

The Other Side of Controversy: Racial/Ethnic Minorities as Gentrifiers

Popular accounts of gentrification frequently highlight the racial/ethnic dynamics of gentrification, arguably fashioning a stereotype of an all-white gentrifying class displacing the all-black existing population. In contrast, academic considerations of inner-city upgrading, including the formal gentrification theories of Ley and Smith, generally abstain from considering any racial/ethnic dynamic, especially in a quantitative manner. This project aims to alleviate the knowledge gap by investigating the extent of minority in-moving to Columbus' revitalized inner-city neighborhoods. A mixed-methods approach incorporates quantitative analysis of demographic, socioeconomic, and housing data with strategic interviews of market-movers: gentrifiers, real estate agents, property developers, and public officials. Both spatial and chronological components are considered, addressing *which* neighborhoods attract minorities and *when*, relative to the gentrification/revitalization cycle, these populations begin to locate there. An early hypothesis is that racial/ethnic solidarity will compel minorities to avoid revitalizing neighborhoods until the gentrification process is in advanced stages and the political controversy surrounding upgrading has passed. Additionally, I hypothesize that non-racial affiliations, particularly sexual orientation and political beliefs, influence minority in-moving to revitalized areas.