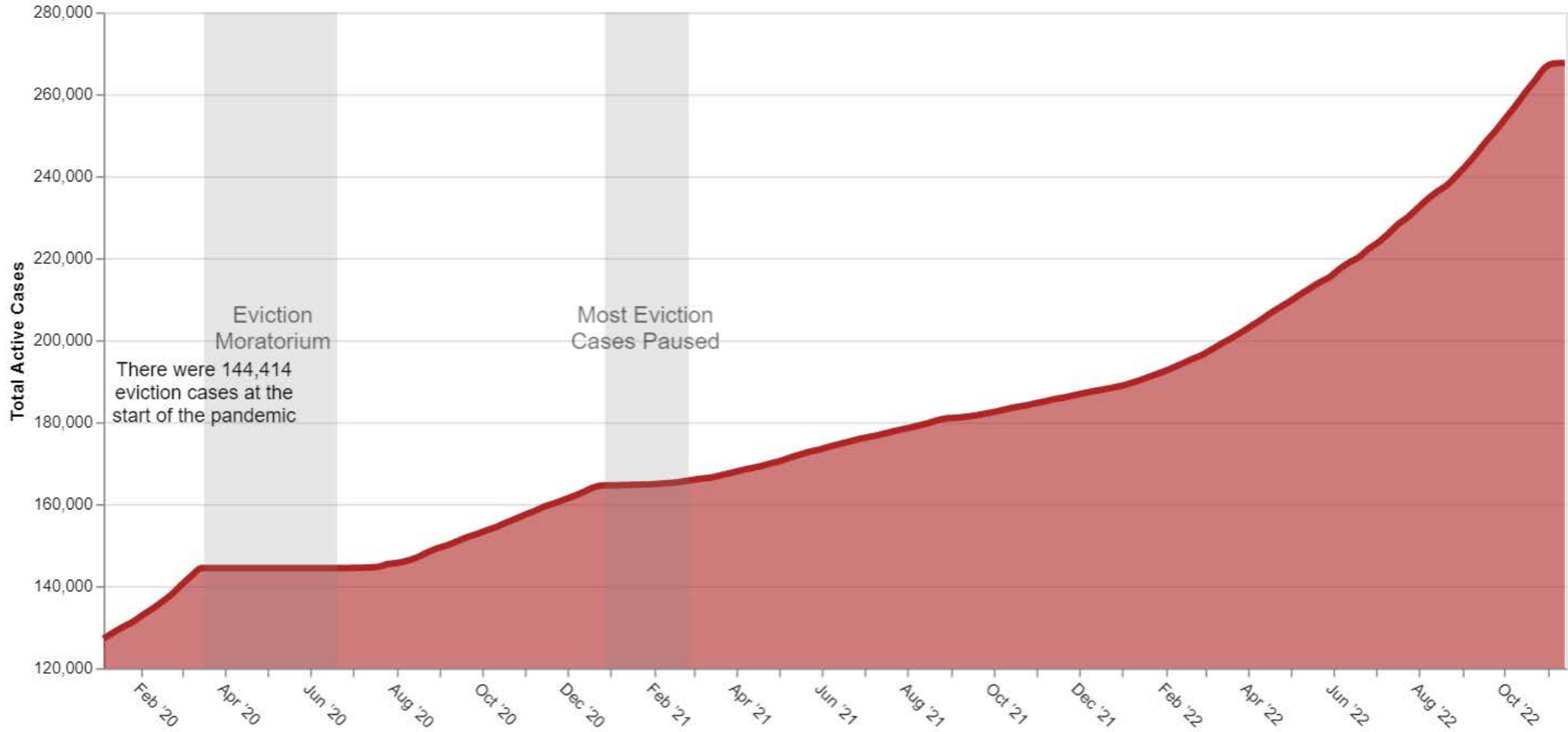


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Active Eviction Cases in New York State

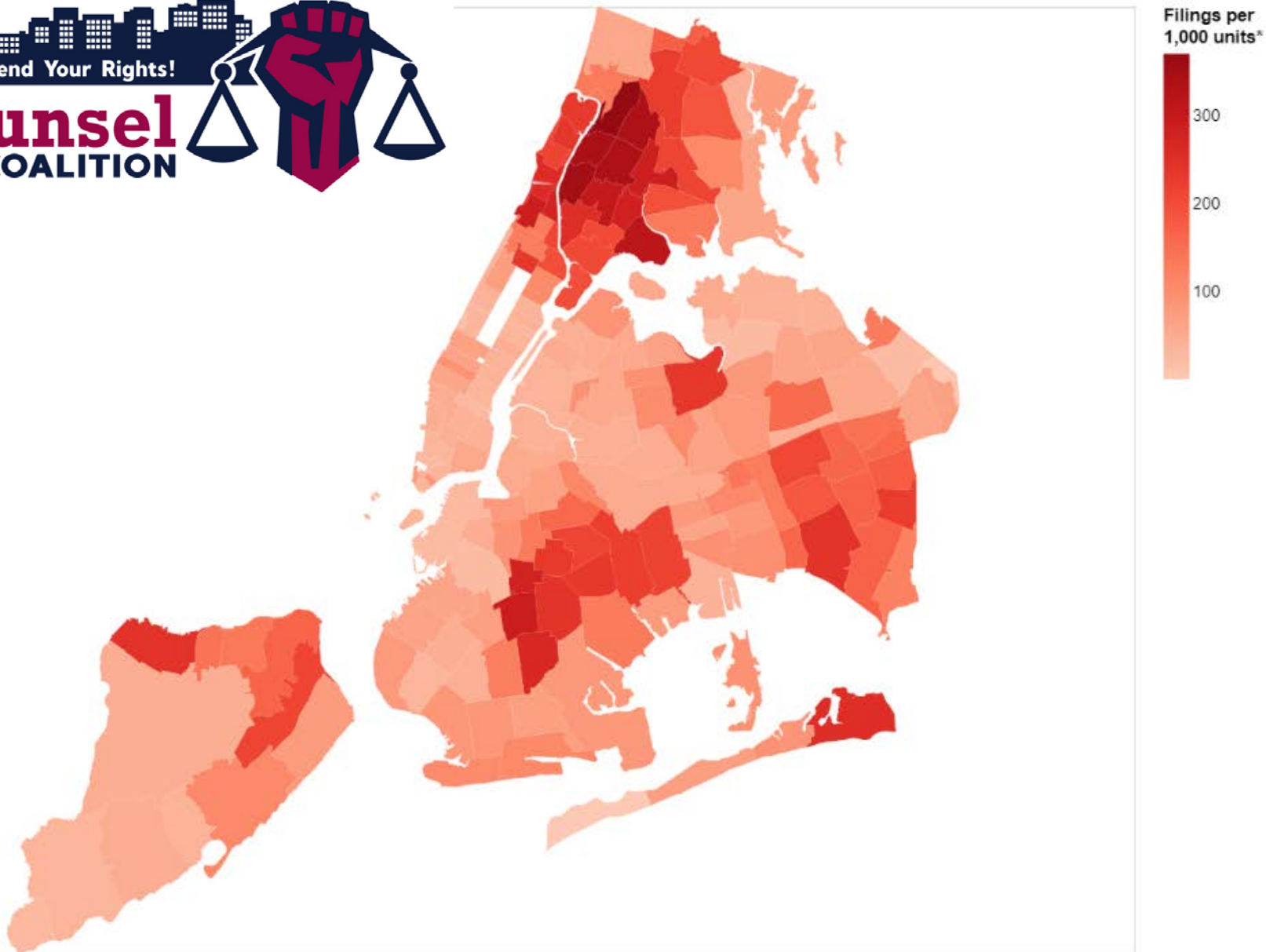
January 2020 - Present



Note: Data only includes residential and commercial eviction cases filed in city courts, not town and village courts. Recent court data (last few weeks) is incomplete due to reporting lags; actual numbers are higher.
<https://www.righttocounselnyc.org/evictioncrisismonitor>

New York City Residential Eviction Filings By Zip Code

March 2020 - Present





HOW WOULD NYC TENANTS BENEFIT FROM STATEWIDE RIGHT TO COUNSEL?

	NYC Right to Counsel	Statewide Right to Counsel
Who is eligible?	ONLY tenants facing eviction with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, which in 2021 is \$43,920 for a family of three.	ALL tenants facing eviction would have Right to Counsel, regardless of income.
What kinds of cases are covered?	ONLY eviction cases in NYC Housing Court and NYCHA administrative hearings.	ANY case that could result in a tenant losing their housing, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Eviction cases ✓ Appeals cases ✓ Repairs cases ✓ Subsidy termination cases (e.g. Section 8) ✓ Harassment cases ✓ Public Housing eviction cases
What are the Courts, Judges, and landlords required to do?	<p>The law does not require the Courts, Judges, or landlords to do anything to ensure that tenants know about and can use their Right to Counsel.</p> <p><i>As a result of our organizing, the City has a public awareness campaign, tenants now have a Right to Counsel Hotline, the Courts send notices, and Judges make announcements about tenants' Right to Counsel, but these things aren't required by law.</i></p>	<p>The Courts, Judges, and landlords must ensure that ALL tenants know about and can use their Right to Counsel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tenants must receive written notice of their Right to Counsel before any court filing or case can proceed. ✓ Judges must let tenants know that they have the Right to Counsel if they appear in court without their lawyer. ✓ Tenants must receive information about how to contact and secure a Right to Counsel lawyer (e.g. phone number or website). ✓ Judges must adjourn cases until the tenant is able to retain and consult with their Right to Counsel lawyer. <p><i>If a tenant is denied their Right to Counsel, any eviction judgements or warrants can be cancelled.</i></p>



The COVID-19 pandemic has only worsened New York State's eviction crisis. Our communities need long-term solutions that will keep them safe and securely housed.

- New York State has the highest rate of homelessness in the country, with 92,000 New Yorkers currently experiencing homelessness.¹
- Landlords are actively trying to evict more than 260,000 tenants statewide.²
- Across NYS, an overwhelming majority of landlords are represented during eviction proceedings, whereas most tenants are not. In Albany, between 2016-2021, fewer than 3% of Albany renters had counsel, compared to 90% of property owners.³
- Right to Counsel has proven to be immensely successful at stopping evictions and protecting tenants' rights, which is especially important now, given the social and economic devastation caused by the pandemic.
- Last year, even with a blanket moratorium on evictions, 5,229 warrants of eviction were issued across NYS. As of October, nearly 33,000 warrants had already been issued across the state.⁴
- Eviction proceedings are complex and violent processes that are nearly impossible to navigate alone.
- Evictions disrupt children's education, tear apart entire communities, and have other traumatic consequences.
- Right to counsel is also about racial justice. Evictions disproportionately impact Black and brown tenants, with women facing the greatest burdens.
- The State spends billions of dollars on shelters and homeless services and studies have shown that Right to Counsel saves public money that would be otherwise spent on shelter and emergency room costs, homelessness services, and more.⁵

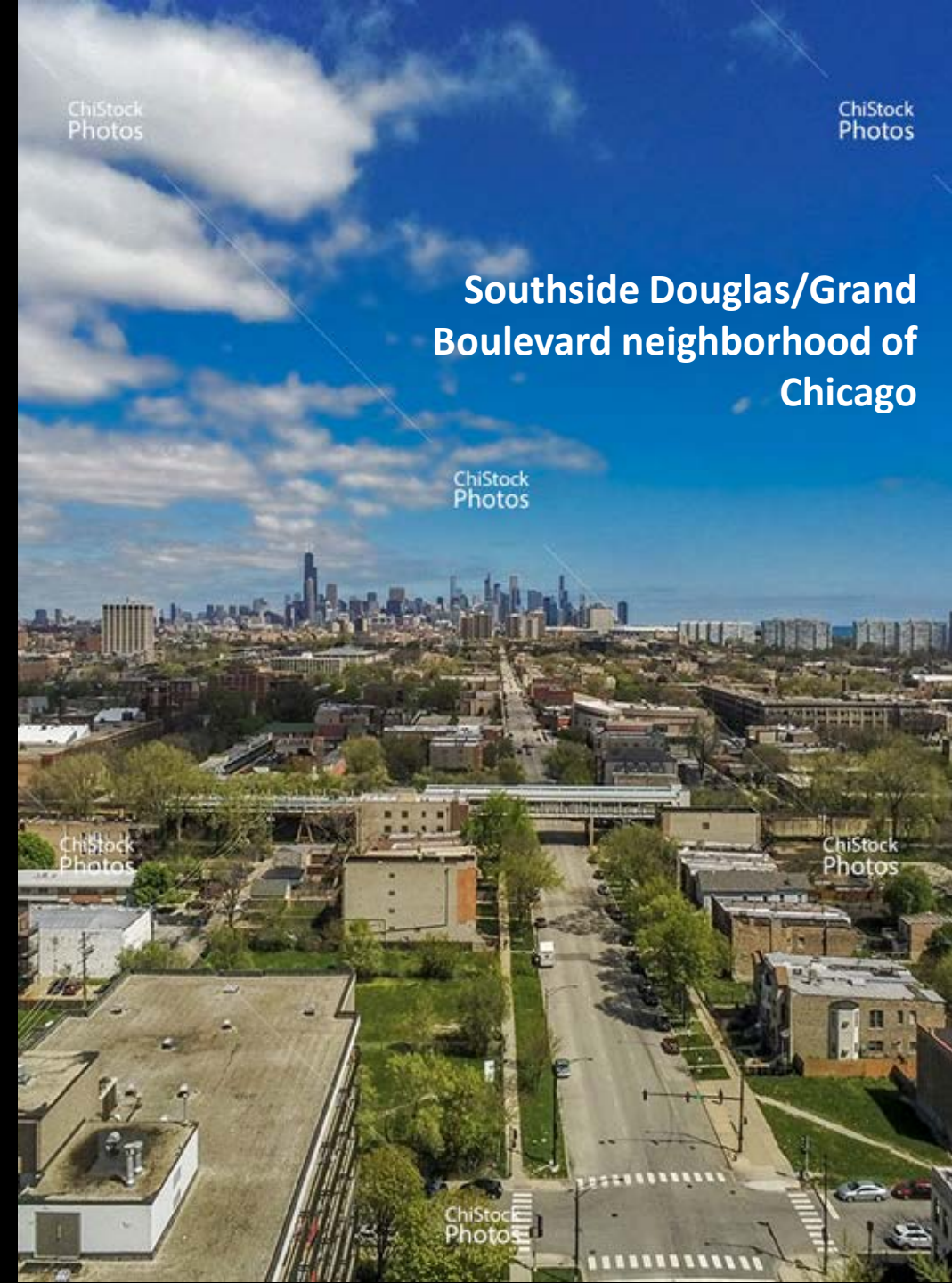
Mrs. Loretta McDonald Takes Us Through Brooklyn for a Look at Gentrification's Effects



Resisting Gentrification: Defensive Development

Michelle Boyd's (2005, 2008) research on Black gentrification considers intra-racial class conflict and resistance that uses both race and gentrification as starting points from which desired development would occur.

- Studying Southside Chicago, Boyd's work moves beyond the production-consumption debates to study the role of racial conflict and defensive tactics in this gentrifying neighborhood.
- Using ethnographic techniques and interviews, she questions the notion that Black residents will always resist gentrification. Rather, in this case, they politicize it as an expression of their class position.
- Through the concept of **defensive development**, adopted by Black gentrifiers, and racial order theory, Boyd argues that secondary marginalization is taking place as the poor, public housing residents become alienated while **“community building and economic revitalization strategies designed to protect their neighborhoods from control by White residents”** are deployed by the Black middle-class (2008, p. 752).
- Forms of defensive development by the Black gentrifiers included:
 - a collaborative planning process with the Illinois Institute of Technology as part of the Restoring Bronzeville land use plan, marketing the neighborhood as an African American Heritage tourist destination,
 - the creation of a local Black leadership base to implement economic development.



Resisting Gentrification: Defensive Tactics

James Lloyd's (2016) study of the historically Black Adams-Morgan neighborhood in Washington, D.C. also identifies defensive, rather than resistive, strategies whereby organized communities acted to contest the nature of local gentrification but not thwart or stop it.

Adams-Morgan neighborhood in Washington, D.C.

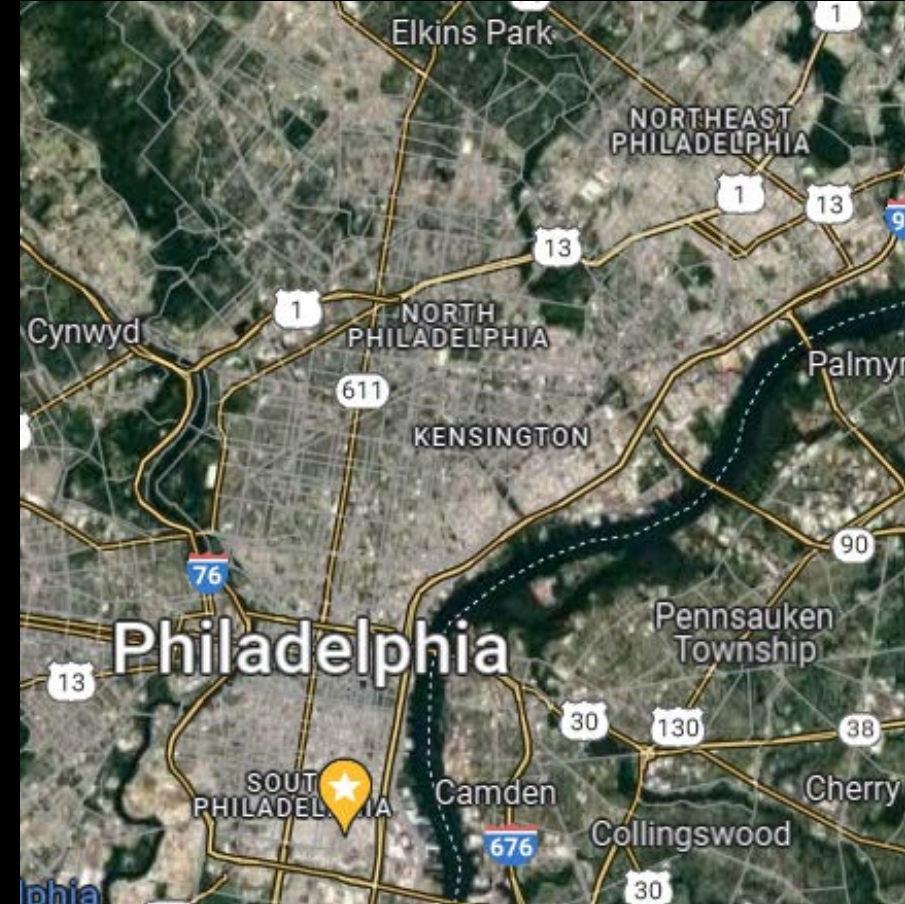


- Using archival data and oral histories Lloyd found residents took **advantage of a legal opportunity** developed in wake of the 1974 condominium conversions which gave tenants the right of first refusal.
- The right was codified in the **1980 Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act** by which landlords must first offer buildings to tenants before going to market. As whole-block redevelopment threatened the displacement of Adams-Morgan residents, two lawsuits were filed on behalf of twenty-three families who were never given their tenant's rights to purchase.
- This occurred even as the developer racked up over 500 code violations, tried to buy out families for as little as \$250, and later flip the property for at least \$40,000.
- **By invoking their tenant's rights through pro-bono legal services, the tenants were able to stop the evictions**, but to stay in their homes they had to exercise their option to buy and prove they had the funds to do so.
- The Adams-Morgan Organization raised funds for down payments and closing costs but getting the primary loan on a home was still an issue. **Through protesting the opening of a local banking branch, that had historically redlined Adams-Morgan, tenants enforced a set of contractual conditions including the bank's promise to cover homeowner loans up to 90% of the home's value.** challenging the capitalist framework enabling it.

Resisting Gentrification: Black Gentrification

Kesha S. Moore (2009) explores the intersection of race and class in Philadelphia. She argues that 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.

- Moore finds that **Black gentrification is not driven by the same factors** and does not produce the same outcomes as gentrification observed among White gentrifiers.
- Using ethnographic methods inclusive of participant observation and twenty informal interviews with residents and community-based organizations, Moore found that **most middle-class interviewees wanted to give back to the community** and desired a Black neighborhood **integrated along class lines**.
- The neighborhood's local community development corporation (CDC), with roots in a religious institution advocating for public housing, believed in **staged redevelopment** whereby luxury development could be built to attract more affluent Black residents while taking care to **encourage asset accumulation among low-income residents**.
- For this CDC, **gentrification could be pursued in the neighborhood without displacement**, although there is still some concern given its location near downtown.
- Moore also found that the higher social status of Black gentrifiers doesn't easily transfer to the whole neighborhood because visual signs of social mobility are not clear, and perceptions of it as a poor Black community persist.
 - For instance, compared to patterns in white gentrification, **Black gentrification in parts of Philadelphia had "fewer housing options, fewer economic resources, and lower social status"** (p. 136) than their white counterparts and an expressed social justice agenda in their motivations to gentrify. This exemplifies the complexity of race and class in gentrifiers themselves.





Resisting Gentrification: Co-opting “Mexican-ness”

Winifred Curran (2018) documents instances of Mexican identity being co-opted and commodified for profit through the notion of ‘defining Mexican-ness’ which heavily revolved around debates of who or what was considered Mexican (i.e., who should be in the neighborhood) and the appropriation of Mexican cultural motifs used in luxury condo design.

- To understand the process of displacement and gentrification as it unfolded over thirteen years, Curran (2018) draws on a longitudinal community-research project with the Pilsen Alliance.
- The purpose is to understand how resistance strategies take shape and to what degree developers and other gentrification actors adapt these strategies for their own profit goals.
- Prompted by fears of gentrification by the University of Illinois’ campus expansion and a [Tax Increment Financing](#) district designation, the predominantly Mexican community engaged in various resistance strategies including:
 - knocking on doors, attending community meetings, creating ballot measures (a downzoning referendum), and honing media coverage to construct a democratic vision of the neighborhood.
 - These were used to push for incremental zoning changes as residents also utilized community land trusts, historic preservations districts, and property tax caps to slow the gentrification process.



Sources

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