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GENTRIFICATION: CULTURE AND CAPITAL IN THE URBAN CORE

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Abstract

Gentrification, the conversion of socially marginal and working-class areas of the central city to middle-class residential use, reflects a movement, that began in the 1960s, of private-market investment capital into downtown districts of major urban centers. Related to a shift in corporate investment and a corresponding expansion of the urban service economy, gentrification was seen more immediately in architectural restoration of deteriorating housing and the clustering of new cultural amenities in the urban core.

Research on gentrification initially concentrated on documenting its extent, tracing it as a process of neighborhood change, and speculating on its consequences for reversing trends of suburbanization and inner-city decline. But a cumulation of 10 years of research findings suggests, instead, that it results in a geographical reshuffling, among neighborhoods and metropolitan areas, of professional, managerial, and technical employees who work in corporate, government, and business services.

Having verified the extent of the phenomenon, empirical research on gentrification has reached a stalemate. Theoretically interesting problems concern the use of historic preservation to constitute a new urban middle class, gentrification and displacement, the economic rationality of the gentrifier's behavior, and the economic restructuring of the central city in which gentrification plays a part.

Broadening the analytic framework beyond demographic factors and neo-classical land use theory is problematic because of serious conceptual and methodological disagreements among neo-Marxist, neo-Weberian, and main-

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stream analysts. Yet efforts to understand gentrification benefit from the use of economic paradigms by considering such issues as production, consumption, and social reproduction of the urban middle class, as well as the factors that create a supply of gentrifiable housing and demand for it on the part of potential gentrifiers.

An emerging synthesis in the field integrates economic and cultural analysis. The mutual validation and valorization of urban art and real estate markets indicates the importance of the cultural constitution of the higher social strata in an advanced service economy. It also underlines how space and time are used in the social and material constitution of an urban middle class.

INTRODUCTION

During the 1970s, throughout North America and Western Europe, new residential patterns in many old cities appeared to contradict the long-term decline of their inner core. These patterns emerged in a wave of capital reinvestment in deteriorating housing that was concentrated near central business districts (CBDs). Although some of the rehabilitation was publicly subsidized, most was financed by the private market, and a significant portion was carried out by do-it-yourself or "sweat equity" part-time workers. The progenitors of this urban "renaissance"—as magazines and newspapers termed it—had white-collar jobs. In many cases, too, they had markedly nontraditional households and styles of life. Together with a surge in service-sector employment and corresponding cultural and commercial amenities, their presence as a newly minted urban "gentry" gave the downtown a different form.

Much of the initial sociological research on gentrification concentrated on documenting its extent, tracing it as a process of neighborhood change, and speculating on its consequences in terms of both displacement of an existing population and reversal of trends toward suburbanization and urban decline. This general approach was especially characteristic of sociologists in the United States, who were still strongly influenced by positivism and the empirical tradition.

Gradually, however, the work of Marxist and left-Weberian urban sociologists and geographers broadened the study of gentrification by emphasizing an underlying dynamic of economic restructuring. The most relevant processes, in this view, were a regional and metropolitan deindustrialization and a concentration of professional and technical jobs and cultural markets in the urban core. Consequently, gentrification was subsumed under the rubrics of production and consumption rather than of demographic structure or individual choice.

Although empirical research on gentrification has repeatedly verified the extent of the phenomenon, the effort to establish a broader analytic framework is problematic. Disagreement on an underlying structure deepens the methodological schisms dividing neo-Marxist, neo-Weberian, and main-stream sociologists. Nevertheless, further research on gentrification may overcome these issues by investigating urban morphology—the shape the city takes—in terms of economic and cultural analysis. Both large and small investors are constrained by the availability of capital and the housing supply. Yet since the 1960s, the expansion of cultural patronage among middle class social strata has shown that investment in culture may augment limited means. Therefore, the accumulation strategies of large investors in central-city real estate are supported by smaller investors' patterns of cultural and social reproduction.

THE EMPIRICAL STALEMATE

From the moment an English sociologist invented the term "gentrification" to describe the residential movement of middle-class people into low-income areas of London (Glass 1964), the word evoked more than a simple change of scene. It suggested a symbolic new attachment to old buildings and a height-ened sensibility to space and time. It also indicated a radical break with suburbia, a movement away from child-centered households toward the social diversity and aesthetic promiscuity of city life. In the public view, at least, gentrifiers were different from other middle-class people. Their collective residential choices, the amenities that clustered around them, and their gener-ally high educational and occupational status were structured by—and in turn expressed—a distinctive *habitus*, a class culture and milieu in Bourdieu's (1984) sense. Thus, gentrification may be described as a process of spatial and social differentiation.

Early research denied that most gentrifiers moved "back to the city" from suburban housing (Laska & Spain 1980). Recent work confirms that they tend to come from other urban neighborhoods and large metropolitan areas (McDonald 1983, LeGates & Hartman 1986).

Yet there is much disagreement about the sources of these shifts, as well as their empirical referent. While some of the literature focuses on gentrifiers, other studies examine property that is gentrified.

In both cases, "supply-side" interpretations stress the economic and social factors that produce an attractive housing supply in the central city for middle-class individuals, and "demand-side" interpretations affirm a con-sumer preference, for demographic or cultural reasons, for the buildings and areas that become gentrified. Other problems are introduced by considering housing tenure—specifically, the different interests of homeowners and rent-ers—when gentrification by both groups causes property values to rise.

Moreover, case studies that include the local political context of gentrification document the contributions of financial and political elites who seem, at first, not to be directly involved. Conflict over zoning laws, historic district designations, and property tax assessments indicates how important may be the state's role in defining the economic and social value of an urban area. Strategic shifts in government policy from 1970 to 1975 supported gentrification at the very time that rising inflation rates, fuel costs, and construction prices made rehabilitation in the center city an economically viable alternative for both homeowners and real estate developers.

At that time, local and national governments in both the United States and Western Europe shifted from supporting the demolition required by urban renewal to giving incentive grants for housing improvement. This facilitated the small-scale building rehabilitation on which gentrification depends. And though gentrification remains predominantly a privately financed action, a strong expression of local government support has generally been a precondition for the participation of lending institutions.

Little wonder, then, that British geographers call gentrification a "chaotic" concept (Rose 1984, after Sayer 1982) or that this observation has become the *cri de coeur* of some thoughtful writers (e.g. Smith & Williams 1986).

For several years, a large portion of every article on gentrification has been devoted to a literature review. Although this may suggest a welcome quality of introspection, it more likely indicates a worrisome stasis in the field.

Descriptive Overview

By all accounts, a small wave of private-market capital reinvestment in deteriorating central-city housing began in the 1960s. Both early and recent studies correctly associate it with the "vitality" of an urban core (Frieden 1964, Bradbury et al 1982). But this investment shows a high degree of selectivity. There are important regional variations in its strength, and an intra-urban concentration occurs in areas of "historic" significance (Black 1975). Moreover, highly visible reinvestment and rehabilitation by upper-income residents take place alongside continuing deterioration of inner-city housing, disinvestment in the CBD, and suburbanization of most new housing construction for the private market (Clay 1979).

In no way but proximity does gentrification counteract the economic and racial polarization of most urban populations. In big cities as different as New York and San Francisco, it fails to raise median family income or to reverse a secular decrease in the number of high-status census areas; nor does gentrification always spread beyond a street or neighborhood to an entire census tract (Lipton 1977, Baldassare 1984, Marcuse 1986). At least initially, housing reinvestment may be concentrated in "pockets" or at the edges of declining districts (Schaeffer & Smith 1986, Marcuse 1986). In fact, the effects of gentrification at the "extreme micro-level" show much divergence:

What appears as ethnic, racial, and economic integration at the neighborhood level may be disaggregated into traditionally segregated enclaves within the census tract, the block, and individual buildings (LeGates & Hartman 1986:195).

The gentrifiers' choice of neighborhood does not imply their social integration with existing neighbors of a different race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. In street encounters, they approach each other warily until familiarity with neighborhood routine ensures politeness (Anderson 1985). New middle-class residents often expect crime to be as prevalent as "background noise" (McDonald 1983:292, Anderson 1985). For their part, existing residents may resent the superimposition of an alien culture—with different consumption patterns and an accelerated pace of change—on their community.[1]

While residents' associations sometimes mobilize to fight "developers" (Chernoff 1980, Weiler 1980), they really confront the whole set of economic and social processes that underlie "development" (Zukin 1982). This makes for an uneven social contest. In general, community mobilization cannot do battle with "the abstract logic of the private market"; and in particular, "the institutionalized procedures for responding to gentrification are weaker, more fragmented, and more costly to engage in" than those that respond to coherent public policies (Henig 1982:353–54).

Moreover, people who live in a gentrifying neighborhood have different interests. Pre-gentrification residents, as already partly noted, are likely to have consumption patterns of a lower social class, constitute a different ethnic and racial community, and an older age group (Spain 1980, Henig 1984, LeGates & Hartman 1986). When they mobilize to defend a neighborhood "as it is," they exclude the "improvements" identified with gentrification. Chief among these improvements, in the gentrifiers' view, is the restoration of historic architectural detail. Yet if existing residents join gentrifiers in associations that support the "historic" community, they may be aiding a process that causes property values to rise and leads to their own displacement. Existing homeowners, however, may have reason to do so. In economic terms, they forsake sentiment, or attachment to the community, for exchange values (Logan & Molotch 1987).

Among gentrifiers, renters have significantly lower incomes than homeowners (DeGiovanni & Paulson 1984). Thus, a cleavage develops between these groups when neighborhood associations pursue improvement strategies that cause rents to rise. Moreover, gentrifiers who buy and maintain multifamily dwellings are torn between a landlord's interest in getting higher

[1]An early view of the implicit and explicit conflicts in this sort of neighborhood improvement is Lyford's (1966) study of Manhattan's Upper West Side. As various factors, including community resistance to dislocation and resulting investor uncertainty, prolonged the process of "revitalization" and reduced the public sector's role, urban renewal in the area was succeeded by gentrification.

rents and a resident's desire to keep the neighborhood unpretentious, affordable, and somewhat socially diverse (McDonald 1983).

Community organizations may mediate residents' conflicting interests in unexpected ways. In a gentrified area near downtown Brooklyn, for example, the gentrifiers' association pursued a strategy of historic preservation—to the extent of creating a "historic" neighborhood name—that permitted them to define and appropriate the area (Kasinitz 1984). Gradually, their Puerto Rican neighbors responded by mobilizing on the basis of ethnicity. Another situation emerged in Philadelphia, when gentrifiers joined existing white ethnic residents in excluding blacks from the neighborhood (Cybriwsky 1978).[2]

When community organizations impose social and cultural homogeneity on a gentrifying neighborhood, they act as a "vanguard of the bourgeoisie" (Logan & Molotch 1987). They seem to be able to carry out their aims regardless of local government involvement or the degree to which they fabricate the area's historic past (Cybriwsky et al 1986).

While studies of gentrification agree on many of these key points, they indicate four contentious—and suggestive—areas of analysis: the use of historic preservation in constituting a new urban elite, gentrification's contribution to homelessness and displacement, the economic rationality of the gentrifier's role, and the relation between gentrification and economic transformation.

Historic Preservation

It is tempting to associate contemporary gentrifiers, as part of a new middle class, with the appropriation of Victorian style (Jager 1986). Certainly the industrial bourgeoisie of the late nineteenth century bequeathed a major portion of the buildings now gentrified in North American, British, and Australian cities. But gentrifiers' tastes are conditioned by the availability and affordability of older buildings. Their aesthetic tastes may be diverted by either new construction in an older mode, like the current vogue in London of new neo-Georgian houses (Wright 1985a), or newer, perhaps Edwardian, old building styles (Williams 1984:212). Similarly, gentrification applies to a taste for restored brownstone, red brick, or gingerbread houses as well as manufacturing lofts that are converted to residential use (Zukin 1982).[3]

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[2]Nevertheless, such strategies do not inevitably result in gentrification. In the Brooklyn community described by Krase (1982), white middle-class gentrifiers mobilized for historic preservation, yet by the time the study was published, the neighborhood was known again as a black ghetto. Also see Williams (1985).

[3]McDonald (1983), however, claims that gentrifiers' choices may be specific to certain neighborhoods. In Boston—a city where older central-city housing is in short supply—his survey of new South End residents found that 39% had looked for housing only in that area. Yet again, the large number of multifamily dwellings in the South End that gentrifiers use for rental income suggests an economic choice.

More significant than the impression of architectural homogeneity is the emphasis on culture in constructing new middle-class consumption patterns. By means of historic preservation, the new middle classes parlay a relatively modest investment of time and money into a quasi-bourgeois *habitus* (Williams, 1986). They are able to enjoy a solid building stock, often individualized to specific spatial requirements—notably, space that supports working at home. They also participate in the creation in their neighborhood of "a critical mass of pleasant amenity" (Logan & Molotch 1987), where shopping and housing provide serious social and cultural experiences (Beauregard 1986).

There is some question, however, about whether historic preservation really confers or affirms more "distinction" than the modern style of most new construction. In contrast to widespread assumptions, gentrifiers have the same income level and educational background as other middle-class people who live downtown in either new or rehabilitated apartment buildings (Ford 1978). In the same ways they also resemble the middle-class residents of affluent, older suburbs (McDonald 1983).[4]

A quest for historic districts implies more, of course. It confronts the plane of modernity with the rich and varied temporality of the past—but which past, and whose? "In this new perspective [a gentrified area] is not so much a literal place as a cultural oscillation between the prosaic reality of the contemporary inner city and an imaginative reconstruction of the area's past" (Wright 1985b:228–29).

Gentrification and Displacement

In a subtle way, the ideology of historic preservation facilitates the removal of a pre-gentrification population, especially those residents whose modernization of their homes is incongruous with the spirit of authenticity in the gentrifiers' own restoration. But the pragmatic wedge of their displacement is rising rents and higher sale prices for homes in gentrifying neighborhoods.

All studies of gentrification confirm that a fairly homogeneous group of in-movers reduces residential density and replaces an existing population. The out-movers, however, are a relatively heterogeneous group (LeGates & Hartman 1986). They can be characterized as economically vulnerable though not always disadvantaged. At least through the early 1970s, white-collar workers were affected by gentrification more than blue-collar workers, with whites displaced more frequently than members of other races. After 1973, revitalization in several major US cities accelerated the displacement of blacks by whites in certain neighborhoods (Gale 1984:24). In somewhat

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[4]McDonald's (1983) survey, however, shows a larger standard deviation in gentrifiers' household income, especially among single-person households.

smaller cities, also, upper-income households showed greater willingness to move into lower-class areas and racial ghettos (Henig 1984:178).

Yet to some degree, race and class may still be a barrier to gentrification. Whites and most middle-class blacks have not gentrified lower-class black areas, such as Harlem and Newark, despite a building stock and a cost structure equivalent to other areas' (Schaeffer & Smith 1986, Beauregard 1986:39).

It is generally agreed that gentrifying neighborhoods produce higher tax yields. For this reason, among others, gentrification elicits the approval of local political leaders, who correspondingly moderate their support for displacees.

In reality, the relation between gentrification and property taxes is more complex. Increases in assessed property values in gentrifying areas may not be significantly greater than in other neighborhoods; they also lag behind increases in market values (DeGiovanni 1984). Nevertheless, once assessments have been raised to reflect some rehabilitation activity, the assessed value of unimproved properties in the neighborhood also rises. So gentrifiers carry their less affluent neighbors with them on a rising tide of property tax assessments.

A more severe blow against an existing population is effected by the removal of low-price rental housing from the city's building stock (Gale 1984, Marcuse 1986). Single-room-occupancy hotels, where tenants pay by the night or week, are a vivid victim (Kasinitz 1983), but the general problem is one of *housing* rather than *household* dislocation (Gale 1984:164). As a rule, low-income residents are displaced farther from the CBD. And no matter where they move, displacees usually pay a higher rent (Kain & Apgar 1985, LeGates & Hartman 1986).

Efforts have been made to qualify these stark changes. An examination of one year's tenant out-movers from "revitalizing" areas in five US cities found the costs of displacement to be outweighed by "benefits" (Schill & Nathan 1983). Similarly, a simulation of displacement in several revitalizing low-income neighborhoods in Chicago speculated that many low-income tenants regularly move out of their neighborhood with or without gentrification; at any rate, Kain & Apgar (1985) consider that the benefits to the area and the residents who continue to live there—in improvements to capital stock—exceed the costs of displacement.

It is more worrisome to consider that spatial differentials—that is, conditions in specific neighborhoods—do not have much effect on rates of displacement (Lee & Lodge 1984). If displacement in the face of mounting rents is an important national trend, then the whole structure of housing markets and their fit with social needs should be revised.

These findings suggest that the gentrifiers' aesthetic hallmark—their in-

vestment in rehabilitation—has less of an impact on other people than does their property investment. This calls into question the relative weights of "sentiment and symbolism" (*pace* Firey 1945) and economic rationality in the gentrifiers' role.

Economic Rationality

Throughout North America and Western Europe, gentrification has occurred together with a shift toward new homeownership and condominium conversion in traditionally low-rent areas of the central city. Generally these forms of housing reinvestment—rehabilitation, on the one hand, and homeownership, on the other—have to clear historical barriers posed by tenants' property rights and the taxation and credit systems (Gale 1984, Williams 1984, Hamnett & Randolph 1986). Once they do, however, they open up an avenue of speculation for both gentrifiers and real estate developers.

The small scale of gentrifiable property and the cost of rehabilitation, relative to new construction, do not attract large-scale investors. Nevertheless, the low cost of entry into this market, at least in its early years, propels significant numbers of professional, managerial, and technical employees into becoming part-time developers and landlords (Zukin 1982, McDonald 1983).

Much emphasis has been placed on the apparent lack of interest in speculation on the part of early, "risk-oblivious" gentrifiers or "urban pioneers" (Berry 1985:78–79). Yet they are hardly insensible to the rationality of a housing investment. Indeed, economic contingencies may "encourage [them to take] defensive actions to protect [themselves] against the vagaries of the housing market and, at the same time, to avoid the ravages of the effects of inflation on [their] salary" (Beauregard 1986:45). Early gentrifiers find the niche they can afford in urban housing markets.

Although respondents often fail to cite economic reasons for their involvement in gentrification (Berry 1985), some surveys have confirmed the importance to them of both investment potential and housing prices (McDonald 1983, Gale 1980:100, 1984:16). Despite this general effect, however, the decision to buy property in a gentrifiable area may reflect different material priorities.

Some gentrifiers may be most influenced by the rent gap, i.e. the difference between ground-rent levels at various locations in a metropolitan area (Smith 1979). The devalorization of capital (the decrease in the economic value of property) in the inner city offers them a fairly low-cost opportunity to get involved in its restructuring. This is especially important when a central-city location already offers some advantages. Although the rent gap introduces a mechanistic and somewhat circular argument, it does accord with real locational choices. What must be remembered is that the increases in investment

and property values associated with gentrification represent only one part of a range of possible outcomes in the inner city (Beauregard 1986).

Low-income gentrifiers may have other motives for making a housing investment in gentrification. In their case, a marginal investment may ensure the conditions they require for their social reproduction (Rose 1984). Residence in a gentrified area may be especially important to single mothers, who try to stabilize their position in urban housing markets and to locate near support services by buying a low-cost, inner-city apartment.[5] Similarly, unemployed and informally employed workers, particularly in the creative and performing arts, may try to cluster in inner-city neighborhoods in order to maintain access to information, training, and markets for their work.

Thus, the economic rationality of gentrification is subject to finely tuned variations. Different forms of capital have a different relation to space and time, and the division of labor within white-collar sectors of the work force shapes both a dispersal and a concentration of middle-class residence (Smith 1986). The new middle classes' insertion into the metropolis takes place at the micro-level of both the suburb and the gentrified neighborhood. The overlay of these insertions on urban, regional, national, and international scales calls our attention to spatial switches even as they are being produced for a variety of economic and social reasons (Smith 1984, Massey 1984).

Economic Restructuring

A major focus of economic shifts since the 1960s has been the recentralization of corporate investment in selected metropolitan cores (Fainstein & Fainstein 1982, Smith 1986). This process involves new uses of space and new spatial forms, as the city is restructured to suit corporate needs. While office towers sprout in underutilized or devalorized downtown districts, a new hierarchy of urban neighborhoods reflects different corporate uses. Headquarters and "back offices" no longer share space; each stratum of white-collar work generates in its proximity the amenities that suit its status, salary levels, and office rents. Manufacturing activity and blue-collar residence are displaced beyond the heart of the city (Zukin 1982).

Gentrification as a white-collar residential style reflects the agglomeration of large companies—or mainly their professional, managerial, and technical staffs and related business services—in the downtown area. Whether the crucial factor is the number of corporate headquarters in a metropolitan area (Palmer & Roussel 1986) or the presence of just a few key corporate employers (Gale 1984:155), this capital presence draws new investors and consumers. The city's population may still be polarized between rich and poor, with

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[5]Using a broader sample, however, a 1978 survey by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development found that women may be satisfied by suburban services (Fava 1985).

the poor providing personal and domestic services for the rich and working in the remaining labor-intensive manufacturing sectors (Portes & Walton 1981, Sassen-Koob 1984). But high-status gentrification, as well as other relatively affluent residential styles, reflects the expansion of high-income personnel in corporations and government and producers' services.[6]

In any city, gentrification correlates *grosso modo* with "administrative activity" (Lipton 1977) and new office construction in the CBD (Berry 1985).

Yet many analyses of gentrification persist in stressing noneconomic factors. One such factor—social solidarity—is indicated by the residential clustering of visible, highly singular social groups, such as gay householders, who constitute a plurality of residents in some gentrifying neighborhoods (McDonald 1983, Castells 1983:ch.14). Nevertheless, the creation by gays of new spatial communities in gentrifiable areas—in contrast to the older spatial division between special entertainment districts and residence submerged in heterosexual society—may be related to the participation of gay men in an expanding service economy (Fitzgerald 1986).

Most mainstream analysts still consider economic restructuring secondary to demographic, i.e. generational, life-style and life-cycle factors that have created consumer demand for new residential styles. In this view, gentrification is the mark of the zeitgeist borne by the baby-boom generation. In the spirit of synthesis, however, a recent examination of gentrification emphasizes both economic restructuring and demographic factors, without giving priority to either (London et al 1986).[7]

Proponents of demographic explanations of gentrification are not persuaded that economic restructuring constitutes a necessary and a sufficient cause. In fact, if values had not changed to accept smaller families, two-earner households, and single parents, most of the gentrifying population would lack either the means or the motivation for city living. Yet gentrifiers' residential choices are ultimately conditioned by material factors. These include the expansion of middle-class social strata because of an increase in white-collar jobs, especially in regional, national, and international business services; a secular withdrawal of investment capital from urban manufacturing, thus freeing industrial sites for redevelopment; and a recentralization of corporate activity in selected CBDs and suburban towns.

Nevertheless, the struggle to reconcile economic and demographic analysis

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[6]Like gentrification, the expansion of jobs in producers' services has no effect on metropolitan median income; neither reduces metropolitan income inequality (Nelson & Lorence 1985).

[7]Using quantitative analysis and survey methods, this study offers a smorgasbord of findings. Gentrification is correlated positively with the size of the baby-boom cohort and the proportion of professional to other jobs. It is correlated negatively with young children and the percentage of the labor force employed in manufacturing. Historical preservation, culture, and corporate presence are also important (London et al 1986).

raises the question, whether the concept of gentrification is really significant, and if so, on which level of analysis. Without conceptual agreement, empirical studies of gentrification have reached a stalemate.

METHODOLOGICAL SCHISMS

Conceptual divergence is reflected in serious disagreements on methodology. A preference for materialism on the one hand or positivism on the other leads to dichotomous views of gentrification. It is described in terms of either structural causality or individual choice (i.e. structure vs agency), cultural style or economic necessity (choice vs need), or consequences that carry greater or lesser costs (displacement vs revitalization).

The broadest analyses of gentrification (hence, those with the most interesting theoretical implications) are influenced in some way by economic paradigms. Two of these refine the Marxist emphasis on production by also considering social reproduction and consumption. A third reformulates the neoclassical model based on supply and demand.

Production/Reproduction

From the outset, the Marxist epistemological critique of gentrification has targeted positivism in general and neoclassical land-use theory in particular. "Positivist approaches to gentrification," in this view, "have remained ad hoc, full of exceptions, and frequently contradictory to other people's positivist explanations" (Rose 1984). Lacking uncontestable criteria for either outcomes or causes, the concept of gentrification, as mainstream analysts use it, suffers from disorganization. Moreover, as Damaris Rose insists, what we observe as the unified phenomenon of gentrification may really result from several causes (1984).

Rose also takes issue with the dominant Marxist approach. Accepting its emphasis on structural causes and economic necessity, she nonetheless criticizes its tendency to stress a single causal factor: the production of gentrified dwellings as commodities. Besides the rent gap, the falling rate of profit, or corporate investment, all else is relegated to a residual category, "a scratch on the surface of underlying capital."

In place of a single resource-maximizing strategy that historically results in gentrification, Rose credits a number of different strategies. And in lieu of production, Rose stresses the importance of social reproduction. Thus, she accords a central role in gentrification processes to marginally employed but highly educated individuals who seek a central-city *and* low-cost residence for social or ecological reasons. Moreover, by considering social reproduction as a separate factor, Rose avoids conflating reproduction and consumption, as both positivists and Marxists tend to do.

Production/Consumption

Rose's critique has influenced other Marxists to the extent that they now seek to give full weight to consumption, though not necessarily to "reproduction" (Smith & Williams 1986). Meanwhile, they continue to study processes of production and devalorization: the first, in order to identify potential gentrifiers, and the second, in order to understand how certain housing becomes gentrifiable.

A major focus of Marxist analysis is the social location of gentrifiers. Because most of them are in the new middle classes, with professional, technical, or managerial jobs, they are identified with corporate reinvestment in the CBD and the growth of local, regional, and national services. This situation has two related effects. On the one hand, whether gentrification is considered an investment for capital accumulation or an investment in social reproduction, it helps promote capital's long wave of expansion. On the other hand, ideological support for gentrification helps legitimize corporate expansion throughout the central city.

As Neil Smith (1986) points out, the ideology of gentrification often describes it as a process of *spatial* expansion—notably, as settlement on an urban "frontier." But the changes in the use of downtown space that result from corporate investment really illustrate *capital* expansion. In our time, capital expansion has no new territory left to explore, so it redevelops, or internally redifferentiates, urban space. Just as the frontier thesis in US history legitimized an economic push through "uncivilized" lands, so the urban frontier thesis legitimizes the corporate reclamation of the inner city from racial ghettos and marginal business uses.

Yet no structural process can disregard institutional constraints. Downtown reinvestment must take account of urban real estate markets, forms and degrees of government intervention, and local politics and social forces. In the United States, social support for gentrification also reflects a response to racial conflict and fiscal crisis (Williams 1986). In that sense, too, gentrification is compatible with a broad movement away from collective consumption.

In fact, much US urban redevelopment during the two decades following World War II could be called "demand-led urbanization" (Harvey 1985b). Although this differs from a process that might be "consumption led," it calls attention to shifting patterns of consumption, their basis in the public or private sector, and their material representation in urban forms.

Economic restructuring changes the basis of consumption for different social classes and also shapes their social and spatial differentiation. Consequently, in contrast to the ghettoization of large areas of the central city, gentrification represents a filtering *up* of housing. Conversely, in contrast to corporate redevelopment of the CBD, gentrification of downtown neighbor-

hoods represents a filtering *down* of investment opportunity (Smith, forth-coming).

Supply/Demand

In an attempt to infuse some of these distinctions into the neoclassical model, Brian J. L. Berry has devised a new supply-side interpretation of gentrification (Berry 1985). In Berry's view, the necessary but not sufficient conditions for gentrification are the "contagious abandonment" of large inner-city areas and a dynamic suburban housing market in new construction. Further, the catalyst of gentrification is significant corporate redevelopment of the CBD, especially office construction that locates professional and white-collar jobs downtown. "To turn the supply-side argument around, the nation's key 'command and control' centers provide a sufficient demand-side trigger for gentrification, provided that the necessary supply-side housing market charac-teristics also are present" (p. 95).

Berry's "new" interpretation adopts several of the neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian key assumptions: corporate centralization in a small number of urban cores (cf Cohen 1981), widespread devalorization and underutilization of inner-city property, a resulting rent gap between the inner city and the periphery, and new consumption patterns that follow the expansion of white-collar jobs. While this corrects Berry's earlier tendency to see housing in terms of rational choice (cf Gale 1984:158), it offers a descriptive rather than an analytic model.

Berry's model does highlight the historical contingency of gentrification, a point on which most Marxist analyses also agree. Moreover, it emphasizes the simultaneity of continued growth in the suburbs, and both abandonment and redevelopment of the inner core. Berry's "islands of renewal in seas of decay" are the metaphorical equivalent of the Marxists' "polarization of urban pop-ulations."

SYNTHESIS: CULTURE AND CAPITAL

By upsetting expectations about unrelieved deterioration of the central city, gentrification was initially received as a revelation. But recent analysis by sociologists and geographers emphasizes several constraints. The area trans-formed in gentrification's penumbra is limited by strategies for capital accumulation on the part of dominant social and economic institutions, and the related strategies of "consumption sectors" (Saunders 1984) that support the internal redifferentiation of urban space.

The emphasis on capital investment calls into question gentrifiers' identification with, and mobilization for, historic preservation. Clearly, they

share with others in society a generalized appreciation of the material and aesthetic qualities that old buildings and old neighborhoods evoke. Further, their support of historic preservation and contemporary urban restorations recalls the patrician sponsorship of art and architecture in US cities in the late nineteenth century, as well as urban professionals' advocacy of "City Beautiful" programs for rebuilding cities at that time (Boyer 1983). But affluent gentrifiers' cultural appropriations do not lack economic rationality. Cultural validation helps valorize their housing investment, and activism on behalf of historic property eases the transition, for some of them, into semiprofessional and part-time real estate development.

Indeed, political mobilization for the legal status of a historic landmark designation typically unifies people with different aesthetic and material interests. While historic preservation enables some of them to satisfy civic pride, others profit by producing goods and services for a "preservationist" mode of consumption.

Yet cultural consumption also offers other dividends. Culturally validated neighborhoods automatically provide new middle classes with the collective identity and social credentials for which they strive (cf Logan & Molotch 1987). Moreover, the ideology of gentrification legitimizes their social reproduction, often despite the claims of an existing population. This is especially important when appeals are made to public opinion and municipal authorities to decide between the claims of different residential and commercial groups.

With some paradoxical results, support for gentrification also channels support to producers of cultural goods and services who seek housing in central-city areas. In the short run, proximity to markets for their services eases their insertion into the urban economy. In the long run, however, their contribution to the downtown's cultural capital may raise housing prices so high that they no longer can afford to live there.

In general, the presence of cultural markets both validates and valorizes business investment in major corporate cities. While the cultural constitution of new urban middle classes has ironically been termed an "Artistic Mode of Production" (Zukin 1982), a study by the National Endowment for the Arts found that cities with the highest percentage of artists in the labor force also had the highest rates of downtown gentrification and condominium conversion (Gale 1984:155).

Gentrification thus appears as a multidimensional cultural practice that is rooted on both sides of the methodological schisms that we have reviewed. As a form of homeownership, gentrified dwellings are both a means of accumulation and a means of social reproduction for part of the highly educated middle class. Moreover, as a reference to specific building types in the center of the

city, gentrification connotes both a mode of high-status cultural consumption and the colonization of an expanding terrain by economic institutions associated with the service sector.

In the long run, economic institutions establish the conditions to which gentrifiers respond. Secular trends of disinvestment in urban manufacturing destroy the viability of industrial areas and blue-collar neighborhoods. The recent resurgence of investment in American cities by major lending institutions reflects, on the one hand, their reduction of foreign loans and, on the other, their participation in an expanding service economy. The office construction that they finance eventually provides jobs for potential gentrifiers, but it is not matched by an interest in building new housing most of these people can afford.

To some extent, also, gentrifiers' locational preferences reflect their withdrawal from a transportation and distribution infrastructure that they perceive as being archaic. Many of them prefer walking or bicycling to work instead of making a long journey to the city by car or train. Similarly, they abandon suburban shopping centers for the smaller scale of shops and the range of goods and services available in the city.

Property values rise in middle-class residential areas, reflecting increased competition for a milieu that unifies proximity to professional, managerial, and "creative" jobs; opportunities for specialized high-status consumption; and the combination of population density and individualized facilities that can support independent, quasi-bourgeois social reproduction by people who are not really rich. Thus, gentrifiers are caught between the expansion of middle-class styles of life and a market situation that makes it harder to realize such lifestyles without compromise.

Microlevel studies of gentrified neighborhoods cannot address these issues. But there are at least three alternate ways to frame a study of gentrification that would integrate cultural and economic analysis. First, the synergy between gentrification and deindustrialization suggests a comparative study of housing and labor markets in metropolitan areas. Second, the long-term plans of local financial, political, and social elites—including their investment projects and their own residential quarters—focus attention on "downtown" interests, whether they momentarily support urban renewal, gentrification, or new private-market construction (cf Ballain et al 1982, Fainstein et al 1986, Hartman 1984). And third, the morphology of urban areas—both their changing form and the way this form inserts itself into the city as a whole—shows how the spatial and built environment concretizes, transmits, and transforms the city's constituent social interests (cf Zunz 1970, Harvey 1985a, Pred 1985).

These proposals may shock traditional urban sociologists, as well as those whose reading in the field ended with the Chicago School. To them it may

seem as though urban sociology has been engulfed by political economy, and the study of cities subordinated to economic processes and social class (Zukin 1980).

In fact, a number of sociologists have recently refocused the discipline's attention on economic institutions (Zukin & DiMaggio 1986). Moreover, there is a growing movement in sociology to incorporate the analysis of space and time (Giddens 1985). These interests should infuse more rigor into urban sociologists' efforts to describe the "post-industrial city," which, like "gentrification," really refers to existing patterns of social, spatial, and economic restructuring of the central city.

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