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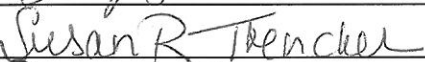
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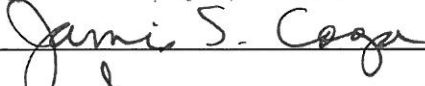of
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Gentrification and the Role of Community from the Perspective of Black-Owned
Businesses in a Historically Black Neighborhood

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts at George Mason University

by

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Bachelor of Arts
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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my family, particularly my three gorgeous and hilarious nephews - Quincy, Hunter and Braddock who are constant sources of laughs and smiles.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

GENTRIFICATION AND THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES IN A HISTORICALLY BLACK NEIGHBORHOOD

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George Mason University, 2013

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This study examines how a sense of community is created and maintained in the gentrifying, historically black Greater U Street neighborhood in Washington D.C. The process of gentrification from the perspective of black business owners can be understood using a theoretical framework that outlines the recursive relationship between physical space, interpersonal connections, and social interactions. Connections within the original, black community are maintained by reinforcing shared sets of meaning. These shared sets of meanings are reinforced through regular interaction with in-group members and by drawing boundaries between in-group (original, black community) and out-group members (new, white community). The ways in which everyday interactions work to maintain connections within the original community and insight into the different sets of meaning each community ascribes to the neighborhood are provided through recorded interviews with ten business owners in the Greater U Street neighborhood.

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, many of the nation's largest cities have experienced an influx of people returning from the suburbs and moving back into urban spaces. This flight back into the city has effectively started the process of reversing "white flight" to the suburbs, as many urban neighborhoods attract a wealthier group of new residents who bring change to the urban landscape. These changes commonly referred to as gentrification, include new businesses and renovated homes. Long-time residents of cities have a mixture of feelings as new, often young and white, residents enter the community and minority residents begin to move to the suburbs or the outskirts of the city to find more affordable places to live. Although most long-time residents of communities agree that revitalization efforts are necessary to changing a neighborhood for the better, there is always an undercurrent of concern for what is lost when a community is gentrified.

Brief History of the Greater U Street Neighborhood

In Washington D.C., ongoing efforts to revitalize the city have noticeably changed the look and culture of the city in the last 20 years as the population has shifted away from being largely African-American to include more Caucasian, Asian, and Latino residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). The Greater U Street neighborhood's black population fell from 78% in 1990 to 44% in 2010 (Neighborhood Info DC 2011). The Greater U Street neighborhood has a particularly rich, vibrant history for the African-

American community in Washington D.C. and the decline in the number of African-American residents leaves many native Washingtonians fearing that the history of the neighborhood will be lost as the demographics of the neighborhood shift.

The buildings and row houses that line much of downtown DC and surrounding neighborhoods began to be constructed circa 1880. The Greater U Street neighborhood was primarily white until Jim Crow segregation hardened residential color lines; as a result, the neighborhood was primarily black by 1900 and has remained so into the 21st century (Rubles 2010: 53-55). While the poorer black population that streamed into the city at the turn of the 20th century from the rural south lived in alleyway communities throughout northwest Washington (Rubles 2010:57), the Greater U Street neighborhood remained primarily middle class

Consistent with discussions about Jim Crow segregation and its impact on black businesses, this neighborhood and its black-owned and black-managed businesses prospered during segregation as black clientele were forced to frequent black-owned businesses, as local white-owned businesses would not serve black customers. Once the neighborhood began to desegregate in the1960's and 1970's, black-owned businesses began to compete with white-owned businesses for black clientele. It is important to note that the riots and the subsequent decline in the neighborhood stalled the integration of the Greater U Street neighborhood until the 21st century. At the same time, many of the neighborhoods' upper and middle-class black residents were moving out of the neighborhood to the Upper Northwest quadrant, into the suburbs, or out of the Washington D.C. area entirely (Rubles 2010:174-175).

The Greater U Street neighborhood's troubles were compounded after a 12-day

riot following the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. in April 1968. Dana Lanier Schaffer

(2003) summarized the events of the riots best:

> On the early evening of Thursday, April 4, 1968, the usual crowds
> bustled along the intersection of 14th and U streets, N.W., in the Shaw
> neighborhood of Washington, D.C., a thriving African-American
> community that had seen the heyday of Duke Ellington's "Black
> Broadway" and served as the city's unofficial center of black leadership.
> At 7:15 p.m. that evening, radio broadcasts began to announce that Martin
> Luther King, Jr. had been shot in Memphis, and crowds of people began to
> gather in the streets. By 8:15 p.m., word spread that King had died, and
> the throngs grew even larger. Stokely Carmichael, the leader of the
> Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), proceeded along
> 14th Street requesting that businesses close and remain closed until King's
> funeral as a show of respect for the slain leader. However, as the mood
> shifted from sorrow to anger, and from mourning to violence, the crowds
> that had been gathering behind Carmichael quickly grew unruly-
> shattering windows at the People's Drug Store at the corner of 14th and U
> streets. Despite Carmichael's and other SNCC leaders' efforts to regain
> control of these growing crowds, mob violence escalated and law
> enforcement struggled to maintain order. By 10:25 p.m., the earliest
> reports of looting reached police radios as rioters broke into Sam's
> Pawnbrokers and Rhodes Five-and-Ten at 14th and T streets, N.W.
> Shortly thereafter, the first fire call alerted officials of a vehicle fire set at
> Barry-Pate-Addison Chevrolet at 14th and Belmont streets.
> These acts sparked the riots that ravaged Washington for 12 days
> and altered its history for decades to come. Violence quickly spread to
> other African-American areas around Seventh Street, N.W., and H Street,
> N.E., and rioters soon destroyed commercial districts that had once teemed
> with movie theaters, car dealerships, white-owned high-end department
> stores, and numerous other shops and restaurants. Although authorities
> called in federal troops to restore order and assist municipal law
> enforcement, the Washington riots resulted in 13 deaths and $24 million in
> insured property damage, a physical devastation more extensive than in
> any other riot-stricken city across the country and one from which the
> neighborhoods have never fully recovered. (p.5-6)

The riots caused extensive property damage that sent the Greater U Street neighborhood

and the entire city into a decline that continued well into the 1990's. After the riots,

hundreds of businesses and residences or "dwellings" were destroyed leaving dozens

upon dozens of people homeless and dependent on the charity of nearby churches and

organizations (Rubles 2010: 212-213). In addition to the physical decimation of the

neighborhood, the 1980's brought the crack cocaine epidemic to Washington D.C. that

wreaked havoc on multiple neighborhoods and contributed to an unprecedented rise in

violent crime and addiction rates. As the community fought against crime and addiction,

buildings remained burned out for years following the riots; even buildings that were not

burned out were bulldozed, leaving vacant lots scattered throughout downtown D.C. and

the Greater U Street neighborhood.

In all, before the 1968 riots, the neighborhood had been a bustling place with a

mix of successful retail stores, nightclubs, theaters and other shops. After the riots, the

neighborhood was largely destroyed and remained so well into the early 1990's when

efforts to revitalize the city and bolster the city's economy began to take shape. In

Washington D.C., community revitalization efforts have been under way for over 20

years as government officials and residents seek to revive the city structurally and

economically. With this effort enters a struggle to refresh the look of the neighborhood

while maintaining the rich culture and history that provides a sense of pride to residents.

In the context of this history, it is not difficult to conceive of large-scale distrust

as revitalization efforts mean gentrification and displacement of long-time residents when

property values rise. Rubles (2010) summarized the process of gentrification on U Street

best:

> …gentrification is different from "normal change" in the rapidity of
> divergence from the past, and in the scope of the transformation that takes

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place. All aspects of neighborhood life are affected in a compressed time period. As a consequence, the underlying community organization substructure fragments before most residents and outsiders can recognize the impact of gentrification. This is precisely what happened in the U Street neighborhood. Along U Street – as elsewhere in cities undergoing these disruptive changes – many local residents became embittered as their lives were uprooted by forces they could not control. (P.267)

The Greater U Street neighborhood was 67% black and 18% white in 2000; only 10 years later in 2010, the neighborhood had shifted to 44% black and 41% white (Neighborhood Info DC 2011). As this shift in demographics continues, the question of historic and cultural preservation of the Greater U Street neighborhood as a predominately black community is a growing concern for long-time residents. With ongoing revitalization efforts and successful renovation of many of the blocks in the Greater U Street neighborhood, the question of how business owners perceive the revitalization of the community arises. In 2007, only 28% of all businesses in Washington D.C. were black-owned (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). In that larger context, the impact of the particular demographic and cultural shift on the black-owned businesses in the Great U Street neighborhood is a worthwhile area of study.

The Role of Business in a Community

"White flight" to the suburbs, white return to the cities and its influence on inner-city life have been studied and documented with numerous studies (Frey 1979; Frey 1980; Galster and Peacock 1986; Knox 1991). What has received less attention, however, is that ongoing de facto housing segregation and white movement to the suburbs created long-standing black communities in the city. The return of whites and a growing number of immigrant groups to these historically black neighborhoods creates

tension between a community that has existed for decades and a set of newcomers that want to make the neighborhood their own. The changing urban landscape has and will continue to have an impact on the minority communities that have been living in Washington D.C. and other American cities for decades to come.

Along side these changes in neighborhood composition, the number of black-owned small businesses in the United States has grown exponentially. According to the Census Bureau, the number of black-owned businesses increased by 60.5 percent and the number of receipts increased by 55.1 percent between 2002 and 2007 (Census Bureau 2011). Despite this progress the number of black-owned businesses continue to lag behind many groups due to lower approval rates for loans, particularly Chinese, Korean, and Mexican immigrants (Cannon, Knox and Paynter 1997; Lownes-Jackson 2003). Small business is one of the top ways that immigrant groups are able to prosper in the United States, but this mode of economic upward mobility has not manifested in the native-born black community at the level that it has for many immigrant groups.

This is especially important because small black-owned businesses tend to hire more local black employees than small white-owned businesses (Kijakazi 1997:40-41). Thus a neighborhood's shift to white-owned and immigrant-owned businesses will likely have an effect on long-time residents' ability to find work close to their place of residence as well as on their ability to afford rising rent and utility costs as property values rise.

A community is made-up of various institutions – churches, schools and businesses – that support the culture of a neighborhood and are integral in the way the

community is able to remain a cohesive body of residents who support one another financially, physically and emotionally. In a community such as the Greater U Street neighborhood, a community with a long and rich history of African-American ownership, the rapid change in the demographics of the neighborhood's residents and business owners will inevitably have an impact on the community's ability to remain cohesive and support one another. The community's long-standing institutions (businesses in the case of this study) may struggle to adjust to a demographic that does not have the needs, values, or culture of longer-time residents. Business owners on U Street who have survived the process of gentrification or have worked to revitalize classic venues, can shed light on the role of business as an institution in the neighborhood, how that role has changed over time, and what impact gentrification has had on their sense of being a part of the community.

Background

Entrepreneurship has a rich history in the African-American community that dates back to the 17th century when slaves bought their own businesses using money earned and given to them by their masters. Slaves with successful businesses would save and pool their monies to buy their own freedom or purchase their family members. This tradition of black entrepreneurs and black systems of money and businesses continued through the Jim Crow era of government-sanctioned segregation with various black men owning businesses in service industries including barbershops, livery shops, and tailoring shops that catered to black and white clientele (Rogers 2010:30-32).

The most important piece of information to take away from the existence of black businesses over the centuries is that black entrepreneurship has always been an integral part of black culture despite the unique circumstances that black Americans have had to overcome, namely slavery and government-imposed segregation. Both slavery and segregation have resulted in a complex history of black businesses vacillating between serving and interacting with white clientele at one point in history or being banned from doing business with white Americans altogether. As a result, black businesses and black residential areas have always had a fluid relationship with white business owners and residents. Nonetheless, some researchers have concluded that exclusion from the larger economic market for so many decades was detrimental to black businesses and the black community as a whole (Rogers 2010:60-63).

It cannot be denied that slavery and segregation created a complex economic reality for black Americans that contribute to ongoing inequalities in wealth accumulation and income. Current statistics on income and poverty demonstrate the pervasive inequality that persists. According to the Census Bureau in 2011, the median income for white, non-Hispanic Americans was $55,412 while the median income for black Americans was $32,229. Poverty and wealth/asset ownership rates reflect the same large disparity. In 2011, the average net worth of a white household was $110,500 while the average net worth of a black household was $6,314. In 2012, 27.2 % of all black people in U.S. were in poverty while 9.7% of all non-Hispanic whites were in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). As research discussed later will emphasize, the ongoing

inequality in wealth and income that has resulted from the history of residential and economic segregation continues to impact black American entrepreneurial endeavors.

During segregation, black churches were the primary source of private lending in black businesses through mutual assistance societies. After Reconstruction-era efforts to give newly freed slaves a boost in finding housing, jobs, and starting businesses, there were various federal programs to boost black entrepreneurs. Among these efforts was a conference on black business held by the Lyndon Johnson administration, and more recently, a micro-enterprise program to provide funds for starting small businesses to people in disadvantaged urban areas (Rogers 2010: 14-17).

There have been numerous quantitative studies of minority-owned and black-owned businesses that examine the systematic discrimination that black business owners experience as they attempt to gain access to capital, manage, and expand their businesses (Robb and Fairlie 2007; Kijakazi 1997; Light and Rosenstein 1995; Rogers 2010). For example, Alicia M. Robb and Robert W. Fairlie (2007) studied the level of access to capital that African-American firms were afforded, concluding that the lower level of wealth accumulation for black Americans may negatively impact a black-owned firm's chance to succeed:

> Racial inequality in wealth is likely to have negative consequences for business formation and success through its effects on access to financial capital. Low levels of wealth and liquidity constraints may create a substantial barrier to entry for black entrepreneurs. Lower levels of wealth among blacks may translate into less access to start-up capital. Business creation is often funded by owners' equity and investors frequently require a substantial level of owners' investment of his or her own capital as an incentive and as collateral. Racial differences in home equity may be especially important in providing access to start-up capital. Homes provide collateral, and home equity loans provide relatively low-cost financing.

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Inadequate access to financial capital in turn limits business creation. (P. 57)

While the specific ways in which lower wealth and access to start-up capital affect profits, number of employees, and ability to take risks and expand, remains unclear Robb and Fairlie made a commonsense point regarding the necessity of start-up capital and ongoing financing to start, manage and expand a business. The racial inequality in wealth accumulation and resulting difficulty in obtaining financing results in lower sales, fewer employees and smaller payrolls (Robb and Fairlie 2007:42).

Naturally, a lower level of wealth accumulation shapes the ability of black-owned businesses to compete with the white and immigrant businesses that emerge with gentrification. Given the historically close-knit ties of black-owned business to the surrounding black community, competition that weakens black-owned businesses in the area can weaken or alter the community that the businesses have been serving.

Despite ongoing discrimination in lending practices and a resulting inability to take growth-oriented risks, black-owned businesses are likely to list a desire to serve their community as a main reason for entering into business (Boston and Boston 2007:126). For example, in Vickie Cox Edmondson and Archie B. Carroll's (1999) survey of the philanthropic priorities of black-owned businesses the top three charitable activities reported were (1) support of youth activities, (2) gifts to charities supporting the black community and (3) management advice to minority-owned firms (p. 174). The respondents named a number of motivations behind their choice in charitable causes but a sense of duty for giving back to the communities in which they had been raised was a major motivator (Edmondson and Carroll 1999:178).

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Gentrification

Given the sense of close ties and duty to the black community, there is an easy connection between black-owned businesses and community revitalization efforts in cities. Community revitalization efforts are often slow and create a complex mixture of excitement for new residents and businesses as well as a push for historic preservation of buildings and the culture of a neighborhood. Unfortunately, excitement for a new face of the community and preserving the history and culture of a neighborhood can create tension between developers, new business owners, long-time business, and residents.

Sean Zielenbach (2008) conducted an analysis of community development in central west Baltimore, Maryland that provides great insight into the tensions that exist when community revitalization efforts begin. Each city has its own particular issues that have contributed to urban decay, but the distrust from local residents as neighborhoods start to be revitalized is common in cities across the nation. Central west Baltimore has struggled with this distrust after the "Highway to Nowhere" displaced dozens of residents for a road that was never completed (Zielenbach 2008: 326). A unified vision for the revitalization of a neighborhood is important, yet it is very difficult to achieve when local residents are suspicious of government officials and outside developers who invest in the neighborhood for financial gain and show little desire to preserve the history of the neighborhood or incorporate the desires of the residents. This reinforces the importance of small businesses in a community. Often the "mom and pop" stores are the businesses that are invested in both the financial development and cultural preservation of a neighborhood since successful business depends on the buy-in of the residents (Zielenbach 2008:327.)

To highlight a similar situation in Washington D.C., a distrust of outside developers has persisted since the 1950s redevelopment of the southwest quadrant of the District. Powerful members of Congress with legislation that allowed developers to raze and completely alter the quadrant led this project. Thousands of poor African-American residents were displaced to develop what is the tourist attraction we see in present-day Washington D.C. Prior to this destruction, the area housed a close-knit African-American community that included long-standing churches, businesses, and a web of deep familial and interpersonal ties. Of the community's more than 20,000 residents, only 391 were able to secure housing in Washington D.C. once the redevelopment was complete (Rubles 2010:183-184). This is an example of "revitalization" that permanently destroyed a thriving neighborhood with a strong sense of community.

This is an exploratory study of the rapidly changing Greater U Street neighborhood in Washington, D.C from the perspective of surviving black-owned businesses. The return of young, white professionals to urban spaces has created a quickly changing neighborhood as houses are renovated, property values rise and new markets are created. These changes in a historically African-American community create tension between the community that has resided in the neighborhood for decades and the new community that seeks to make the neighborhood into a place that reflects their wants and needs. A window into the insights and observations of African-American business owners who have witnessed the changes in the neighborhood is provided. Particularly, the impact gentrification and newly opened immigrant-owned businesses have had on the

look and feel of the neighborhood, as well as the business' role in creating and

maintaining a sense of community with old and new residents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A study of community requires an understanding of the meso-level of sociological analysis. The meso-level or local mode of sociological analysis allows the researcher to define a neighborhood and explore the group dynamics within a neighborhood that create or destroy community. The local lets the researcher view the neighborhood as a stage where actions take place; a place where opportunities for interactions are created (Fine 2010: 357-359). Gary Alan Fine (2010) summarizes the unique level of analysis that a local sociology supports:

> A local sociology asserts that interaction provides the basis of culture, but also that local culture provides the basis of interaction. Because they are bounded and segmented, groups provide opportunity structures for organizing society: not only are they outposts of society but they are models for how society should be. Through maintaining boundaries, local settings become the site for exclusion or segregation, suggesting why members of social categories have differential access to knowledge, resources, or relations. (p.359)

A cyclical relationship between the physical space, interaction through interpersonal ties within the group, and meanings assigned to those spaces and interactions take place at the local level. With this recursive relationship in mind, an understanding of the context of actions emerges. Actions are in response to the setting where opportunities to interact are created. Local sociology permits the researcher to move beyond the "what" of the scenarios in the setting and examine the "how" of the situations. The "how" exposes the ways in which sets of meaning are transmitted (Fine 2010:356). Group members assign meaning to physical spaces and transmit those meanings through interactions. These interactions shape a shared understanding of the

environment, and inform traditions and rituals that create community in a neighborhood. Fine explains:

> Interaction provides the dynamics for social life, but lacks recognition that shared references constitute an essential way in which actors transform their interaction into routine, ritual, and tradition, establishing boundaries and expectations. Local worlds, and not interaction alone, provide action with meaning, establishing tightly held values and in this sense incorporating cultural continuity. (p.360)

A deeper understanding of neighborhood dynamics is gained through Fine's (2010) view of the relationship between interaction, the local world, and sets of meaning. All three are transmitted through rituals that sustain boundaries and expectations. This mode of analysis is particularly important in a study of a gentrifying neighborhood where conflicting sets of meaning are seen in everyday interactions between groups.

Physical Space

Community and interpersonal connections are supported by physical space through the ways space is used and the meaning that spaces are assigned (Gieryn 2000:465). A space is transformed into a place through its use and assigned meaning. Thomas F. Gieryn (2000) uses three criteria to describe a place: (1) geographic location, (2) material form, and (3) investment with meaning and value. Geographic location refers to:

> …a unique spot in the universe. Place is the distinction between here and there, and it is what allows people to appreciate near and far. Places have finitude, but they nest logically because the boundaries are (analytically and phenomenologically) elastic. A place could be your favorite armchair, a room, building, neighborhood, district, village, city, county, metropolitan area, region (Entrikin 1989, 1991), state, province, nation, continent, planet or a forest glade, the seaside, a mountaintop. (Gieryn 2000:464)

This definition recognizes the objectivity and subjectivity of a place at once. A place is a physical space that an individual can locate on a map but is also fluid, for example as changing neighborhood boundaries. This definition makes room for the perspective of the individual and prevents the definition of a place from being dominated by those in power.

Material form brings in the importance of the buildings, parks, and the general look of the neighborhood. Gieryn (2000) says:

> Place has physicality. Whether built or just come upon, artificial or natural, streets and doors or rocks and trees, place is stuff. It is a compilation of things or objects at some particular spot in the universe. Places are worked by people: we make places and probably invest as much effort in making the supposedly pristine places of Nature as we do in cities or buildings. (p.472)

This definition recognizes the meaning that is assigned to buildings by incorporating the emotional energy people put into designing and using space. Observing the time and energy that people put into physical spaces aids in the transformation of a space into a place.

The above definitions already include the third feature of a place, the investment of meaning and value:

> Without naming (on toponyms: Feld & Basso 1996), identification, or representation by ordinary people, a place is not a place. Places are doubly constructed: most are built or in some way physically carved out. They are also interpreted, narrated, perceived, felt, understood, and imagined (Soja 1996). A spot in the universe, with a gathering of physical stuff there, becomes a place only when it ensconces history or utopia, danger or security, identity or memory. In spite of its relatively enduring and imposing materiality the meaning or value of the same place is labile-flexible in the hands of different people or cultures, malleable over time, and inevitably contested. (Gieryn 2000:465)

Gieryns's (2000) features of a place perfectly tie into a local sociological analysis. The

close connection between sets of meaning, physical space, and the perspective of

individuals in the creation of a place complement the "how" level of analysis that this

study requires. That the meaning and value of a place are inextricably wedded to physical

space makes the identification of meaning a requirement in the study of any place. Gieryn

(2000) elaborates on how the features of a place connect to the emotions individuals

develop about that place:

> Places are endlessly made, not just when the powerful pursue their
> ambition through brick and mortar, not just when design professionals
> give form to function, but also when ordinary people extract from
> continuous and abstract space a bounded, identified, meaningful, named,
> and significant place (de Certeau 1984, Etlin 1997). A place is remarkable,
> and what makes it so is an unwindable spiral of material form and
> interpretative understandings or experiences. Something in the built-form
> of a place encourages people to distinguish this building or that patch of
> ground from its overlookable backdrop. (p. 471-472)

A sense of place ties into a sense of community as both demand knowledge of the shared

value that individuals ascribe to a place.

Injecting emotion into the formation and preservation of a place allows for an

examination of the social and political structures of communities within a neighborhood.

The places in a neighborhood are sites of ongoing exchanges of active public life where

social and political structures are built up and torn down through affirmed or altered

expectations. Fine (2010) explains:

> Every local scene is shaped by the constraints, opportunities, and under-
> standings made possible through the physical (or virtual) space in which it
> unfolds: an arena of action. While numerous resources must be mobilized
> for group life, finding a place to gather is among the most essential. A
> vibrant public sphere requires numerous such places. Obtaining material
> resources cascades from that choice. Behaviors, thoughts, and emotions

are generated and performed because of the symbolic meaning of space. We believe that churches demand quiet attentiveness that schoolrooms promote ordered participation, and that taverns encourage sociable involvement. An ongoing interaction scene requires locales where individuals regularly gather with their expectations intact. This does not require formal meetings or routine schedules, but suggests that the availability of spaces will characterize the group. (p.362)

At once, the importance of businesses and public sites of interaction are affirmed as they are the "arena[s] of action" that display the values of the group members that make the physical space into a place (Fine 2010:362). These arenas in the local space also expose the differences of *what* each group values and, more importantly, *how* each group assigns meaning to create a sense of place. Gieryn (2000) clarifies:

A sense of place is not only the ability to locate things on a cognitive map, but also the attribution of meaning to a built-form or natural spot (Rotenberg& McDonogh 1993, Walter 1988). Places are made as people ascribe qualities to the material and social stuff gathered there: ours or theirs; safe or dangerous; public or private; unfamiliar or known; rich or poor; Black or White; beautiful or ugly; new or old; accessible or not. Rankings of city neighborhoods in terms of perceived desirability and quality of life are key variables in "place stratification" models used to explain patterns of residential dispersion of racial and ethnic groups in metropolitan areas (Alba & Logan 1993, Farley et al 1994, Harris 1999, Lindstrom 1997, South & Crowder 1998). Advantaged groups (and individuals) seek to put distance between themselves and the less advantaged. The very idea of "neighborhood "is not inherent in any arrangement of streets and houses, but is rather an ongoing practical and discursive production/imagining of a people. (p.472)

A sense of place includes multiple subjective definitions on the part of the individual, such as "public or private" and "safe or dangerous." Those with conflicting notions of a sense of place can find it difficult to co-exist. In this way, the process of gentrification is better understood.

Examinations of gentrification tend to focus on the economic change that the process sparks and the injustice of dispersing people who happen to reside in a neighborhood that is attractive to the wealthy population of people returning to the city (Samara 2012:39). Both lenses of examination are political in nature as they expose the struggle for ownership of the neighborhood that the wealthy generally win, due to current definitions of ownership. Tony Roshan Samara (2012) explains that there is an inherent inequality in the way that ownership in a neighborhood is defined (p.52-53). Under current definitions, the wealthy automatically have the right to a place because of the narrow definition of ownership that excludes the poor. Samara (2012) clarifies:

> … right to place directly challenges the current rights regime of land ownership, which is guaranteed primarily through market mediated, legal property ownership by a legally constituted individual (be that a person or a corporate body); in its place it widens the concept of ownership to include communities and to be based on other forms of possession, such as occupancy. Given the role this regime has played and continues to play in displacement, such a challenge is absolutely crucial. In this sense right to place can provide a mechanism through which other forms of ownership, many in practice today as efforts to preserve affordable housing, are both strengthened and made more politically possible as they are situated in a different property regime. (p.53)

Samara (2010) proposes that changing the definition of the right to place would encourage equality in neighborhood ownership and would begin to rectify the ongoing inequality in housing (p.53-54). Currently, the right to place is dominated by the wealthy. Now and for centuries prior, the wealthy have been able to enter a place that has been occupied by a group of people for an extended period of time and stake a claim with little consideration for the existing population. This same view of the "right to place" has manifested itself in urban renewal projects that destroyed black neighborhoods in cities

across the nation. Gentrification is a slightly altered version of the same process that favors the rights of the wealthy at the expense of the poor. Urban renewal and gentrification both occur in the name of revitalization but have the identical end result of permanently displacing thousands of low-income people across the nation. Money is one way that the wealthy take ownership of a place as houses are purchased and businesses open that reflect the sense of place that newcomers value. The other is the use of political governance to create rules and regulations that favor the wealthy over the poor. For example, implementing taxes and fines for unoccupied buildings or houses in disrepair and employing the use of strict parking zones.

The process of gentrification exposes the political and social tensions between two different groups occupying the same physical space. Through these tensions, the true "placeness" of a place is revealed because the features of place as defined by Thomas F. Gieryn (2000) are in contention. The streets and neighborhoods are renamed and redrawn (geographical location); the buildings and parks are changed through renovation or renewal efforts that destroy and replace buildings (material form); and the assigned meanings of the original group are systematically replaced with the meanings of the new group (investment of meaning and value).

Interpersonal Ties and Membership in the Group
The group is best defined by Gary Alan Fine (2012) in "Group Culture and the Interaction Order: Local Sociology on the Meso-Level," as "an aggregation of persons that is characterized by shared place, common identity, collective culture, and social relations" (p.160). A common identity in a group perpetuates shared meanings that

connect back to one's sense of self or self-concept. Many theories of individual and

collective identity stem from the theoretical developments of George Herbert Mead

(1934). These theories, such as Peter.J. Burke's Identity Control Theory (2004) and

Sheldon Stryker's Identity Theory (1968) revolve around how individuals come to have

an idea of a "self" and how this "self" is maintained through interactions and various

roles. Although these are relevant theories, these particular modes of exploring identity

are not wholly applicable in an exploration of how a sense of community is maintained.

Instead, identity theories that extend into how situational and cultural contexts shape our

selves are appropriate. Analyses of the ways that we use physical space to create place

and perpetuate meaning through boundaries are the most relevant ways to situate the

actions of the individual in a group. Timothy J. Owens, Dana T. Robinson and Lynn

Smith-Lovin (2010) summarize this difference in identity theories best:

> Here, we shift attention to theories that give priority to situational, social
> structural, and cultural elements that lie outside the individual. We caution
> that our categorization here does not imply competition or contradiction.
> Instead, theories (and the conceptualizations embedded within them)
> necessarily simplify reality by focusing on some elements to the exclusion
> of others. So the theories described here do not reject the idea that social
> roles, group memberships, and category memberships are incorporated
> into the self-image. Rather, they emphasize how the elements of situations
> in which actors are involved shape their behavioral, cognitive, and
> emotional reactions, rather than focus on the intraindividual features of
> identity in the self-structure that are carried from situation to situation.
> (p.485)

Owens et al. explains the difference between identity theories focused solely on

group dynamics and theories that explore the relationship between cultural elements,

situational experiences and collective identity. Collective identity theories differ from

group dynamic theories in that the latter focuses on the ways in which the "self" is carried

through various roles and social situations. These theories seek to show how individuals

utilize cultural elements and social situations to connect to their physical environment. In

this sense, identity is a vehicle through which people are compelled to produce

boundaries that are defined within physical spaces through regular interactions in the

group. Fine (2012) elaborates:

> Identity, the presentation of selves to publics, is the access point for
> sociologists to treat persons as social entities. Rather than by cognition or
> emotion alone, identities develop through ongoing and referential
> interaction with influential communities. To understand identity
> development, one must not only focus on the individual as shaped by
> expansive institutions, but also recognize the influence of identification
> with one's social relations. Routine copresence, along with the history that
> such interaction implies, builds a secure sense of self. (p.162)

In an urban setting, neighborhood businesses provide a stage for "routine copresence."

Another term for "routine copresence" is "interaction ritual chains." The theory of

interaction rituals incorporates the situational aspect of interactions that connect the

individual self-concept with the group. Collins (2004) writes:

> A theory of interaction ritual (IR) and interaction ritual chains is above all
> a theory of situations. It is a theory of momentary encounters among
> human bodies charged up with emotions and consciousness because they
> have gone through chains of previous encounters. What we mean by the
> social actor, the human individual, in a quasi-enduring, quasi-transient
> flux in time and space. (p.3-4)

Our identity is tied to the group because our sense of self and connection to place is

sustained by our ability to interact in that environment. Put another way, situations are the

opportunity structures that individuals utilize in the "arena of action" to transmit shared

sets of meaning. The situation may shift so different aspects of the individual emerge;

either way, the connection between the individual and the situations of everyday interactions cannot be divorced. Collins (2004) elaborates:

> In a strong sense, the individual is the interaction ritual chain. The individual is the precipitate of past interactional situations and an ingredient of each new situation. An ingredient, not the determinant, because a situation is an emergent property. A situation is not merely the result of the individual who comes into it, nor even a combination of individuals (although it is that, too). Situations have laws or processes of their own; and that is what IR theory is about. (p. 5)

Situations have sets of meanings that individuals ascribe to them based on the value and purpose of the situation occurring within the place. In turn, the individual reinforces those sets of meaning through regular interactions. Maintenance of those sets of meanings indicate membership within a group. David McMillan and David Chavis (1986) explain how a web of shared meanings, shared values, and physical space interact to create a feeling of membership in a group. Membership is defined as "a feeling that one has invested part of oneself to become a member and therefore has a right to belong" (McMillan and Chavis 1986:9). McMillan and Chavis (1986) assert that groups require a shared set of values and a shared emotional connection to foster a feeling of membership (p.13). Shared values and sets of meaning take time to develop. Collins (2004) tied time and space into the description of interaction ritual theory since both are necessary for interactions to occur.

A sense of membership in a group and a sense of ownership of the physical space can develop through the time spent in a neighborhood. Graham Paul Crow and Graham Allan (1995) elaborate on the importance of time in developing membership in the group through shared meanings, social structure, and physical space:

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> There are several ways in which the time dimension of community is an important one, and one, which has bearing on precisely how communities as places, social structures and meanings interconnect. Time is part of the reason why physical proximity is not always associated with sociability, since it takes time for social contacts to develop and, conversely, for community traditions to die out. The dynamic nature of social cohesion and divisions is an equally important aspect of community analysis… (p.152)

Time is an invaluable dimension to consider when analyzing the interactions of group members in a community. Time is the connection between shared history and ongoing sets of meaning in a place. Fine (2010) elaborates:

> Each ongoing gathering develops an idioculture, a set of references that permits groups to identify themselves as meaningful micro-communities. Groups as focused domains establish collective memories that define the group to participants. The common past that a group has experienced or to which new members have been socialized is crucial as shared meaning constructs the boundaries of the group, separating insiders from outsiders and defines how members imagine their linked future. (p.365)

The development and subsequent evolution of shared meanings within a neighborhood are a vital mode of analysis into group dynamics that transcend decades.

Sustained interactions or rituals display membership by establishing clear lines of inclusion and exclusion (Collins 2004:273). Sustained interactions that take place over time serve to build a level of trust within a group and between members of different groups. According to Sandra Susan Smith (2010) there are three types of trust. Two types are applicable to the role that trust plays in how membership in a group is performed as it informs who the individual perceives as sharing the same sets of meaning. The first is generalized trust, which "is the belief that 'most people' can be trusted" (Smith 2010:455). The study goes on to conclude that blacks are the least likely to have high levels of generalized trust:

Most striking are black-white differences in misanthropy (Patterson 1999). Smith (1997) shows that whereas 51% of whites reported that most people are untrustworthy, 81% of blacks find most people untrustworthy, a difference of 30 percentage points. Blacks were also far more likely than whites to report that people are unfair (61% versus 32%) and unhelpful (63% versus 41%). Similarly, Uslaner (2002) shows that blacks were significantly and substantially less likely to report generalized trust compared with whites, by between 9 and 22 percentage points depending on the survey data employed. And Alesina & La Ferrara (2002) report that blacks were roughly 24% less likely than nonblacks to trust (see also Glaeser et al. 2000). Finally, the Pew Research Center's report (Taylor et al. 2007) on trust indicates that whereas 41% of whites reported high trust, just 20% of blacks and 12% of Latinos did, and, whereas just 32% of whites reported low trust, 61% of blacks and 53% of Latinos did (also see Patterson 1999, Putnam 2000). (Smith 2010:456)

Considering the unique historical relationship between black and white Americans, the low levels of generalized trust are not surprising findings as they include questions on the trustworthiness of out-group members who have consistently displayed different meanings and values.

The other type of trust that Smith (2010) details is particularized trust or "a belief in the trustworthiness of one's own kind" (p.463). The results of this part of the study demonstrate a much higher level of trust within the group. Smith (2010) shares:

Among the many predictors of particularized trust, race, according to Uslaner (2002, p. 107) is "the *most powerful* determinant." Drawing from the Pew, NES, and World Values Study surveys, Uslaner reports that blacks are much more likely to trust other blacks than they are to trust most people—i.e., whites. Specifically, whereas 70% of blacks report that other blacks can be trusted, just 23% report that most people, presumably whites, can. Furthermore, blacks report greater trust in other blacks than whites express in blacks—59%. (p.463)

This study of trust provides valuable insight into membership within a group and the different perceptions of in-group and out-group members, particularly along racial lines

since blacks and whites are the primary occupants of the location of the study, the Greater

U Street neighborhood in Washington D.C.

Social and Cultural Boundaries

The current racial make-up of the Greater U Street neighborhood informs the

social and cultural boundaries between the groups. Racial identity shapes the way

boundaries are expressed. The demonstration of racial and neighborhood group

membership in an "arena of action" lies in routine interactions between group members

and people who are outside of the group. Jimy M.Sanders (2002) clarifies:

> The situational and subjective aspects of ethnic identity mean that
> researchers who wish to understand how ethnicity emerges as an important
> factor in a range of social processes must do more than identify key
> cultural and behavioral components of groups. Researchers must also
> investigate patterns of interaction that link groups. The locations of cross-
> group interactions are usually better understood in terms of social space
> than as physical places. The social spaces wherein cross-group interactions
> take place are the effective social boundaries between groups. (p.328)

Cross-group interactions are instrumental to the maintenance of racial group membership

because they serve to reinforce cultural beliefs through regular interaction with people

who share one's values and those who do not share the same values.

Social boundaries or symbolic boundaries, an idea developed by Pierre Bourdieu

are most plainly stated in Michelle Lamont's *Money, Morals and Manners*, as

"conceptual distinctions that we make to categorize objects, people [and] practices"

(1992:9). These boundaries do not serve as a way to *develop* racial and neighborhood

identity, but instead serve as a way to *reinforce* racial identity and group membership.

Social boundaries reinforce racial identity by clearly delineating the cultural differences

between in-group members and out-group members. This is achieved by emphasizing

differences in language, slang words, taste in music and books, appreciation of different physical features or ideals of beauty, style of dress, political orientation and numerous other aspects of culture and belief systems that signal a person's identification with a certain group. Successful businesses in a neighborhood will understand and embody these tastes in order to identify with the residents of the neighborhood and attract their business.

In the case of the Greater U Street neighborhood, the differing cultural tastes between black and white residents contributes to the way residents and businesses maintain a sense of community. Different groups assign different cultural meanings to products and embody a different set of values. One can see the clashing of group identities and claims of ownership in an urban neighborhood during the process of gentrification. The nature of creating a place makes it difficult for two cultures to co-exist. Only one can dominate the space when the sets of meaning are on opposite sides of the spectrum. Fine (2010) says:

> Local culture generates emotional energy, cohesion, and action routines that promote order by investing participants in group outcomes. In the process, these local arenas also produce distinct knowledge regimes that generate stratification, building a hierarchy of groups. (p.362)

Over time, the distinct knowledge regimes or systems of shared meanings begin to shift as the opportunity structures for those sets of meaning to be reinforced (through interaction) begin to disappear. The original group's businesses and associated sets of meanings and values are slowly converted to those of the new group. The conflict between the two groups is made visible in the groups' creation of place in gentrifying neighborhoods. Monique M. Taylor (1992) gives an example:

> Stores such as Benetton clothing and David's Cookies and an overabundance of boutiques and ice cream shops have become the divisive symbols of change in gentrifying neighborhoods across the United States. Lifestyle differences between new "yuppie" residents and their poorer neighbors created conflicts around uses of public and private space. Interactions between old and new, black and white, young and old in gentrifying neighborhoods and communities have been fraught with tensions as residents negotiated sometimes shared and often differing visions of community life... (p.101)

Businesses can be boundaries in and of themselves by displaying what is most valued or affordable in a neighborhood. Taylor's characterization of a changing neighborhood shows an influx of people with disposable income, as most lower class populations cannot routinely spend money on gourmet cookies and ice cream. Businesses can also be symbols of the racial and ethnic roots of the community that claim ownership of the neighborhood. Opportunities to display social and cultural boundaries are provided through the use of public and private space.

In summary, transformation of physical space into a place, the role of the group in reinforcing shared sets of meaning through interactions, and the boundaries between groups all interact to create a sense of community that is unique to each community in a neighborhood. Fine (2010) summarizes the intersections:

> Whether consciously recognized or tacit, the experience and recognition of these groups provide a basis by which a local culture reverberates through time and space, creating a network of groups and gatherings. These tiny publics are knit together to form institutions, communities, and ultimately societies that, although grounded in ongoing interaction scenes, are larger, more established, and more stable. To have predictable effects social order cannot be momentary and evanescent; an interaction order depends on interaction being durable and continuing. The local context of action invests a social world with longevity as it builds upon collective interpretations, common references, and shared identity… (p.371)

Referring to communities as "tiny publics" legitimates neighborhoods or the "local" as an important aspect of sociological inquiry, particularly as a way of understanding the details of what happens within and between groups in a gentrifying neighborhood. The local level of inquiry provides a lens for understanding how groups struggle to obtain and keep ownership in a quickly changing neighborhood.

METHODS

With the demographic shift in the Greater U Street neighborhood, black-owned businesses moved from serving an almost entirely black American clientele to serving an increasing number of white Americans along with a variety of immigrant populations. Because this was an exploratory study of the impact of this demographic shift on the black-owned businesses on U Street, the main inquiries were to assess how businesses owners were navigating this rapidly changing neighborhood and what role they felt they played in creating a sense of community in the neighborhood. Business owners were asked to discuss how they saw the neighborhood, how they related to the community in the past, and how they tie themselves into the community now.

Research Design

For the purposes of this study, the neighborhood was roughly defined within the boundaries of 16th street NW to the west, S street NW to the south, Florida Avenue NW to the north, and 7th street NW to the east. The sample of business owners interviewed was obtained through a canvass of the neighborhood to identify long-standing black-owned businesses. The business owners were approached individually to discuss the general premise of the project and asked to participate. The business owners were interviewed using an unstructured, non-directive interview conducted with the use of a topic guide, allowing for the "loose notion that each interviewee should be encouraged to talk about similar topics…asking for clarification when points made by the speaker seem unclear…[and] drawing a person into telling a story in their own words by using

interventions such as "tell me more" or semi-verbal cues like 'uh-huh,' which encourage

an interviewee to continue speaking" (Seal 1998: 206). Of the sixteen businesses

identified and approached to conduct an interview, ten agreed to a recorded interview.

The questions for the semi-structured interview guide revolved around five general topics

identified during the writing of the literature review and background sections. Each

interviewee that agreed to be recorded signed a consent form (provided in Appendix A).

All interviews were coded for the themes identified in the literature review. These themes

included the memories respondents have of the neighborhood, identifying definitions of

community and how boundaries between the old and new residents were identified and

reinforced.

Interviews were conducted between late-May 2013 and early September 2013.

One interview was conducted in October 2013 resulting from an event through a

volunteer organization with which I am affiliated. The recorded interviews consisted of

owners of two flower shops, two shoe repair shops, a tailor shop, an African clothing and

décor store, a bank, a medical supply distributor franchise, a jazz lounge, and a theater.

The business owners represented a range of years in the U Street neighborhood; eight of

the ten were Washington D.C. residents. The dual roles of Washington D.C. business

owner and resident likely added particular depth to the comments on racial dynamics.

Table 1 displays general details of the businesses and owners, in order of interview date.

Business Type	Year Opened	Pre- or Post-Metro	DC Resident
Florist #1	1945	Pre	Yes
Tailor	1939	Pre	Yes

Bank	1913	Pre	Yes
Jazz Lounge	2001	Post	No
Shoe Repair #1	2006	Post	Yes
Theater	1910	Pre	Yes
Medical Equipment Distributor	2005	Post	Yes
Florist #2	1988	Post	Yes
Shoe Repair #2	1962	Pre	Yes
African Décor Store	1991	Post	No

The first set of questions was meant to encourage the interviewee to share the history of the business and describe the neighborhood in his or her own words. The prompts for this section were: "Tell me about the business. What year did you open or start managing? Can you share any of the history behind the business?" This section provided an excellent way to gather dates, descriptions of the area, and the history of the neighborhood from the viewpoint of the interviewee.

The second set of questions was meant to embolden the interviewee to define community, what it means to be connected to the community, and if possible differentiate between the concept of community and neighborhood. The prompts for this section were: "Do you feel there is a community here (a particular group of people that feel and show they are connected)? How do you fit into the community? Do you feel connected to people around here? How long did it take for you to develop connections with the neighborhood? What did you do that helped you get connected?" These questions were designed to encourage respondents' expression of how they feel community operates and the ways that cultural differences shape community.

The third set of questions was meant to inspire the interviewees to describe the neighborhood and the people in the neighborhood. The prompts for this section were:

"Have things changed in the neighborhood since you started here? Does the neighborhood feel different? How does it look different? How do these changes make your role in the community different? How was it before? How is it now?" This encouraged respondents to reflect on the changes in the physical space in the neighborhood and the connection between the neighborhood and the community.

The fourth set of questions was meant to gauge the respondents' involvement in the community through charity work and allow them to express an interest in particular causes. The prompts for this section were: "Are you involved in any charity work in the community? Is it personal or do you tie your business to the charity work? Do you participate in the work of any other businesses in the neighborhood? Which businesses and/or causes are you involved in?" These questions were meant to allow the respondents a chance to share the issues that they found most important as the type of charity work an individual or a business engages in can provide insight into what they value in community.

The last set of questions was meant to assess whether building and maintaining relationships with other black-owned businesses in the area was an important part of having one's business in a historically black neighborhood. It was hoped that this question would also yield the names of potential interviewees. The prompts for this section were: "Do you have any particularly close relationships with other minority business owners in the area who may have an interest in sharing with me? Would you mind if I contact them for an interview as well?" This proved to be a source of

information about past and present businesses in the area and did provide the names of two additional businesses to approach.

Limitations and Challenges

It is important to note that the only business owners interviewed were those who are running businesses that have survived the changes in the neighborhood. Considering the earlier discussion of the ways in which business' products and services are reflections of what is valued or affordable within the community, the fact that these businesses have survived is a reflection of their ability to appeal to a broad population. It is important to understand that this could influence the way that business owners view the process of gentrification since it has resulted in an uptick of business rather than a downturn. Each business owner, with the exception of the African décor and attire storeowner, provides products or services that appear to transcend class and race. The African store business owner was admittedly struggling and may have to shut down in the coming months. I am aware of this because I met her at a "cash mob," an event that a volunteer organization I am affiliated with held to encourage members and friends to support the business by spending a set amount of money during the event.

The role of insider and outsider is a dynamic that every qualitative researcher has to deal with while conducting research. I struggled with two outsider roles – age and place of origin. The first outsider role was age. The youngest interviewee was in her late 40's (approximated based on her mention of starting to work for the family business in the mid-1980's directly after college, during the construction of the metro). The age difference ranged from about twenty to forty years. The other outsider role was place of

origin. I am a native Virginian, not a native Washingtonian. I am a current resident of the neighborhood being researched, but have only lived in the area since June 2012. As a result, this may have limited the number of historically significant events and local sets of meaning that I was privy to in the neighborhood. This limited level of local knowledge could have expanded the interviews had I been from Washington D.C.

Insider roles included race, class and gender (for three interviewees). My role as a native-born black American afforded me the ability to discuss racial dynamics in a way that may have been uncomfortable with an interviewer of a different race. I think my insider statuses made it easier for informants to discuss their perceptions of cultural differences between blacks and whites and the differences between the original group of whites and the "new" whites. The interviews with the lengthiest conversation after the formal, recorded interviews were with all three female respondents. This is undoubtedly due to our shared status as middle-class, black females.

In addition, most interviewees were raised in a middle class setting. My status as a member of the middle class did not prove to be a barrier and may have helped some open up and feel at ease. The tailor noted at the end of the interview that I made her feel comfortable and suggested that I incorporate conducting interviews into my career.

There were a number of overarching challenges in obtaining interviews. One issue was the limited availability of business owners. Many owners worked long hours or had multiple obligations and meetings that created time constraints. Each rescheduled interview was changed the day of the scheduled interview, upon my arrival. Obtaining interviews from the lounges or nightclubs proved to be nearly impossible. The owner of

one lounge would not respond, and it was clear that his son did not want me to interview him. While it seemed that the son was open to being interviewed, he canceled twice and was unresponsive when called back to reschedule a third time. He was engaged in multiple businesses and appeared to have little time to spare,

One owner of a popular jazz lounge was generally unavailable; it seems he had a hands-off relationship with the business and did not frequent the building often. Efforts to interview him were not productive; the two lounge managers were white and had not been employed in the area for more than 3 years. The owner of the lounge was black and had owned the lounge for over 10 years. Unfortunately, the phone number and email address that I was provided were incorrect and when I went back to obtain another phone number or email address the managers stated that they could not help me. I was able to interview the Ethiopian owner of another jazz lounge (she had owned the lounge for twelve years). Unfortunately, she had little knowledge of the history of the area, did not live in DC, and had made very few ties to the surrounding community outside of charity work. This interview did not provide any insight into the role of her business in the community and how gentrification was changing her relationship to the community, as she had not seen any changes in business or in her clientele since opening her doors.

An additional and unexpected challenge was the difficulty of getting two interviewees, particularly the theater and African store owners, to fully articulate the role that race has played in their ability to connect with the new community and the differences between the old (black) and new (white) communities. From observation of body language and nonverbal cues such as sighing, my attempts to encourage the

interviewees to elaborate on the differences they mentioned was frustrating for them.

This reaction may have been due to my role in the community as a resident and as a black

female. Thus, these questions may have struck them as obvious; my need to have them

elaborate on their remarks may have seemed baffling and possibly obnoxious if they

perceived me as already having an understanding of the community dynamic.

The final challenge involved two interviewees' previous interactions with the

media as the neighborhood has changed. The first shoe repair business owner

interviewed had been misquoted and as a result seemed suspicious of my intentions about

recording and asking the questions that I chose to ask. He was particularly cautious in his

choice of words, making sure that I explained what I meant by each word in my

questions. This interview strayed a bit further than the other interviews, since I had to

explain my definitions of community and neighborhood in a way that I did not have to in

other interviews. By the end of the interview, he was more willing to volunteer

information without having me elaborate on the question or share my thoughts on the

matter; as a result, I chose to include more of his words from the end of the interview

since they seem less influenced by my phrasing. All other interviewees were generally

more willing to share their viewpoints without needing to know mine first. The owner of

the Caribbean restaurant who refused to be recorded or formally interviewed (and who

thus did not sign a consent form) was involved in an ongoing conflict with nearby

residents who had petitioned the city to have her liquor license pulled. As a result of this

conversation and a subsequent Internet search that found an article in the Washington

Post regarding the incident, I chose not to re-approach her later in the summer.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Identity combines our individual values and those of the group with which we associate. Constant interaction between the community and the individual sustain the identity of each entity. Similarly the complex interaction of individuals within a community and between individuals from different communities creates a sense of community. These interactions signal in-group and out-group membership. In this study, the primary ways of signaling in-group and out-group membership involved: (1) differing ideas about the use of physical space; (2) the role of memory and time as symbolic boundaries; (3) different ways of expressing personal connections; (4) the role of social interactions in maintaining symbolic boundaries and (5) displays of differing values between the communities. Together, these symbolic boundaries establish where the community exists and where the community does not exist for the respondents.

Physical Space

Individuals delineate in-group or out-group membership through the use of physical space and the cultural meanings that they assign to buildings and blocks within the neighborhood. For long-standing businesses, occupation of a particular block or physical space in the city is particularly significant. Physical proximity helps to provide an ongoing connection between the businesses that have survived multiple generations. The following statement expresses this connection best:

> But Kamal and I of Ben's Chili Bowl - we like to say we're the surviving black businesses of that era. Um, there are others but I just so happen to know that Kamal has done the same thing I have. Chosen to be in the family business. (Tailor, female)

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The tailor expressed pride in the decision to stay in the family business and keep the family's business in the neighborhood. The Howard Theater developer shared another instance of the importance of physical proximity to buildings that hold personal significance with the story of his great grandparents' establishment and the importance of saving the theater:

> So yea, yea. It was important and I really realized the importance of the project as I got more and more involved and I started hearing the history. And my father used to talk about it from time to time. He used to come here as a kid. He's from this neighborhood. My great-grandparents actually had a place just two blocks over. Um, that was on the 1900 block of 9th street and they… [it was] called the Eureka café and they lived above and had a café below in probably the late 20's [or] early 30's. And um, so, you know I heard stories about the Howard here and there but I didn't realize just how important it was. And as this neighborhood and DC just started to, you know, really gentrify 5 years ago I really started seeing… wow, if someone like myself or, you know, someone doesn't do something to really protect this historic jewel than a major part of our history, not only in the district but in the country, will be lost. (Theatre developer, male)

This excerpt demonstrates a pride in the deep personal ties to the neighborhood, as his family has been an integral part of the neighborhood for generations. By providing this fact in such detail, he reveals the importance of the physical presence of the remaining buildings. This respondent, and each person he shares his history with, find importance in physical spaces in the neighborhood where they can walk down a block and see the houses and storefronts that were in existence over 90 years ago when his great-grandparents owned a business. Multiple family members occupied the same space over generations and experienced working in this historic neighborhood. The owner's own business and fellow long-standing businesses serve as a way for the current owners

to maintain a deep connection to the physical space of the neighborhood and to one another.

Past businesses were a common thread in each interview as a way for business owners to recall the former look and feel of the neighborhood. These references suggest how difficult it was for certain businesses to survive as affluent whites moved into the neighborhood in the 1990's. With the neighborhood's population shift came a shift in the use of physical space. New businesses with new values replaced existing ones. Businesses that did not survive became symbols of what the former community valued that the new community does not value and vice versa. The African store owner mentioned past businesses by name and described the services that those businesses provided:

> It, it, it was a very different U Street in 1992 of course. And a lot of the buildings were empty or in some ways it was a service oriented street. There were, um, the grocery store which was quite different. The um, laundry had another owner at that time. There was um, what do you call that um, what's a Lowe's…a hardware store. So, uh, there were a couple of pro—um, um, places that were designed to help people improve their lives…so next door there was a wonderful lingerie shop called Claudette's, Claudette's something. Um, three four doors down there um, there was an organic shop called um, "Something From the Harvest." Things that could have succeeded now but because it was in such an early phase, uh, we just sort of, there wasn't a market for it so we sort of paved the way for other people's success and I think that's often the case when an area is changing. (African store, female)

This detailed history of the block connects space, time, physical businesses, and changing values. Some businesses sold products that were "ahead of their time" because the community did not value or could not afford them. On the other hand, some stores left because the new community did not value their products:

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I mean, up to a point, up to a point. I mean my old customers will come in but they don't come in as often. You know, I see everybody during the holiday season. You know it's like one grand reunion. People come that I haven't seen that year but they'll come in during the holidays and depending on the day, you know there's a lot of "I haven't seen you" or you know it's a family reunion in some ways ... It is beautiful. You know, it's one of the aspects of leaving that I would really feel something was lost. I mean everybody can sort of sell clothing, sell jewelry. You know and have this fabulous space but it's the feeling of sharing and interacting and being part of something meaningful that I, you know, a lot of the places were like that. You know, people still come in and talk about Belmont Arts. Because at that point it wasn't just me, it was, oh, seven, eight stores that were open that were African American artists or African focused. So that was a community. [Now], um, there are some who come who are very interested in what I have, um, but not, not enough. And not often enough. So, for my old customers I was a regular, you know who would come in 4 or 5 times a year. They may come in once and buy a pair of earrings or something of that nature and I probably don't see them again unless they have a parent or something interested in African art or and they bring them when they come. But they're not the regular consistent customers that you know keep a business going. They're a once and done. (African store owner, female)

This discussion of the decline of her business shows the suffering that attends closing businesses and changing community values. Another interviewee described other businesses that disappeared due to the community's changing consumer patterns:

That bar that's there used to be a pawn shop. It used to be - this bar two doors down, it was a pawnshop. And a lot, it was a lot of you know, it was the neighborhood pawnshop you know? That's gone. (Medical equipment distributor, male)

Both of these passages demonstrate how the use of space in the neighborhood changes with the community's values and income level. Thus, businesses exist in the context of a particular time, place, and set of community desires and values.

In addition to the changes in the types of businesses that exist in a neighborhood, there struggles over ownership of physical space. One way that a new community can claim ownership of the physical space is by renaming the neighborhood. For example, when asked if the old and new communities could integrate, one business owner shared:

> Well, I don't see it at the moment. I don't see any coming together. It's still fragmented. All of these new areas, they get new names and what not. Like NoMa and Bloomingdale and stuff like that. You know you, I think you still have a fragmented city and you see that in the last election. I mean, black folks voted for Anita Bonds and the white folks voted for the white people that were running. And that's the way things are right now. It's unfortunate. (Florist #1, male)

Renaming neighborhoods is a visible sign that the new community members claim the physical space for themselves. For this florist, renaming the neighborhood indicates the divide between the communities and is viewed as being closely tied to a group's political leanings and allegiances. In the passage above, the florist spoke with a sense of frustration; he saw renaming neighborhoods as an outward display of the differing community goals and as a symbol of the future when the businesses and values of the old community will fade away. A new name indicates a new era to the original community members, as a space that they have occupied for decades begins to look different.

The new community stakes its claim to the city utilizing the city's governmental institutions to give neighborhoods new names. Renaming neighborhoods demonstrates in-group and out-group membership since neighborhood names carry the history of an area and a particular set of meanings for the original community. Memories of significant events, past businesses, and residences of family members fill neighborhoods and streets. When new community members change the names of neighborhoods and streets, the

original community views the changes as an attempt at erasing the history of the space. By extension, the original community views the removal of the history of the space as a signal that they will not be recognized any longer.

Multiple interviewees identified the use of the tax code to punish people who are not utilizing their property in the way that new community members deem appropriate. One respondent shared an experience of a close friend:

> He has watched this whole block turn to the point where now there's only two black families on the block. But he owns three houses on that block. And let me just tell you, there have been times where they have charged him with abandoned home tax. With higher taxes because no one was residing in the house, but so what, the house is still in good shape…even politicians who I will not name work with these white people – [they] work with these white people in this particular neighborhood who try to force him to sell the houses that are not occupied. Same in another neighborhood where he owned property. It was almost like "who are you to own this much property that *we* want? (Tailor, female)

Another interviewee shared a similar sentiment in regards to the new, white residents' use of the city's rules and regulations to take ownership of the neighborhood:

> They have a bigger, you know, foothold on the community now and, and, and you know they're well educated people so they really know the law. They know the rules and regulations and they'll force them, they'll force them from the city council right up to your door. And you know, while we're out partying they're home reading the rules and regulations. (Florist #2, male)

Although the florist said the last sentence with an air of humor, both respondents sincerely expressed concern at the feeling that the residents know the political system well and use it to their advantage. Considering the government-sanctioned history of segregation in the city and the divides that it caused between the communities, it follows

that this concern would exist. Naturally the original community reacted with apprehension over the new, white residents using a structure that historically worked to confine or limit the black community. Through these connections to the city government, the old community members view new ones as having an advantage in claiming the physical space of the neighborhood. Further, using the city's rules and regulations to "stake a claim" demonstrates in-group and out-group membership. A generation ago, the city government began openly serving white people over black people. The act of using this system indicates being a member of the new, white community since the black community does not view the government as an entity that serves them. Historically, the government has worked to preserve the economic and social interests of the white population at the expense of the black population. The process of gentrification mirrors this dynamic of serving the economic interests of the wealthy, white population with little regard for the black population in the city. As a result, using the city's rules and regulations serves as a boundary between community members since the original community does not utilize the local government for neighborhood affairs.

In addition to utilizing taxes to create the neighborhood that new residents envision, taxes served as an incentive for investors to enter the neighborhood. The use of tax incentives to start the process of gentrification serves as another boundary between the communities since the tax incentives primarily benefited the new community with no regard for the maintenance of the original community.   To the original community members, this shows people who do not share the same values taking control of the neighborhood. One interviewee stated:

>...the government or the DC council you know, that that kind of whatever incentive. Got people to invest in the neighborhood and buy up the properties and improve them and then reset the market for them kind of forced a lot of people who lived here to move out. Is it all bad? Not necessarily cause like I told you it drove down the crime rate but at the same time everything that has a positive usually comes with some form of a negative and that's that a lot of the people that you were used to can't afford to live here. That's just the way it is and, you're now in a neighborhood that's more like, you're in there with a bunch of transplants a lot of moving parts, a lot of people who are here temporarily and they come in [and] they go, they come, they go, and its like there's no real connection between the businesses and the people. (Medical Equipment Distributor, male)

The reference to the people who occupy the neighborhood as "transplants" and "moving parts" vividly captures the disconnect between the original and new communities; it speaks to a lack of permanency and an affiliation with values that are not aligned with the original community, an important way of describing the new community.

The perception that new inhabitants used city rules and regulations to begin the process of gentrification indicates how the older community views the new inhabitants. The use of city rules and regulations by new residents to claim the physical space of the neighborhood and by the city to displace thousands of people across the city in the name of economic development bred distrust. It confirms in the mind of the original community members that the government continues to serve a particular group of people in the city over another group. Another respondent shared a similar sentiment that people from outside the city forge the changes:

>...a lot of these are probably owned by people that haven't even seen the property in 30-40 years. Now that the kids and grandkids are in a hurry to get rid of these properties, [children and grandchildren of original owners or wealthy people] usually come in and take more cause they're uh, you know, young professionals. They come and take them or get offers for

these properties. They may live in another city and they get offers for these properties and they can't believe that some little house gets that…so that's one major way of uh what happens. (Florist #2, male)

This response expresses a concern that transplants that do not know the history of the neighborhood are taking control of multiple pieces of property. In Washington D.C., through observation, some houses were completely abandoned while other properties were owned by descendants of family members who had died and left the property sitting for decades. The reasons for allowing the property to sit vary, but it appears that many were owned by people who had found it more desirable to reside in the suburbs or had long since moved on to live in other cities. As a result, when the process of reinvestment in the community began, the people who decided to sell were selling to new community members that had never lived or worked in the community. The new members of the community are seen lacking understanding of how their actions affected the original community.

The new community members are viewed as not understanding the hurt that is caused by the displacement of people when the properties that were occupied by long-standing tenants are sold. The people who were left behind feel the missing presence of those people. The florist continues:

A lot of them moved out to PG and places like that. You know what I mean? They didn't own their homes, unfortunately they were renting so they moved out and so what we have now is we a have a lot of folks but we don't have a sense of community. People aren't tight knit anymore. (Florist #2, male)

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Here the florist describes how the displaced black community's movement to the suburbs diminished the community that remained, even before gentrification. The interviewee recognizes the higher general population in the neighborhood as abandoned houses are occupied; yet few individuals from the original neighborhood remain. The close community that existed scattered to the suburbs of Maryland where property values are lower.

Zone stickers and neighborhood parking permits also signify ownership and they are also a major use of city rules and regulations. Until the new community entered in the last decade, parking rules were non-existent on U Street. One interviewee shared:

> …Then you have, uh um, a situation with um, community parking. Community parking zones. Uh, now that wasn't here before. Now in some of these places you have to have zone stickers to park. Initially, that started near the metro stations so neighborhoods near the metro stations wouldn't get a great influx from particular suburban people. [They] would come and park and take the train downtown. This initially started to protect the people near the metro stations but now the community's not even near the metro stations have parking zones. So if you don't live in a community then you don't have a zone sticker then you can't park there. (Florist #2, male)

People cannot park in the Zone 1 neighborhood of Greater U Street at any time of the day or night during weekdays or weekends. The other parts of the city allow people to park for two or four hours without a permit, and infinite time on the weekends. Two interviewees identified the reason for this unique circumstance as the higher number of historically black churches on U Street as compared to the rest of the city. One respondent stated:

> And a lot of black churches in the community, uh, are being forced out. Uh, my old church was forced out just, you know, with parking problems.

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People uh, uh, new neighbors getting together uh and going downtown complaining about Sunday mornings. You know, how they can't get to their cars on Sunday mornings. Saying they have an emergency on Sunday mornings and they were blocked in and churchgoers there on Sunday mornings…the city has always allowed folks to double park near the churches and it's just something that we always dealt with. Over the years, some of the cars next to the church may be owned by somebody black that didn't go to that church but they dealt with it. They understood why they were blocked in and they didn't make an issue of it, you know? (Florist #2, male)

Another interviewee elaborated:

Parking changed, as you can see, as you see today. Residential parking happened. There was never a time when this was mostly a black city that you had residential parking. That would say, no you can't park in my neighborhood. I mean that's basically what it says. You cannot park in my neighborhood, period now. Not for 4 hours, not for 2 hours. You cannot park in my neighborhood at all if you don't live here. And many people who don't live are natives of here. They live in Silver Spring, they live in Bowie now but they are still native Washingtonians who now feel like they can't visit their own city. At all. And they don't feel welcome here anymore. You know? Um. The other residents didn't have a problem with it. Why you got a problem with it? I understand that an emergency can happen so you got to get out. Ok, so make a way to work together so that everybody can get out if necessary. But don't decide that you want to start bothering the churches about the property they own because you don't want people parking there. You want to take the parking lot that the church has used all these years for free and turn it into a dog park. Not even a children's park. A dog park. You have dog parks on almost every corner of DC now. And bars. So you see what's important. (Tailor, female)

The zone stickers have created tension between the groups for years, particularly in the

Greater U Street neighborhood (Zone 1), due to the larger number of historically black

churches that have existed since the end of the 19th century. The institution of no-parking

zones for non-residents communicated that non-residents – even prior residents – were

now unimportant.   As the tailor notes, dog parks and bars are seen as more importance

than the needs of the original community members; these physical structures serve as obvious boundaries between the original community and the new community.

A comparison between the newcomers and the arrival of Englishmen to the shores of North America occurred twice when discussing the way that the neighborhood began to change. One interviewee explained:

> Pioneering. When they said the urban pioneers…if you think about the historic context of pioneers is to go out someplace where it may not have been safe for you all the time. And if you didn't have the kind of support mechanisms you had had you stayed where it was safe for you all the time. So you went out and you did that and then in return you got rewarded. You got a big raise, you became a pillar of the new state and the like, you know, you became whoever you and your family became because you pioneered. It doesn't mean that you didn't push Native Americans off their land. You did. You did. But that may not have been your intent. You know? Cause you didn't see, you didn't." (Shoe Repair #1, male)

Another business owner referenced the same event in response to comments from new residents that they have created a community to be proud of:

> I mean it's like, you know, people saying, you know, we discovered America when the Indians was standing there on the shore!" (Florist #2, male)

The poignant and distressing depiction of newcomers to the neighborhood as the equivalent of Englishmen colonizing North America puts the sense of loss (and insult) on an historical level.

This particular assessment of gentrification acknowledges the conflicting relationship between the communities as well as the sense that the area will never return to being a historically black neighborhood. This image is one of encroaching enemies and a losing battle over physical space. The identification of the experience of Native

Americans sums up the importance that the physical space of the neighborhood holds for the original community. Everything from the name of the neighborhood to the right to park near church on Sunday mornings indicate the way that the physical space holds cultural meaning for the original community. In addition to cultural meaning, the physical space denotes membership within a particular group as the streets and buildings hold memories and connections to the past.

Time

Time draws lines between communities. It takes time to develop connections in a community as well as dismantle those connections. Also, developing memories of people and places takes time. Just as physical space denotes membership by showing the cultural meanings assigned to different blocks and buildings, memories of those physical spaces demonstrate membership within the group of original community members. Shared memories of the neighborhood denote a set of shared experiences in a place. One interviewee stated:

> The people that have quote unquote stood the test of time…the people that have been here since we've been here, it's that sense of "oh you're still here" and even if you weren't talking to the person, the past however many years when that whole exodus or influx happened and you still see that person you're like 'ok, this person pretty much, you know, experienced what I experienced.'" (Medical equipment distributor, male)

This passage acknowledges the importance of memory in creating community and remembering how the neighborhood looked and felt before the changes began to occur. A symbolic boundary manifests in the acknowledgement that the interviewee shared memories with strangers. The boundary provided by a simple memory of what the neighborhood looked like prior to gentrification serves as a unifying force for the

neighborhood's original inhabitants. Shared memories in the area display in-group

membership as it shows an investment of time in the neighborhood. The lack of shared

memories on the part of new community members indicates out-group membership and a

way to maintain boundaries between the communities.

Developing enough knowledge of a place to form demarcations requires time. In

other words, it takes time to develop an understanding of the significant events that

changed the trajectory of a particular neighborhood. During the interviews, respondents

referenced time in particular ways that created a "before and after" understanding of how

the neighborhood changed over the last century. For example, the riots demarcated the

neighborhood as a center of commerce:

> Well, from the time of the riots, um, well even before the riots it was a
> center of African-American life but not necessarily of African-American-
> owned business. Businesses were owned by others and not necessarily by
> African-Americans; even though all of the presence of African-American
> business owners was much greater, um, the appearance was that there was
> a larger footprint of African-American owned business because people
> who were hired in the businesses and all were African-American but they
> weren't necessarily who owned the business. (Shoe Repair #1, male)

The respondent described the role that businesses played in the area with a significant

event (i.e., the riots) instead of referencing time through years. This is a demarcation that

a new resident would not have.

The extended construction of the metro from 1986 to 1991 also divides time and

signifies changes in the community. The metro permanently transformed the

neighborhood as it connected it to the remainder of the city and made the area into a

destination point for both Washingtonians and tourists. On the other hand, the metro

construction added to the decline in the area's businesses after the riots of 1968 and the

crack cocaine epidemic of the 1980's. One interviewee mentioned the lengthy installation

of the metro and its impact on the area's businesses:

> It was riot-scarred and then the subway comes along and takes an unbelievable amount of time to put in…the streets along U Street were boarded so you couldn't drive down U Street and you could [only] drive down 11th Street…Ms. Ali will tell you the story that they had to put a door in the alley of Ben's Chili Bowl so that people could walk into Ben's Chili Bowl cause you couldn't walk through the front door…so this went on for years and years and it was destitute. (Bank owner, female)

The use of the word "destitute" poignantly describes what is now a bustling area of the

city. It provides a picture of empty storefronts, abandoned buildings and an inaccessible

street that now has traffic at almost all times of day and night. Couple this with the

interviewee's body language of disbelief, one gets a sense of how much change occurred

over the course of twenty years.

Another respondent used the installation of the metro as a way to reference time

while sharing the role of businesses in the community:

> Then it underwent the, a large part of the city in the African American community underwent …the construction of the metro system and so that further depressed business opportunity because even if you had a business no one could get to it because of the construction activities…putting a subway system is a very complicated thing and it took years to accomplish it… the heavy equipment is all over the place and everything, um, it's not conducive to growing a business because people who, whatever the service is, or good you're providing can be replicated someplace else without trying to figure out how to get in and out of the location. So, many businesses were affected in a negative sense even though they knew the long term potential was greater but they had to be around to experience it and many were not, many did not survive that period. (Shoe Repair #1, male)

This respondent's description of the extreme difficulty of entering the block by foot or

car conveys the severe challenges faced by businesses in the area. In both descriptions,

the installation of the metro references an important time in the neighborhoods'

evolution. It also indicates how the metro serves as a constant reminder of how much the

physical attributes of the neighborhood changed and how few business owners remain

who would remember a "destitute" U Street.

Memories of the neighborhood as Black Broadway also serve as a unique way of

dividing time. A respondent provided a brief timeline of the changes utilizing significant

events, such as the time period referred to as Black Broadway (1930's to 1950's):

> Living here, it's gone from one level of vibrancy into the, um, to
> the era in which is was the, uh, if you will the Black Broadway
> where it was the center of black life in black Washington to the riot
> corridor which it took 30 years to recover from…During which
> time it also became a open air drug market for addiction and all in
> the black community. And now it is rebounding in terms of going
> back to being a center of commerce in the city. (Show Repair 1,
> male)

This timeline shows the perception that the neighborhood had a period of glory which,

after the 1968 riots, was followed by destruction for more than three decades. The

neighborhood was described as Black Broadway by two other interviewees, making it a

vital part of the neighborhood's history. The memory of this time period influences the

business owner's modern day perceptions of the block. One respondent mentioned:

> …we had the stars here, you know, Duke Ellington and that. (Shoe Repair
> #2, male)

Another shared more about the neighborhood's past while explaining the reasons behind

choosing U Street for her location:

> Well, U Street has always been the Black, uh, Harlem so to speak. And
> you know, there's the sense of some people [that] we were here before

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Harlem, so yea. Yea, it was, it was where black people came. It was Black Broadway. All the names. I knew all of that. (African store, female)

Descriptions of the years during Jim Crow-era segregation denote in-group and out-group membership because they signify time that only certain members of the group remember. This era directly connects to how the neighborhood became and remained historically black for a century. The business owners who opened during that era described the lines that existed within Washington D.C. Particularly, the fact that only white people could go to downtown Washington D.C. forced black people into U Street and Georgetown. When asked about the presence of a community in the neighborhood, one respondent replied:

> Not anymore. There used to be. Actually, I don't know if you know the history of DC but DC was basically a segregated town and U Street was kind of the line of demarcation cause U Street was the black neighborhood where black folk had businesses and you know, went to the movies and that kind of thing and downtown was segregated. They didn't want us downtown so you couldn't even go down there to buy stuff and you couldn't try on anything or anything like that. Couldn't go to the movies, movies was segregated… (Florist #1, male)

Another florist expressed a similar story of the color lines that existed in Washington D.C. in the past:

> …and just like Georgetown. It used to be a black neighborhood. Yea, yea. And now if you're over there after dark they look at you funny! You know, there was like the end of the black parts. But now, probably maybe 1 out of 150 houses in Georgetown are owned by blacks. (Florist #2, male)

Another business owner confirmed the existence of color lines in Washington D.C.:

> U Street was an area where everybody knew each other. That was when it was the Black Broadway. That's when it was limited; there were a couple of places blacks went – U Street and Georgetown. And, um, so when you

went out you went to U Street so you would know everybody. (Bank owner, female)

These responses express how the history of the neighborhood reflects the era of segregation that created the historically black neighborhood. The era of segregation created black neighborhoods because government sanctions did not allow black people to freely roam the city and patronize the businesses of their choice, whereas white residents went where they pleased. One interviewee mentioned the requirement that blacks patronize black businesses in their own neighborhoods:

> …we've had during the history of my business some of the most prominent people in DC, um, to come and patronize our business because we were the only black tailor shop. Once upon a time, you didn't have a choice. If you wanted your tailoring done, you're going to go to the black tailor if you're black. (Tailor, female)

A bank owner shares a similar story:

> …we've been in existence since 1934. And the bank opened because blacks could deposit money in majority banks but they were not able to get loans. So, the purpose of the bank was initially to get mortgage loans for blacks, for blacks to be able to have a place where they could get mortgage loans. (Bank owner, female)

This history informs the ways in which members of the black community formed bonds and laid boundaries between themselves and the white residents of Washington D.C.

Given this history, it is easy to understand why black residents periodically display anger about the gentrifying neighborhood. Considering that the bonds between black people in the neighborhood solidified at a time when the hardened and legally sanctioned boundaries between whites and blacks existed, the sudden influx of white

residents feels insulting since blacks had little autonomy in their residential choices. On the other hand, white residents historically and currently enter black physical spaces (neighborhoods) as they choose. One respondent shared:

> It was still an angry time, it was a time when many white people were moving into the city. It has been going on for a long time, probably at least 25 years that I know of from when I started experiencing white people moving in more to DC in [this] area…Because they were always up in Connecticut Avenue and areas like that…U Street was the strip and it was mostly visited by African-Americans. Of course you did have white people that came through there but they didn't come through on foot. I can promise you that." (Tailor, female)

The tailor's remarks point to his indicates the social boundaries that existed prior to gentrification; the respondent expressed the sentiment with a matter-of-fact attitude that explained how jarring the change to the current racial make-up of the area is to long-time residents. Always visitors in the neighborhood, white people played by the existing community's rules. This change to an era of new, white and wealthier residents, businesses and social rules equates to a veritable breakdown in the symbolic boundaries that existed between the groups for a century – a time that represents multiple generations. Those sorts of deeply engrained symbolic boundaries do not change easily. The memory of the Jim-Crow era of segregation serves as an important boundary between the two communities. Only members of this group from this time or family members of those who experienced these memories share an understanding of the feelings of residents who experienced it on a daily basis.

Personal Connections

Ways of relating through interactions within the black community serve as a way of delineating in-group and out-group membership. The sense of community within the

Greater U Street neighborhood's black community is maintained by ongoing group

dynamics that demonstrate particular values, habits, and priorities. Business owners

described a feeling of familiarity in the original community - a sense that people knew

each other well and took advantage of opportunities to build and maintain bonds. One

respondent stated:

> So, U Street was a very tight knit community. Um, folks knew each other
> and they looked out for each other and that kind of thing. We had a lot of
> parades and football games and what not so you don't see that anymore –
> not since gentrification. It's like, very fragmented now, you know? (Florist
> #1, male)

The tailor described a similar environment of kinship:

> You know when I got off work from my grandfather I could walk to the
> bus stop, catch the bus, and get home safely. As a matter of fact, the
> neighborhood assured you got home safely. It was always a friend of the
> business that walked you to the bus stop. They assured you got on the bus
> and there was always someone waiting, knowing what time that bus get[s]
> to Monroe Street and I got off safely. My kids would not have had that.
> (Tailor, female)

An understanding between community members about keeping one another safe

and relying on one another on a daily basis is a display of in-group trust. This memory of

a trusting community – however romanticized – has faded over time.   These memories

tie back to the specific history of the neighborhood, i.e., a neighborhood in a segregated

city where black people often traveled through sections of the city in which they were not

welcome. In that type of environment, community members would need to develop a

close-knit community due to the limited mobility and fewer options available for

entertainment and shopping.

During discussions of how community operates, a number of observations about the black community were shared. These included opinions about the role of entrepreneurship and the relationship between youth and elders in the community. One interviewee shared that small businesses are an invaluable part of the community since black-owned businesses train their black employees and provide an opportunity to manage or own the business:

> Like I came in with no collateral, no money, no nothing. I got an opportunity to go back in business because a brother believed in me and he wanted to see me do well. So I had to pass that on to the next one. Know what I mean? That's why I try to help all I can, but, but the relationship between, I think, black businesses and the community is a beautiful thing. (Shoe Repair #2)

This business manager was able to obtain the opportunity to manage the business as a result of his relationship with the prior owner who had passed away within the previous two years. Before that he had worked for a number of other businesses that had not afforded him the same number of opportunities:

> …they would never teach you what you really needed to know until you open your own business 'cause they always want you to work for them. Make them money. And all the people I worked for cheated me that way. Whether it be Korean, white, Jew. But I was smart enough to know if I could make these people rich and happy then I can do it for myself. (Shoe Repair #2)

Thus, black-owned businesses were seen as more likely to invest in black employees than businesses owned by other ethnic groups. In addition to observations of the role of black-owned business in the community, the same respondent spoke of his experiences as a young person in the community decades earlier:

Yea see when I was young; I didn't come on U Street. My friends and I drove through U Street but we didn't stop. When I was in Dunbar we would come up here at night but I was clean though. Went to Ben's Chili Bowl, ate, stuff like that. Other than that, I had to get off the strip to hustle in old times. You know they ran everything. You couldn't come up here acting like a… (Shoe Repair #2)

Here the interviewee is describing a time when there was a clear understanding between elders and youth in the older neighborhood that certain behaviors were unacceptable. This dynamic is important to mention as it indicates a high number of personal connections within the community – the type of community that set expectations for youth and fostered communication between the generations. The need to rely on one another for safety and the ability to count on fellow black community members for multiple things, including business opportunities, is a memory that only group members who have a significant investment of time will recall. In this way, the memory of a close-knit black community serves as a boundary to signify membership within the group that has lived and worked in the neighborhood for generations.

Throughout the interviews, there was a clear differentiation between white residents who began the gentrification process and the white residents who entered once the process was fully underway. There seemed to be a sentiment that the "pioneers" were friendlier and more community-minded than the white residents who moved in once the neighborhood had attained a certain percentage of white people. This differentiation extends the importance of building personal connections within the black community to new, white community members. When asked if there is currently a sense of community, one respondent stated:

I would say it's completely wiped out and even when there were some white folk that moved up here that were community minded and everything and even they're gone now. (Florist #1, male)

Another interviewee made the distinction between the first group of white residents and the newer white residents clearly:

Yes, so there were areas where black and white people lived harmoniously. Then you just all of a sudden had these new white people who moved in who felt like they didn't know about that and so they acted accordingly. They acted like they were the privileged and we were the underprivileged. And there was a lot of tension in DC for a while about that and you still see it. (Tailor, female)

This describes a clear distinction between white residents who moved into the area when the neighborhood's white population was at a very low percentage and newer residents who moved in once many of the buildings had been renovated and the neighborhood had developed into a destination point for people in and around Washington D.C. The second florist expressed a similar sentiment:

And I've noticed the attitude of the young whites when they come in. When the transformation is in its early stages, uh, they're extremely polite. Extremely. And then they speak and smile and they get off the sidewalk for you to pass. All of that, you know? And as the numbers grow, as they become a greater part of the community, the attitudes change. Now they want you to stop doing what you're used to doing and do what they want you to do. (Florist #2, male)

Thus, there appears to have been a time where the boundaries between the groups were softer, that is before the investment in the community reached its current levels and white community members started taking ownership of the neighborhood.

Social Interaction

Social interaction serves the dual purpose of maintaining symbolic boundaries and promoting personal connections. The earlier observation that the new, white residents wanted the older residents to behave a certain way indicates that boundaries between the groups are constantly being built and reinforced through everyday social interaction. These social interactions include passing one another on the streets and the use of certain words and body language during transactions within businesses. Community members use interactions to build boundaries and display ownership of the neighborhood.

Social interaction can serve to support the development and maintenance of personal connections. Providing a space for people to interact and discuss what is meaningful to them demonstrates the importance of interaction for maintaining personal connections and a group identity:

> So it is that kind of a place also. You know if you had a bad day and you can come in here and you're going to find a friendly face and you can feel comfortable just roaming around for 2 or 3 hours before you go and face whatever is out there that you have to deal with. So, I mean you know a lot of the stuff I think this place has isn't necessarily related to money, it's related to a sense of freedom, of comfort. (African storeowner, female)

This storeowner consciously creates a place that encourages in-group social interaction and comfort. In this case, the implication is that refuge is from the group of people in the neighborhood who exist outside the symbolic boundaries of the black community. As the neighborhood's race and ethnic composition shifts, ownership of the neighborhood shifts. Social interactions are a way to draw lines and claim ownership of the neighborhood, just as boundaries can be drawn through controlling physical space.

Historical boundaries remain present as communities maintain social distance over time. The social distance between groups is demonstrated when one interviewee mentions the struggle to get business from a white clientele as the neighborhood began to change:

> Furthermore, you know, flowers don't have no color so I'm trying to sell flowers. I have gotten a lot of white business. It took a while. It took, like, because this revolution has been going on about ten, fifteen years. So for the first five to ten years we didn't see hardly any white folks coming in here. They rather go down to Whole Foods and buy flowers or something like that. But now, I'm seeing quite a few; a lot of white business. And so, I always try to be friendly. I mean, let's face it. There is a barrier and there's always going to be a barrier. It's just one of those things. But, I'm not a person that's going to put that barrier up. You may put it up, but I'm not going to put it up - if they want to be like that, hostile or standoffish. But I'm not going to be that way. (Florist #1, male)

This passage exposes the lag between the beginning of the gentrification process and the point in time when white residents begin to patronize local black-owned businesses. From this business owner's point of view, the white residents can be "hostile or standoffish." This statement at once recognizes the boundary that exists between the groups and places the maintenance or the destruction of the boundary on the shoulders of the new white residents. Earlier statements confirmed that the segregated history of the neighborhood created a complex dynamic between the communities that took generations to develop. For the florist quoted above, if white people enter this community it is their duty to forge bonds and create an inclusive community, it is not the duty of the existing black community to create opportunities for the two communities to co-exist. This is an important realization as it solidifies the role of social interaction, whether positive or negative, in maintenance of the boundaries between communities.

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Another respondent expressed a similar sentiment of feeling a tangible divide between the groups:

> Well I always lived in an all-black neighborhood…but, I have had angry moments. I do remember being, I do remember one day going into Whole Foods, right, and being mistreated by this white man that felt like he had the right to mistreat me because I was not the majority anymore. Who actually felt like, you know, you need to let me go ahead of you in the line because this is my store. Not yours. So I witnessed it a lot in the beginning…where these people feel like they can talk to you any kind of way. This city has a lot of transplants, you have a lot of people are here from Montana, from Maine, from Wyoming. And they, they've had zero interaction with black people and feel like, wow, I'm over here living on P Street and what are you doing here? This is not your area. So yea, we had a lot of moments of abrasiveness there when a lot of black people were angry in the city, not so much by the white people moving in but the attitudes of them who came from these little small hick towns that felt like they could bring that sort of hick town attitude with them. (Tailor, female)

This statement confirms the perception that new white residents engage in behaviors or social interactions that the existing community reads as hostile. The latter part of the tailor's remarks are consistent with the sentiment expressed by the florist that the issue is with new residents who behave as if the original community members do not belong. Although racial differences and the history between the groups have a clear and present impact on the way that the communities interact, the reasons for the divide are numerous. Both groups sustain the divisions as each group lays claims of ownership over the neighborhood by participating in the maintenance of symbolic boundaries through social interaction.

Values

The boundaries between the communities are also highlighted by cultural

differences that appear during social interactions. One respondent mentioned differences

in lifestyle:

> You don't just come to your tailor for alterations you chitchat about stuff.
> You talk about styles. You talk about politics. You talk about parties. You
> talk about everything with your tailor. It's always been a personal business
> whether it was an African American client or a white client. It's just that
> maybe white people did things differently than black people did. They
> might come in and they might talk to us about the horse races. They might
> talk to us about things that we weren't really privy to. Country clubs [and]
> things that they did on their weekends. The Hamptons. That's the
> differences that, you know, their life experiences and how they lived was
> different than how we lived but we still always talked about it. You know,
> our black clients, they would talk more of course about Rock Creek Park
> and politics and how it affects black people. Because it has always been a
> difference in how African Americans and whites were affected politically
> in D.C. It's always been a difference. You know, how they were the
> privileged and the not privileged. (Tailor, female)

This articulates a difference in activities and priorities between the groups due to

differences in wealth, income, and political concerns. Another respondent described a

difference in buying habits due to cultural differences in taste:

> In the flower business, whites have a different buying habit than
> blacks…uh, whites for the most part buy small bunches of flowers for
> their house. Uh, they spend almost no money on funerals. Yea and they
> uh, they just handle their dollar differently and uh, you know, we don't do
> their weddings so much…I'm sure they probably go to white florists.
> They'd probably rather trust a white florist that does business. It's such an
> intimate thing you know, uh, to do somebody's wedding. You know,
> where they just don't uh, trust black businesses to do it. I don't think in
> my 25 years, I don't recall every doing a white wedding. (Florist #2, male)

This statement conveys the existence of cultural differences that would prevent white

residents from crossing the community's racial lines to have a black florist design

bouquets and centerpieces for a wedding. Perceived differences in aesthetics between the groups and their historic social distance interact to create a boundary. To clarify, the tone in this part of the interview is one of understanding and acceptance of the boundary. The line between picking flowers for one's home on a weekly basis and the intimate nature of planning for a wedding is a manifestation of cultural differences and a social boundary that this respondent seems comfortable maintaining.

In previous statements regarding the difference between the first and later waves of white people in the neighborhood, there are also references to the role that class plays in sustaining the boundary between the groups. For instance, when talking about the black/white divide, the tailor mentioned that white residents "acted like they were the privileged and we were the under privileged." She elaborated on this later in the interview:

> You know, it's not just a community thing it's a class thing because…so how I bought my house on Brown Street over here and the property values have gone up. When you bought your house it was only $69,000. I paid $350,000 for mine. The last one went for $450,000. This one's on the market for $650,000. But you're still in your $69,000. You and Joe Blow down the street. So you know what? You're not in the same class as us. You're not in our category. (Tailor, female)

Class is seen as a boundary between the new and old communities, as people who have owned their homes prior to the process of gentrification see themselves as perceived differently.

Also, class creates a boundary due to the different consumption patterns that different income levels create. One interviewee explains:

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Where people have more disposable income, when people have more disposable income, they tend to have a variety of, a mix of businesses that may be somewhat different. A lower income community will not have coffee shops selling $4 coffee and the like because people won't do that. So, a community that can afford, that has people in it that can afford that sort of thing will then reflect somewhat differently but it's not because people wouldn't, uh, um, like to, um, have particular services…it's just not, it doesn't fit a business plan. It's not a, um, um, financially advantageous to do such a thing and so people don't do it. They make businesses that fit the customer base that they have and um, it's not a difference, it's just, it's just they need, they, there's no reason to have a business that really doesn't fit in that regard. There are not a lot of, there tend to be more liquor stores and not so many bars. Because people who can go and buy a six pack of beer doesn't necessarily translate into people who can pay as much for a beer at a bar as a six pack cost. And so, in a, in a community with more disposable income you will get bars because people can afford that. In other communities people will go to the liquor store and buy their liquor in a package store and take it with them but both, both communities are using, both communities, uh, are consuming alcohol but just differently. (Shoe Repair #1, male)

The reality of the different economic capabilities of the new community are

acknowledged by another respondent:

They have different economic, you know, capabilities. They don't necessarily have to be rich, but you know - and I tell this to the community all the time – it's like gentrification is really just people who are looking for a better opportunity and they can afford this neighborhood. They couldn't, you know, a lot of people living in this neighborhood couldn't go over to Georgetown and live. So it's really just about that, they're looking for an opportunity just like everybody else…so it's not, you know, as bad as people like to paint it, as you know, white people coming in and taking things over. But white people, quite frankly, when they come with their money they expect certain things. (Theater, male)

This statement acknowledges the additional boundary that class creates on top of

the racial boundaries that exist in the community. Notwithstanding the sympathetic

perception of gentrification expressed by the theater owner, the last part of the statement

acknowledges a feeling that the expectations of the new, white community are present as

their political clout and higher amount of disposable income are reflected in the surroundings. One respondent explains:

> They felt like here are these white people had moved into the city and now all of these things could happen for them. All of these things could happen. You could have these night watch programs, the police are here more often, and you know they get there immediately when you call them now. A lot of African-Americans were offended by the fact that it seemed like once the white people came everything was better."(Tailor, female)

This is a very important aspect of the changes in the neighborhood to consider when examining the divide and tensions between the groups. Each community wants to reside in a safe neighborhood with thriving businesses and clean streets. It cannot be denied that a number of the positive changes in the neighborhood coincided with an increased flow of money into the neighborhood. But these positive changes due to the higher wealth of the new residents in this case combine to accentuate cultural differences and historic divisions. Thus, the mixture of class, cultural values, and history intersect to provide an ongoing system of symbolic boundaries that keep the communities detached.

Differing values appear within the original, black community as well. Another interviewee expressed the recognition of a growing divide between the generations and frustration at her dwindling understanding of what currently interests youth in the community. She explains that when she opened up her store 22 years ago, there was a general interest in African décor and attire among young black people. The values across the generations, at least from the current perspective, seem to have been more consistent. She has seen these generationally-shared values decline in recent years as the

neighborhood has changed. When asked what she thinks has changed in recent years, she

responded:

> I wish I knew. I wish I had an idea. And I, I sort of, I really struggle with that um, I don't know that the image of Africa has not suffered over the last 20 years so that when one associates anything with Africa its poverty and warfare and not creativity and yea, culture and beauty. And the enormous wealth that is there. I am not sure that in the ladder of diversity, Africa has ascended. (African store owner, female)

Her words speak to a shift in values that has directly shaped her ability to relate to the

current young black population on U Street, as well as her ability to recreate the kind of

community that existed in earlier years. This is the community that she feels some former

residents and patrons with the same values still seek out:

> …but they used to come for, ok we'll go around here and it would be a day of it. They just, they'd just be shopping for the day. That doesn't happen anymore. Or it doesn't happen as often. People may come down looking for specific things. And I think people from out of town don't do it either because they're looking for black DC. They're looking for Chocolate City. Can't find it anymore…I feel like it doesn't really exist anymore. (African store, female)

Thus this business owner succinctly describes a black community with a cohesive set of

values and tastes that is fading from both the neighborhood and the city as the culture

shifts.

The use of city rules and regulations to demonstrate ownership of the

neighborhood also creates a boundary in values as a cultural difference between the

group's ways of handling neighborhood affairs is illustrated:

> Those are the kinds of things that have black folks angry. It's senior citizens who couldn't keep their houses up and then get hit with these ridiculous taxes because they didn't have the roof in the state that they [the

city] wanted it to be in, or the gutter was falling off the house. Well, ok. Well if you're in a neighborhood and you want to be neighborly then come and help us fix it up. That's what you do. When I was growing up as a kid, you didn't hire a painter or a roofer, you get your family and your neighbors to come and fix it up. If they fall on hard times that's what you did. But now, its "I'm sorry you're 75 years old and you can't fix your house up. Then you just need to leave this neighborhood. We're not going to help you. (Tailor, female)

The use of city rules and regulations for this purpose sends a message to older residents that they are not a valued part of the neighborhood. Cultural difference is displayed when house maintenance is treated as an individual rather than neighborhood issue.

Differing community values were further illustrated during discussion of why the shift in the neighborhood occurred so quickly, which business owners attributed to the fact that the vast majority of renters did not own the property they had lived in for decades. One respondent clarifies:

Well, I say we didn't own anything. See what I'm saying? The reason that, um, the gentrification was allowed to happen cause we left. We didn't own anything so we left. We have a few owners that held on but it was basically rentals. (Florist #1, male)

Another respondent shared a similar viewpoint:

And in many instances it's also business choices people made. It may have been inadvertent but they could have bought the home when they were buying new cars. But they didn't buy the home, they had always rented the house and they mind paying whoever the landlord was the rent and everything but the rent was at a level that allowed them to be able to go buy a new car…so then it rolls around to now and they didn't buy when they could have. These are business choices they made. They made! And so when somebody says well it's pushing these people out. Some instances that may be true and it certainly, certainly in some instances that's true. But in many instances it's not true. It was just, it was just delayed. When you could have bought the house for $35,000 or $40,000 you didn't buy it.

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And now somebody wants $300,000 and you can't afford it. But it wasn't because you couldn't have bought it. You didn't. (Shoe repair #1, male)

These perspectives give an interesting insight into the ways in which different community values may have played a part in the end result of the gentrification - a displaced population and shrinking sense of community. These passages display frustration with the original community members who did not see the value in purchasing the property when it was still affordable.

In addition to the describing values that were lacking in the old and new communities, respondents hoped to see a renewed sense of loyalty to one another in the black community. Multiple respondents expressed a desire for a deeper sense of the importance of entrepreneurship within the black community on U Street. For example, one of the florists argued:

…we don't have any ownership, you know what I mean? We're the ultimate consumer and folks know that. So we don't have the right to really call our own shots. You know, we don't have the fire, that economic firepower, you know, or anything like that. So it's unfortunate. We're like the low man on the totem pole. You know? Always. Cause we don't really take care of ourselves. (Florist #1, male)

Another interviewee shared a similar thought:

I mean I'm very clear about where, where we all fit in. I'm very clear that, that wealth gap is going to continue unless we in my mind change some of the things and some of the ways we operate. And, what we don't know about black businesses is that we tend to hire our people so you have an automatic economic, uh, addition when you um, support a black business. You also support other black businesses because we're; I mean for me I'm buying from black artists as much as I can product-wise I am buying from African women or men who are making small things. So it's a, it's a wonderful way of spreading wealth and we have a lot of things honestly I think that keep us down. (African store, female)

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Both of these statements show a desire for a value shift toward black people opening

businesses in the community and members of the community frequenting those

businesses. Fostering a larger sense of the importance of home and business ownership

within the black community is important to the remaining black business owners as the

entire community ponders ways to stop the cycle of displacing long-time residents and

dismantling a community. As the banker concluded:

> You don't have that problem in other communities. Asian community,
> they always support their own businesses. Hispanic communities, they
> support all of their own businesses. Their banks have grown as a result of
> that. Ours haven't grown as much. (Bank, female)

As the process of gentrification continues, the remaining black business owners and

managers feel the difference in the loyalty of the community. As time progresses, long-

time black residents are displaced as a cultural value shift away from consciously

supporting black-owned businesses develops.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the contrast neighborhood as physical space and neighborhood as community is displayed through business owner's investment of emotional energy. Their pain about losing community was evident throughout the interviews. Their memories of "how things used to be" clarified what has been lost in the community. The struggle to retain "ownership" of the neighborhood has grown more difficult with class, race, and ethnic changes in the neighborhood.

Interviewees offered rich descriptions of U street and other historically black neighborhoods in Washington D.C. during Jim Crow segregation and after the riots when the city grew to be predominantly black. These recollections were filled with fond memories of people "knowing" one another and being "tight-knit." There were references to a time when elders in the community controlled U Street and youth were not permitted to behave in certain ways in the neighborhood. Knowing one another and having behavioral expectations that the entire community understands are vital to feeling a "sense of community." These business owners' descriptions of the black community in Washington D.C. match with people interviewed in Mindy Thompson Fullilove's book *Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, and What We Can Do About It.* For example, Fullilove (2004) shares a viewpoint of a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania resident:

> As Sala Udin, who grew up in the Hill District and later served as councilman, put it, "The sense of community and the buildings are related in an old area. The buildings were old, the streets were cobblestone and old, there were many small alleyways and people lived in those alleyways.

> The houses were very close together. There were small walkways that ran in between the alleyways that was really a playground. So, the physical conditions of the buildings helped to create a sense of community. We all lived in similar conditions and had similar complaints about the wind whipping through the gaps between the frame and the window, and the holes in the wall and the leaking and the toilet fixtures that work sometimes and don't work sometimes. But that kind of common condition bound us together more as a community. I knew everybody on my block, and they knew me. They knew me on sight, and they knew all the children on sight, and my behavior changed when I entered the block. And so, I think there was a very strong sense of community. (p.61)

Sala Udin's description conveys the connection between a sense of community and a place. The buildings and streets support and reinforce the community as they represent shared sets of meaning and knowledge of the area. The knowledge of how to navigate the physical space is intertwined with the importance of the place itself (Fullilove 2004:19). The physical space is connected to the way people interact with each other as it provides a setting where particular behaviors are expected. The changes in the look and feel of the neighborhood are connected to the respondent's assessment that the community is gone. This sense of loss is not only tied to the dispersal of the people in the community; it is also tied to the changing landscape as buildings are torn down and repurposed.

The knowledge of how to navigate the neighborhood is directly connected to the history of the area. References to the Jim Crow-era of segregation were often made in response to the question of whether there is a community here now. This signifies that the sets of meaning and knowledge of how to navigate the neighborhood are rooted in that era. The close connections between black community members were solidified during that era and continued until gentrification began to change the neighborhood in the 1990's. Fullilove (2004) characterizes this historical process best:

> …the virulent racial segregation that was instituted all over America – and which remains at the time of this writing a potent force influencing residential life…the geography created by dispersal-in-segregation created a group of islands of black life. (p.27)

The reality of life in these "islands of black life" was referenced throughout interviewee's discussion of past and present community life, as for example, when the two florists discussed the lines of segregation that shaped black people's visits to U Street and Georgetown. This reality fed into the surprise and pain (often masked with laughter during the interviews) of visiting these same neighborhoods today. Now that these neighborhoods are predominantly white, elderly respondents expressed a feeling of being unwelcome. The feeling of being unwelcome in a place that harbors so many memories is just as hurtful as being displaced entirely. The buildings may be intact after gentrification in a way that they are not after urban renewal projects, but the pain and sense of loss is just as acute. If community members are unable to access those memories by visiting and interacting with people who share those memories, the resulting loss is the same as if the buildings were destroyed.

The feeling of being unwelcome in historically black areas creates an added level of anger within the original community about the attitudes of the "new white people" in the neighborhood. The tailor shared a humorous recollection that whites came to U Street prior to the neighborhoods gentrification, but "never on foot." Her words reference a bygone era in Washington D.C. when whites entered black neighborhoods with an understanding that the black inhabitants of the neighborhood governed that space. Before gentrification, the boundaries were clear and regularly reinforced through behavior. Now,

new members in the community behave as if their meanings and values are paramount as more members of the original community are displaced.

Displacement breeds a feeling of being encroached upon that inspired comparisons to Native Americans having their land stolen. Fullilove (2004) sums this up simply:

> Inherent in taking land is the implication that former residents have to go someplace else, as the working people were moved to the periphery of Paris and the Native Americans were moved to reservations. In many cities, there was literally no place for the displaced black people to go. (p.64)

The common theme here is the lack of completion in the process. Issues of home and place remain in the Native American community to the present day. For respondents, these issues mirror the processes of urban renewal and gentrification. From their perspective, both processes lack the foresight to think of where the displaced people will go and how they are affected by the changes. The people who enter the communities are seen has being provided with all of the resources they need to prosper and feel whole. The people who are displaced and the people who stay (but are left missing their community) do not seem to be considered in the process.

The lack of consideration for the original community ties directly into Samara's (2012) assessment of the role of citizenship in gentrification and urban renewal. The new community members are able to utilize the local governance as a way to stake a claim to the neighborhood that the original community members cannot access. Multiple respondents mentioned the use of tax incentives to encourage investment in the community, the institution of fines to control the use of buildings, and the establishment

of zoned parking as ways that the local government works with the new, wealthy, white community members to create the community they desire. These tools are not extended to the original community members and generally work to keep the displaced population out of the neighborhood. The implementation of no parking zones for non-residents in Zone 1 at all times is an example of how the city's rules and regulations work in favor of the wealthy, new residents. This lack of consideration for the original community's need to visit and attend services at their historic churches is due to their lack of wealth. Thus, it seems as the desires and emotional attachment of the original community to the neighborhood are low priorities for local government.

In this project, the displaced population of the neighborhood is only explored through the emotions felt by the respondents as they recount a lost sense of community. The perspectives of the displaced people of the neighborhood are noticeably missing from the analysis. This group is invaluable in gaining a deeper understanding of how gentrification affected the original community. A twin study on the thousands of people who have been displaced to Maryland suburbs would be a valuable addition to further study of this community. In the same vein, the businesses studied in this project are businesses that are currently able to bridge the needs of both communities. Only one struggling business was interviewed and her perspective was full of references to businesses and people that are no longer present. A study of the displaced residents could include displaced business owners that have not been able to stay on the U Street corridor due to gentrification. Furthermore, a study of the differences in perceptions between male

and female business owners of gentrification could be an interesting endeavor for a gender studies department.

Considering the history of U Street as a hub of black-owned businesses, the idea that one interviewee shared that the businesses were largely owned by people outside of the black community is an interesting notion. An examination of the relationships between business owners (presumably white under the above assertion) and managers (presumably black under the above assertion) to develop an accurate account of what happened to the businesses after the riots destroyed the neighborhood.

Due to the focus on the interactions of the historically black community and the entering community that is dominated by middle and upper class, white professionals it would have been overwhelming to gauge the black business owners' perceptions of the incoming immigrant groups. For the Greater U Street neighborhood, this would have been a study of the interactions between the Ethiopian community and the native-born black community. Revisiting this study in the near future with a focus on the intersections of the native-born black community and the Ethiopian community could serve as a comparison for how symbolic boundaries are drawn between communities. It would be particularly interesting to see if there is more or less tension between the groups considering the drastically different history between the groups.

The connection between physical spaces (buildings and parks) in the neighborhood was an ongoing theme; specifically, the ways in which physical spaces are used to draw boundaries between communities during everyday interactions. Further research on the ways in which symbolic boundaries are created and maintained in a

gentrifying neighborhood could be completed in cities across the nation. Specifically, the ways in which boundary drawing differs depending on the region and the ethnic groups involved.

This project added a necessary dimension to the study of gentrification through the inclusion of business owners and their unique take on the changes that occur in a neighborhood. Consciously seeking out the opinions and viewpoints of business owners is a necessary addition to gaining a better understanding of how gentrification affects the dismantled community. This project provides a starting point for examining multiple themes and concepts in the ongoing study of gentrification in urban settings.

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