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Surviving in the Land of Opportunity: Outcomes of Post-Crisis Urban Redevelopment in the United States

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Surviving in the Land of Opportunity:
Outcomes of Post-Crisis Urban Redevelopment in the United States
A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Sociology

By

Brianna Foster

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Abstract

How we develop cities in the twenty-first century remains a subject of contentious debate worldwide. As neoliberal strategies are implemented in redevelopment projects, public safety nets are reduced and low-income communities of color in declining urban neighborhoods become particularly vulnerable. This multiple case study seeks to understand the experiences of post crisis urban redevelopment for low-income communities of color in 5 major U.S. cities. The data I analyzed include 101 short videos from the interactive documentary platform Land of Opportunity, documenting the process of post-crisis urban redevelopment in New Orleans, New York, Chicago, Detroit, and San Francisco. In doing so, I discovered that residents' experiences vary greatly based on redevelopment strategy that was employed and the level of resident involvement in the redevelopment process.

Keywords: redevelopment; displacement; public housing; gentrification; cultural displacement

Introduction

People in cities around the world are losing decision-making power in their communities due to the privatization of public space and resources. The adverse effects of privatization has steadily become more prominent in urban communities experiencing crisis related to profit based economic redevelopment. This fundamental shift toward neoliberalism in post-crisis urban redevelopment has marginalized some urban residents and further exacerbated social inequities among them (Costes, 2014). The purpose of this study is to explore the experience of post-crisis redevelopment in American cities for residents who live in neighborhoods impacted by profit driven development.

Urban crisis is the destabilization of the urban core due to fundamental upset of economic, political, social, or environmental structures that compromise a city's ability to meet the needs of its citizens. Modern ideas of urban crisis are often characterized as economic crisis due to deindustrialization, rise in unemployment, out migration, population decline, and increased dependence on social safety nets (Glaeser and Gyourko 2001). These phenomena culminate in disinvestment and deterioration of the municipal tax base, which exacerbates poverty in neglected urban neighborhoods (Friedrichs 1993).

Cities across the U.S. have experienced many variations of economic crisis as well as additional social, political, and environmental crises that further upset the fabric of urban life. Environmental disasters, social unrest and political strife, in addition to economic decline, shape the experiences of urban citizens in the U.S. These experiences are also shaped by conflicting interests in the efforts to redevelop the urban core. To examine the overarching experience of post-crisis urban redevelopment in the twenty-first century

through the eyes of residents depicted in media and film, I examined the multimedia documentary project Land of Opportunity platform.

Land of Opportunity

Rooted in post-Katrina New Orleans, Land of Opportunity is an ongoing and dynamic documentary project which examines post-crisis community redevelopment in U.S. cities. Along with partners in sister cities, Land of Opportunity has captured and curated multiple stories of post-crisis redevelopment in cities across the U.S., exploring the topics of community, cultural vitality, and human rights. Reaching across media platforms, Land of Opportunity includes a feature film and an experimental interactive web platform that provide far-reaching and in-depth accounts of residents, planners, activists, officials, and developers navigating issues of redevelopment in their communities. Land of Opportunity views post-crisis urban redevelopment through a critical lens, asking vital questions such as *What kinds of communities do we want to (re)build in the 21st century?*, *Who holds the power in your community?* and *Who is invested in your community*, and others that challenge issues with current redevelopment strategies and dig deeper into residents' experiences and input about urban redevelopment.

History

The Land of Opportunity team came to New Orleans immediately following Katrina to document the experiences of diverse groups of people from different communities on the ground during the redevelopment of the city. After capturing over 1500 hours of on-the-ground footage of the redevelopment process over a 5-year span, the feature film was released chronicling the experiences of New Orleanians and local organizations as they

navigated the city's chaotic rebuilding process (Land of Opportunity, 97 minutes, 2011: landofopportunitymovie.com).

The Land of Opportunity team continued to tell the story of post-crisis urban redevelopment by partnering with filmmakers in other cities and creating a collaborative project featuring additional footage from New Orleans as well as a multitude of stories from New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, and other cities. The multilayered interactive web platform features diverse stories of post-crisis urban redevelopment as well as supplementary educational and academic content designed for classroom use and academic research, or to inform and facilitate community organizing (landofopportunityinteractive.com).

How it works

The interactive multimedia platform features a wide array of rich media videos (RMVs) containing multiple layers of content. Rich media videos contain a “base layer” containing a primary storyline (such as the redevelopment of public housing in New Orleans), and secondary layers containing additional related stories, and/or educational information (such as a clip about public housing redevelopment in Chicago, or a statistical report about public housing in the U.S.). With the layering component, the Land of Opportunity team collaborated with multiple partners (filmmakers, journalists, scholars, and advocates) in various to curate content layers that show how experiences of redevelopment connect and relate in different cities. Users can switch between layers of content in order to examine and compare testimonies of post-crisis urban redevelopment from multiple perspectives.

To help guide users through the content, the rich media videos are organized into broad themes, or *categories*. Categories, such as *Displacement/Home*, *Community/Commodity*, *Exclusion/Engagement* encourage users to think about the broader connections between residential experiences of urban redevelopment in different communities. These thematic categories also allow users to explore content based on their interests, and help researchers, students, educators and community organizers locate relevant content more easily.

Researcher's Role and Researcher's Relationship

My relationship to the Land of Opportunity platform affects my role as a researcher. I began my involvement with Land of Opportunity as a researcher for supplementary multimedia content and data. My role as a researcher and extended time spent on the platform deepened my interest in the contrasting processes of urban redevelopment and how redevelopment differentially affects residents. The accessibility of the videos and the breadth and depth of the content on the platform was a promising data set for comprehensive research and inspired me to perform a comprehensive analysis of redevelopment outcomes.

However, my role as a research fellow also created some limitations in my study. Because I am involved in the creation and curating of supplementary educational data on the platform, I had to exclude it from my analysis in order to minimize bias. For this reason, I only used video footage in the rich media videos, which were filmed, edited, and produced without my labor or influence.

Through an analysis of the far-reaching testimony available on Land of Opportunity, I was able to identify similarities and differences between redevelopment strategies across the U.S. While the experiences of residents differed, I found that neoliberalism in urban redevelopment tends to result in similar impacts on incumbent residents of urban neighborhoods.

Post-Crisis Urban Redevelopment: Background and History

To inform my research on the impact of post-crisis urban redevelopment on incumbent residents of American cities, I examined redevelopment following two major waves of urban crisis in the latter half of twentieth century and into the early twenty-first century United States. While the Great Depression was met with New Deal redevelopment strategies inspired by the top-down safety net systems of the Keynesian welfare state, the urban crises of the mid and late twentieth century were met with capitalistic urban redevelopment strategies of Fordist and neoliberal ideology (Schmid 2012). The simultaneous social, political, and economic strife emergent in the early twentieth century provided the perfect climate for urban crisis. Influenced by Henry Ford's concept of mass production and consumption, the urban core moved away from collective ownership and use of public space and adopted a market-oriented approach. Fordism encouraged the shift toward a globalized city and embraced an increasingly financialized economy centered on the use of public space for private benefit and profit growth. This, along with white flight and desegregation, caused the depletion of economic investment in the urban core as whites commuted to the city to work, but invested their money in the suburbs (Schmid 2012). This allowed for the expansion of industry in U.S. cities while residential

enclaves—home to mostly working class and people of color and the small businesses that serviced them—deteriorated.

Despite citizens' efforts within the Civil Rights Movement toward collective consumption and localized means of urban production, issues associated with Fordism remained on the social agenda with the rise of neoliberal paradigm in American governance (Mayer 2012). While capital investments increased urban globalization and production, deindustrialized cities became increasingly unaccommodating to the residents who remained, and pushed them deeper into economic crisis (Friedrichs 1993). Rezoning of urban space to support these investments displaced working class communities of color from resource rich urban centers, and directed them to isolated geographically undesirable neighborhoods, further enforcing racial segregation (Slater 2012).

Following the urban crisis caused by globalization and deindustrialization, the United States began to shift toward a conservative political regime (Follian 2010). The associated disinvestment in public programs and infrastructure led to the quick decline of neighborhoods. From the effects of the urban decline, low-income residents and communities of color in U.S. cities were heavily reliant on public investment to supplement the missing tax base that white and middle-class residents took with them to suburbia. This shift in political regime led to the neglect of safety net programs that subsidized income and resources such as affordable housing, education, and health care, and pushed declining cities into full-blown crisis (Fraser and Kick 2007, Costes 2014).

Slum Clearance, Urban Renewal and Racial Cleansing

Dating back to the late 1930s, neoliberal redevelopment strategies were employed as a response to economic depression in America's slums. Anti-New Deal policy halted traditional public housing development programs for low-income residents, and focused on clearing slums for commercial redevelopment. With the Housing Act of 1949, residents and activists were able to negotiate for more public housing as part of the redevelopment plan for low-income families displaced by slum clearance. However, the Act allotted billions of dollars for slum clearance and commercial redevelopment in urban cities, and only mandated enough public housing construction to rehouse approximately ten percent of families displaced by slum redevelopment (von Hoffman 2000).

Moving forward, urban redevelopment programs became increasingly focused on using government funding to bolster commercial redevelopment, and slowly public housing programs that accompanied them. This strategy, later termed *urban renewal* incited a marriage of public investment and private commerce that became the new driving force for the next generation of neoliberal urbanization as the public became a target of market exploitation for capital gains (Harvey 2005). Under this policy, city governments used public funds to bolster private investment in business interests in an effort to bring white and middle-income residents back to the urban core.

Because deindustrialization and white flight, redlining, and other discriminatory laws concentrated African Americans and other people of color into segregated slums, they represented a large percentage of residents in clearing zones. This illuminated the issue of racial cleansing as whites re-invested and settled into newly cleared space and the people

of color who lived there before struggle to survive in the spaces that remained. These racial dynamics underlying the processes of urban development sparked class and race conflict surrounding neoliberal redevelopment strategies that are still being debated today.

Urban Redevelopment and the Right to the City Movement

Responses to urban renewal projects include citizens resistance in many U.S. cities to the exclusive redevelopment strategies that disrupt urban communities, contribute to racial segregation and exacerbate poverty. As public spaces and resources within cities are sold to the private sector, the community is denied the opportunity to actualize basic human rights within the city. The commodification of public space in a way that only serves those who have political and economic power has a tremendous effect on the attainability of basic human rights for others who occupy the space. This is to say that redeveloping cities to serve white and middle class residents diminishes the means of survival for low-income communities of color. When communities lose their common ground within cities, collective democratic decision-making is lost as well (Borja 2010, Marcuse 2010, Brawley 2010). Acts of resistance to neoliberal redevelopment strategies by citizens, as well as contributions from scholars, experts, and activists culminated in a movement toward the “right to the city.”

Henri Lefebvre, father of the Right to the City movement, claimed that the right to the city is “like a cry and a demand ...[for] the return to the heart of the traditional city...” (1967: 178). The movement is fueled by three main questions that seek to explain why crises exist. “Whose right?,” “What right?,” and “To what city?” That it is the “right to information, the rights to use of multiple services, the right of users to make known their

ideas on the space and time of their activities in urban areas...” (1991: 34). This right, Lefebvre demands, belongs not only to the contributing members of the neoliberal urban city, but to the economically excluded, culturally marginalized or geographically alienated citizens who are deprived or discontented by the social ills of Fordist and neoliberal development (Lefebvre 1967, 1991).

The Right to the City movement as Marcuse describes, emphasizes that rights within cities are not separate issues for different interest groups, but instead are all housed under one singular right—the “right to the city.” Stated by Marcuse, the current model of urban redevelopment is centered on the conflicting desires of different members of the community, the resolution to which is usually biased by economic and political power.

The Right to the City movement embodies the critical theoretical perspective that disparate access to decision-making power in one’s community is rooted in the fundamental structure of society, and of the city. It calls for the collective demand to eradicate structural inequalities as a whole in order to benefit everyone mutually—rather than the fragmented and conflicting struggles between different interest groups for access to various rights. Since the anti-World Trade Organization summit in 1999, international protests against the move toward neoliberal forms of governance and resulting elimination of citizens’ rights have made waves around the globe (Marcuse 2011). Drawing from Lefebvre’s “right to the city,” sociological and urban theorists such as Marcuse, Harvey, Brenner, Mayer, and Slater incorporate an analysis of neoliberal and critical urban theory to create an active framework for alternative ideas of post-crisis urban redevelopment in the twenty-first century.

Theory

Post-crisis urban redevelopment in the twenty-first century is riddled with contentious debates surrounding equity, access, and rights to public space. The theoretical underpinnings of post-crisis urban redevelopment show that we have arrived at our current urban dilemma through the culmination of various socio-historical processes whose lingering effects set the tone for the next generation of action. Theories driving urban redevelopment assist in understanding relationships between city, government, and people in order to identify recurring issues and themes present within the framework of neoliberalism, as well as alternative systems of governance within the framework of critical urban theory. Knowledge of the Right to the City movement allows me to examine how resistance to neoliberal forms of governance is gaining ground, and how alternatives to neoliberal development are being implemented. Finally, documentary film theory informs my conceptual analysis of audiovisual content on the Land of Opportunity platform. These theories of crisis, urban development, and documentary film all intersect to provide a multi-dimensional framework through which to understand and analyze post-crisis urban redevelopment.

Neoliberal Urban Theory

Though American cities have been through waves of redevelopment in the past, neoliberalism has majorly influenced resident outcomes in twenty-first century redevelopment (Costes 2014, Goetz 2010). Stabilization strategies aim to alleviate core urban issues through mixed-investment models of urban redevelopment. In this model, government works with the private sector to find market-based solutions to core urban

issues as an alternative to public investment (Newman and Wyly 2006). However, neoliberal strategies designed to transform housing, education, and health care have failed to promote stability and instead have led to further inequity and isolation in urban communities, further exacerbating poverty and racial segregation (Bagert 2002, Bates, 2013, Goetz 2013).

Like Fordism, neoliberal forms of urban redevelopment emphasize the mobilization of city-controlled property for capital gains. However, neoliberalism acknowledges the lingering social effects of past development strategies and aims to incorporate market-based solutions to current urban issues of poverty, exclusion, and isolation (Mayer 2012). Neoliberal governance connects the public and private spheres not just in terms of space, but also in terms of public services. The theoretical emphasis of individual and corporate freedom from regulation within the market extends also into the public sphere, submitting all aspects of the urban to market-forces (Harvey 2005).

As neoliberal policies have taken root, public spaces have shrunk, public services have been curtailed, and safety nets have been designed to protect against the negative side effects of market-forces have deteriorated as city budgets have been restructured for increased capital investment. While the privatization of public services removes the burden of social welfare from the state, efforts to commoditize urban space often fail, destabilizing urban centers and resulting in crisis (Costes 2014). As cities have grown and developed over the past few decades, the issue of privatization has steadily become more prominent in urban communities. Scholars and activists fighting against neoliberal urban governance have developed a critique of dominant paradigms of urban redevelopment that favor a more inclusive and equitable city. In preparation for my analysis, I reviewed these

critical urban theories that suggest alternative ideas to the dominant neoliberal urban theory.

Critical Urban Theory

Critique of the dominant urban paradigm is evident as early as 1845 with Engels' call for a "city for people," but became prevalent in the 1960s through the unified voices of the post-World War II urban renewal projects (1987 [1845]). Pioneers of critical urban theory such as Lefebvre, Castells, Harvey, and Marcuse seek to understand the ways in which capitalism and urbanization intersect and how they impact socio-spatial inequalities, power relations, and political institutional arrangements (Marcuse, Brenner, Mayer 2012). As defined by Brenner, critical urban theory,

emphasizes the politically and ideologically mediated socially contested and therefore malleable character of urban space – that is its continual (re)construction as a site, medium and outcome of historically specific relations of social power (2009: 198).

The goal of critical urban theory is to expose any inequalities, marginalization, or crisis tendencies associated with the dominant urban paradigm in order to politicize a strategy for change (Brenner 2009). In practice, critical urban theory seeks to expose the root origin of urban inequity, propose an agenda for change, and politicize the social change agenda (Marcuse 2009). Critical urban theorists argue that the root origin of urban inequality is the inherently discriminatory nature of capitalism. Because capitalism is characteristically perpetual of inequality, a city that runs via capitalistic systems of governance is inherently unjust as well (Schmid 2012).

Critical urban theorists and activists have politicized their agenda for change in the framework of the Right to the City movement. The Right to the City is a global response to neoliberal urban redevelopment and the privatization of public space that emphasizes the citizens' right to decision-making power in the way cities are shaped and reshaped through the process of urbanization (Harvey 2008). Ultimately producing a World Charter for the Right to the City, the movement has had far reaching agents of politicization ranging in different types of media vessels. The activist documentary film is the agent of politicization for social change that I would like to explore for the purpose of this study.

Activist Documentary Film

Activist documentary film genre surfaced in the first quarter of the twentieth century with the political curiosity of filmmaker John Grierson, and has been a useful tool in the social change agenda to date (Aguayo 2005). Documentary film genre originated as an attempt to provide a realistic representation of civic life in order to promote democratic participation among citizens. However, in its second wave of popularity with the addition of sound, documentary film became a vehicle of representation for marginalized communities. "Talking heads" gave film actors a voice, bringing issues of marginalized experiences to the forefront of society and allowing us to bear witness to their testimonies (Aguayo 2005). Improvements in technology have made documentary film increasingly accessible to citizens, inspiring self-reporting methods of social documentary, and even provoking rhetoric among the audience. The third, and most recent wave of activist documentary film in the era of the internet and economic globalization provides documentary activists a platform for the larger community to become a part of the

discourse on issues addressed in the film, and to become involved in the public sphere to promote socio-cultural and political change (Aguayo 2005).

Land of Opportunity is a good example of interactive documentary film that engages the audience to become a part of the discourse. The critical questions raised in the platform, as well as the ability for users to interact with the content, also gives merit to its ability to serve as a tool for education, activism, and research.

Literature Review

The crisis of urban America originated when major cities began to decline and deteriorate due to shifting social, political, economic, or environmental factors. As urban neighborhoods become disinvested and face decline, residents, community organizations, developers, and government actors plan for their redevelopment. However, not all of these visions for redevelopment can be actualized. This literature review explores the ways U.S. communities in crisis are redeveloped in the twenty-first century, and what has been discovered so far about residents' experiences with post-crisis urban redevelopment. In order to understand these experiences, I explore literature documenting the outcomes of neoliberal urban redevelopment strategies as well as community-based urban redevelopment strategies.

Neoliberal Urban Redevelopment

Public Housing

In previous waves of urban decline, deteriorating neighborhoods were redeveloped by the up and coming class whose interests were gladly accommodated by surrounding commerce, resource providers, and private real estate companies. This process of gentrification attracted market investment, and drove up real estate values and cost of living in previously affordable neighborhoods. Increased cost of living financially displaced incumbent residents to unfamiliar and often more disinvested areas of the city (Levy et al. 2006). The market-based attempt to revitalize and stabilize publicly and privately owned urban housing stock has had no different outcome. The literature shows that in most cases, government investment in social mixing strategies and homeownership opportunities, and

the marketization of public services are successful at revitalizing physical neighborhoods and attracting private investment, but have an overall negative impact on incumbent residents (Newman and Wyly 2006). This study attempts to verify and expand on these findings in order to describe the experiences of low income communities of color in the process of post-crisis urban redevelopment.

The original functionality of public housing is to provide security from the inequities of the housing market, and resilience against inflation and gentrification. As previous waves of gentrification claimed the remaining desirable urban areas, and other supplies of affordable housing stock have been eliminated, public housing remained as the only secure option for low-income residents. However, through privatization it is now the last frontier for 21st century gentrification.

The implementation and maintenance of public housing has been controversial since its birth, however, extreme roll backs to public housing support in the 1980s, and the resulting destruction sent public housing into a downward spiral. This set the climate for officials to begin promoting the redevelopment of public housing in the name of neighborhood stabilization. The transformation into mixed-income developments through the HOPE VI initiative demolished neglected public housing units and replaced them with smaller scale buildings to revitalize the infrastructure of urban neighborhoods. After the federal HOPE VI initiative launched, redevelopment of America's public housing stock began moving away from a need-based urban revitalization, toward a government assisted profit-driven acquisition of housing authority land for market use.

The marketization of new housing units and the movement of private, middle income consumers into formerly public sector space financially and socially displaces incumbent

residents who are economically, and racially marginalized (Fraser and Kick, 2007). The competition for revenue incentivizes urban mercantilism, often at the expense of vulnerable populations. Therefore, opening the housing authority to mixed-development goes against all of the mechanisms put in place to preserve affordability (Bagert 2002, Goetz 2013, Goetz 2011). This type of government-subsidized gentrification is being called the “third wave” of gentrification due to the acquisition of formerly protected, valuable urban land.

Housing authorities in metropolitan cities such as Atlanta, New Orleans, and Chicago were targeted for demolition and redevelopment at the beginning of the HOPE VI initiative in the 1980s, in some cases even before disinvestment had taken full effect (Goetz 2013). Despite protests from residents, activists, and community members in all three cities, residents were forced from viable housing units and relocated in the private sector or elsewhere with a very low chance of return to redeveloped units. In the case of New Orleans, housing projects were slated for redevelopment as early as 1992, and six of the largest public housing sites were boarded up after Hurricane Katrina (Bagert 2001, Goetz 2013). Public housing residents, who are predominantly black, are now forced out of the city or into isolated, voucher-supported properties away from their communities. Similarly, in Chicago, as public housing is slated for redevelopment, former public housing residents are more likely to relocate to households in marginalized neighborhoods outside of their communities where resources are scarce and support systems are weaker (Chaskin and Joseph 2012).

Public Healthcare

The private and mixed-income redevelopment of public hospitals across U.S. cities has been a major component of neoliberal social reform. Though public hospitals in metropolitan cities serve as fundamental safety nets to supplement medical care costs for low-income residents, the shift toward consumer-oriented health care is characterized by the politically motivated privatization of public hospitals (PAR 2013). While privatization improves profit margins and patient stay efficiency, negative associations with privatization include price adjusting, and decrease in care to the community, especially for low-income residents (Bovbjerg et al. 2000).

Much like mixed income housing, private hospitals provide quality, polished, and specialized services to low-income patients, but they do not have the capacity to provide services to everyone (Bovbjerg et al. 2000). The literature reveals that some privatized hospitals invested in replacement clinics and nursing homes to cater to uncompensated care for low-income residents after privatization (Bovbjerg et al. 2000). A future model for health care may reflect this disbursement strategy for treating uncompensated care patients more efficiently in the absence of public hospital safety nets in order to move toward a more sustainable model of community based health care and a more stable urban core.

Community-Based Redevelopment

U.S. government strategies to redevelop declining cities cause displacement, reinforce inequality, and ultimately send urban neighborhoods into a secondary housing crisis (Fraser and Kick, 2007). Outcomes of current models of neoliberal urban redevelopment in

housing and healthcare have called for reconsideration of how to revitalize without excluding incumbent residents from services. There is a rapid move in the literature toward sustainability and alternative multi-partnership community redevelopment models. The literature reveals that there are effective models that rely on multiple partnership investment to achieve sustainable post-crisis urban redevelopment of housing, education, commerce, culture, and community (Saegert et al. 2012). Two examples of these models are Community Land Trusts and Community Development Corporations.

Community Development Corporations and Community Land Trusts

Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and Community land trusts (CLTs) are neighborhood development models designed to protect the affordability of homes in urban communities. Community Development Corporations are multi-partnership organizations that work to acquire and manage affordable housing or mixed-use developments for sustainable redevelopment. CDCs are the closest community-based alternative to the public-private partnership presented in HOPE VI. Common characteristics of CDCs are high internal capacity, effective project management, several funding sources, and expansion to multiple sites. CDCs provide stable urban residence, moderate support services, and community-level commerce for individuals seeking supportive amenities. However, they do not offer residents a stake in the community or opportunity for long-term growth and development supported by the CLT stewardship model (Johnson 2013).

The CLT model is an arrangement in which a stewardship organization collectively purchases an area of land with the intention of keeping it within the organization to protect affordability. Community members then lease or buy homes in the neighborhood while the

property they sit on stays within the trust. Renters or homeowners are able to stay in a unit as long as they desire without facing fear of unaffordability due to the stabilized land value (Saegert et al. 2012). If a community stakeholder wishes to relinquish housing arrangements with the CLT, she will have the opportunity to sell her home to another eligible affordable homebuyer or back to the CLT for a regulated profit margin.

Community land trust organizations have been effective in protecting urban residents against unaffordability, foreclosure, disinvestment, and gentrification (Axel-Lute 2010). CLTs have also had success in the implementation of personal and economic growth opportunities via stewardship organization initiatives. Many CLTs offer educational opportunities, cultural enrichment programs, and employment services; and some even offer financial mobility plans for renters and homeowners to maximize economic growth (Saegert et al. 2012). CLTs often designate mixed-use spaces within the neighborhood for community gardens, commercial development, and recreational development. Community stakeholders have the opportunity to elect board members and routinely express their input regarding community issues in a safe and meaningful space (Axel-Lute 2010). Community Land Trusts are a sustainable alternative to gentrification and displacement because they provide affordable homeownership within a coherent community atmosphere where all residents have a stake in the future of the community.

Gap in the Literature

The body of literature pertaining to post-crisis urban redevelopment utilizes a range of qualitative and quantitative methods intended to tell of what happens to urban residents during post-crisis redevelopment. However, there does not seem to be a comprehensive analysis of how different redevelopment strategies are implemented, and in what ways the residential outcomes differ. There are also few studies that performed a cross-analysis of the experiences and outcomes of redevelopment in different cities. There needs to be research that compares redevelopment strategies to identify what is the best in order to inform policy relating to socio-spatial issues. Also, while the literature is well-informed by statistical data, it does not provide rich, first-hand accounts of the redevelopment process from residents and others involved. Because urban redevelopment processes are multi-pronged operations with countless factors involved in measuring and recording the outcomes, formal data sets and statistical analyses only tell part of the story of what happens to the residents post-development. Because there is a lack of research centering on resident testimony of their own experiences, I seek to explore the more conceptual meanings of post-crisis urban redevelopment described by community members. An analysis of the Land of Opportunity platform allows , a more comprehensive study of the portrayal of residential experiences of post-crisis urban redevelopment in the United States.

Research Methods

Audiovisual Analysis

Ways of reporting on social phenomena are becoming more direct and detailed through increasing access to media technology. Video camera recording has enabled researchers to perform in-depth audiovisual analysis of first-hand accounts of social phenomena.

Audiovisual data provides a more holistic way of reporting on social phenomena in which the “experiences and meanings become tangible through visual representation and may be understood in ways that other conventional forms of communication may not necessarily allow” (Leibenberg, 2009). To inform my research on post-crisis urban redevelopment, I performed a holistic audiovisual analysis of the documentary footage available on Land of Opportunity. A holistic analysis involves careful and repeated viewing of audiovisual content, and analytic memo-writing describing the overall impression of the content and the details that led to that impression. Codes and themes are constructed after multiple cycles of viewing and analytic-memo writing (Saldaña, 2013).

Data

To perform my analysis of post-crisis urban redevelopment, I used the rich media videos available on the Land of Opportunity interactive multimedia website platform (www.landofopportunityinteractive.com). Using the platform I observed the experiences of post-crisis urban redevelopment as they are portrayed in documentary films by Land of Opportunity, and various partner filmmakers across the U.S. The setting of the video footage spans 1988 through 2015 and ranges in location including New Orleans, Atlanta,

Boston, Chicago, Detroit, San Francisco, and New York. The format and nature of the videos varied. Some of the videos featured “talking head” style testimonials from interviews with residents, activists, planners, public officials, and developers. Others captured live-action footage of redevelopment processes such as montages of redevelopment sites before and after completion, and meetings between residents, developers, city council, community organizations, etcetera.

Rich Media Videos

I selected *nine* rich media videos containing a total of *101* documentary film clips from the Land of Opportunity platform. I chose these videos based on relevance of content to my research question, *What is the experience of post-crisis redevelopment for low-income communities of color in U.S. cities?* After viewing all of the RMVs on the platform, I selected every video that contained relevant content based on the criteria: post-crisis setting, urban location, footage or discussion of neighborhood or community redevelopment. While some of the footage is captured by activists using a cell phone camera or a single camera, most of the videos are professionally captured, edited and produced by Land of Opportunity and other documentary film projects and community organizations.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Once I selected the RMVs, I viewed and reviewed them carefully, transcribing significant dialogue and writing analytic memos each time describing the overall impression I received from the content, and the details that led to that impression. To analyze audiovisual data, Saldaña suggests examining dialogue transcripts and analytic memos

describing visual data together as a whole to get a comprehensive conceptualization of the video (2013, 52). I then coded my transcripts and memos for each RMV separately.

Coding and Themes

I coded my data using a holistic, interpretive lens recommended by Saldaña, using key words and phrases to describe essential ideas that emerged (52). For my interpretation, I first identified codes deductively from general themes found in my review of the theory and literature, as well as borrowing from the RMV categories identified by Land of Opportunity. I created inductive codes for emergent concepts in my data. I then reviewed my data again using my emergent codes deductively to identify any emergent sub-codes. I repeated this coding process until no new codes emerged. Next, I organized my codes by reviewing and consolidating or differentiating similar codes, and then grouping codes and sub-codes into categories to create themes. To ascertain that my themes were accurate, I reviewed my data once more, ensuring that each theme was identified correctly and fairly. Once I decided my final codes and themes, I used them to do a cross-analysis of the similarities and differences between the experiences portrayed in the videos to begin answering my research question.

Findings

Background: Urban Crisis

Disaster/devastation

Disinvestment/disrepair

Housing Crisis

Economic Crisis

Urban poverty

Redevelopment

Residents in major U.S. cities are speaking out about the challenges they face in the wake of rapidly shifting economic, political, and social climates of their neighborhoods. Urban crisis in the U.S. has developed in many different forms over the past few decades. It has threatened long time residents' survival and ability to thrive in the neighborhoods that they and their families have been in for generations. From the instantaneous uprooting of New Orleans via disaster to the gradual displacement of native San Franciscans by the tech industry, the stories told by residents featured on the Land of Opportunity platform paint a poignant picture of the experience of urban crisis for low-income communities of color in the United States.

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, damaging eighty percent of the city's homes and businesses, displacing hundreds of thousands of native residents and destroying the social, political, and economic fabric of the city (The Data Center, 2015). In the wake of the storm, residents faced various challenges due to the severity and vastness of the devastation. In *How Does One Begin*, Sunni Patterson of New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward, one of the most culturally historic and hardest hit neighborhoods, recites a poem expressing the state of her home as she walks amongst the rubble and emptiness that remains,

How does one begin to tell of the end when somewhere in the middle the truth lies belly up in the gutter dingy and still...
Stained with poverty the type no detergent can get out of nowhere
She said water ran up the street asked if I had ever seen something you normally only hear about
And now her house is home to nothing a no one except the memories she remembers as she stands atop broken bunk beds and shards of glass that encase the only picture she ever had of her mother and father she remembers happy here, before the rain came, before the flood of filth filled their eyes...

As residents struggled to make their way back to the city from evacuation and longer-term displacement, many were met with extreme barriers concerning homeownership, affordable and publicly subsidized housing and healthcare, and the right to return to their neighborhoods (Green et. al., 2011). The staggering number of African Americans that are still displaced ten years after the storm suggests that they faced even greater obstacles in returning to their homes. As Cashauna Hill, director of Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center states in *Toward a Just New Orleans*, "... about 100,000 fewer African Americans live here now than lived here pre-Katrina." African American resident Alfred Marshall expresses this loss as he reflects on the ten year anniversary of Katrina, "People are missing. Not only the buildings, the community that we had... the neighbors down the street. The school that was right across the street. All those things are gone."

In other cities, urban crisis takes a similar, yet more gradual form as native residents endure displacement, unsafe living conditions, and loss of economic opportunity and cultural capital amidst the decline and transformation of their neighborhoods. Since the expansion of suburbia and urban flight of the predominantly white middle class, the crisis of the American city has been centered on poverty within minority communities (Fraser and Kick 2007, Costes 2014). As investment capital moved out of cities and educational and economic opportunities deteriorated, urban poverty intensified, and many American

cities fell into an identifiable state of crisis. The lack of opportunity available in the city's urban core left many low-income people of color in marginalized communities to endure unstable or unsafe living conditions, and depend on regulation ordinances and unreliable social safety net systems to make ends meet (Slater 2012).

As city planners, officials, residents, and activists consider how to revitalize and redevelop these communities, a contentious debate arises regarding the best way to rebuild a community. City governments are moving even farther away from the Keynesian model of social welfare to alleviate urban crisis, and employ instead a more neoliberal approach to urban development. At the root of neoliberal urban redevelopment is the motive to alleviate the symptoms of urban crisis through free market strategies (Brenner, 2012). However, it is evident in the footage of residential testimony that the effects of these endeavors have exacerbated issues such as urban poverty and racial segregation, rather than resolve them.

While government-subsidized neoliberal urban redevelopment is the most common approach that I observed in my data, there were also a few occurrences of community-based urban redevelopment and civic involvement that positively impacted residential experiences of the redevelopments. In my findings, I will discuss the different instances of redevelopment that I observed and the overall experiences of incumbent residents who were impacted by these redevelopments.

Out with the Old, In with the New: Neoliberal Urban Redevelopment



Neoliberal urban redevelopment is a trend that values the free market and economic growth as a central means to urban progress and sustainability (Brenner 2012). The global trend toward neoliberal urban redevelopment has led city leaders to appeal to large-scale development plans in order to maximize capital gain from city-controlled property, citing participation in global competition and tourism as avenues to alleviating symptoms associated with urban crisis. It has manifested in a multitude of ways, from legislative changes affecting affordability and usage of property to the privatization of public services. In cities across the United States, neoliberal urban redevelopment plans are creating an influx of higher income residents and consumers, negatively affecting low-income residents in their home communities (Bagert 2002).

In the videos on the Land of Opportunity platform, several instances emerged of neoliberal redevelopment in the private residential and retail sector as well as privatization of public services. Small businesses, homes, and public services are taken

over by neoliberal redevelopment corporations in Brooklyn, San Francisco, New Orleans, and others.

First, in *Out with the Old, In with the New*, featuring footage from Kelly Anderson and Alison Gould's film "My Brooklyn," residents and business owners discuss the 2004 the Downtown Brooklyn Plan. The redevelopment plan was implemented to bring new large-scale retail businesses and luxury residence Brooklyn's downtown to spark economic growth and attract tourists and more affluent consumers. The plan was part of a city-wide series of rezoning policies in New York City to bring the city up to speed with increasingly globalized urban centers in the U.S. and abroad. Deputy mayor Daniel Doctoroff explains the rationale for New York City's redevelopment plan, "We have to think of our position from a competitive standpoint. What do we need to do in this city to attract more people, to attract more visitors, and probably most importantly, to attract more jobs?" The plan involved rezoning small-scale and marginal retail areas to allow for larger development such as hotels, condominiums, and major chain retail stores. While the rezoning did bring in capital investments from major corporations, it also displaced approximately one hundred small businesses from the Fulton Mall area that were owned by local and often racially and ethnically marginalized residents due to eviction, or rising rents that resulted from new developments. Long-time Brooklyn resident and social worker, Rahsun Houston, talks about the dynamics of rezoning and changes in the community.

A lot of stores are no longer here. You have more of the brand name stores that are going up now. The smaller merchants, they don't stand a chance down here now. The commercialism was for people. Now the commercialism is not for people anymore, it's gone corporate now... These are things that are just overwhelming the community that the community will never have a chance to be a part of.

In *Out with the Old, In with the New*, Makani-Themba Nixon, community advocacy specialist and former executive director of the Praxis Project identifies a paradox within neoliberal redevelopment in marginalized urban communities,

What gets developed in a community is all about what makes money. And so then that means that if the government has land that could be quote-unquote-better used for profit, then they need to give that land away because supposedly that's going to generate jobs. But not so much even jobs because people don't talk even about jobs anymore. That's almost like an eighties-seventies thing. They don't even require this land to create jobs, they only require that it creates capital.

This contradictory redevelopment plot is similarly exercised in other U.S. cities as government controlled land is given up to the market to bolster economic growth.

Second, in *We Are Here: Stories of Displacement and Resistance in San Francisco*, featuring footage from the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project, residents in San Francisco discuss deregulation of affordable housing and retail laws that are allowing for large-scale luxury residential and retail redevelopment to accommodate the influx of new transplants that the tech industry is bringing. Until recently, San Francisco renters were protected by the Ellis Act, a California state law that protects the tenant and landlord agreement by restricting a landlord's right to evict all tenants. The law stated that landlords may evict tenants only in order to go out of business and sell the building for non-residential use (CA Government Code Section 7060-7060.7, sftu.org). This was primarily used to protect affordable and rent-controlled units from being re-rented for a higher rate once the evicted tenants were gone. These affordable and rent-controlled units have been instrumental in enabling a broad array of citizens to remain in San Francisco despite previous waves of urban renewal, including African Americans, Latinos, and Vietnamese residents. However, a loophole in the Ellis Act excepting private condominium and single-family occupancy development is now being used to foster rapid reconstruction of San Francisco's previously

rent-controlled and affordable housing units into luxury condos and single-family mansions for new residents of SF who are largely employed by the booming tech industry, and mostly represented by white men. Musician and educator, Benito Santiago, life-long SF resident born to first generation immigrants, faced eviction under the Ellis Act. Benito, who is also a musician and educator in the community, described his confusion when he found out that he was being evicted.

In the eighties, from my understanding the Ellis Act was for the landlords, landladies, getting older who wanted to get out of the rental business...And so when they sold the properties to these property speculators, they came in like Pac-Man buying up all these low income, rent-controlled units like myself and in the process of doing that, displacing people like myself, low-income, and selling the units to the highest bidder, converting to condominiums, so instead paying \$575, a person who can afford \$4000.

Along with the housing redevelopment boom, the impact of San Francisco's neoliberal policy trend has also extended to public services. Public arenas such as parks, playgrounds, and transportation are also being reimagined under the neoliberal influence. In *We are Here, Mission Playground is Not for Sale*, black and Latino youth are confronted while playing ball by a group of white men who obtained a permit from the city to occupy the popular field in Mission Playground. The community's youth invited the group of newcomers to join them in their game, but they declined, demanding that the youth clear the field anyway. One of the older members of the community's youth spoke up against the commodification of the field, comparing his twenty years of residence in the community to his opponent's one year span.

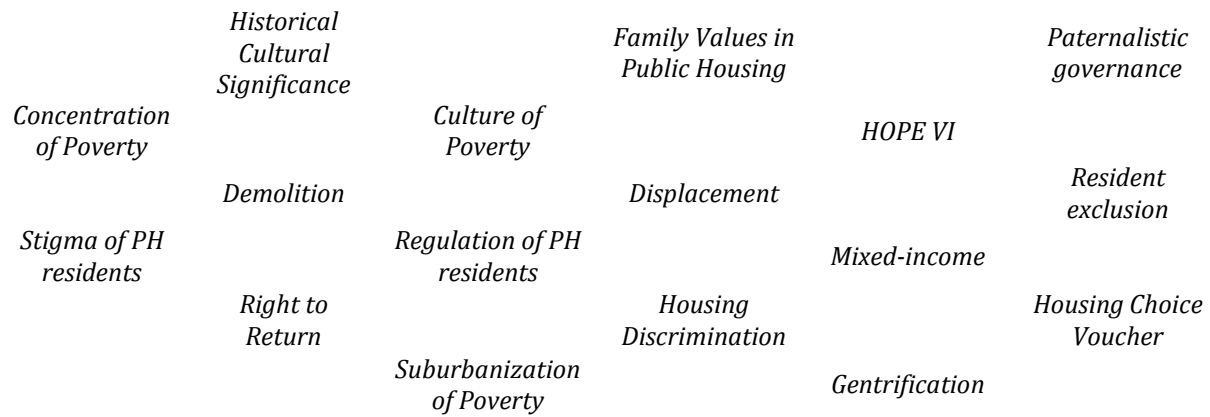
If you wanna play pick-up, you play pick-up like the rest of us...just because you got money and you can pay for the field, you don't get to book it for an hour, to take over these kids lives... You don't understand. This field has never been booked...I've been born and raised here for twenty years and my whole life, we've been playing here. We will share with you, why don't you get a team?

As the newcomers claimed that they are part of the community as well, they were unwilling to participate in the previously established traditions of the community, and insisted that the youth follow the new rules. This type of gentrification not only commoditizes previously free public services that are valued by the community, but also excludes incumbent residents from new policies, contributing to racial and cultural erasure.

Transportation systems are also becoming privatized as the city allows luxury shuttle systems to use public bus stops. These private buses, such as the “Google Bus,” were brought into demand by the tech industry and serve the purpose of providing young professional members of the new San Francisco community with a luxurious, convenient, and eco-friendly way to commute to work. While the majority of native San Francisco residents in these areas cannot afford the cost to ride the luxury buses, their frequent stops interfere with the regular public bus schedule, so many residents including seniors and people with disabilities are displaced from their means of transportation.

In these videos, I found indications that neoliberal urban redevelopment strategies displaced incumbent businesses and residents, and replaced viable housing and employment opportunities with low-wage jobs and high-cost housing options. Though new development suits the needs of newcomers and tourists, it pushes marginalized residents further into poverty and makes it harder for them to survive in their own communities.

“We Live Like Normal People”: Urban Poverty and the Privatization of Public Services



The privatization of public services in order to appeal to the more profitable market of higher-income residents is a trend that is spreading across the United States as local and national initiatives are set in place to defund social safety net systems and supplement the remaining costs with investments from private interests. In order to achieve this financial structure, city governments began gradually cutting funding to public services, slowly strangling resources to low-income communities. This fundamental shift in the provision of public services has sparked a contentious debate surrounding the importance of public safety net systems for native residents of marginalized urban communities.

In *Bricks and Sticks: Public vs. Private*, the importance of social safety net systems are discussed as community members debate the effectiveness of the privatization of public housing in eradicating poverty. Cynthia Wiggins, CEO of Guste Resident Management Corporation explained the plight of the low-wage worker in American cities, “When you talkin’ about someone who makes six dollars an hour coming home with four hundred, almost five hundred dollars every two weeks, they’ll never survive in the private sector. The rising costs of utilities, the rising cost in rent, you know the cost of living...they can’t afford it.” Stephanie Mingo former resident of the St. Bernard Housing Development in New Orleans also shares how she struggled to make her rent, even with the assistance of

public housing, “I always tell people, most of the time, if I didn’t have two jobs... my rent is more than my check, so I live paycheck to paycheck.” Evidence such as this supports the notion that urban poverty is a symptom of the inequitable social, economic, and political structure. Therefore, supporting the need for a structural solution such as regulations and safety net systems.

However, national leaders and supporters of privatization cite the culture of poverty as a rationale to move away from the Keynesian model of social welfare distribution. The theory, heavily rooted in racial stereotypes of poor Black people and Latinos, suggests that problems associated with urban poverty are symptoms of the culture and lifestyle of poor people themselves, rather than any structural disadvantages they may face. In the videos presented on the platform, I observed that politicians and developers have cited the density of poverty in ghettos and public housing developments as the cause for misconduct and crime in poor communities and the justification for the redevelopment of public housing. When portrayed addressing the crowd at a press conference in *Bricks and Sticks*, former Mayor of New Orleans C. Ray Nagin said about the state of the city post-Katrina, “We had concentrated poverty into certain sections of our city and then wondered why we struggled with crime...” This statement shows governmental support for the assumption that the lifestyle of poor black people in New Orleans is inherently flawed and that density within these communities is therefore inherently bad. However, testimony from public housing residents, urban planners, and civil rights experts begs to differ. When interviewed about the association between poverty and crime, former director of the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center, James Perry, argues “people can be poor and still be good, moral people. The idea that that’s impossible is so ridiculous.” Civil rights attorney,

Bill Quigley, who has worked with residents who are suffering from disinvestments, explains that the concentration is not just of “poverty,” but that “it’s a concentration of extended families, it’s a concentration of African American female headed households. There are cooks, there are teachers’ aids, there are nurses’ aids, there are nurses...people help each other. They connect their communities and the like.” Testimony of former public housing residents in New Orleans supports the notion that poor Black people living in dense urban communities value the same quality of life as everyone else. In *Culture Shock: Mixed-Income Housing*, Kawana Jasper, former resident of the St. Bernard Housing Development reminisces about her old neighborhood that was demolished for redevelopment, she recalls her life there.

We live like normal people. We have happy times...my little girl was a cheerleader for Willie Howe Park and I miss going there every day after she do her homework we go to practice or whatever, watch the kids scrimmage, I miss things like that. And you know a lot of kids you know, wasn’t ashamed to say ‘I live in the St. Bernard Development. Why should I be ashamed?’”

Most of the memories Kawana discusses are centered on community and familial involvement fostered by the St. Bernard Development and associated public programs. Kawana’s mother, Sharon, said “We were a big family. We looked out for one another. We loved and respected where we lived, and we tried to build our community so that we could live with love, harmony, and not in fear.” In an on-camera interview in *Bricks and Sticks*, CEO of Policylink, Angela Blackwell, explains how concentrated poverty leads to negative outcomes for residents’ quality of life.

It is not the concentration of poverty that in and of itself creates the problem. It is the concentration of poverty that allows for an identifiable community that the

private sector and the government sector disrespect. When those three things are happening you have an unacceptable situation.

This statement that the symptoms of poverty are exacerbated not by the concentration itself, but by the unwillingness of society to serve poor communities, is supported by the testimonies of public housing residents across the U.S. as well as other low-income residents and people of color who are struggling to survive in America's cities.

As neoliberal urban governance gains popularity, city leaders move toward a more mixed financial structure. This suffocates public safety net systems to poor people in urban communities, causing the state of urban crisis to become more severe. The deregulation and disinvestment in public services under neoliberal motives has pushed the state of urban poverty even further, leaving low-income families to survive in dangerous living conditions. In the case of public housing in the United States, disinvestment and poor management has left living conditions intolerable for low-income residents. In *Culture Shock: Mixing it Up*, featuring footage from the feature film by Ronit Bezael "70 Acres in Chicago: Cabrini Green," footage from Chicago public housing developments dating back to the 1991 shows that disinvestment in public housing quickly deteriorated the living conditions within the developments. Residents at multiple CHA locations, mostly African American mothers, tell of the living conditions they endure in the city's severely distressed public housing developments due to disinvestment and neglect by Chicago Housing Authority. Annette Hunt, resident of the Henry Horner Homes, describes her experience living under Chicago Housing Authority.

It's very hard because you're bringing up kids in a very negative world. It's very negative because you have to do the best you can, you have to teach them, and you have to put all you can into them. But being single and bringing kids up and living in CHA living with the gangs, the drugs, the rats, the roaches, it's very hard. Because

then you have to explain to your child, well why do we have to live like this here. And that's not easy to explain to them.

Along with Chicago, public housing residents in New Orleans, Atlanta, Washington D.C., Detroit, and others face disinvestment in their communities. In some cases, parts of the community are completely neglected by city authorities. In Detroit, a recreation center that served the old Brewster Douglass housing development was abandoned after years of disinvestment and neglect. Former Brewster Douglass residents, Bettie and Raven Milton discuss their memories in the old recreation center. Raven, Bettie's teenage granddaughter reminisces on her childhood there compared to what the center is like today.

Kids felt like they couldn't wait to get out of school because that's exactly where they were going. There was different stuff to do at the recreation center, they helped you with your homework, they had dance teams, basketball, a whole bunch of different stuff. It was so fun up there. And then in the summertime they had day camp, swimming, they had a whole bunch of different stuff. But now you can't do anything cause there's nothing there.

Over time, local and federal disinvestment in public housing developments culminated into severely damaged units in need of major structural renovations. In order to address this, the U.S. department of Housing and Urban Development called a national commission on the state of "severely distressed" public housing. In 1991, HOPE VI, Housing Opportunity for People Everywhere, was established as the national initiative to redevelop public housing (Popkin 2004).

"When you put me in a nice building, you do not make me a better person":

HOPE VI and Self-Determination Among Public Housing Residents

The HOPE VI grant initiative provided federal funding and oversight to housing authorities with public housing developments that were deteriorating due to poor

management and disinvestment. However, at the roots of the HOPE VI redevelopment plan is a mixed financial structure that depends on public-private partnerships to provide funding to the new developments. This mixed financial structure also involves a mixed-income redevelopment model that involved demolition of the original public housing developments, and the dramatic reduction of low-income housing planned for the new developments. These plans sparked debates on displacing the majority of previous public housing residents in order to accommodate to market-rate housing and retail interests. In the video footage, I observed several instances of local and national politicians and developers using the culture of poverty theory to justify their decision-making regarding the privatization of public housing. In *Bricks and Sticks*, developer and president of HRI properties, Pres Kabacoff claimed that, “if you do mixed-income then concentration is not a real problem, but if you have all public housing then concentration can be a horror... concentrating poor and raising children in that environment makes them much more conducive to get involved in criminal behavior.” Donald Babers, former Recovery Advisor and Chairman of the Board for the Housing Authority of New Orleans (2006-20012) said, “to de-densify our sites which is what we’re attempting to do in this whole process, by thinning it out, it gives the families the opportunity to be in a better environment.” While some argue that the HOPE VI redevelopments do provide a better environment for the residents, many think that the new developments are not worth the loss of so many former public housing residents. Naomi Miner, St. Bernard Resident Council President states, “Yes, we wanted them to maybe renovate, or redo. But not at the cost of losing people.”

In the videos, testimony from public housing residents in New Orleans, Chicago, Atlanta, and Detroit, describes how residents were not being considered in the redevelopment

plans and that they feared displacement from the newly developed buildings. One early example of resident involvement in public housing redevelopment is the case of Chicago. Footage from early redevelopments in Chicago shows that many residents feared their right to return to the new developments as brick and mortar public housing developments were slated for demolition. They began to seek involvement in the redevelopment plans and joined committees and working groups in which they were able to share their interests in the new developments. While some Chicago public housing residents state that their vision for the new developments were considered, leaders from Rockwell Gardens, Robert Taylor Homes, Lowden Homes, Henry Horner Homes, and Stateway Gardens felt as though their involvement was just a symbol of equity, but did not hold any substance. Myra King, president of Local Advisory Council for Lowden Homes shared her thoughts on the redevelopment, "In my mind it was just so that they could say, leadership was at the table. This is why I say that. We put our input into the plan, we gave our ideas, but it was almost like it went in the ears of those that was around us... but our plans and our input did not come to fruition." As redevelopment plans progressed, residents were evacuated and moved to other housing sites, and only a small portion of residents were able to return to the new mixed income developments. Through 2009, over 4,000, mostly African American, households had been displaced from public housing units in Chicago (Goetz 2013).

In the case of New Orleans, the events following Hurricane Katrina made the redevelopment of public housing even more contentious. After Hurricane Katrina, neoliberal redevelopment plans came into full swing as corporate developers swarmed the city looking for investment opportunities presented by the devastation and political crisis. Similar to many other cities, the government played a significant role in the decision-

making process regarding redevelopment. However, the push to transform the city's most vital public services into the mixed-income model was motivated more by the desire to exploit public resources for profit, and less by the necessity to rebuild. In the wake of the storm, the St. Bernard Housing Development, among others, was boarded up for demolition, despite its overwhelmingly salvageable state. When residents returned to the city, they were unable to access homes from which they evacuated. In *Miss it the Way I Do*, Kawana Jasper, resident of the St. Bernard Public Housing Development, expresses her feelings of displacement and alienation from her neighborhood as she walks through the development that has been boarded up for demolition two years after the storm (2007).

At one point before the hurricane, I said I can't wait to get out here, I can't wait to move so my kids can be in a better environment. But they say you never miss it till it's gone. And I thought I'd never miss it the way I do. But we not welcome. They're trying to make it more for tourists. Trying to make it like Las Vegas where all the rich people stay within city limits and all the poor people, poverty-stricken people live on the outskirts of New Orleans.

Though the redevelopment plans were already underway by the time most of the residents returned from evacuation, returnees immediately sought involvement in the redevelopment plan in order to express their concern for the displacement of their community under the mixed-income model, fearing that their right to return to their neighborhood will be jeopardized. After being involved in the redevelopment process and having the opportunity to visit a mixed-income site in Atlanta that was developed by the same company as the St. Bernard, former resident Stephanie Mingo says, "I do want something nice but I feel like right now is not a time to do that because that's my community, and I want my community and I want my neighbors back." In a meeting with the Unified New Orleans Plan, architect and planner Fred Schwartz explains how public housing units are factored into mixed income developments,

Right now all of these housing [developments] have forty-five units per acre. Iberville, St. Bernard, [B.W.] Cooper. The mandate by HUD is to go to fifteen...Then [the units] goes to one-third, one-third, one-third. So what you have, you've gone from eighteen hundred public housing units to two hundred. And that's the best case. And you don't have programs then to put the other sixteen hundred people. It's one-ninth. That's the formula and that's why it doesn't work because there's no answer for the other ninety percent.

In addition to fear of displacement, many residents also expressed their frustration with the redevelopment plans due to the culture of poverty rationale and paternalism ingrained in the mixed-income model. In *Bricks and Sticks*, Pam Mahogany, another resident of the old St. Bernard who worked with developers and activists to protect the interests of public housing residents, explains her frustration with the plans at a city council hearing on public housing demolition in 2007.

Yes, we do want better, and we as a whole should be able to come to the table and decide what we want for public housing. Who in their right mind doesn't want their child to have a decent living? Who in their right mind doesn't want their child to have a decent school? When you put me in a nice building, you do not make me a better person.

Like in Chicago, resident input was largely ignored as the city council voted unanimously for demolition and developers and politicians remained unaccountable for the unnecessary demolition of viable low-income housing in the city. The privatization of public housing is just one aspect of neoliberal privatization that is impacting low-income residents who are native to American cities. Public schools and hospitals, among other vital community services are being privatized as well. (Croghan 2005). One example of this I observed on the Land of Opportunity Platform is the redevelopment of Charity Hospital.

Big Charity

Immediately following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, city decision-makers called to permanently shut down Charity Hospital, the oldest operating public hospital in the United States, and only remaining public hospital in the city of New Orleans. Though the ground floor of Charity Hospital had suffered flood damage, the water was immediately pumped out and the rest of the hospital remained completely undamaged. The rationale for the redevelopment was that the existing Charity Hospital was in a state of disrepair and that it already needed to be redeveloped before the storm hit (Croghan 2005). However, the principal motive behind the hospital redevelopment was the statewide plan to join the increasingly competitive health care delivery system in the United States in privatizing health care services. In *The Life and Death of Charity*, featuring footage from feature film by Alex Glustrom “Big Charity”, Fred Cerise, former Vice President of Louisiana State University Health Affairs, stated of the new development, “What you see around the country is these university based academic medical centers that are destination facilities. That’s the big idea behind this is to not just build a new facility but also build a new model of health care delivery for LSU, for New Orleans, for the State.” However many argued that Charity Hospital did not need to be demolished to achieve an improved model of health care.

As Charity Hospital remained boarded up after the storm, the Foundation for Historical Louisiana partnered with world renown architectural experts and determined that Charity Hospital is not only in operable condition, but that the original edifice could also be redeveloped to serve the mission of the new University Medical Center plans. Sandra Stolkes, VP of the Foundation states,

The building is absolutely structurally sound. It’s a million square feet. We don’t understand why they’re not thinking about reusing it. So we hired the seventh largest

architectural firm in the world. And they designed a beautiful concept plan that showed that we could get everything they wanted in perfectly...we could save 34% in construction costs...finish in 3 years of construction time...and we wouldn't have to demolish the neighborhood nearby.

Though these plans were presented to those involved in the redevelopment plans, financial investors and LSU officials were clear in their support for the abandonment of Big Charity in favor of new construction. James McNamara, Former CEO of BioDistrict, states of the new development, "This is the largest hospital construction project currently going on in the globe. We had a Charity Hospital, what we did not have was an industry that's one of the future." Similarly, in support of the new construction, LSU Chancellor Larry Hollier states "This new hospital will be a modern design, modern equipment, I think it will function in a much more aesthetic fashion. The rooms will be all private rooms. I think we will see a broader array of payer mixes." While community members were portrayed as focused on the functional benefits of keeping the old hospital, investors and officials were portrayed as more focused on market appeal such as aesthetic, competitive edge, and prestige. As neoliberal urban redevelopment spreads across the United States, the social, economic, and political fabric of cities are changing. I observed that this shift has impacted urban residents in numerous ways.

“We’re Not Welcome”: Outcomes of Neoliberal Redevelopment

Displacement

*Commodification of
culture*

Economic exclusion

Cultural displacement

Testimony of residents in the videos I observed, suggest that outcomes of post-crisis urban redevelopment across U.S. cities varied, but most experiences described by residents were negative. In my observations, I found that neoliberal urban redevelopment not only displaced low-income people of color from their neighborhoods and vital safety net systems, it also exploited their culture and excluded them from economic growth.

“There’s No More Road Home Comin’”: Economic Exclusion and Subordination

Gentrification

Displacement

*Geographic
isolation*

*Housing
inequality*

*Residential
and retail
segregation*

*Discriminatory
Hiring Practices*

*Wage
disparity/income
inequality*

*Corporate
commercialism*

*Destabilization
of local
economy*

Though neoliberal urban redevelopment claims to revitalize economically challenged communities, evidence of economic exclusion of incumbent residents can be found in both immediate and long-term outcomes of neoliberal urban redevelopment portrayed in the videos. The alleged revitalization of these communities often displaced the original residents and local businesses, and ruined their means of economic participation, stability and safety net systems, ultimately having negative effect on their economic status. In the videos, overwhelmingly Black, working-class residents in New York and New Orleans were

portrayed to suffer economically due to neoliberal redevelopment in their neighborhoods, both as workers and consumers.

While neoliberal urban redevelopment claims to revitalize communities and offer a comprehensive environment that meets the needs of the community, many of these efforts exclude the incumbent community, and appeal to a more affluent, and more white, population. One example of this is evident in the redevelopment of public housing units as a part of the HOPE VI initiative, which excluded former residents from the redevelopment plans and displaced them from their original units, giving them the only option to find housing using Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8). This limited them to low-quality housing in isolated, predominantly African American neighborhoods that had little access to transportation, education, fresh food, and vital community services. In *Bricks and Sticks* James Perry, executive director of the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center, explains that how this economically excluded the overwhelmingly displaced public housing residents and segregated the city even more.

All of those families got Housing Choice Vouchers, and the only place that will take them are segregated low-income African American neighborhoods, which all it did was further concentrate poverty and further concentrate African Americans into exclusively African American neighborhoods which further segregates the city.

Similarly the green space that was proposed by the city to revitalize the Lower Ninth Ward and protect it from floodwaters excluded the African American residents who owned property in those areas, suffocating them from participation in the community as well as the economy. In *Right to Return*, Black homeowners of the Lower Ninth Ward expressed that they experienced discrimination and exclusion when the city deemed those “green” areas of the neighborhood unsafe for rebuilding due to flood risk, therefore discouraging residents, businesses and services alike from rebuilding in those areas . These residents

expressed their concern in facing challenges in accessing goods and services, economic opportunities, transportation, and even insurance coverage for their homes. In the video footage of a Unified New Orleans Plan-sponsored community meeting, the director of the Recovery Center informed the residents of these limitations,

We've called every insurer that is writing, and there's only ten of them. And the other ones, they all told us 'look that's a restricted area, and you gotta look [elsewhere]' ...so if you rebuild be aware, because if there's another fire or flood, you're up a creek. There is no more Road Home coming.

This legislation forced many African American homeowners to relocate from their generational family home, and left those who chose to rebuild in these high-risk areas with no community support and limited public and private services in their neighborhoods (Rivlin 2015).

In New York and New Orleans alike, residents are not only displaced from their homes and jobs, they are also excluded from the new economic opportunities that urban revitalization brings. While leaders from most global cities cite jobs as a main rationale for urban redevelopment, many local residents who are negatively impacted by the development are also shut out from the job opportunities created in the planning, organizing, rebuilding process. *In Toward a Just New Orleans*, native residents speak ten years later about their place in the post-Katrina economy. Many express that they cannot survive in their own neighborhoods anymore due to the redevelopment. Alfred Marshall, New Orleans native worker and member of STAND with Dignity expresses his frustration with the post-Katrina job market for black men in New Orleans,

African American workers are excluded from work. All of the construction is happening and we're not a part of it. So when you got contractors or people of that nature that's really building our city and not giving those opportunities to the black men that's jobless, that's a huge problem in the city.

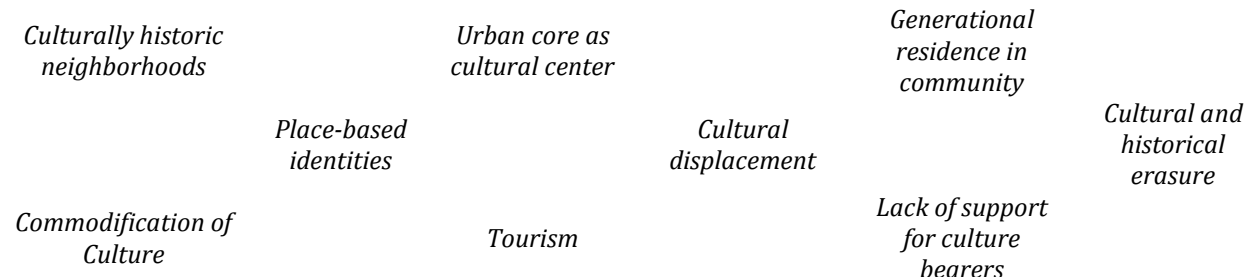
In my observations, similar experiences were shared by New Orleanians across job fields as workers in the cultural arts, tourism industry, and others discussed the difficulty of surviving in the neoliberal post-redevelopment tourist economy.

In *Out with the Old, In with the New*, residents and business owners express their frustration about an inability to participate in the newly developed economy in their neighborhood. Rahsun Houston, native to the downtown Brooklyn Area discusses how the community has been ostracized by the new development,

You still have the original name of the streets, but we don't have the stores. You can't come downtown to really buy the things that you really want because the conversion that's taking place for the shoppers now. Those stores are going out into the outskirts of communities now. Downtown is not the place where you would say this is a rich shopping area. Rich meaning in merchants and in goods.

Like in Brooklyn, redevelopment of New Orleans and San Francisco also appeals to tourists and more affluent residents who are moving in to work in the growing post-redevelopment industries. This economic shift often destabilizes the economy for native residents who contribute to the culture of the community and are vital to the cities that are being redeveloped for cultural tourism.

Consumption without Contribution: Cultural Displacement and the Commoditization of Tourism



The videos that I observed of New Orleans, San Francisco, and Brooklyn, there were portrayed several experiences of cultural displacement. While dense urban areas often attract redevelopment investors due to the value their culturally rich characteristics bring to tourism, the impacts of gentrification and displacement often threaten the survival of culture bearers, community symbols, and historically significant neighborhoods that create the spirit of that community. In the footage I observed, residents and culture bearers across the U.S. expressed similar sentiments about the displacement of culture due to gentrification and the loss of place-based identities associated with those cultures.

Due to Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, many of the familial and social safety nets that artists and cultural creators relied on to survive were uprooted forever. As redevelopment and gentrification raised the cost of survival, many artists, culture bearers and community activists who were mostly African American could not afford to return to the city following the storm. (Green et. al. 2011) In *How Does One Begin*, Sunni Patterson, poet and activist and native New Orleanian, talks about being a culture bearer in New Orleans and trying to survive amongst the rapid gentrification post-Katrina,

The reality is that as a community artist and activist and spiritual motivator and mover, I can't tell T-Mobile, I can't tell the landlord, I can't tell you know Entergy... look I work for the community. They're not trying to hear that...When you go from living in your family's house and now it's gone and you don't have nothing. And now you try to rebuild but you can't do it because the money is so sparse to where it's like what are we gonna do? The only thing you can do is go somewhere and make a way.

While residents like Sunni were displaced outside of New Orleans after the storm, many artists and culture bearers returned to the city to continue practicing their cultural traditions and participate in the burgeoning tourist economy. In *Toward a Just New*

Orleans, Carol Bebel, co-founder and director of Ashé Cultural Arts Center, explains how the commodification of culture in New Orleans tourism negatively impacts native residents, artists and culture bearers that are struggling to survive post-Katrina.

The folks that work in the hotel industry are not getting the salaries they ought to get. Half of what brings people here is how they get taken care of when they're here; in the restaurants and in the hotel. The fact that they are able to, on any given Sunday to be able get into our second lines, or the Mardi Gras Indian tradition. There's nobody who consumes that and thinks about how can I be a contribution to it. It's an unawareness of how culture bearers are valuable.

Like New Orleans, many other cities are attracting corporate development companies that want to capitalize on the historically and culturally rich centers of America's greatest cities. And like New Orleans, the creators of the culture and history of these great cities are being alienated and displaced.

In *We Are Here*, Latino artists and community organizers describe their experience with displacement in the wake of urban redevelopment. Rio Yanez, a Latino artist born and raised in San Francisco's Mission District, shares how he and his parents are being evicted from their apartment of thirty-six years under the Ellis Act,

My family has lived in the same apartment building since 1978. My father was one of the founding members of Galeria de la Raza. The Mission was our home; we all worked there in different ways and went to school. And one of the only reasons we've lasted so long in San Francisco is because of rent control. Without that I don't know where my family would be right now.

In addition to their home, Rio's family legacy, Galeria de la Raza is being threatened under the Ellis Act evictions. This displaces the very art and culture that makes the Mission District unique, as well as dismantling a lifetime of work and stake in the community for Latino immigrants in the Mission.

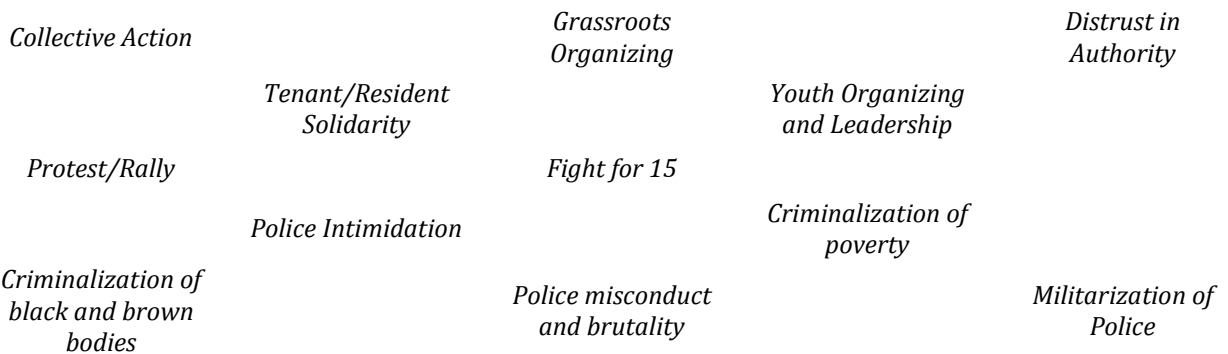
Similarly, Fulton Mall in Brooklyn's downtown was a hub for the arts and trade of many immigrant families who built their lives and laid roots there only to be displaced by large-

scale redevelopment plans. *In Out With the Old, In With the New*, Rawle Gift, Fulton Mall bookstore owner, tells of the loss felt by the community when Duffield's Seafood Restaurant was evicted. Duffield's, a long time seafood vendor and cultural landmark in Fulton Mall, was evicted so that the building it inhabited could be demolished to make way for a hotel to attract more tourists to Brooklyn's culturally rich downtown.

People used to leave from all over Brooklyn to come to that little fish store... He is gone. His livelihood, his customers, they can never get that taste again, that taste is out of our community... That's the kind of neighborhood stuff you would lose when big business comes. There's no more neighborhood again. You lost that. You lost something that is great.

This displacement and demolition of culturally historic people, homes, community centers and businesses contributes to the erasure of some of the most culturally significant neighborhoods in the United States. However, many residents in these affected communities are not going away without a fight. In the videos I reviewed, residents were portrayed as fighting for their right to thrive in their native communities in the face of neoliberal urban redevelopment over the past four decades.

We Won't Go Without A Fight: Opposition and Resistance



From protesting the demolition of public housing, to rallying against a local landfill, and confronting private landlords and corporate developers, residents and activists portrayed in the Land of Opportunity platform have been organizing to fight against neoliberal urban redevelopment in their communities. While some residents claimed they were successful in their protests, others were ignored, or met police intimidation.

Since the dawn of HOPE VI, public housing residents have protested the demolition of their homes and fought for their right to housing as a basic human right. In the videos I observed, there were several instances of resistance from public housing residents and activists. One example of this resistance set the tone for public housing protest strategies to come. In *Culture Shock, Abandoned Community Center in Detroit*, featuring footage from Cass Corridor Films' "Brewster Douglass, You're My Brother", a 1988 protest is discussed. After the Brewster Douglass public housing project in Detroit was slated for demolition, residents and activists gathered on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to occupy four of the boarded up buildings in protest of the demolition. Their intention was to protest homelessness in Detroit and demonstrate the viability of the units. Protestors opened up the buildings from the back and marched peacefully into the development. The protest was broken up and protestors were removed by police intimidation while leaders of the protest were detained for several hours before being released.

Almost twenty years later on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, New Orleans public housing residents occupied the boarded up St. Bernard Development in the spirit of the Brewster Douglass protest. In *Bricks and Sticks*, residents are shown marching a second line around the old development, protestors entered the abandoned units and began cleaning them out, preparing them to house residents again. Protestors hung signs from the units that read

“Housing is a Human Right” among others. Resident Sharon Jasper says to a news reporter, “We are going in the St. Bernard Development today to start the process. We are gonna bring our families back home.” Though residents expressed that they had high hopes for their demonstration, it was quickly shut down as police moved in on protestors and the housing authority threatened to terminate the residents’ rental assistance if they re-entered the development. Despite threats from the housing authority, residents and protestors continued to resist demolition outside of public housing sites, city council hearings, and anywhere their voices would be heard. They were met with increasing police intimidation.

What began as police supervision quickly escalated to wrongful arrests, rough handling, and even police brutality at the final city council hearing to vote on the demolition of the St. Bernard. At the hearing, some residents were physically barred from entering, while police restrained, tackled and even tazed some young male residents who were trying to make their way through the crowd to attend the hearing. Though the city council hearing was intended to give residents a chance to make an argument against public housing demolition, the residents expressed that they felt as if they were met with extreme adversity from redevelopment supporters before they even entered the building.

In San Francisco, residents facing Ellis Act evictions have also shown up to the conversation about redevelopment. In *We Are Here*, footage by the Anti-Eviction Mapping Project and Eviction-Free San Francisco, residents, activists, and local organizations came together in solidarity to protest and rally in a number of ways in opposition to the impact of Ellis Act Evictions in the Bay Area. In addition to holding rallies to raise awareness, organize and share stories in solidarity about their evictions, activists and resident

organizers protested the Ellis Act Evictions to their landlords, property speculators, the mayor, and tech executives. They even interrupted a Google “corporate mindfulness” conference and mobilized to blockade a Google Bus in resistance to MUNY displacement.

While protestors faced an adverse response from their targets, their persistence increased awareness of Ellis Act Evictions in the area and helped to win at least some battles against eviction. When interviewed, residents emphasized the importance of collective action and how the evictions have brought them closer together as a community.

Resident and anti-eviction activist Benito Santiago said,

I’m gonna stand my ground, and see if I can make a difference, and speak up for myself, I’m speaking up for the seniors, the disabled, the educators, the students, the families, who give to the community, who add to the community, and then are being displaced. Going to these protests, and going to these meetings, these conventions, I feel that I’ve made a difference in speaking up.

In some cases portrayed in the platform, collective action and protest played a big role in protecting residents’ rights in the process of neoliberal urban redevelopment. However, some residents were able to use their collective power to redevelop their own communities through grassroots organizing. Residents in Boston, New Orleans, New York, and many other cities were able to take control of one or more aspects of the redevelopment process of their community.

Development Without Displacement: Community-Based Urban Redevelopment



Community-based redevelopment strategies primarily involve members of the community to shape an inclusive plan for the residential, economic, or municipal redevelopment of a community. In the videos I observed, there were several instances of community-based redevelopment strategies implemented in housing, economic sustainability, youth involvement and leadership, and participatory budgeting.

This Land is Our Land: Community-Based Housing Redevelopment

In the videos I observed instances of community-based housing redevelopment in Boston, San Francisco, and New Orleans. In all three cities, residents used the community land trust model in order to protect the availability and affordability of the homes in their neighborhoods. While the model was successful in protected housing affordability in all three cities, the most comprehensive example of community-land trust neighborhood redevelopment is the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI). In *This Land is Our Land*, featuring footage from the feature film “Gaining Ground: Building community on Dudley Street” (Executive Producers Mark Lipman and Leah Mahan), May Louie, Director of Leadership and Capacity Building at DSNI, explains how the members of the Dudley

community made the collective decision to redevelop their neighborhood into a community land trust,

When the neighborhood was really destroyed the community came together and said, “We want to rebuild and revitalize this neighborhood in a way that those of us that are here now are not going to be priced out. And so we set up a land trust to protect the affordability of the homes...That 30 acres of land that had been vacant when DSNI started is now filled with permanently affordable homes with parks and playgrounds, a community greenhouse...

Unlike the mixed-financial structure that many neoliberal mixed-use redevelopment models use that involve multiple public, corporate, and non-profit organizations, community land trusts split ownership of new development between the community and the residents. Resident and former DSNI Board President, Che Madyun explains how the community land trust model is effective in fighting displacement and gentrification in the heart of Boston,

A community land trust is an arrangement that recognizes that the community has an interest and a family has an interest. So it splits ownership. The individuals who buy the housing; they own the house but not the land. And the purpose of doing that is to keep the housing affordable and in the community.

This model has given residents not only the stability of having affordable housing, but also the opportunities that stable, comprehensive communities provide.

In my observation of residential testimonies, I found that Dudley residents generally express that the outcomes of their neighborhood redevelopment have been positive. Debra Wilson, long time Dudley resident and land trust homeowner, discusses the journey of her neighborhood from devastation to sustainability, and the role that Dudley residents have played in the transformation,

I’ve been here for seventeen years ... I wanted stability, I wanted connection, I wanted a sense of belonging. When I bought this house, I bought into a community... Buying this house turned me into an activist. This was a heavy drug area and it’s not like that anymore. If you want change you have to work for that change.

Resident involvement is portrayed as a vital component to the success of the community-land trust model. All members of the community have an opportunity to get involved in the ongoing planning process of the community, as well as economic opportunities that are created by redevelopment. While preexisting members of the Dudley community express their gratitude for having a stake in the community, they argue that the most vital way to keep the future of the neighborhood in the hands of the community is through youth involvement and leadership.

Youth Involvement and Leadership

As DSNI has grown and remained successful over the years, youth who were raised in the community and participated in its revitalization are now becoming prominent leaders within the land trust neighborhood as well as in the community at large. When interviewed in *Youth Rising*, community leaders who grew up in DSNI expressed that the opportunities afforded them through land trust involvement and leadership has given them the ability to be successful adults and make a significant contribution to the future of their community. Carlos Henriquez, who grew up at DSNI and eventually became a state representative, states,

John Barros is the Executive Director, myself as chair of the board, Jason Webb is the VP of Operations - we grew up in DSNI as youth so we know exactly what it's like to be the young guys at the table or not have a voice. Going into our third generation here at DSNI I can only imagine when we pass the torch to them how much better they'll do. At fourteen or fifteen I was clearing vacant lots. Fifteen years ago it would have been all adults planning it, now it's almost all youth planning it.

As the land trust grows, leaders who grew up on the land trust are now extending even more opportunities for youth to be involved in the civic and economic aspects of the

community. Jason Webb explains how generational leadership within the community is creating even more future opportunities for the next generation of youth, “CommunityScapes is a program here at Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative that really focuses on the upkeep of the open spaces that the land trust owns. Over the past five years I’ve run this program. This year I’ve handed over that power to this team of youth.” This opportunity allowed youth to manage a budget, and plan working groups, determine wages, and eventually create even more employment opportunities for fellow youth in the community. The community land trust model of neighborhood redevelopment is portrayed as fostering positive outcomes for long-time residents and youth alike, contributing to the long-term sustainability and economic stability of residents in the community.

Like DSNI, community-based redevelopment strategies are often heavily centered on civic engagement and participatory planning strategies. While community-land trusts are usually small-scale and neighborhood focused, many cities are attempting to bring participatory civic engagement and planning to their city’s budgeting process.

“Your City. Your Money. You Decide.”: Participatory Budgeting

In *Your City. Your Money. You Decide.*, featuring footage from PB NOLA, I observed how participatory budgeting (PB) is used to foster civic engagement among residents in communities across the United States. Josh Lerner of the Participatory Budgeting Project explains how PB brings autonomy and inclusivity to neighborhoods,

First, people brainstorm ideas. They come together in neighborhood assemblies and start to think of what kinds of projects they would like to see in their neighborhoods. Volunteers take people’s initial ideas and turn them into real projects. They are then implemented over the next few years and the following year, the process starts again. PB becomes part of the budget process. It becomes a new way of governing.

When interviewed, residents had positive opinions of the participatory budgeting process and showed interest in being involved in the planning process of their communities.

Estelle Taylor, budgeting participant in New York says of the process, “Oh this is different because you’re actually voting for where the money is going to be spent. Instead of allowing ‘them’ to decide how to spend the money.” Even youth in the community express their interest in being involved in their community’s budgeting process. La’Mirah King, member of the PB youth committee said, “This was a great opportunity for you to be a part of government and better the city you live in. Like who wouldn’t wanna take advantage of that?”

The videos exhibit how participatory budgeting has been successful in 1,500 cities around the world. Some examples of this include Toronto, where public housing tenants voted to fund yearly improvements to their buildings, Chicago and New York where city council members have set aside discretionary funds for the community to vote on, and in Vallejo, California where they use participatory budgeting to decide how to spend a new sales tax. This type of community-based redevelopment strategy claims to value each resident’s stake in the community and in the budgetary spending, leading to a more sustainable community as a whole.

Overall, community-based redevelopment strategies were portrayed as having a positive, inclusive impact on communities and community members. Residents involved in community-based redevelopment plans expressed satisfaction, interest and even excitement about planning their community’s future. Many residents expressed that the redevelopment model their neighborhood used help protect residents’ access to decision-making power in their communities.

Analysis

Post-crisis urban redevelopment projects are often portrayed as having a unanimously positive impact on incumbent residents. However, the qualitative data gleaned from these narratives revealed that residential experiences of post crisis redevelopment vary tremendously depending on multiple factors. The main factor that seemed to influence resident outcomes the most regardless of the city, type of redevelopment, or redevelopment strategy is the level of resident involvement in the planning process. While community-based redevelopment strategies incorporated residents more in the planning process overall, residents who felt that they had a voice in both community-based and neoliberal redevelopment plans expressed more satisfaction with the outcome of the redevelopments.

In community-based redevelopment projects portrayed in the videos, where residents were enabled to identify what they want for the future of their community and work together to achieve it, incumbent residents were more likely to fare well and express satisfaction with the outcome of the redevelopment, as well as more contentment with the compromises they felt that they had made on behalf of other members of their community. In the case of the Dudley Neighborhood redevelopment, resident families continued to benefit from the redevelopment for generations to come. Community-based urban redevelopment strategies also portrayed new communities to be more racially integrated, and as serving each racial and ethnic group fairly and respectfully.

In public-private redevelopment projects portrayed in the videos, residents were most often excluded from the planning process from the beginning, most likely because the rationale for redevelopments were profit-driven. In these cases, residents were less likely

to support redevelopment, fared worse after redevelopment and expressed dissatisfaction regarding the outcome of the redevelopment. Post-development outcomes were more likely to increase racial segregation and lack of fair and respectful representation and accommodation to racial and ethnic minorities. As Newman and Wyly found in 2006, deregulation and the privatization of public services under neoliberal policies are successful in revitalizing neighborhoods and attracting private investment, but they have an overall negative impact on incumbent residents. The most prominent issues associated with neoliberal urban redevelopment that I identified in my analysis of the videos are displacement, economic exclusion, and cultural displacement of residents.

Profit-driven redevelopment models are often touted as successful because the influx of new and more affluent residents and patrons gives the illusion that a neighborhood “improved.” However, along with the influx of new residents, the main difference contributing to the illusion, is the absence of the old community (Fraser and Kick, 2007). Displacement of low-income and working class people of color was a recurring theme in experiences of neoliberal redevelopment in all of the videos I observed. In the videos discussing HOPE VI, the Ellis Act, and the Downtown Brooklyn Plan, residents and families shared that were being displaced from their long-term affordable homes and business rentals through gentrification or eviction as a result of the redevelopment in their neighborhoods. These redevelopments forced incumbent residents to find affordable housing and access to resources outside of their native communities in an ever-inflating market, isolating them into increasingly segregated communities. In the cases of HOPE VI and the Ellis Act, impacts of displacement were even more severe due to the loss of secondary social safety nets that existed within tight-knit low-income communities of

public housing and long-term rent-controlled units. Displacement from affordable housing and retail units forces residents into marginalized communities on the outskirts of cities that are still affordable, but offer much less access to resources and opportunity. This displacement excludes incumbent residents from the economic growth within the urban core that they sacrificed their old lives for. This suburbanization of poverty and people of color to give the city back to affluent, white residents moving back into the city from the suburbs indicates that the intersections of racial and economic power structures are heavily at play when determining who has a “right to the city.”

Economic exclusion was another recurring issue that emerged in the narratives. While residents in Brooklyn were literally put out of business when they were evicted from their retail rentals, low-income and working class residents in other cities experienced more subtle forms of economic exclusion. Residents in New Orleans discuss the ways in which the post-Katrina redevelopments have excluded them from participating in the new economy. While Sunni describes her struggle to survive as a culture bearer in the post-Katrina economy, Alfred Marshall discusses his experiences with discrimination against black New Orleanians in the booming construction industry. In these cases, even if affordable housing were available, incumbent residents are still displaced by absence of a means of survival. This appropriation and consumption of African American culture by white tourists and newcomers indicates a dehumanization of incumbent residents and their significance to the culture of the community.

While neoliberal redevelopment plans are often implemented to capitalize on the intrinsic value of historically and culturally significant neighborhoods, displacement and economic exclusion of incumbent residents inhibits them from creating and participating in

place-based cultural traditions and rituals, and ultimately strips newly developed areas of cultural significance and personality. As Benito Santiago of SF discusses fear of eviction due to the fact that his rent-protected apartment allows him to be an artist educator in the community, Mardi Gras Indian Joe Allen performed for the new influx of gentrifiers and tourists with little to no compensation as he struggled to rebuild his home in the Lower Ninth Ward. Due to the unaffordability of post-crisis cities and lack of support for the bearers of cultural traditions, community liaisons like Benito are forced to move elsewhere, taking their cultural intelligence with them and leaving behind a sanitized and symbolic interpretation of the culture that once was.

The differing outcomes between community-based and neoliberal urban redevelopment strategies again brings up the age-old question of *who has a right to the city?* The displacement of predominantly Black and Latino incumbent residents, and erasure of cultural and historical presence in profit-seeking development strategies shows a lack of rights to “information, the rights to use of multiple services, the right of users to make known their ideas on the space and time of their activities in urban areas...” (1991: 34). As Lefebvre demands, the right to the city should belong not only to the contributing members of the neoliberal urban city, but to the economically excluded, culturally marginalized or geographically alienated citizens who are deprived or discontented by the social ills of Fordist and neoliberal development (Lefebvre 1967, 1991).

In the cases of narratives spotlighting neoliberal redevelopment I reviewed, the motives behind redevelopment projects were racist and paternalistic (in the case of public housing) at best, and at worst, completely profit-driven. Profit-seeking redevelopment processes also denied residents the right to information, use of public services, and a voice within the

community. This type of urban colonialism negatively impacts low-income people of color's quality of life, and their ability to survive and thrive within their own communities, contributing to the further decline of crisis communities.

Conclusion

In my study of post-crisis urban redevelopment in the twenty-first century, I answered the question of *what is the experience of post-crisis urban redevelopment for low-income communities of color in U.S. cities as represented in documentary film?* I found that while neoliberal urban redevelopment is strangling survival resources such as housing, health care, and employment for low-income residents in marginalized communities, more inclusive redevelopment strategies are emerging to protect against the negative impacts of urban crisis and to circumvent the threat of profit-seeking redevelopment initiatives. Residents in community-based redevelopment projects expressed that their involvement in development provided them safety and security in their community as they felt they had a stake in the future of their communities and a voice in their own decision-making. Residents impacted by neoliberal urban redevelopment projects expressed that exclusion from redevelopment process caused them to feel uncertainty and insecurity about self-determination and a stake in the future in their communities.

The tremendous differences between residential outcomes between residents who were involved in redevelopment versus those that were not suggests that residential involvement is an important factor to create equitable, sustainable urban redevelopment. This suggests that policy needs to be implemented to enforce complex systems of accountability and consideration of incumbent residents when planning urban redevelopment projects in order to protect the means of survival and well-being of residents.

This qualitative research project was not without limitations. The videos observed for this project are not exhaustive of all audiovisual testimony of post-crisis urban

redevelopment. Because of the small sample size of videos, results are not generalizable to all cases of post-crisis urban redevelopment. While testimony is taken from resident interviews and statements, filmmakers and Land of Opportunity site organizers have an impact on the way that information is portrayed and organized on the platform.

Future studies of post-crisis urban redevelopment should examine other ways in which residents are protecting against negative impacts of redevelopment both in community-based redevelopment strategies and in neoliberal urban redevelopment strategies. A clear intersectional analysis, including race, gender, and class, on the disparities within outcomes for different groups is also needed to truly inform the research on the impacts of urban redevelopment on low-income communities of color.

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