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**GENTRIFICATION & URBAN MORPHOGENESIS OF SAN FRANCISCO'S MISSION DISTRICT:
SYNTHESIS OF THE HISPANIC BARRIO AND THE HIPSTER SUBCULTURE**

A Thesis in
Architecture

by

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ABSTRACT

Gentrification is a pervasive and complex urban process of neighborhood change shaping contemporary cities. Production and consumption theories are often used to explain the emergence of gentrification as either an economic or sociocultural process; however, it has been observed that both perspectives are important in explaining, understanding, and dealing with gentrification. Consumption-side explanations focus on understanding the growth and behavior of the middle classes in terms of their tastes and values, and how those are represented through gentrification. Often disregarded as having any significant social merit, hipsters are multifaceted social characters who seek authenticity and individuality through adopting fashions from other cultures. As gentrifiers, they could be conducive to the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers, and contribute to the slowing of gentrification of a neighborhood.

This case study analysis explores the process of gentrification in terms of the role and impact of hipsters as gentrifiers in facilitating or hindering the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers in San Francisco's Mission District. Two perspectives are used in this analysis, geographical/spatial (urban morphogenesis) and sociological (expression of authenticity). Taken from geography, the concept of urban morphogenesis lends to the understanding of gentrification by examining the physical and spatial changes to the urban landscape that occur as a result. From a sociological standpoint, the concept

of authenticity describes how groups exert power over space through gentrification.

The primary data come from qualitative interviews and field observations. Individual interviews were conducted to ascertain the viewpoints of the residents, both longtime and new, as well as the perspectives of visitors to the neighborhood. Field observations were conducted to record existing conditions and physical changes to the built environment as well as social characteristics.

The study revealed three key findings: 1) the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers hinders the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers, 2) there is a physical and social “divide” between longtime residents and newcomers, and 3) hipster wannabes play a large role in the current gentrification of the Mission District. The expression of authenticity by hipsters is demonstrated in the “gentrification aesthetic” and is visible in the demographic data, field observations, and personal interviews.

Using the Mission District in San Francisco as a case study reveals that there are significant implications of gentrification for urban economics, politics, and social inequities in the restructuring of metropolitan cities and neighborhoods in the United States. These implications focus on the widening income gap, polarized urban policies that favor the affluent, the affordability crises for low-income renters, and most importantly, the need for architects to be better prepared to address the issues that arise from social, political, economic shifts in urban restructuring as designers of the built environment who require a sense of social responsibility.

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"Nothing of me is original.
I am the combined effort of everyone I've ever known."¹
– Chuck Palahniuk

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¹ Chuck Palahniuk, *Invisible Monsters* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999), 104.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

While gentrification involves physical and social changes to a neighborhood and often has negative connotations with gentrifiers being the main agents of change, the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers should be conducive to the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers, and contribute to the slowing of gentrification of a neighborhood based on the interest of the hipster subculture in expressing authenticity and its openness to different cultures. This thesis focuses on the process of gentrification and uses geographical and sociological perspectives to examine the role of hipsters as gentrifiers in the current gentrification of the Mission District in San Francisco. The research uncovered a dominant presence of hipster wannabes who fit the negative account of consumption-driven gentrifiers. Many of the interviews and observations collected in the Mission District of San Francisco revealed that the neighborhood is physically and culturally divided, and its social diversity is not as prevalent as it may seem.

This chapter is divided into four sections: an overview of gentrification, an explanation of urban morphogenesis, a description of authenticity, and the research question. The first section highlights the earlier models and primary theories of gentrification, characterizes the gentrifier and the gentrified, and describes gentrification in the United States. The following section on urban morphogenesis defines the urban morphological sequence of neighborhood change and the life-cycles of ethnic and nonconformist communities as described by geographer Brian J. Godfrey. The third section defines the concept of authenticity as described by sociologist Sharon Zukin. The last

section includes the research question, purpose and goals, and definition of terms and concepts.

In the next chapter, I outline my research methods and introduce the site. A chapter on San Francisco and the Mission District follows, providing geographical and social context to the research. Chapter 4 characterizes the contemporary hipster figure, discusses the hipster subculture that has widespread prevalence in everyday life, and reveals the presence of the hipster wannabe as a new type of gentrifier. Chapter 5 examines gentrification in the Mission District through an "urban morphogenetic sequence of neighborhood change" and describes two distinct and consecutive waves of gentrification led by artists, yuppies, hipsters, and hipster wannabes. Current gentrification of the neighborhood is presented through demographic data, field observations, and interview responses. The following chapter discusses three key findings from the demographic analysis and the ethnographic fieldwork while highlighting their implications for urban policy and the role of the architect. Finally, the conclusion presents topics that could be further researched to better understand gentrification.

Gentrification: The Inevitable Process of Neighborhood Change

Gentrification is one of the most prominent visible urban processes shaping contemporary cities. This word was originally coined in 1964 by British sociologist Ruth Glass to describe the then newly observed changes occurring in the traditionally deprived East End of London, where the poor working class was being pushed out and displaced by the middle class resulting in the creation of middle-class neighborhoods.² Both the term "gentrification" and its definition are ideologically and politically loaded in academic literature and popular discourse. The concept is complex and hides as many things as it reveals; thus, defining gentrification is a difficult task.³ Robert Beauregard notes that gentrification has a different meaning to those who gain from the process (i.e. gentrifiers, developers, etc.) than to those who lose from it (i.e. the indigenous groups, the displaced, etc.) and shows how different theories produce different definitions.⁴ Gentrification is a process and not a finale state. It is dynamic and changing; thus, it is always incomplete.

Classic gentrification is associated with the type or wave of gentrification that was first described by Glass and served as the basis for the early stage models of gentrification that were developed in the 1970s and 1980s to try to explain the process. Philip Clay produced one of the first models using

² On the first description of gentrification, see Ruth Glass, introduction to *London: Aspects of Change*, ed. Centre for Urban Studies (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1964), xviii-xix.

³ "Introduction to Part One," in *The Gentrification Reader*, ed. Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wylie (London: Routledge, 2010), 3.

⁴ On the difficulties of defining the essential nature of gentrification, see Robert Beauregard, "The Chaos and Complexity of Gentrification," in *Gentrification of the City*, ed. Neil Smith and Peter Williams (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1986), 35-55.

observations and data on neighborhood change from several large U.S. cities, such as Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco.⁵ His model consisted of four distinct stages: 1) a “pioneer stage” where a small group of risk-oblivious people move in, 2) a slow, tentative stage of expansion where more of the same type of people move in and a small but growing number of realtors and developers begin to recognize the area's potential, 3) a pivotal stage where gentrification is at its peak as increasing numbers of newer middle-class residents see the housing as an investment, signaling safe entry for larger numbers of young middle-class professionals, 4) a final stage where newer residents from the business and managerial middle class compete with the existing professional middle class for property.⁶ In this model, displacement gradually increases from one stage to the next as vacant housing becomes scarce. Renovations to properties were originally done for personal use, but began to shift towards promoting resale or rental. Due to the lack of external funding, initial investment was based on sweat equity and private capital until banks begin to “greenline” the area and offer loans to middle-class buyers and investors. Thus, gentrification intensifies alongside rising property prices in the area. Over time, gentrification is seen to stabilize at an endpoint.

However, critics are quick to point out that this model offers a generalization of the gentrification process and lacks the necessary account of the particularities and differences among and within various neighborhoods,

⁵ Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly, *Gentrification* (London: Routledge, 2008), 30-33.

⁶ Philip Clay, *Neighborhood Renewal: Middle-Class Resettlement and Incumbent Upgrading in American Neighborhoods* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1979): 57-60.

residents, and investors. While the early stage models of gentrification illustrate the dynamism of gentrification in an orderly, temporal, sequential progression, their differences highlight how different emphases lead to different accounts of the process.

Jason Hackworth and Neil Smith's stage model remains one of the leading analyses on the progression and spread of contemporary gentrification. Their 2001 assessment, following geographer Loretta Lees, recognizes that "gentrification today is quite different to gentrification in the early 1970s, late 1980s, even the early 1990s"⁷ and argues that it has become a much more comprehensive and coherent state strategy to remake urban space to benefit wealthy residents, investors, and tourists in light of being a symptom of social, economic, and geographical change.⁸ Based on the history of gentrification in three New York neighborhoods, Hackworth and Smith identified three distinct stages or waves of the political economy that shaped the context for the various actors involved (see Figure 1).

Each stage is separated by a major recession, which served as transitional periods that called for institutional restructuring. The first wave of gentrification, beginning in the 1950s, was sporadic, small-scale, and state-led and its end was marked by the 1973 global economic recession. Following the recession, the second wave, described as "expansion and resistance," brought gentrification

⁷ Loretta Lees, "A Reappraisal of Gentrification Towards a 'Geography of Gentrification,'" *Progress in Human Geography* 24, no. 3 (2000): 397.

⁸ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 173.

to many more cities; thus, anchoring and stabilizing the gentrification process.⁹ It was during this wave that the character of gentrification began to change due to intense political struggles over displacement, homelessness, income inequality, and racial discrimination. After a short recession in the 1990s that slowed gentrification and caused speculation of its demise, there was widespread agreement that gentrification had entered a third wave, post-recessional gentrification.¹⁰ Described as “recessional pause and subsequent expansion,” this stage was seen as an extension and intensification of gentrification as a generalized strategy of the capital accumulation seen in the second wave.¹¹ Hackworth and Smith note four characteristics that make third-wave gentrification distinct from the other phases: 1) it was led primarily by developers, rather than households, 2) the role of governments was strengthened as they were more open and assertive in facilitating the process, 3) anti-gentrification movements became more marginalized, 4) it was diffusing into more neighborhoods outside of the city center.¹²

⁹ Jason Hackworth and Neil Smith, “The Changing State of Gentrification,” *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 92 (2001): 466.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 468.

¹¹ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 178.

¹² Hackworth and Smith, “The Changing State of Gentrification,” 468.

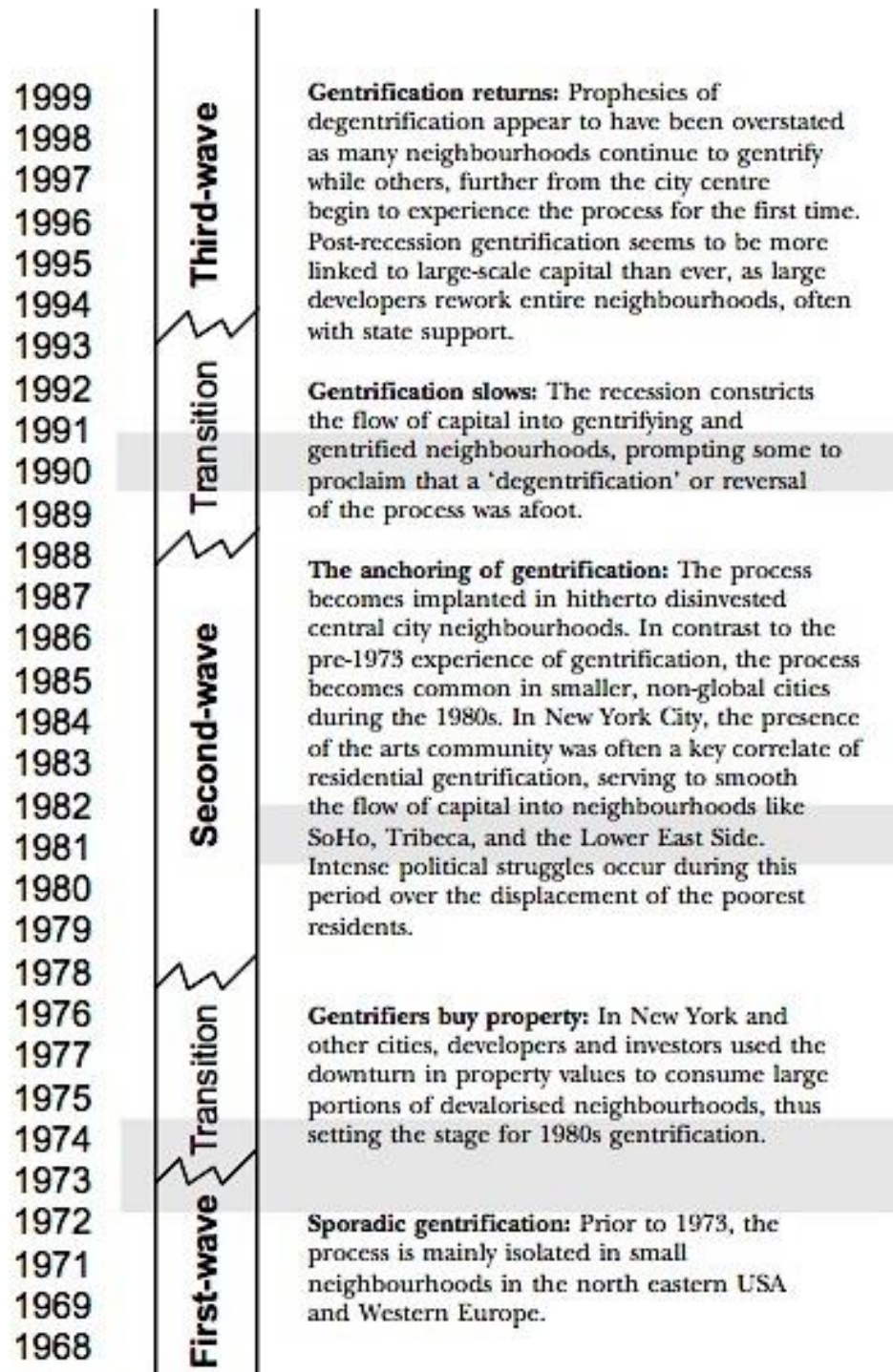


Figure 1: Hackworth and Smith's Stage Model of Gentrification
 Source: Hackworth and Smith, 2001, 467.

Although not discussed in the summary above, Hackworth and Smith's model is over reliant on neo-Marxist rent gap theories and, as with the earlier stage models, it underplays the wide range of actors involved in the gentrification process. The rent gap is based on theories first introduced by Neil Smith in 1979 and is used as a measure to describe the disparity between a site's actual capitalized ground rent (land value) at current use and its potential ground value under a higher and better use.¹³ Furthermore, the model is now somewhat outdated and there is evidence that a fourth wave of gentrification is underway in the United States, which is discussed in a later section.

Aside from examining gentrification as it moves through time and space, researchers have sought to understand the process of gentrification through production and consumption explanations and theories. Production or supply-side arguments are presented to explain the emergence of gentrification as an economic process and focus on Smith's rent gap theory. Under this theory, when the rent gap in an area is determined to be wide, the area will undergo gentrification as developers, landlords, and others see it as an economic opportunity on which to capitalize through the redevelopment of property. The rent gap, hinged on uneven development, demonstrates how disinvestment opened up the inner city for the reinvestment of capital.¹⁴ In contrast, consumption or demand-side arguments are presented to explain how gentrifiers are significant players in the production of gentrification through their

¹³ Neil Smith, "Gentrification and the Rent Gap," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77, no. 3 (September 1987): 462.

¹⁴ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 61.

consumption preferences. The work by David Ley and Chris Hamnett describes gentrification as “a consequence of major changes in the industrial and occupational structure of advanced capitalist cities, resulting in the growth of middle-class professionals.”¹⁵

These different positions, Smith (economics) and Ley (culture), were sharply divided, leading to what is called the “gentrification debate” and as Slater notes, “considerable time, energy, and ink have been consumed arguing over whether it is the quest for profit or the expansion of the middle classes that offers the best explanation of gentrification.”¹⁶ By the early 1990s, the debate reached a stalemate and interest in the subject had declined due to the search for a synthesis between the two sides. Fortunately, an agreement was reached as a number of writings have tried to find a middle ground and today, “most observers acknowledge that both production and consumption perspectives are crucially important in explaining, understanding, and dealing with gentrification.”¹⁷

Through the large body of gentrification research, starting from the stage models to the lively production/consumption debate, several new types of gentrification were identified as urban development changed and the spatial and physical manifestations of the term have evolved. While the term itself

¹⁵ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 124.

¹⁶ Tom Slater, “Gentrification of the City,” in *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 572.

¹⁷ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 190.

connotes “a process which operates in the residential housing market,”¹⁸ it has evolved over the past fifty years to include “many different spatial forms involving different groups of people”¹⁹ and different disciplines across the breadth of the social sciences. The broadening scale of the gentrification process is best described in the account given by notable sociologist Saskia Sassen:

Gentrification was initially understood as the rehabilitation of decaying and low-income housing by middle-class outsiders in central cities. In the late 1970s, a broader conceptualization of the process began to emerge, and by the early 1980s, new scholarship had developed a far broader meaning of gentrification, linking it with processes of spatial, economic and social restructuring. Gentrification emerged as a visible spatial component of this transformation. It was evident in the redevelopment of waterfronts, the rise of hotel and convention complexes in central cities, large-scale luxury office and residential developments, and fashionable, high-priced shopping districts.²⁰

Thus, contemporary gentrification has come to include high-end, “new-build” developments on old industrial brownfield sites²¹ as well as middle-class resettlement of rural areas,²² and has begun to focus on other aspects of neighborhood change, such as the transformation of neighborhood retail landscapes²³ and the promotion of tourist spaces.²⁴ In her reappraisal of the

¹⁸ Neil Smith and Peter Williams, “Alternatives to Orthodoxy: Invitation to a Debate,” in *Gentrification of the City*, ed. Neil Smith and Peter Williams (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1986), 1.

¹⁹ Brian Doucet, “A Process of Change and a Changing Process: Introduction to the Special Issue on Contemporary Gentrification,” *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 105, no. 2 (April 2014): 125.

²⁰ Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, and Tokyo* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 255.

²¹ See Mark Davidson and Loretta Lees, “New-build ‘Gentrification’ and London’s Riverside Renaissance,” *Environment and Planning A* 37: 1165-1190.

²² See David Parsons, “Rural Gentrification: The Influence of Rural Settlement Planning Policies,” Department of Geography Research Paper no. 3 (Brighton, UK: University of Sussex, 1980); Darren Smith and Debbie Phillips, “Socio-cultural Representations of Greentrified Pennine Rurality,” *Journal of Rural Studies* 17 (2001):457–469.

²³ See Tom Slater, “The Eviction of Critical Perspectives from Gentrification Research,”

gentrification literature since the mid-1990s, Loretta Lees identifies four gaps/issues that were not addressed in light of the changes in the nature of the gentrification process: 1) financiers – super-gentrification; 2) third-world immigration – the global city; 3) Black/ethnic minority gentrification – race and gentrification; and 4) liveability/urban policy – discourse on gentrification.²⁵ These changes focus on “contemporary urban policy and politics, the emergence of financiers, the intricacies of race, and the ideology of liveability and sustainability.”²⁶

Often times gentrification has been used as a generic description of neighborhood revitalization and as a synonym for urban revitalization, urban regeneration, neighborhood rehabilitation, and renovation, yet each term still conveys its own set of connotations.²⁷ Slater argues that it is “analytically erroneous and politically conservative”²⁸ to label the construction of upscale housing aimed at young professionals in or on working-class industrial spaces as anything but gentrification, and to characterize the implosion of low-income public housing projects in favor of mixed-income developments using the terms “revitalization” or “regeneration.”

International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 30, no.4 (December 2006): 737–758; Sharon Zukin, “Consuming Authenticity, from Outposts of Difference to Means of Exclusion,” *Cultural Studies* 22 (2008): 724–748.

²⁴ See Kevin Gotham, “Tourism Gentrification: The Case of New Orleans’ Vieux Carre (French Quarter),” *Urban Studies* 42, no. 7 (June 2005): 1099–1121.

²⁵ Lees, “A Reappraisal of Gentrification,” 402.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 392.

²⁷ Bruce London and J. John Palen, “Introduction: Some Theoretical and Practical Issues Regarding Inner-City Revitalization,” in *Gentrification, Displacement, and Neighborhood Revitalization*, ed. J. John Palen and Bruce London (New York: SUNY Press, 1984), 6-7.

²⁸ Slater, “Gentrification of the City,” 573.

Glass paved the way as gentrification gained much attention internationally leading to a considerable amount of literature highlighting class struggles and the transformation of inner-city space. New forms have since challenged the spatial description given by Glass and the process has taken on broader implications due to factors such as the economic, social, political, and growth conditions that lead to residential shifts and urban planning initiatives. Yet, the constant focus of class change has remained as the term “simply yet powerfully captures the class inequalities and injustices created by urban capitalist land markets and policies.”²⁹

The transition and transformation of the gentrification process and its meaning exposes the difficulty of grasping the enormity of its reach as demonstrated in the past and current discourse. As urban scholar Kate Shaw points out, this leads to variation in interpretations of gentrification, variation in assessments of displacement, and variation in the agents. What is also evident is the range of disparities that exist even within a single city; gentrification varies across cities and neighborhoods, and even the gentrification of a similar time period has quite a different geography depending on the site.³⁰

Shaw aptly offers a vivid and comprehensive description of what gentrification is today and its effects on the urban landscape:

[A] generalised middle-class restructuring of place, encompassing the entire transformation from low-status neighbourhoods to upper-middle-class playgrounds. Gentrifiers' residences are no longer just renovated houses but newly built townhouses and high-rise apartments. Their

²⁹ Slater, “Gentrification of the City,” 571.

³⁰ Lees, “A Reappraisal of Gentrification,” 405.

workplaces are as likely to be new downtown or docklands office developments as warehouse studios. Gentrification extends to retail and commercial precincts, and can be seen in rural and coastal townships as well as cities. Its defining feature is conspicuous cultural consumption. Designer shops, art galleries, bars and restaurants form the background to a landscape of people in semi-public space (tables on the footpath they must pay to occupy) watching the passing parade and sipping chardonnay from a boutique winery, beer from a microbrewery, coffee from organic beans grown in the developing country *du jour*.³¹

In addition to highlighting new types of gentrification, this account briefly comments on the characteristics of gentrifiers and their consumption preferences.

This section provides a conceptual understanding of the process of gentrification by exploring the stage models developed by Clay in 1979 and Hackworth and Smith in 2001, the production-side and consumption-side theories supported by Smith and Ley, as well as the new types of gentrification described by Sassen and Lees. The stage models present a framework for which gentrification can be understood as it moves through time and space; however, one weakness is their lack of attention towards the peculiarities of the actors involved in the gentrification process. As the complexity of gentrification became more apparent, the production and consumption theories developed by Smith and Ley considered economic and cultural explanations while addressing the role of various actors, such as real estate developers and gentrifiers. Due to changes in urban development and the evolution of the spatial and physical manifestations of gentrification, the process has broadened as new forms emerged in response to consumer demands for residential and

³¹ Kate Shaw, "Gentrification: What It Is, Why It Is, and What Can Be Done About It," *Geography Compass* 2, no. 5 (September 2008): 1698.

retail spaces. The following section further examines the motives of gentrifiers as cultural consumers driving gentrification in inner-city neighborhoods and the reactions to gentrification by the gentrified or the longtime residents.

The Gentrifier and the Gentrified

Ongoing discourse on gentrification has proceeded to concurrently examine the empirical and theoretical aspects of this issue, yet much of the interest has been towards understanding the sociocultural dynamics of the middle class as being a key driver of the process. In particular, there has been overwhelming research on a variety of topics surrounding gentrifiers and their forms of agency: who they are, why they settle in disinvested neighborhoods, how gentrification represents their tastes and values, and how they mix or do not mix with non-gentrifiers.³² The overall goal has often been to understand the growth and behavior of the middle-classes. Accordingly, demographic shifts and migration preferences within this group have been studied in part to understand the restructuring of metropolitan cities and neighborhoods. Thus, as Lees argues, “gentrification is deemed to be a spatial manifestation of these new cultural values.”³³

Consumption-side theories have explained gentrification as a consequence of shifts in the industrial and occupational structure of advanced cities. In addition to the greater implications of gentrification for urban

³² Doucet, “A Process of Change,” 128.

³³ Lees, “A Reappraisal of Gentrification,” 396.

economics and politics, its relationship with socioeconomic status or class raises issues of race and societal inequities. The *gentry* have typically been described as predominantly White, young, and highly educated individuals who belong to the middle and upper classes. For gentrifiers, their motivations for moving to the central city or small town are varied, but some do so as an investment strategy or to find affordable housing, employment, or cultural amenities.³⁴

As David Ley pointed out in 1996, it is important to note the emergence of "the new middle class" or young urban professionals and their role as the primary gentrifiers. He characterized this group as "educated, middle-class professionals, primarily under forty years of age, and disproportionately employed in the public or non-profit sectors such as teachers, professors, social workers, architects, or lawyers."³⁵ Their culture and urbane values stemmed from the critical youth movements of the 1960. Yuppies, gentrifiers in a postindustrial society, have now replaced the hippies.

However, his description of gentrifiers is insufficient as the gentrification process now includes many aspects of gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, and life-course. Gender plays a large role in the social and occupational formation of the new middle class and researchers (including feminists) accept gender's importance in understanding the relationship between gender and gentrification.³⁶ As the gay community tends to concentrate residentially, gay

³⁴ Japonica Brown-Saracino, *A Neighborhood That Never Changes: Gentrification, Social Preservation, and the Search for Authenticity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 4.

³⁵ David Ley, *The New Middle Class and the Remaking of the Central City*, ed. Gordon Clark, Andrew Goudie, and Ceri Peach (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 4.

³⁶ See: Liz Bondi, "Gender, Class and Gentrification: Enriching the Debate," *Environment*

gentrifiers play an active role in the making of urban social space through gentrification.³⁷

Much of the literature on gentrifiers assumed that they were at a particular stage in their lives as young, single, childless, professionals in the 25-35 year old age range. However, there has recently been research focused on a new type of gentrifier that has emerged over the last ten years – middle-class families raising children in the city.³⁸ Following this line of research, the term “yupps” was introduced in 2003 by author Lia Karsten to describe young urban professional parents.

While the common image people have of gentrifiers is of White yuppies, the Black middle class, which has similar educational, occupational and income characteristics to their White counterparts, has contributed to the gentrification process in neighborhoods such as Harlem and Bronzeville.³⁹ However, the Black middle-class gentry settling in these neighborhoods do so with the intention of economic and cultural change. In her research on Black gentrification in Harlem, Monique Taylor writes that, “The stories that middle-class Black newcomers to Harlem tell make use of its spaces and other residents to present and explain themselves as actors returning to the ghetto and rescuing it.”⁴⁰

and Planning D: Society and Space 17, no. 3 (1999): 261–82.; Tim Butler, *Gentrification and the Middle Classes* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1997).

³⁷ Lees, “A Reappraisal of Gentrification,” 395.

³⁸ Doucet, “A Process of Change,” 129.

³⁹ On Black gentrification in Harlem, see Monique Taylor, *Harlem: Between Heaven and Hell*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002. On Black gentrification in Bronzeville, see Michelle Boyd, “Reconstructing Bronzeville: Racial Nostalgia and Neighborhood Redevelopment,” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 22, no. 2 (2000): 107-122.

⁴⁰ Monique Taylor, *Harlem: Between Heaven and Hell* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), xi.

A similar trend has been occurring in Latino neighborhoods like Boyle Heights in Los Angeles called, “gentefication.” A play on the term gentrification where *gente* is Spanish for “people,” “gentefication” is defined by journalist Leslie Berestein Rojas as, “The process of upwardly mobile Latinos, typically second-generation and beyond, investing in and returning to the old neighborhood.”⁴¹ These gentrifiers, called “Chipsters”⁴² (short for Chicano hipsters), are young, hip Latinos who have moved back into the neighborhood their parents had left years ago to open up cafes and bookstores. As with gentrification in general, the threat of displacement is always an issue, but those moving back to the Boyle Heights neighborhood are aware of the contention. Marco Amador, an entrepreneur who runs an Internet radio station from a storefront he helped open last fall in Boyle Heights, explains that the Latino newcomers mean no harm to the neighborhood, “We’re not trying to get out of the barrio, we’re trying to bring the barrio up.”⁴³ The use of the term “gente” is especially applicable as it is the “people,” the Mexican-American people, who are returning to the neighborhood to, in a sense, save it from others gentrifying the space and to maintain the area’s deep sense of Mexican-American history. Guillermo Uribe, a bar owner in Boyle Heights, explains this notion of community-led gentrification,

⁴¹ Leslie Berestein Rojas, “The Cultural Mashup Dictionary: Gentefication,” *Multi-American Blog*, 89.3 KPCC Southern California Public Radio, December 28, 2011, <http://www.scpr.org/blogs/multiamerican/2011/12/28/7605/the-cultural-mashup-dictionary-gentefication/>.

⁴² Larry Mantle, “‘Gentefication’ vs. Gentrification in Boyle Heights, Long Beach and other SoCal Hip Spots,” *AirTalk*, 89.3 KPCC Southern California Public Radio, August 20, 2013, <http://www.scpr.org/programs/airtalk/2013/08/20/33346/gentefication-vs-gentrification-in-boyle-heights-l/>.

⁴³ Jennifer Medina, “Los Angeles Neighborhood Tried to Change, but Avoid the Pitfalls,” *New York Times*, August 17, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/18/us/los-angeles-neighborhood-tries-to-change-but-avoid-the-pitfalls.html>.

"If we want to preserve the cultural integrity, the pride we have, the only shot we have is to do it ourselves."⁴⁴

In contrast to this concept of community-led gentrification, earlier scholars often used the metaphor of the "urban pioneer" comparing gentrifiers to nineteenth-century pioneers on the plains who had little regard for those who came before them and favored profit by evicting tenants and replacing the old housing stock.⁴⁵ Under this depiction, Neil Smith explained in his book published in 1996, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*, how "urban pioneers seek to scrub the city clean of its working-class geography and history;"⁴⁶ they engage in gentrification for financial gain as it is "an expression of personal activism ... their personal triumph of culture over economics."⁴⁷ Their reclamation was seen as intentional as they sought to completely remove the area's "historical associations with poor immigrants."⁴⁸

Gentrification can also be seen as a middle class strategy to gain power and create tolerance. Jon Caulfield argues that by resettling in old-city neighborhoods, gentrifiers subvert the dominance of hegemonic culture and create new conditions for social activities leading the way for the developers that follow.⁴⁹ In this sense, gentrification brings social diversity and freedom of personal expression. However, Caulfield's assumption fails to recognize the

⁴⁴ Medina, "Los Angeles Neighborhood Tried to Change, but Avoid the Pitfalls."

⁴⁵ Brown-Saracino, *A Neighborhood That Never Changes*, 5-6.

⁴⁶ Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (London: Routledge, 1996/2000), 27.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴⁹ Lees, "A Reappraisal of Gentrification," 393.

possibility that those being gentrified, who are typically the working-class and/or ethnic minorities, may not always share the same desires as gentrifiers.

In his analysis of the architectural and internal decorative aesthetics of gentrified buildings and neighborhoods, Michael Jager presents the concept of the “gentrification aesthetic” as the means through which gentrifiers distinguish themselves from other social class groups on the streets of gentrifying neighborhoods. He notes, “the aesthetics of gentrification not only illustrate the class dimension of the process but also express the dynamic constitution of social class of which gentrification is a specific part.”⁵⁰ Through his research on the landscapes of Victoriana in inner Melbourne, he finds that the new middle class, driven by new modes of consumption, is purchasing the affordable, deteriorated housing stock and initiating gentrification through the façade restoration work of historic preservation and extensive remodeling of their new homes. In turn, “the past becomes a commodity for contemporary consumption.”⁵¹ Rehabilitation by the new middle class provides “a means of expressing social identity, of representing values, of affirming arrival, of symbolizing possession and of demonstrating presence.”⁵²

Expanding on the concept of the “gentrification aesthetic” and the use of historic preservation as a means of expressing social class, Sharon Zukin discusses how gentrification was seen more immediately in the architectural restoration of

⁵⁰ Michael Jager, “Class Definition and the Esthetics of Gentrification: Victoriana in Melbourne,” in *Gentrification of the City*, ed. Neil Smith and Peter Williams (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1986), 78.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 90.

deteriorating housing and the new clustering of cultural amenities in the urban core following a shift in corporate investment into downtown districts and corresponding expansion of the urban service economy.⁵³ She notes that empirical research on gentrification had reached a stalemate and theoretically interesting problems, such as the use of historic preservation to constitute a new urban middle class, benefited from the use of economic paradigms to understand the factors that create a supply of gentrifiable housing and demand for it on the part of the gentrifier. In terms of historic preservation, the “gentrifiers’ tastes are conditioned by the availability and affordability of older buildings”⁵⁴ while 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, or newer perhaps Edwardian, old building styles.”⁵⁵ Gentrified dwellings, as a form of ownership, are both “a means of accumulation and a means of social reproduction for a highly educated middle class.”⁵⁶

Zukin also notes “gentrification’s consumption markers are explicitly identified with a specific type and use of space.”⁵⁷ Geographically central, low-rise but densely constructed types of housing attract potential gentrifiers who, with their preference for remnants of the past, target them for historic preservation. The goods and services that cater to these gentrifiers’

⁵³ Sharon Zukin, “Gentrification: Culture and Capital in the Urban Core,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 13, (1987): 129.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 134.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 143.

⁵⁷ Sharon Zukin, “Socio-Spatial Prototypes of a New Organization of Consumption: The Role of Real Cultural Capital,” *Sociology* 24, no. 1 (February 1990): 40.

consumption needs also displace the existing, lower income residents. Therefore, shopping along with architectural restoration creates a “coherent space of consumption.”⁵⁸ In this sense, Jager’s “gentrification aesthetic” not only refers to the consumption of housing, but can expand to include the retail landscape as a means of expressing social identity and illustrating class distinction.

From her four years of fieldwork on gentrification in four different neighborhoods (Provincetown on Cape Cod, Andersonville and Argyle in Chicago, and rural Dresden in Maine), Japonica Brown-Saracino concludes that the gentrification literature, on a whole, generalizes the image of the gentrifier as pioneer and exaggerates the relationship between economic position and ideology while neglecting what she calls the “social preservation” ideology and practices of some gentrifiers.⁵⁹ Brown-Saracino describes “social preservation” as “the culturally motivated choice of certain people, who tend to be highly educated and residentially mobile, to live in the central city or small town in order to live in authentic social space, embodied by the sustained presence of ‘original’ residents.”⁶⁰

She goes on to identify three types of gentrifiers: social preservationist, social homesteader, and pioneer. Characteristics of a social preservationist include: the desire to live in authentic social space and affordable housing for middle class with the intention of preserving and enjoying the social ecology

⁵⁸ Sharon Zukin, “Socio-Spatial Prototypes of a New Organization of Consumption: The Role of Real Cultural Capital,” *Sociology* 24, no. 1 (February 1990): 41.

⁵⁹ Brown-Saracino, *A Neighborhood That Never Changes*, 8.

⁶⁰ Japonica Brown-Saracino, “Social Preservationists and the Quest for Authentic Community,” *City and Community* 3, no. 2 (June 2004), 135.

while recognizing the old-timers' culture and desiring their sense of authenticity.⁶¹ In contrast, the pioneer desires to live in affordable housing for middle class but with the promise of economic gain and the excitement of revitalization as the neighborhood is seen as a frontier to be tamed and later marketed, much like Smith's urban pioneers.⁶² Brown-Saracino notes that in some scholarship, the term "homesteader" is synonymous with "urban pioneer." She makes a distinction between the two by assigning a new meaning to the term "homesteader." Like all other types of gentrifiers, social homesteaders are "pioneers on the urban and rural frontier who engage in the transformation of poor and working-class neighborhoods to serve middle-class purposes."⁶³ Falling in between the social preservationist and the pioneer, the homesteader shares similar characteristics with the former, such as the desire to live in authentic space and affordable housing for middle class. However, homesteaders hope to improve the space through a mixture of high culture and certain original features while appreciating the diversity that old-timers provide as objects of symbolic preservation.⁶⁴ These different ideologies demonstrate that gentrifiers do not possess a single value structure and suggest that they have multiple orientations to place and gentrification, which could affect how they interact with old-timers.

⁶¹ Brown-Saracino, *A Neighborhood That Never Changes*, 13.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

In terms of the relationship between gentrifiers (newcomers) and longtime residents, literature suggests that there is contention between the two groups.

Zukin writes:

In street encounters, [gentrifiers and longtimers] approach each other wearily until familiarity with neighborhood routine ensures politeness. ... New middle class residents often expect crime to be as prevalent as 'background noise.' For their part, existing residents may resent the superimposition of alien culture – with different consumption patterns and an accelerated pace of change.⁶⁵

This behavior may be due in part to an actor's ideological orientation to gentrification in relation to one's economic or structural position and cultural tastes. Using the Lower East Side in New York City, Janet Abu-Lughod explains these two extremes as "exchange value" and "use value":

At one extreme are the diverse players who view the land and buildings of the Lower East Side simply as "property" – as commodities with exchange values only. Flippers perhaps are the purest example. ... Purchasers and renters of rehabilitated apartments share some of the views of developers, they differ only in terms of their relative stakes in a gentrified neighborhood, with owners more concerned than renters. At the opposite extreme are those players who view the land and the buildings of the Lower East exclusively in terms of their use value, since they are outside of or very marginal to the system of property. The homeless are perhaps the purest example.⁶⁶

All commodities, particularly land and buildings, have both an exchange and a use value. Using an apartment building as an example, the exchange value is the rent that is generated for the owners (purchasers) from the occupied apartments, while the use value is the functional return the apartments provide to residents (renters) as being a home. Therefore, the exchange value is

⁶⁵ Zukin, "Gentrification," 133.

⁶⁶ Janet Abu-Lughod, *From Urban Village to East Village: The Battle for New York's East Lower Side* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994), 337-38.

commonly a financial return and the use value satisfies an essential need for shelter.

Along these lines, purchasers and renters are similar to the pioneers and the social homesteaders identified by Brown-Saracino in terms of sharing some of the views of developers and their relative stakes in a gentrified neighborhood. Like the pioneers, purchasers seek to make a profit and therefore, they are more concerned than renters because they have higher stakes in the neighborhood. For the renters, they are like the homesteaders in that they seek to make space for themselves alongside the longtimers in order to build a home in the neighborhood.

While there is a significant amount of research focused on understanding the role of gentrifiers and the issues they face, very little research has been conducted on the experiences of the non-gentrifying groups living in the neighborhoods experiencing gentrification.⁶⁷ This is surprising considering that their perspective is a crucial part of the understanding the larger story of the gentrification process. A recent exception is the work by Lance Freeman, which examines the experience of gentrification from the perspectives of indigenous residents of two inner-city African-American neighborhoods. One important finding is that “their reactions are both more receptive and optimistic, yet at the same time more pessimistic and distrustful than the literature on gentrification

⁶⁷ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 122.

might lead us to believe."⁶⁸ Freeman notes that previous research tended to treat indigenous residents as victims of the gentrification process.

After reviewing the stage models and theories that were developed to understand and explain the process of gentrification as well as the motivations of the middle class gentrifier and the reaction of the gentrified longtime resident, it is necessary to examine the process of gentrification as it occurs in the United States.

Gentrification in the United States

As noted in an earlier section, there is evidence that suggests the U.S. is experiencing a fourth wave of gentrification. Lees, Slater, and Wyly assert that a new, distinctive fourth wave has emerged in the United States since 2001 that "combines an intensified financialization of housing with the consolidation of pro-gentrification politics and polarized urban policies."⁶⁹ Drawing on Hackworth and Smith's stage model, the recession that began to hit the U.S. economy in early 2001 served as a transitional period after the third wave and led to gentrification being tied to the financial transformation of housing occurring in the fourth wave.

Due to the relaxing of mortgage lending practices in the previous decade and the barrage of interest rate cuts when the recession hit, enormous flows of

⁶⁸ Lance Freeman, *There Goes the 'Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2006), 1. Freeman's research presents the possibility that inner city gentrification within an African American context could lead to more positive feelings towards gentrification given the cynicism from previous neighborhood disinvestment.

⁶⁹ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 179.

capital were funneled into housing in the years after 2001. This led to mortgage debt mushrooming and the subsequent housing bubble as a number of wealthy households began investing in housing as a means of recovery from stock market losses.⁷⁰ Although there were indications that the market was cooling down beginning in late 2005, “years of heavy capital flows into housing have greatly worsened the affordability crises for low-income renters, with particularly severe stress for those living in gentrifying neighborhoods.”⁷¹ Disinvestment, reinvestment, and rent gap dynamics are economic trends that have driven gentrification deeper into the heart of inner-city neighborhoods while perpetuating class and race inequalities.

According to Lees, Slater, and Wyly, the most distinguishing features of a new fourth wave involve “the consolidation of a powerful national political shift favoring the interests of the wealthiest households, combined with a bold effort to dismantle the last of the social welfare programs associated with the 1960s.”⁷² It was during the Clinton administration when private market gentrification was allowed to flourish and the George W. Bush administration continued many of the Clinton-era programs. Domestic policy, especially urban policy, was sidelined as Bush’s emphases on “tax cuts for investors and the War on Terror”⁷³ took precedence, which allowed local governments to continue to “pursue economic development and housing policies that generally favor

⁷⁰ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 179.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 183.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 184.

gentrification.”⁷⁴ Unfortunately, these efforts are also taking place at the national level. Furthermore, this fourth wave of gentrification is “not readily identifiable outside of the United States,” reinforcing the notion that gentrification varies across cities, neighborhoods, and even countries.

A number of U.S. cities are currently experiencing this wave of gentrification with much larger implications than earlier waves as the economic shifts of the twenty-first century play a large role in increasing class and race inequalities. It is important to note that while gentrification is widespread, it is not occurring across the country but in a limited number of cities and a limited number of neighborhoods in those cities. In their 2001 report, researchers Maureen Kennedy and Paul Leonard classify several cities into three categories, those experiencing widespread, rapid, or less rapid gentrification.⁷⁵ San Francisco is listed as having both widespread and rapid gentrification due to its supercharged economy. Rapid gentrification is also occurring cities such as Boston, Seattle, Chicago, and Portland. Cities with less rapid gentrification are Atlanta, Washington D.C., and Denver.

Part of the difficulty in establishing a definitive set of trends that determine the likelihood of gentrification occurring is because there are neighborhoods that have long exhibited trends that could be identified, such as ease of access to transit systems and relative housing prices, but have only recently begun to

⁷⁴ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 184.

⁷⁵ Maureen Kennedy and Paul Leonard, *Dealing with Neighborhood Change: A Primer on Gentrification and Policy Choices* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2001), 1.

gentrify.⁷⁶ However, trends in local data can provide leading indicators of gentrification at the neighborhood level that may be useful in predicting gentrification. Through interviews conducted for their case studies, Kennedy and Leonard compiled a list of static and dynamic indicators that may provide ways to anticipate impending gentrification (see Table 1).

Table 1: Leading Indicators of Gentrification

LEADING INDICATORS
<p>Conditions indicating likelihood of gentrification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High rate of renters • Ease of access to job centers (freeways, public transit, reverse commutes, new subway stations, or ferry routes) • High and increasing levels of metropolitan congestion • High architectural value • Comparatively low housing values
<p>Trends indicating gentrification in progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift from rental tenure to homeownership • Increase in downpayment ratios, decline in FHA-financing • Influx of households and individuals interested in specifically urban amenities and cultural niches (e.g. artists, young professionals, gay/lesbian households) • Influx of amenities that serve higher income levels, for instance music clubs and galleries, valet parking, new Starbucks locations, etc.

Source: Kennedy and Leonard, 2001, 8.

In spite of the debate over whether gentrification is caused primarily by social/cultural factors, economic factors, or a combination of both, some of the factors that cause or drive gentrification are also ones that are essential for urban success, such as rapid job growth and appreciation of cities' cultural

⁷⁶ Kennedy and Leonard, *Dealing with Neighborhood Change*, 7.

amenities.⁷⁷ Drivers of gentrification today include, but are not limited to: rapid job growth, tight housing market, preferences for city amenities, increased traffic congestion and lengthening commutes, and targeted public sector policies.⁷⁸

Gentrification is a double-edge sword as the consequences of it can be positive or negative depending on whom it affects and the perspectives of the stakeholders. Consequences of gentrification include the following: involuntary or voluntary displacement, increasing tax revenues, greater income mix and deconcentration of poverty, changing street flavor and cultural fabric, changing community leadership and institutions, and increased value placed on the neighborhood by outsiders.⁷⁹ Due to the complex nature of the gentrification process, these consequences can be good, bad, or both good and bad.

Although much of the literature presents gentrification as a negative process, it is important to acknowledge the growing body of research that examines its positive aspects. In addition to wrenching shifts in affordability and social character, Freeman notes that gentrification can also bring benefits to poorer long-time residents by creating mixed-income neighborhoods with more neighbors that are affluent.⁸⁰ This view is based on the notion that affluent residents bring social and economic stability to declining neighborhoods and “serve as bridges to greater resources.”⁸¹ Though they do tend to bring better

⁷⁷ Kennedy and Leonard, *Dealing with Neighborhood Change*, 10.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 10-14.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 15-23.

⁸⁰ Lance Freeman, “Gentrification,” in *Local Planning: Contemporary Principles and Practice*, ed. Gary Hack et al. (Washington, D.C.: ICMA Press, 2009), 160.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 160-161.

amenities and attract a broader range of commercial services, there is mixed evidence to support this argument.

Atkinson and Bridge also present the positive and negative consequences in their summary of the main neighborhood impacts of gentrification (see Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of Neighborhood Impacts of Gentrification

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>
	Displacement through rent/price increases Secondary psychological costs of displacement
Stabilization of declining areas	Community resentment and conflict
Increased property values	Loss of affordable housing Unsustainable speculative property price increases
Reduced vacancy rates	Homelessness
Increased local fiscal revenues	Greater take of local spending through lobbying/articulacy
Encouragement and increased viability of further development	Commercial/industrial displacement
Reduction of urban sprawl	Increased cost and changes to local services Displacement and housing demand pressures on surrounding poor areas
Increased social mix	Loss of social diversity (from socially disparate to rich ghettos)
Rehabilitation of property both with and without state sponsorship	Under-occupancy and population loss to gentrified areas

Source: Atkinson and Bridge, 2005, 5.

As the effects of gentrification are most noticeable at the neighborhood level, it is important to understand how the process emerges in neighborhoods and transforms those spaces. Focusing on gentrification and neighborhood change, the next section presents the concept of urban morphogenesis as a

framework for examining the production of urban space in terms of physical changes in the urban landscape.

Urban Morphogenetic Sequence of Neighborhood Change

Urban morphology is “the study of the form, physical structure, plan and layout, elements of townscapes, and functional areas of towns and cities.”⁸² While research in this field traditionally focused on examining the development and the phases of growth of urban areas through the physical, socioeconomic, and cultural aspects of urban form, current studies have focused on the relationship between urban morphology and planning.⁸³ As a result, the nature of urban morphological investigation has changed to include examining the role of architects and planners in the production of urban space as the physical qualities of the urban environment change with additions to and modifications of the urban fabric.⁸⁴ The processes of urban morphology can be examined as they operate at different spatial scales, from individual buildings to city neighborhoods. Thus, urban morphology can be linked with gentrification in that both examine transformations in the urban landscape and the agents of change.

According to geographer James Vance Jr. who popularized the term in 1977, *urban morphogenesis* is “the creation and subsequent transformation of

⁸² Harri Andersson, “Urban Morphology,” in *Encyclopedia of Urban Studies*, ed. Ray Hutchison. Vol. 2 (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Reference, 2010): 894.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 895.

city form,"⁸⁵ in which morphogenesis refers to "the processes that create and reshape the physical fabric of the city."⁸⁶ Thus, the evolution of urban form or morphology is inextricably related to a broad range of factors, such as changing land uses, collective behaviors, and popular tastes. The concept has generally focused on the origins of the physical form of a place in the context of specific building types in the city. In this sense, gentrification can be seen as a process of urban morphogenesis.

Examining the morphology of urban communities offers the opportunity to understand their spatial relationships through geographic patterns in their particular locational distributions. Such patterns provide insight into the cultural history of a community as they reflect how people behave within a space.⁸⁷ In line with Jager's notion of the "gentrification aesthetic" used by gentrifiers to distinguish themselves from other social class groups, urban morphogenesis highlights how a distinctive social group expresses itself somehow in physical terms by dominating a place or demonstrating a discernable presence there.

In 1988, geographer Brian Godfrey noted that urban morphology had seldom been used in the study of shaping social districts in the city, even though the city had been viewed as a collection of morphological subareas.⁸⁸ In turn, he used the concept of urban morphogenesis as a conceptual framework from which to study the processes of community formation. Furthermore, the

⁸⁵ James E. Vance, Jr., *This Scene of Man: The Role and Structure of the City in the Geography of Western Civilization* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 37.

⁸⁶ Andersson, "Urban Morphology," 895.

⁸⁷ Brian J. Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition: The Making of San Francisco's Ethnic and Nonconformist Communities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988), 23.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

emergence and evolution of specialized communities represents what Godfrey called, "evolutionary urban morphogenesis," which is "a continuous process of initiation and adaptation of the built environment."⁸⁹

Using an "urban morphogenetic sequence of neighborhood change," Godfrey examined the relationship between inner-city physical structure and population flux of ethnic and nonconformist communities in San Francisco.⁹⁰ The focus of his research was on formation the Hispanic ethnic community in the Mission District and the seemingly bohemian nonconformist community in the Haight-Ashbury District. The processes through which each of these communities was formed differed as the Mission District's Hispanic community arose through the process of ethnic succession and the Haight-Ashbury District's bohemian nonconformist community arose through the process of gentrification. Godfrey chose to examine these types of communities because of their distinct cultural content as well as the specific ways in which they each carved out territory for themselves in central cities. He argued that although both ethnic and nonconformist areas may vary greatly in their forms and functions, they serve as bastions for subcultural expression.⁹¹

Through his research, he noted that one striking difference between ethnic and nonconformist communities is their relationship to gentrification, which he defines as the conversion of working-class neighborhoods to middle-class neighborhoods through a physical restoration of the buildings: "Ethnic

⁸⁹ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 24.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 46.

neighborhoods tend to maintain a working-class status, at least insofar as they remain truly ethnic, whereas nonconformist enclaves in the inner city are prone to gentrify in time, despite their working-class and bohemian beginnings."⁹² The gentrification Godfrey described is indicative of the period in which he was writing, the 1980s, correlating with the second-wave of gentrification identified by Hackworth and Smith. In relation to Godfrey's finding on the tendency for nonconformist enclaves in the inner-city to eventually gentrify, Hackworth and Smith noted that during the second-wave in New York City, "the presence of the arts community was often a key correlate of residential gentrification, serving to smooth the flow of capital into neighbourhoods like SoHo, Tribeca, and the Lower East Side,"⁹³ neighborhoods that were inhabited by artists and recognized for their "alternative" art scenes.

Godfrey established a general structural framework based on a revised filtering model of the relationship between inner-city physical structure and population flux, which integrates the geographical study of urban community formation and neighborhood change.⁹⁴ From this, the specific phases of neighborhood change can be applied to ethnic and nonconformist communities:

Since patterns of initial settlement strongly influence the subsequent evolution of urban areas, the first structural phase involves *neighborhood inception and growth*. In the next phase, *neighborhood decay*, the inner-city area starts to suffer, showing signs of physical deterioration and departure of the sorts of inhabitants that lived there in an earlier heyday, which helps prepare the way for a process of downward filtration and

⁹² Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 46.

⁹³ Hackworth and Smith, "The Changing State of Gentrification," 468.

⁹⁴ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 48.

community succession. Then comes the phase of *neighborhood transformation* in which "invasion" by the new minority group and the abandonment by earlier inhabitants fundamentally change the character of the area, giving it a new social identity reflected in the adapted forms and functions of local businesses, gathering spots, and residences. On the heels of this turnaround come the beginnings of *neighborhood revitalization*, an adaptive phase of upward filtering, which brings with it varying degrees of both physical renovation and social resistance to the displacement of local residents.⁹⁵

He stated that it is during the phase of *neighborhood transformation* that the two life-cycles diverge. It is assumed that the morphogenesis of ethnic and nonconformist communities occurs in a life-cycle or series of successional stages.

These life-cycles of neighborhood change are similar to the concept of "ecological succession" introduced in the 1920s by Park and Burgess from the influential Chicago School of urban ecology. The concept of "invasion and succession" has most often been applied to the replacement of one human community by another, but more specifically, to the racial transition in the inner city.⁹⁶ Under this process, it is assumed that inner-city neighborhoods tend to go through predictable life-cycles. As Godfrey argued, "the physical structures age and deteriorate with time, leaving the housing stock to filter down to lower socioeconomic groups."⁹⁷ Although the process is not universal, neighborhood succession was described as generally following the downward filtration of aging physical structures.⁹⁸

Using the phases of neighborhood change from his general structural framework, Godfrey then outlined the next phases of the life-cycles of ethnic

⁹⁵ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 48.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

and nonconformist communities in more detail, both of which are discussed in the next two sections. Both life-cycles follow the first three structural phases, but it is at the third phase of *neighborhood transformation* or “invasion” when the two diverge. Ethnic communities follow a path of succession, while nonconformist communities follow a path of gentrification (see Figure 2).

Life-cycle of Ethnic Communities

As outlined by Godfrey, the life-cycle of ethnic communities (given the general downward filtration of inner-city housing stock) included: 1) *Initial migrant penetration* of a few upwardly mobile settlers, 2) *Minority invasion* of a large number of the new immigrant group replacing the departing population, 3) *Ethnic consolidation* as the new group dominates the neighborhood.⁹⁹ During these stages, the ethnic subculture intensifies; however, the next phase may vary. The area can repeat a new process of succession, undergo gentrification, or evolve into a less ethnic but still working class community.

It is important to note that this model is dated and cannot be applied to the formation of ethnic communities today, in that increasingly the suburbs are now the immigrant reception areas.¹⁰⁰ Current immigrants settling in inner-city ethnic neighborhoods are more than likely entering long established communities.

⁹⁹ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 48.

¹⁰⁰ On the formation of contemporary suburban Asian settlements, see Wei Li, *Ethnoburb: The New Ethnic Community in North America*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009.

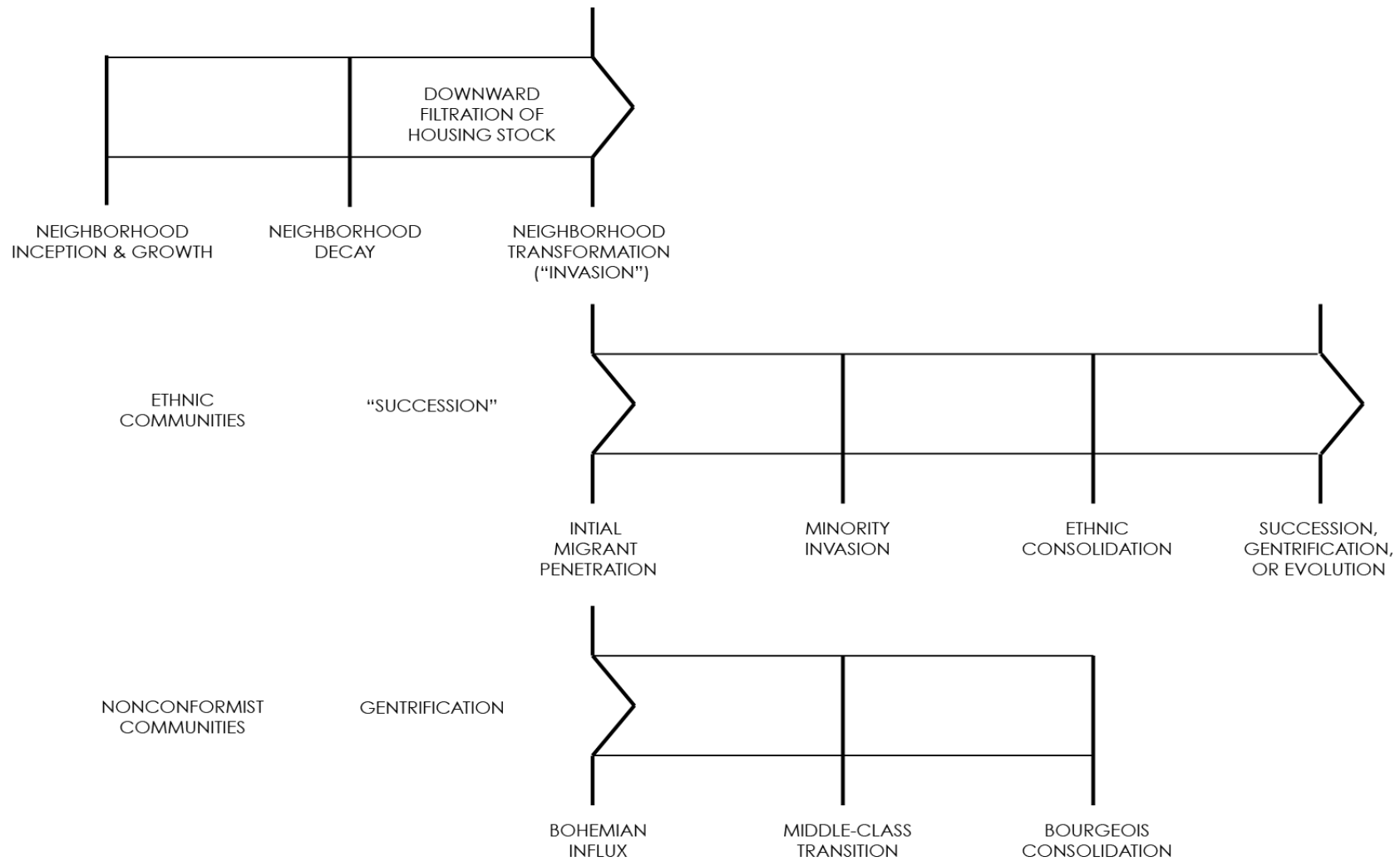


Figure 2: Diagram of Godfrey's Urban Morphogenetic Sequence of Neighborhood Change
 Source: Godfrey, 1988, 48-9. (Diagram by Author)

Life-cycle of Nonconformist Communities

The gentrification life-cycle of nonconformist communities, as described by Godfrey, included: 1) *Bohemian influx* of “urban pioneers” who favor nontraditional social elements and discover a neighborhood’s special charms (i.e. social diversity, subcultural identification, architectural heritage or historic distinction), making the run-down/dangerous area more livable and attractive, 2) *Middle-class transition* as more people hear about the neighborhood causing the rise of both the local entrepreneurial class and residential middle-class, 3) *Bourgeois consolidation* when private firms enter the local shopping area to cater to the affluent clientele, rents and property values rise (displacing lower-income residents), and the residential population becomes increasingly homogenous.¹⁰¹

The use of the term, “nonconformist,” referred to nontraditional, unconventional groups such as the counter-culture, feminists, homosexuals, political radicals, students, and artistic movements. He argued that these groups demonstrated the sense of solidarity, social cohesion, and structured relationships typical of most concepts of community. Nontraditional communities were seen as “urban pioneers” (a term popularized by Neil Smith) because of they acted as a revitalizing force against urban deterioration in run-

¹⁰¹ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 48-9.

down inner cities.¹⁰² Due to their opposition to mainstream culture, nonconformist subcultures tended to have the mobility and fluid composition that helped to explain spatial patterns in that their urban impacts were transitory compared to ethnic enclaves.¹⁰³

In examining urban morphology, Godfrey outlined two processes of community formation: ethnic succession and gentrification. It is through these processes that urban morphogenesis occurs. Thus, both processes involve physical changes to the built environment with the production and transformation of space in the urban landscape.

Creation and Preservation of Authenticity

While urban morphology focuses on the production of urban space through processes that create and reshape the urban fabric like gentrification, the concept of authenticity focuses on the experience of that space through cultural consumption.

Sociologist Sharon Zukin describes *authenticity* as “a constant dialogue between two faces: between features that every generation views as ‘original’ because they have been there throughout their lifetimes, and features that each

¹⁰² Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 33.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 44.

new generation creates on their own.”¹⁰⁴ She notes that the tension between these two faces produces the desire to preserve the “authentic” city, citing the battle in New York between Robert Moses’ push to build the corporate city and Jane Jacobs’ struggle to preserve the urban village as an example.¹⁰⁵ Yet both methods of producing authentic places, historically old versus creatively new, in conjunction offer an alternative to city and neighborhood growth that often pushes people out.¹⁰⁶ Thus, one way authenticity is tied to gentrification is the relationship between both the longtime residents and the “original” or historically old features of a city or neighborhood, and the newcomers and the creatively new features. The longtime residents represent the old features, while the newcomers represent the new features.

In her seminal book published in 1961, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jane Jacobs had argued for the preservation of the “authentic” city in her promotion of economic and social diversity in urban planning through a cityscape based on multiple uses:

One principle emerges ... ubiquitously, and in so many and such complex different forms [that] ... it becomes the heart of my argument. This ubiquitous principle is the need of cities for a most intricate and close-grained diversity of uses that give each other constant mutual support, both economically and socially. The components of this diversity can differ enormously, but they must supplement each other in certain concrete ways.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Sharon Zukin, *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), xi.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, xxiii.

¹⁰⁷ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961), 14.

She called this “zoning for diversity” which is thought of as being different from the usual zoning for conformity. One example is the diversity of building heights so that “the lower buildings remaining could not be further replaced by excessive duplication of the more valuable high buildings. Again, sameness was being zoned out – or in effect, differences zoned in.”¹⁰⁸ These differences were in the form of both high and low buildings as well as old and new buildings, which provides a sense of balance between the two faces of authenticity. By promoting diversity in the physical fabric of the city and its neighborhoods, Jacobs also promoted social diversity as building diversity creates differences among the density of crowds and multiple uses of common spaces, which dynamic social life depends on. Although Jacobs does not specifically use the term “authenticity” in her writing, talking instead about density and diversity, Zukin often refers to her work when discussing the concept.

According to Zukin, authenticity has taken on a different meaning, shifting from a quality of people to a quality of things, and most recently to a quality of experiences.¹⁰⁹ Due to the recent shift in meaning, authenticity now has little to do with origins and a lot to do with style.¹¹⁰ The emergence of the term in popular language reflects the significance of our roles as cultural consumers, who consume the city's art, food, imagery, and real estate; thus, making authenticity a tool of power that controls not only the look but the use of urban

¹⁰⁸ Jacobs, *The Death and Life*, 253.

¹⁰⁹ Zukin, *Naked City*, 3.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

space.¹¹¹ In this case, both authenticity and gentrification go hand in hand, one as “a cultural form of power over space”¹¹² and the other as the physical process of imposing that power over space through “the preservation of historic buildings and districts, encouraging the development of small boutiques and cafes, and branding neighborhoods in terms of distinctive cultural identities.”¹¹³ In this sense, authenticity plays a key role in Jager’s “gentrification aesthetic” as the tool which gentrifiers use to distinguish themselves from other social class groups and to demonstrate their presence in a gentrifying neighborhood; thus, imposing their power over that space and controlling the way it looks.

However, Zukin highlights that “authenticity could become a potent tool to combat recent negative effects of upscale growth”¹¹⁴ as a means of gaining ownership for *any* group. The community-led gentrification or “gentefication” in Boyle Heights is an example of this. To combat others from gentrifying the neighborhood, upwardly mobile, second-generation Latinos are investing in and returning to Boyle Heights as a means to reinforce the area’s Mexican-American identity and to preserve its strong cultural history. By reinforcing the neighborhood’s existing sense of authenticity through self-gentrification, they are further strengthening their power and ownership over that space. In doing so, the power to determine the future of the neighborhood stays with the community and is kept amongst the people or the “gente.”

¹¹¹ Zukin, *Naked City*, 3

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, xxiii.

The power over space that authenticity provides is not only financial, but also cultural as the new tastes and consumption preferences of newcomers displace those of longtime residents and reinforce the clean, safe, and modern image of neighborhoods that are undergoing growth, which many see as being positive. In examining authenticity through these factors, a positive correlation can be found between power (over space), consumption (cultural), and wealth (financial) as an increase in consumption results in an increase in power or vice versa due to an accumulation of wealth and resources, which then combine to produce an overall perceived increase in authenticity as defined by the newcomers (see Figure 3). For newcomers, this perceived increase in authenticity reinforces their belief that the gentrification they initiate is a good thing.

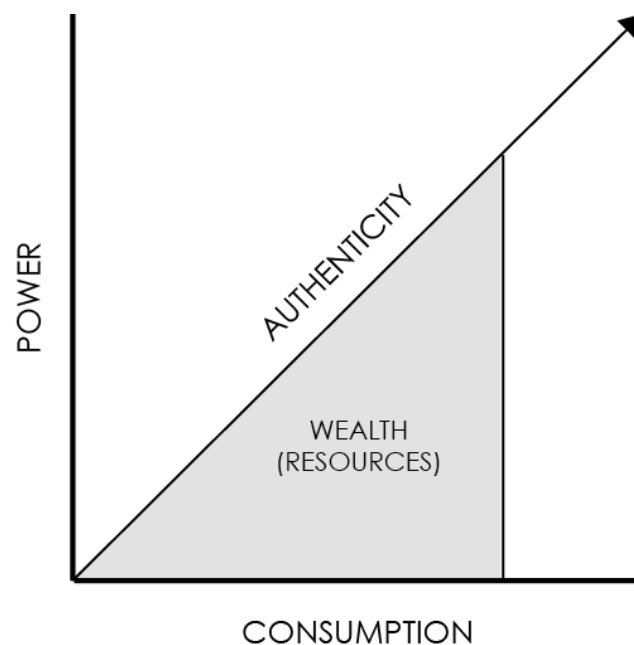


Figure 3: Diagram of Perceived Authenticity as a Relationship Between Power and Consumption
Source: Diagram by Author

To some gentrifiers, their desire for authenticity stems from the belief that gentrification can offer a sense of progress or potential for their neighborhood and they want to be a part of its transformation. This is demonstrated in the motivations of Brown-Saracino's social homesteaders, who are strategic in their gentrification as they want to both improve the space with new spaces that reflect their high culture and preserve the authenticity that the old-timers provide. In this sense, they believe that what they are doing is good for the neighborhood and that their actions are in a way justified because, unlike like the pioneers who have no concern about preserving an authentic place and the preservationists who care so much that little gentrification occurs, the homesteaders care just enough about authenticity to make gentrification acceptable. Furthermore, Zukin notes, "In the gentrified and hipster neighborhoods that have become models of urban experience since then, authenticity is a consciously chosen lifestyle and a performance, and a means of displacement as well."¹¹⁵

Zukin and Jacobs each present authenticity as being both positive and negative in terms of representing a balance of preserving the old and accepting the new through diversity among groups. However, the authenticity of a neighborhood becomes unbalanced when gentrification occurs and the new group dominates by pushing out the older groups and making the area homogenous. An example of this would be a mixed-income neighborhood where there are both poor longtime residents and affluent newcomers. As

¹¹⁵ Zukin, *Naked City*, 4.

noted by Freeman, when the newcomers first move into the neighborhood, they bring social and economic stability through better amenities and commercial services that benefit the longtime residents. Yet, there is a tipping point when the newcomers outnumber the longtime residents and the neighborhood is no longer mixed-income, but has become middle or upper class. When this happens, the newcomers become the dominant group with more power over the space and the other groups are eventually pushed out as the newcomers increasingly gentrify the neighborhood to fulfill their consumption demands.

According to Zukin, the new features that hipsters and gentrifiers bring to the areas where they live is not necessarily a bad thing. Yet, what is problematic is the loss of the old ethnic neighborhoods and the people rooted in them that are displaced when hipsters and gentrifiers move in:

In the areas where hipsters and gentrifiers live there's a new cosmopolitanism in the air: tolerant, hip, casual. And that isn't a bad thing. But little by little the old ethnic neighborhoods they have moved into are dying, along with the factories where longtime residents plied their trades and the Irish bars, Latino bodegas, and black soul food restaurants where they made their homes away from home. The people who seemed so rooted in these neighborhoods are disappearing.¹¹⁶

This notion brings into focus what Zukin calls a “crisis of authenticity” which is “seen and felt as an undesirable change in urban experience.”¹¹⁷ Simply put, it is the loss of cultural vitality and the conspicuous display of wealth or opulence.

In this sense, cultural consumption, promoted by both the rhetoric of elected officials and media images, is presented as a means through which we

¹¹⁶ Zukin, *Naked City*, 7-8.

¹¹⁷ Sharon Zukin, “Changing Landscapes of Power: Opulence and the Urge for Authenticity,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33, no. 2 (June 2009), 544.

fulfill our desire for a good place to live. As Zukin notes, this belief is eventually accepted by society: "In time, this language persuades us, or just confirms our belief, that the good life depends on building more cultural attractions to draw tourists to the city, opening more sidewalk cafes and boutiques, and restoring more old houses."¹¹⁸ Yet, what is being described is gentrification and ultimately, the belief that gentrification is necessary in order to have a good life is what leads to the transformation of the urban landscape.

This can result in a feeling of inauthenticity by longtime residents as the old features slowly disappear and are replaced with new features that are based on images of a false belief in what is perceived to be a good place to live. Since the new tastes and preferences of newcomers reinforces the clean, safe, and modern image of a good neighborhood, this feeling of inauthenticity can not only be seen as the overall perceived increase in authenticity as defined by the newcomers (shown in Figure 3), but also as a "crisis of authenticity" for longtimers. The increases in newcomer power, consumption, and authenticity result in the displacement of longtime residents and retail establishments as well as the loss of cultural vitality. On one hand, newcomers believe they are doing good by increasing authenticity in a neighborhood, while on the other hand, longtimers believe that the increase in newcomer authenticity is actually an increase in inauthenticity through the display of wealth and a subsequent decline in longtimer authenticity. This relates back to Zukin's argument that both methods of producing authentic places, historically old versus creatively new, in

¹¹⁸ Zukin, "Changing Landscapes of Power," 549.

conjunction offer an alternative to city and neighborhood growth that often pushes people out. Whether it is the newcomers pushing out the longtimers or vice versa, authenticity is being lost.

Although she attributes the perpetuation of gentrification via cultural consumption to media representations, she argues “the media’s hunger for content leads them to support the generic goal of growth, as well as specific processes of revitalization.”¹¹⁹ As a result of this hunger, consumer hunger is subsequently created as the media, “... stimulate an appetite for consuming the local, the past, the edgy, the different – tastes for different genres of authenticity that take spatial form in loft living, hipster neighborhoods and gentrified houses in low-rent, previously ghettoized districts.”¹²⁰ Furthermore, it is important to note that the media “do not cause neighborhoods to be upscale, but they capitalize on it”¹²¹ and they also “do not cause individuals to take these actions.”¹²² However, media do indirectly play a role in perpetuating gentrification with their ability to shape consumer trends and tastes.

In her discussion of gentrifying areas, Zukin observes, “The cultural synthesis of the early twenty-first century as it offers boutique gourmet cheese stores side by side with the bazaar, small-scale agricultural production in community gardens across the street from branches of Whole Foods supermarkets, street vendors of tortillas and dosas next to IKEA and H&M.”¹²³

¹¹⁹ Zukin, “Changing Landscapes of Power,” 549.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 550.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 549.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 550.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 551.

The three preceding sections on gentrification, urban morphology, and authenticity, provided an explanation of the process of gentrification and presented two perspectives, geographical and sociological, from which gentrification can be examined. While urban morphology is the geographical study of the form and physical structure of towns and cities, urban morphogenesis refers to the creation and transformation of that form and physical structure. Therefore, urban morphogenesis can provide a spatial representation of gentrification. The sociological concept of authenticity is a tool of power that uses consumption to control the look and use of urban space. Thus, the expression of authenticity is a sociological representation of gentrification. Both of these perspectives offer new ways in which gentrification can be examined and understood.

Research Question

This thesis uses two varying perspectives: geographical/spatial (urban morphogenesis) and sociological (expression of authenticity) to examine the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers in the Mission District in San Francisco. With regards to the ability for longtime residents and newcomers to coexist in a gentrifying neighborhood:

Does the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers facilitate or hinder the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers in the Mission District?

Challenging the notion that gentrifiers have a negative impact on neighborhoods, it is speculated that the presence of hipsters could be conducive to the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers and contribute to the slowing of gentrification of a neighborhood based on the interest of the hipster subculture in expressing authenticity and its openness to different cultures.

Purpose and Goals

Gentrification is a complex process addressed by many different disciplines, such as sociology, planning, geography, economics, and anthropology. It is a valuable lens through which to examine a variety of

intersecting phenomena in a city and/or neighborhood context.¹²⁴ Within the existing literature and discourse on gentrification, there is a lack of analysis on the products of this process through an architectural lens in terms of building functions and physical changes to the built environment, such as the housing stock, business types, transportation modes, and the overall character of the space created by the new and existing residents of the neighborhood. The closest the field of architecture comes to examining the issues of gentrification falls within the realm of historic preservation in the context of housing as it is tied to social class distinctions. Even then, much of the work on this topic comes from geography and sociology. This limited scope suggests that there needs to be a more defined relationship between gentrification and architecture.

Utilizing literature and concepts from the fields of geography and sociology, the goal of the research presented in this thesis is to offer a method from which architects and planners can examine the process of gentrification as it relates to architecture and the built environment in order to further understand the role design plays in the transformation of urban space. This thesis serves as specific case study that highlights the relationship between architecture and gentrification by examining whether the presence of gentrifiers either facilitates or hinders the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers in a gentrifying neighborhood through the physical transformations to the urban landscape and the expression of authenticity.

¹²⁴ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, xv-xvi.

Definition of Terms & Concepts

Gentrification

Due to the many views of gentrification, it is important to specify the definition that applied to this research and is used as the basis of inquiry. The following definition from Lees, Slater, and Wyly focuses on the core elements of the process and is not attached to one particular landscape or context:

1. Reinvestment of capital,
2. Social upgrading of locale by incoming high income groups,
3. Landscape change,
4. Direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups.¹²⁵

Neighborhood

Although the definition of a neighborhood can vary depending on geographic, political, and individual perceptions of its boundaries, this research uses the political delineation of the Mission District and it is assumed that this delineation is the common perception of its boundaries. The following definition from Godfrey is broad, yet sufficient for this level of research: "The essence of the concept of neighborhood is the common recognition of an area's identity by residents and knowledgeable outsiders, on the basis of any number of distinguishing traits."¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly, eds. Introduction to *The Gentrification Reader* (London: Routledge, 2010), xvi.

¹²⁶ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 25.

Culture

Similar to preceding term, the concept of culture has several varying definitions depending on which academic field it is being drawn from. As such, the following definition from Godfrey is broad, yet sufficient for this level of research: "Culture in a general sense encompasses people's ways of life, characteristic patterns of human thought and behavior that are embedded in geographical conditions but not strictly limited to them."¹²⁷ It can be expressed through material things and beliefs.

Subculture

In his writing, Godfrey notes "Subcultures are specialized social worlds involving distinctive ways of life, with discernible morphological expressions, within a larger pluralistic society."¹²⁸ Furthermore, a subculture that is characterized by a systematic opposition to the dominant culture can be described as a "counterculture."

Nonconformist

Drawing once again on Godfrey, nonconformist will be interpreted as being of or characterized by behavior that is a "conscious group rejection of selected elements of mainstream culture."¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 206.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

CHAPTER 2

Research Methodology

This chapter introduces the site and provides an overview of my methods. It details key aspects of my ethnographic research including data collection, analysis, and interpretation from field observations and interviews. The first section explains the overall design strategy of this study. The following section on the context and setting provides a brief overview of the site and reasons for its selection. A more descriptive account of the site is provided in the succeeding chapter. The next section on data collection outlines the focus of my field observations and discusses the construction and composition of my interview sample. The section on data analysis and interpretation follows. The final section states the proposed outcomes of this research and its relevance to society.

Research Design

Research has been conducted to examine the process of gentrification in terms of the role and impact of hipsters in the Mission District in facilitating or hindering the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers. Two perspectives are used in this analysis, geographical/spatial (urban morphogenesis) and sociological (expression of authenticity). Urban morphogenesis is used to examine gentrification as the creation and transformation of urban space. The expression of authenticity is used as a marker for preservation to examine gentrification as the loss of existing culture.

This thesis follows a mixed-method approach with a combination of primary and secondary sources. The secondary data come from archival

sources, government documents, planning reports, as well as scholarly books and journal articles. The primary data come from qualitative interviews and field observations. Individual interviews were conducted to ascertain the viewpoints of the residents, both longtime and new, as well as the perspectives of visitors to the neighborhood. Field observations were conducted to record existing conditions and physical changes to the built environment as well social characteristics.

Context and Setting

The Mission District in San Francisco was selected as the location of this study for several reasons. My curiosity about this particular neighborhood and a semi-autobiographical interest in San Francisco influenced site selection. The neighborhood has been experiencing waves of gentrification since the 1970s and is currently undergoing another due to spikes in job growth from Silicon Valley and subsequent demands for affordable housing. The Mission serves as home to the city's largest Latino population as well as to a diverse collection of other ethnicities and lifestyles. It is often referred to as being a "hipster" neighborhood. Economic and demographic shifts continue to cause the character of the neighborhood to change. For comprehensive demographic data on San Francisco and the Mission District, [see Appendix C](#).



Figure 4: Street Map of the Mission District in San Francisco

Source: <http://www.sf-planning.org/Modules/ShowImage.aspx?imageid=982> (Modified by Author)

The focus of this study is on West Mission – located west of Valencia Street and marked by recent gentrification and a high concentration of hipsters and yuppies, the western part of the Mission Core – located just east of Valencia Street including Mission Street with a high concentration of Hispanic/Latino businesses and residents, and the Mission Dolores Park – a high use public green space frequented by all types of residents and visitors (for a map of these areas, see Figure 10).

The Mission Dolores Park is located along the western edge of the Mission District (see Figure 4). It is bounded by 18th Street on the north, 20th Street on the south, Dolores Street on the east, and Church Street on the west (see Figure 5). The northern end of the park is directly across from Mission High School and two blocks away from the historic Mission Dolores Basilica. The park is a popular destination for both locals and visitors (see Figure 6).

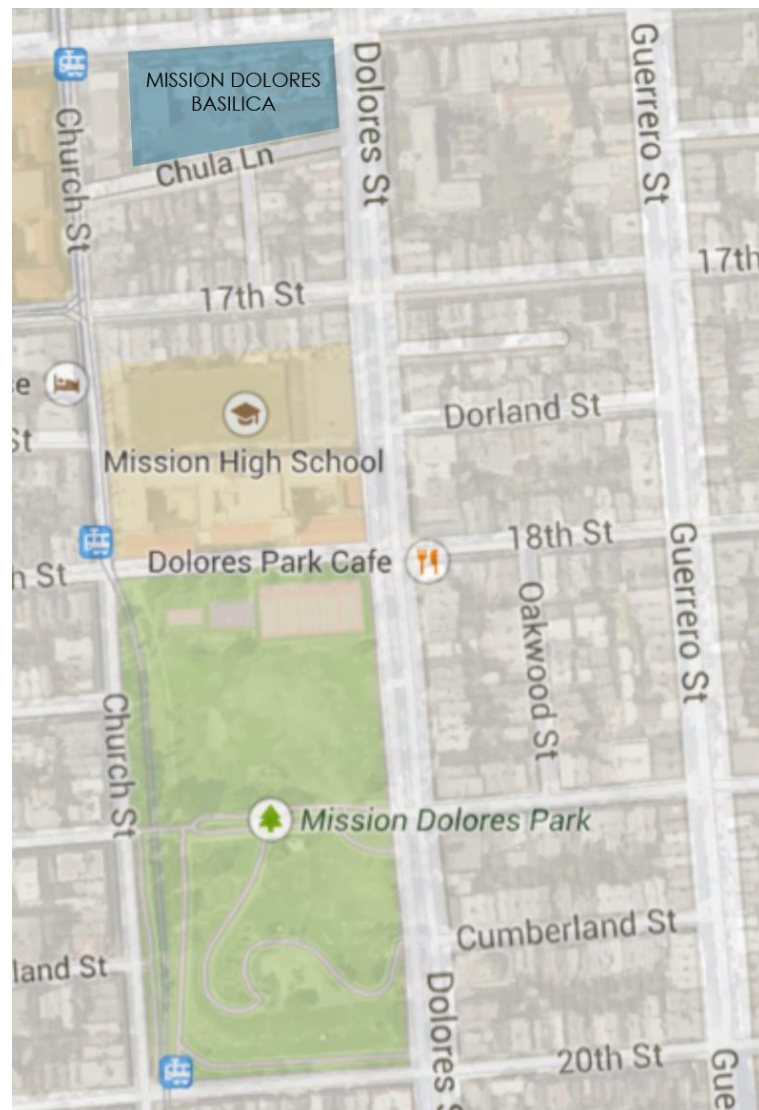


Figure 5: Street Map of the Mission Dolores Park in San Francisco
Source: Google Maps (Modified by Author)



Figure 6: Mission Dolores Park, Looking Northeast Towards Downtown

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Dolores_Park,_San_Francisco_2013-04-13_14-48.jpg

Data Collection

Field Observations

My field observations were made by walking around the core area of the Mission District while taking field notes and photographs along the way. I focused specifically on the four main commercial streets in the district: 16th Street, 24th Street, Mission Street, and Valencia Street. The numbered streets run horizontally and are considered secondary commercial streets while the named streets run vertically and are considered the primary commercial streets. I examined both the physical and social characteristics of these streets, taking note of levels of traffic (pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile), condition of sidewalks (uses, width, and cleanliness), types of services and businesses, and the characteristics of people using these streets (race, age, single/group, intention).

Although 16th Street is located in North Mission and not the Mission Core, it was included in the observations to gain a complete image of the retail landscape in the neighborhood.

Interviews

Twenty-one semi-structured interviews were conducted during a two-day span in the Mission Dolores Park. This site was chosen because it provided a large participant population from which a purposive sample of longtime residents (longtimers), new residents (newcomers), and visitors (non-residents) could be extracted. The participant population includes both male and female adults of any race/ethnic group ranging from ages 18-65+ years old. This large population offered a diverse pool of participants. Due the limited amount of research conducted on the experiences of non-gentrifying groups living in the neighborhoods experiencing gentrification, it was of utmost importance to obtain interviews from longtime residents of the Mission District.

The participants were chosen through random selection. However, specifying those groups was time-intensive and challenging, as they were not easily identifiable through visual indicators. Thus, before conducting the interview, potential participants were first asked if they lived in the Mission District. While doing so, it became apparent that there was an intermediary classification. A newcomer/longtimer refers to a former resident of the neighborhood who recently moved back or still works in the area. Respondents who lived in the neighborhood for 5 years or less were classified as newcomers,

and those that stated 6 years or more were classified as longtimers. The cut-off point of 5 years was used because it is a long enough residency period to witness neighborhood change. For newcomers, the residency period ranged from 3 months to 3 years. For longtimers, the residency period ranged from 14 to 22 years. A majority of the visitors live in nearby neighborhoods, such as Portrero Hill, Western Addition/Pacific Heights, Excelsior, Noe Valley, and Outer Sunset. The rest could be considered true visitors in a sense since they traveled to the neighborhood from areas outside of San Francisco, such as Los Angeles, Virginia and New Jersey.

The goal was to interview at least five people from each of the three categories (longtime residents, newcomers, and visitors) for a total of fifteen. However, I was able to obtain interviews from 9 visitors, 6 newcomers, 3 newcomer/longtimers, and 3 longtimers. The task of locating longtimers and newcomers in the park setting turned out to be more challenging than anticipated. Despite the small sample size, these resident types offered very informative responses. Overall, the number of resident types is greater than that of the visitors (12 to 9).

Respondents ranged in age from the youngest at 21 years old to the oldest at 63 years old with an average age of 34 years old. The racial composition of the sample includes: 5 people self-identified as Asian, 14 people self-identified as Caucasian, and 2 people self-identified as Hispanic. The proportion of male to female respondents was 2:1. In terms of housing tenure for the respondents who are residents, 5 currently owned their place of residence

while 7 currently rented, which reflects the high rental market in the city and the neighborhood. For demographic data on the interview participants, [see Appendix B](#).

When potential participants were approached, they were asked if they would mind being interviewed regarding the neighborhood changes in the Mission District. The duration of the interviews typically ranged between 10-15 minutes with the longest being roughly thirty minutes in length. Responses were audio recorded and later transcribed. The questions were divided into four categories: personal background (4), residential patterns (6), neighborhood change (4), and social networks (6). For visitors, the list of questions was adjusted and varied slightly from the list designed for newcomers and longtimers ([see Appendix A](#)). The types of questions that were asked elicited information on the respondent's perceptions of neighborhood change. In some instances, respondents noted that they had never thought about such things until then.

Informants were not directly asked about their reactions to gentrification and the terms "gentrification" and "gentrifier" were never introduced by the interviewer during the interview or in the questions. They were also not asked about their opinion of hipsters and the interviewer never used the term "hipster." This was done so that the negative perceptions associated with those terms would not influence with their responses.

It cannot be assumed that the newcomers are gentrifiers because displacement is difficult to track and it is not always due to gentrification. It was also not specifically asked and it is possible that the respondent does not know if

they displaced someone when they moved in. In addition, it is difficult to determine if respondent is a hipster without explicitly asking; plus, hipsters are not necessarily forthcoming on identifying themselves as such and so no assumptions can be made without stereotyping.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The interview transcripts were examined and reoccurring topics were noted as points of discussion. The interviews are used to support the notion of hipsters as gentrifiers based on the respondents' perception of them in the neighborhood and in changing the neighborhood – either directly or indirectly. If they discussed the presence of new stores/restaurants, it is sometimes possible to associate their responses to hipster preferences and gentrification.

Outcome

Findings from this research will provide information on the role of hipsters as gentrifiers, one that potentially has a positive impact on gentrifying neighborhoods. Through this research, I speculate that the presence of hipsters could be conducive to the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers and contribute to the slowing of gentrification of a neighborhood based on the interest of the hipster subculture in expressing authenticity and its openness to different cultures. This research has relevance to society by providing insight on the large and complex topic of gentrification as a crucial and frequent result of

urban development and regeneration. As we have seen, gentrification is constantly transforming and becoming more complex. This research also establishes a method for examining and understanding the connection between gentrification and architecture using the concepts of urban morphology and authenticity in the context of a rapidly transforming, diverse neighborhood. By examining the consumption preferences of hipsters and the subsequent types of stores and restaurants they demand, it is possible to understand the transformation of a neighborhood. As architecture shapes both the built environment and the experiences of the residents in the neighborhoods experiencing gentrification, the role of the architect is an important one.

CHAPTER 3

San Francisco &
the Mission District

Figure 7: Map of San Francisco Neighborhoods/Districts

* The Tenderloin District is located within the Civic Center neighborhood and is adjacent to South of Market, Western Addition, and Nob Hill.

Source: <http://www.cocoanetics.com/files/neighborhoods.gif>

This chapter offers detailed descriptions of the surrounding city and the specific neighborhood chosen for this study. The following section on San Francisco is included as it provides a wider scale of context from which to understand how social and economic characteristics of the city affect the gentrification of the Mission District. The section on the Mission District describes geographical characteristics of the neighborhood including its three morphological zones. Subsections further outline the history of its initial settlement and subsequent growth as well as the conception of the Hispanic *Barrio*, the primary area of Latino settlement in the neighborhood and the source of its cultural identity. The subsection on the Hispanic *Barrio* examines its formation through Godfrey's stages of ethnic succession.

San Francisco: City of Diversity

The City and County of San Francisco is a consolidated city-county, which refers to a city and county that have been merged into one unified jurisdiction, and it is the only consolidated city-county in California. Located in the northern end of the San Francisco Peninsula, San Francisco is the second-most densely populated major city in the United States after New York City. It is also the fourth-most populous city in California, after Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Jose, and the fourteenth-most populous city in the United States (see Table 3). The city's population has been increasing steadily and the Census Bureau has estimated a 2013 population of 837,442. In 2000, the number of immigrants in the U.S.

reached 31.1 million and more than two-thirds lived in only six states: California, New York, Texas, Florida, New Jersey, and Illinois. Not only did immigration boom during in the 1980s and 90s, but source countries also shifted from Europe to Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa. By 2010, the number of immigrants increased to 39.9 million or 13% of the total population.

Table 3: Total Population for San Francisco & the Mission District, 1990-2010

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
San Francisco (city)	723,959	776,733	805,235
Mission District	57,016 (7.9%)	60,202 (7.8%)	57,298 (6.5%)

Source: U.S. Census

As a financial and cultural hub, San Francisco serves as one of the many immigrant gateway cities in California and has remained a dominant residential choice for immigrants since the 1900s. Based on historical and current immigrant flows, and settlement trends in U.S. metropolitan areas during 1900-2000, Audrey Singer, senior fellow at the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, identified six major types of immigrant "gateways": former, continuous, post World-War II, emerging, re-emerging, and pre-emerging. She classified San Francisco as a continuous immigrant gateway. Similar to other major central cities that are also continuous gateways, San Francisco attracted large numbers of immigrants at the beginning of the twentieth century and maintained an above-average percentage of foreign-born for every decade in the twentieth century. While San Francisco saw immigrant population declines that reached a low in 1970,

like the former gateways, the city again registered high immigrant growth in the last three decades of the century making it a continuous gateway.¹³⁰

The growing immigrant population has established San Francisco as an ethnically diverse city with an racial/ethnic makeup in 2010 that includes: 48.5 percent Whites, 33.3 percent Asians, 15.1 percent Hispanics or Latinos of any race, 6.1 percent African Americans, 0.5 percent Native Americans, 0.4 percent Pacific Islanders, 6.6 percent other races, and 4.7 percent two or more races.¹³¹ Reflecting the city's role as an immigrant gateway, census data shows that overall the percentage of Whites and African Americans have declined and the percentage of Latino/Hispanics and Asians have risen. **Table 4** shows a breakdown of the racial and ethnic composition of San Francisco for the past three decades (1990-2010). It is important to note that San Francisco is a majority-minority city as non-Hispanic Whites make up only 41.9 percent, comprising less than half of the population. This had also been the case in 1990 and 2000, when non-Hispanic Whites made up 46.6 percent and 43.6 percent, respectively. The principle Hispanic groups in the city are those of Mexican, Salvadoran, Nicaraguan, Guatemalan, and Puerto Rican ancestry. These population groups are heavily concentrated in the Mission District, Tenderloin District, and Excelsior District (**see Figure 7**).

¹³⁰ Audrey Singer, "The Rise of New Immigrant Gateways," in *Redefining Urban and Suburban America: Evidence from Census 2000, Vol. 2*, eds. Alan Berube, Bruce Katz, and Robert E. Lang (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005), 48.

¹³¹ U.S. Census Bureau, *State & County QuickFacts*, January 2014, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/0667000.html>.

Table 4: Population by Race and Hispanic Origin in San Francisco, 1990-2010

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
White (%)	52.6	49.7	48.5
Non-Hispanic or Latino White (%)	46.6	43.6	41.9
Hispanic or Latino (of any race) (%)	13.3	14.1	15.1
Black or African American (%)	10.9	7.8	6.1
Asian or Pacific Islander (%)	29.1	31.3	33.3
American Indian/Alaska Native (%)	0.5	0.4	0.5
Some other race (%)	5.8	8.5	6.6

Source: U.S. Census

While gentrification is widespread across the massive and varied metropolitan San Francisco Bay Area, its working-class and poor neighborhoods were greatly affected during the 1990s and early 2000s as the dot-com boom hit Silicon Valley, a sub-region around San Jose south of San Francisco. This unprecedented economic boom generated rapid job growth and tight housing markets throughout the Bay Area; placing heavy pressure especially on the relatively few remaining affordable areas, many of which have historically been home to lower income and minority residents.¹³² Both of these factors are the primary drivers of gentrification in the Mission District (see Tables 5 & 6) and other affordable communities in the Bay Area. Kennedy and Leonard offer a descriptive account of this:

An economic tidal wave is washing over the Bay Area, originating in Silicon Valley, but affecting all parts of this massive and varied metropolitan area. The wave has lifted many boats, soaked some

¹³² Kennedy and Leonard, *Dealing with Neighborhood Change*, 42.

longstanding disadvantaged communities, an inundated other towns completely unprepared for the flood.¹³³

The subsequent dot-com bust in 2000 along with the 2001 recession that marked the fourth wave of gentrification in the United States led to significant job loss and an increase in housing vacancies in San Francisco during 2000 to 2010.

Table 5: San Francisco Employment Trends, 1990-2010

	<u>Total # of Jobs</u>	<u>Growth (Loss)</u>	<u>% Change</u>
1990	579,180	26,980	4.9%
2000	643,430	55,250	9.5%
2010	568,730	(65,700)	-10.4%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 6: Housing occupancy for San Francisco & the Mission District, 1990-2010

	<u>Total housing units</u>	<u>Occupied</u>	<u>Vacant</u>
San Francisco (city), 1990	328,471	305,584 (93%)	22,887 (7%)
San Francisco (city), 2000	346,527	329,700 (95%)	16,827 (5%)
San Francisco (city), 2010	376,942	345,811 (91.7%)	31,131 (8.3%)
Mission District, 1990	21,310	19,932 (93.5%)	1,378 (6.5%)
Mission District, 2000	22,424	21,652 (96.6%)	772 (3.4%)
Mission District, 2010	24,848	23,232 (93.5%)	1,616 (6.5%)

Source: U.S. Census

Despite the increase in housing vacancies and slowing housing market during 2000 to 2010, involuntary displacement continues to be a significant issue plaguing the Mission District and San Francisco as a whole. The Ellis Act and

¹³³ Kennedy and Leonard, *Dealing with Neighborhood Change*, 42.

Owner Move-In (OMI) are the most common types of no-fault evictions that occur in San Francisco. Under these types of evictions, a landlord can legally evict a tenant under the law. Enacted by the State in 1986, the Ellis Act allows property owners to remove all their properties from the rental market, and evict all tenants. Under the Ellis Act, owners must give tenants first right of refusal if the unit is returned to the rental market and they must also pay relocation benefits of \$5,101 per tenant up to a maximum of \$15,304 per household and \$3,401 additional for tenants who are elderly, disabled, or have children if evicted.¹³⁴ Owner move-in evictions (OMIs) allow an owner to evict a tenant if the owner resides in the building for 36 months following the eviction. After this period, the owner can return the unit to the rental market.

Displacement also occurs when residents can no longer afford to live in a gentrifying neighborhood due to rising rents. Rent control is one feature that slows voluntary displacement as it provides some stability to residents in gentrifying neighborhoods by keeping their rent affordable to some extent while the costs of everything else in the neighborhood and city increase. According to the San Francisco Tenants Union, most tenants are covered by rent control, which means that rents can only be raised a certain amount each year.¹³⁵ However, those tenants who are not covered by rent control can have their rent increased to any amount at any time as long as there is a proper 30- or 60-day

¹³⁴ San Francisco Tenants Union, "Ellis Act Evictions," last modified May 2014, <http://www.sftu.org/ellis.html>.

¹³⁵ San Francisco Tenants Union, "Rent Control Coverage & Rent Increases," last modified May 2014, <http://www.sftu.org/rentcontrol.html>.

notice.¹³⁶ A tenant is not covered if he/she falls into one of four major exceptions: 1) He/she lives in a building constructed after June of 1979 – “new construction exemption,” 2) He/she lives in subsidized housing, such as HUD housing projects, 3) He/she lives in a dormitory, monastery, nunnery, etc., and 4) He/she lives in a residential hotel and has less than 28 days of continuous tenancy.¹³⁷ For a tenant living in either a single family home or a condominium in which he/she (and his/her roommates) moved in on or after January 1, 1996, he/she has limited coverage and does not have full rent control protection as these types of units do not have limits on rent increases, but do have “just cause” eviction protection.¹³⁸ Under the rent control law, “there is no limit on the amount of rent a landlord may first charge the tenant when entering a vacant unit.”¹³⁹ Effective March 1, 2014 through February 28, 2015, the allowable annual rent increase amount is 1.0% of the tenant's base rent.¹⁴⁰ Unfortunately, even residents who are covered under rent control are also vulnerable to involuntary displacement.

Recently, San Francisco has become a victim of unprecedented hyper-gentrification and urban renewal as gentrified areas are being re-gentrified and rents have skyrocketed. This is due in part to huge job growth in the technology sector, which has outpaced the traditional industry hub of Silicon Valley in job

¹³⁶ San Francisco Tenants Union, “Rent Control Coverage & Rent Increases,” last modified May 2014, <http://www.sftu.org/rentcontrol.html>.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ City and County of San Francisco Rent Board, “Topic No. 051: This Year's Annual Allowable Increase,” last modified December 2013, <http://www.sfrb.org/index.aspx?page=954>.

¹⁴⁰ City and County of San Francisco Rent Board, “Annual Allowable Increases: 1982-Present,” last modified December 2013, <http://www.sfrb.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=1939>.

creation. There was a 57 percent growth in technology jobs from 2010 to 2013 in San Francisco, while Santa Clara County, home to Apple Inc. and Google Inc., only saw job increases of 14 percent.¹⁴¹ While it was common for young entrepreneurs and workers to prefer living in the city for its amenities and affordable housing and commuting to Silicon Valley, the new trend shows them opting to avoid the commute and stay in the city altogether to be closer to their clients. In response, more technology companies are opening offices in San Francisco to cater to young job seekers attracted to an urban lifestyle; thus, making the demand for affordable urban housing more of an issue.

The Mission District

The Mission District or the Mission is located in a valley that is surrounded by Twin Peaks, Diamond Heights, Bernal Heights, and Portrero Hill (see Figure 8). It is bounded on the north by Market Street and U.S. Highway 101, which also extends along the east, Cesar Chavez Street on the South, and Sanchez and Dolores Streets on the west. Mission Street is the main thoroughfare of the neighborhood and it runs north-south across the city, connecting the city's southern border with the northeast waterfront (see Figure 9). Due to its location, the area gets a lot of sun and is buffered from ocean winds and fog, allowing it to have some of the best climate in the city, which is one reason why it is a

¹⁴¹ Alison Vekshin, "San Francisco Beating Silicon Valley With Growth in Jobs," *Bloomberg*, March 25, 2014, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-03-25/san-francisco-beating-silicon-valley-with-growth-in-jobs.html>.

popular destination for visitors and attracts newcomers. Another reason for its popularity is the access to public transportation, with two subway (BART) stations along Mission Street, and close proximity to City Hall (one stop) and the Financial District (three stops).¹⁴² Additionally, there is also easy access to major freeways to get to Silicon Valley and popular destinations in the city, including downtown and the waterfront. Just as San Francisco is a continuous gateway for foreign immigrants, the Mission is still a popular reception area for Latin and Central Americans.

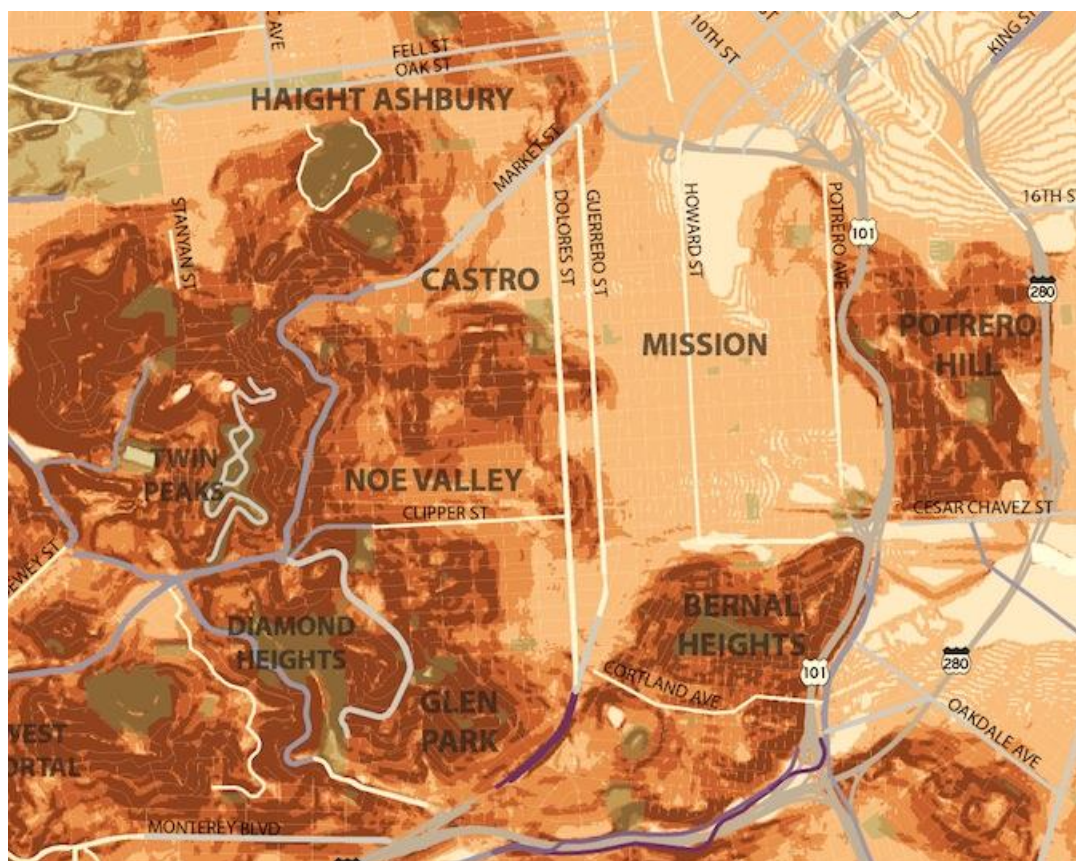


Figure 8: Map of the Hills Surrounding the Mission District

Source: <http://groups.ischool.berkeley.edu/mentalmaps/img/barriers.png> (Modified by Author)

¹⁴² Kennedy and Leonard, *Dealing with Neighborhood Change*, 45.

The neighborhood is often considered the “heart of San Francisco” for several reasons. It is the oldest settled area in the city and has developed into a semi-independent “city within a city” with its own cultural and architectural history.¹⁴³ The architecture in the Mission is distinctive and includes Victorian row houses and duplexes in the Italianate, Stick-style, and Queen Anne styles. Not until recently has the Mission District become the center of Latino culture and an incubator for counterculture and bohemia in San Francisco.¹⁴⁴

The Mission District can be divided into three distinct morphological zones¹⁴⁵ (see Figure 10):

1. The Mission Core: located on the district's southeast side; bounded by 17th Street, the U.S. Highway 101, Cesar Chavez Street, and Valencia Street; roughly coincides with the contemporary Hispanic *barrio*; high Hispanic concentration.
 - Census tracts for the Mission Core: 208, 209, 228, and 229
2. The North Mission: located in the northern region; bounded by Valencia Street and 17th Street; composed of industrial warehouses, live/work lofts; early receiving area for Hispanics, Asians, and alternative life-style groups; low Hispanic concentration.
 - Census tracts for the North Mission: 177 and 201

¹⁴³ City and County of San Francisco Planning Department. *City Within a City: Historic Context Statement for San Francisco's Mission District* (November 2007), 1.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 132-136.

3. The West Mission: located on the western side between Valencia and Dolores Streets; an upscale area that has witnessed the most physical renovation; receiving area for young, affluent Whites; low Hispanic concentration.
 - Census tracts for the West Mission: 202, 207, and 210

* See Appendix D, Figure 1 for a map of the census tracts.

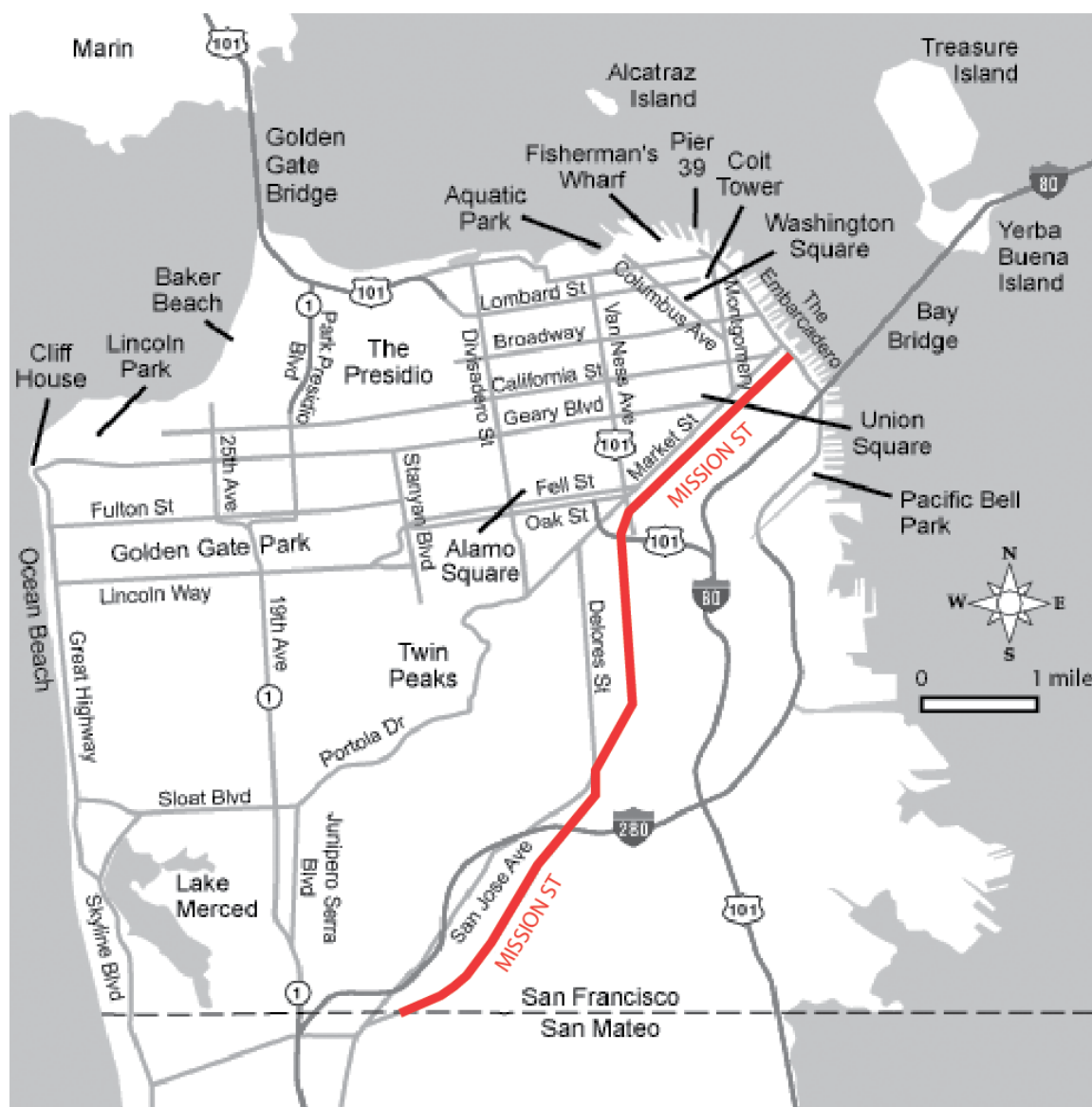


Figure 9: Map of Mission Street in San Francisco

Source: http://www.erate.com/images/san_sanfrancisco_mortgage_map.gif (Modified by Author)

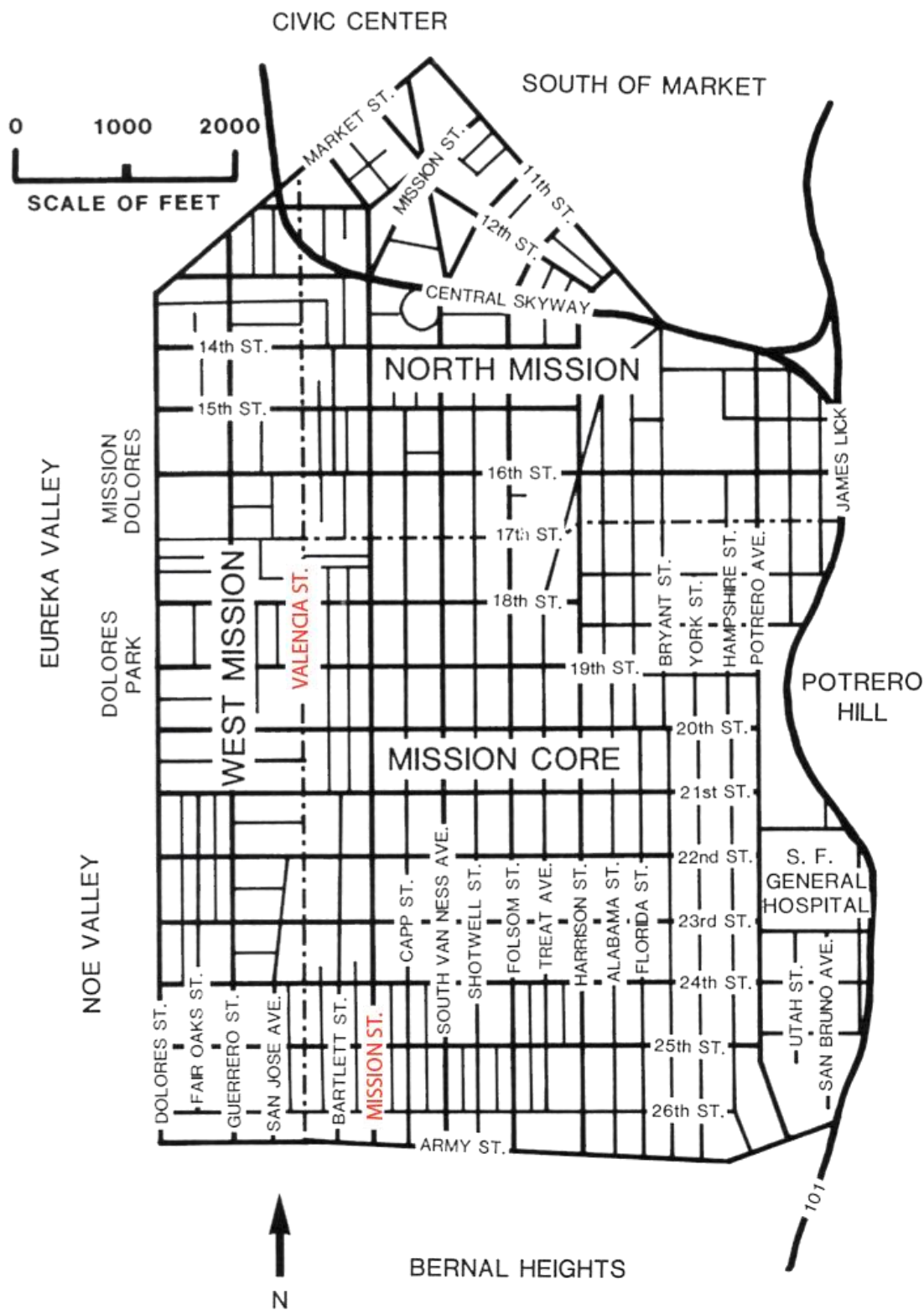


Figure 10: Map of Mission District Streets and Zones
Source: Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 134. (Modified by Author)

History of Settlement and Spatial Structure

The Mission District has a long history of ethnic succession. The vibrant history of the area now known as the Mission District began when the Yelamu Indians and Spanish missionaries first inhabited the region during the late eighteenth century. Several buildings were constructed during this time including Mission San Francisco de Asis or Mission Dolores, the oldest surviving structure in San Francisco. Large numbers of Irish, Italian, and German working-class immigrants moved into North Mission, the industrial area of the district, during European settlement of the city in the nineteenth and twentieth century.

By 1890, a basic land-use pattern was established and most of the Mission District area was developed with mixed-use buildings lining Mission, 16th, and Valencia Streets, and single- and multi-family residences for middle-class families were built throughout the neighborhood, except in the district's northeast industrial corner.¹⁴⁶ The 1906 earthquake and subsequent fires led to two distinctive residential landscapes in the Mission: post- and pre-disaster residential architecture. Buildings in North Mission were destroyed and were rebuilt in their entirety; thus, the area contains a significant concentration of post-disaster architecture built during the later twentieth century.¹⁴⁷ In contrast, buildings in the southern part of the Mission were spared and the area maintained a significant concentration of pre-disaster architecture from the late nineteenth

¹⁴⁶ Simon Velasquez Alejandrino, "Gentrification in San Francisco's Mission District: Indicators and Policy Recommendations," *Mission Economic Development Association Report*, Summer 2000, 16.

¹⁴⁷ City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, *City Within a City*, 3.

century and early twentieth century.¹⁴⁸ The earthquake also prompted an increase in development and settlement as displaced businesses and residents moved into the area, making Mission Street a major commercial thoroughfare of the city. Parallel to Mission Street on the west, Valencia Street became a secondary commercial corridor that was historically oriented towards services, industry, and retail.¹⁴⁹ Light industry, such as breweries, bakeries, and dairies, increased in the northeast part of the neighborhood during the rebuilding of the city after the earthquake.¹⁵⁰

Foreign immigration slowed briefly during World War I and continued to decline during the 1920s. In 1926, the Polish community of San Francisco established itself in the area with the conversion of an existing church into "Dom Polski" or Polish Home to house the Polish Club of San Francisco. Thus, the Mission District became an area of secondary ethnic settlement where immigrants could establish familial roots after they had already arrived in the city.¹⁵¹ During the interwar period, mostly increasingly acculturated European ethnic groups inhabited the neighborhood. However, the Mission District was becoming, according to Godfrey, "a low-income and increasingly dilapidated residential area of San Francisco."¹⁵²

Given the general downward filtration of the housing stock, the neighborhood was ready for the process of ethnic succession and followed the

¹⁴⁸ City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, *City Within a City*, 3.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Bernadette C. Hooper, *Images of America: San Francisco's Mission District* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006): 8.

¹⁵¹ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 147.

¹⁵² Ibid.

life-cycle of ethnic communities set forth by Godfrey. This signaled the morphogenesis of a Hispanic *Barrio* in the Mission Core.

The Hispanic *Barrio*

A brief overview of Godfrey's stages of ethnic succession in the Mission District includes: 1930s-1940s – Hispanic *penetration*, 1950s – ethnic *invasion*, 1960s – *consolidation*¹⁵³ (see Figure 11). The *initial migrant penetration* occurred as a small number of Mexican residents, displaced from the “Mexican Barrio” on Rincon Hill due to the construction of the Bay Bridge, began pouring into the area during the 1930s-1940s. This group settled in the North Mission and grew steadily, opening the door for the subsequent *minority invasion* with the influx of Central American immigrants into the neighborhood during the 1950s. The neighborhood underwent many changes during the post-war years due to the wartime housing shortage. Federal housing subsidies in the 1950s and 1960s initiated White flight to the suburbs and caused the older groups to steadily depart the neighborhood, being replaced by the Central American immigrants. Although this group originally settled in the North Mission, they continued a southward migration into the Mission Core.¹⁵⁴ The Mission underwent *ethnic consolidation* as the influx of Central American immigrants caused the Central

¹⁵³ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 150.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

American population to outnumber the Mexican population, giving the neighborhood its Latin character as the ethnic subculture intensified.¹⁵⁵

Similar to other low-income minority neighborhoods, the Mission was plagued with systematic disinvestment and discrimination, which led to poverty, crime, and a deteriorating housing stock by the late 1960s. However, local community groups successfully resisted the threats of government-led “urban renewal” efforts. The Hispanic population continued to increase, reaching over sixty-percent in the neighborhood by the 1980s.¹⁵⁶ This increase was due to a larger influx of immigrants and refugees from Central and South America who settled in the Mission after fleeing civil wars and political instability during the 1980s and 1990s. These immigrants brought with them Central American banks and companies that established themselves on Mission Street. A network of immigrant services, community organizations, and local businesses were established to accommodate the fast growing Latino community.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 258.

¹⁵⁶ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 153.

¹⁵⁷ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 258.

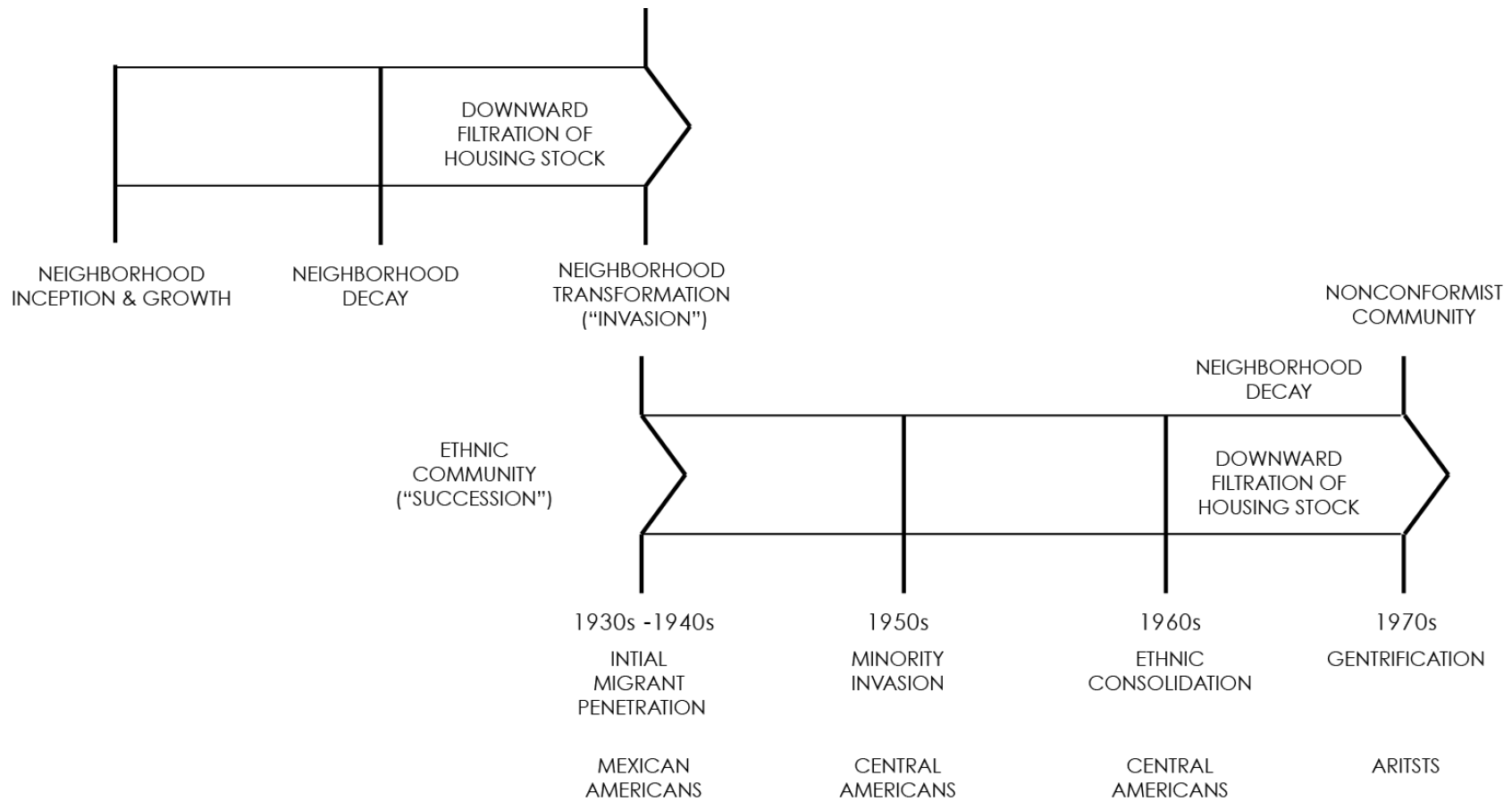


Figure 11: Diagram of Formation of the Hispanic *Barrio* in San Francisco
 Source: Godfrey, 1988, 150. (Diagram by Author)

As noted by Godfrey, the next phase of urban morphogenesis can vary for ethnic communities after a neighborhood undergoes *ethnic consolidation*. There are three possible paths of neighborhood transformation that ethnic communities can follow: 1) the area can either repeat a new process of ethnic succession, 2) the area can undergo gentrification, or 3) the area can evolve into a less ethnic but still working-class area.¹⁵⁸ In the case of the Mission District, the neighborhood underwent gentrification beginning during the 1970s with artists in North Mission, which peaked in the 1990s and intensified in the 2000s with yuppies, and continues into the 2010s with contemporary hipsters.

Before examining the gentrification of the Mission District, it is necessary to understand the varying characteristics and motivations of hipsters. As noted earlier in the first chapter, the broadening scope of gentrification has led to new spatial forms and new gentrifier types, such as the Black middle class. Yuppies or young urban professionals are considered the typical type of gentrifier as they are often identified as such throughout the literature and discourse. The following chapter describes hipsters and their subculture while revealing a subtype, the “hipster wannabe.”

¹⁵⁸ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 48.

CHAPTER 4

The Hipster Subculture

In the first chapter, the two perspectives, geographical/spatial (urban morphogenesis) and sociology (expression of authenticity), were introduced and explained. It is through these perspectives that the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers in the Mission District will be examined to determine whether the group facilitates or hinders the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers living in the gentrifying neighborhood.

As discussed in the preceding chapter, detailed descriptions of San Francisco and the Mission District were presented to provide social and geographical context to the study. Further discussion on the Mission District described its geographical characteristics including its three morphological zones as well as the history of its initial settlement and subsequent growth, and the conception of the Hispanic *Barrio* through Godfrey's stages of ethnic succession.

At this point, now that the two perspectives and context have been laid out, it is necessary to examine the characteristics and ideology of hipsters and their subculture. This chapter provides a detailed description of hipsters and hipster subculture, focusing on their lifestyle and influence as gentrifiers. The emergence of "hipster wannabes" is also discussed.

Who are the Hipsters and the Hipster Wannabes?

Hipsters live in the now; they seek to be the first to uncover or create obscure cultural influences and then they turn them into the latest trend. Though they take on many trends and personas, hipsters have one goal: to embrace their own individuality while rejecting the cookie-cutter consumer culture that overwhelms society today.¹⁵⁹ – Amanda Nordby

The metamorphosis of the “hipster” – if it is real – involves a word that has been used for insult and abuse gaining a neutral or even positive estimation in the culture. It accompanies the sense that hipster fashion has entered the mainstream as a set of style accessories repackaged for purchase in shopping malls across America, but also that the deeper social impulses that helped create the hipster – as well as the vitally necessary impulses to impugn hipsters – have gone global, mushrooming in Europe and Latin America, too.¹⁶⁰ – Mark Grief

The hipster was originally a Black subcultural figure of the late 1940s, but later became a White subcultural figure of the 1950s. Hipsterism is influenced by the past countercultures of the post-WWII period, such as the beatnik, hippie, punk, and grunge cultures. Aspects of the beatnik culture from the early 1950s that are so prevalent in hipster culture today are the rejection of mainstream culture and materialism as well as the celebration of nonconformity and creativity. As noted in the quote from Amanda Nordby, hipsters embrace their own individuality by uncovering or creating obscure cultural influences. The hipster's appearance is framed around a process of discovering, filtering, and

¹⁵⁹ Amanda Nordby, “What Is The Hipster?,” *Spectrum*, 25th edition. St. Mary's College (2013): 52.

¹⁶⁰ Mark Grief, Preface to *What Was the Hipster?: A Sociological Investigation*, eds. Mark Grief, Kathleen Ross, and Dayna Tortorici (New York: n+1 Foundation, 2010), viii-ix.

assessing obscure cultural products that is motivated by “the desire to create a fashionably rebellious image rather than by genuine radicalism.”¹⁶¹

The use of the term “hipster” is pejorative in the sense that it is not a term that people apply to themselves because, as author Mark Grief explains, it identifies “a subculture of people who are already dominant.”¹⁶² The hipster aligns oneself both with “rebel subculture *and* with the dominant class.”¹⁶³ Within the hipster identity is the implicit membership in the middle to upper class because it requires both time and money to create the image of stylistic deviance.¹⁶⁴ Robert Lanham, author of *The Hipster Handbook*, a humorous profile of hipsters, notes that putting a label on oneself hinders efforts to be different,¹⁶⁵ offering another explanation as to why “hipsters will never admit to being hipsters.”¹⁶⁶ Sociologist and post-subcultural theorist, David Muggleton, offers another explanation for the aversion of group identity and argues that “group identifications are therefore resisted because they carry connotations of collective conformity, suggesting a concomitant loss of individuality that renders their members inauthentic.”¹⁶⁷

While there have been few books published to date that focus solely on contemporary hipsters and their subculture, a majority of them approach the topic using humor as a means to poke fun at them. However, the book titled,

¹⁶¹ Kelsey Henke, “Postmodern Authenticity and the Hipster Identity,” *Forbes and Fifth 3* (Spring 2013): 117-118.

¹⁶² Mark Grief, “Positions,” in *What Was the Hipster?: A Sociological Investigation*, eds. Mark Grief, Kathleen Ross, and Dayna Tortorici (New York: n+1 Foundation, 2010): 9.

¹⁶³ Grief, “Positions,” 9.

¹⁶⁴ Henke, “Postmodern Authenticity,” 122.

¹⁶⁵ Robert Lanham, *The Hipster Handbook* (New York: Anchor Books, 2003), 13.

¹⁶⁶ Nordby, “What Is The Hipster?,” 53.

¹⁶⁷ David Muggleton, *Inside Subculture* (New York: Oxford International Publishers, 2000), 78.

What Was the Hipster?: A Sociological Investigation, provides an analysis of the subcultural formation of a cultural phenomenon. Although not entirely scholarly, it includes transcripts from a symposium and discussion centered on the question, "What Was the Hipster?" as well as the papers offered for discussion, two extensive accounts of the event and its initial reception, responses to the transcripts from commentators, and brief essays on particular sub-topics. From a certain remove, it offers a detailed account of the hipster phenomenon. Mark Greif, co-editor of the previously mentioned book, has this to say about the hipster:

The hipster represents what can happen to middle class whites, particularly, and to all elites, generally, when they focus on the struggles for their own pleasures and luxuries – seeing these as daring and confrontational – rather than asking what makes their sort of people entitled to them, who else suffers for their pleasures, and where their 'rebellion' adjoins social struggles that should obligate anybody who hates authority.¹⁶⁸

This description suggests that hipsters, like elites, are pretentious, with no concern for anyone else but themselves.

According to author R. Jay Magill, the contemporary hipster subculture burst onto the scene in the late 1990s and flourished until around 2007.¹⁶⁹ However, some authors, like Greif, pinpoint it to exactly 1999. With its emergence in 1999, Greif notes that the contemporary hipster has two phases of existence: the first phase (1999-2003) was short, but robust, in that it set the stage for increasing diffusion and durability in the ongoing second phase (2003-present).¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ Greif, Preface to *What Was the Hipster?*, xvi-xvii.

¹⁶⁹ Ronald J. Magill, *Sincerity* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012), 197.

¹⁷⁰ Greif, "Positions," 4.

The contemporary hipster is strongly associated with neighborhoods in U.S. cities that “represented either new zones of White recolonization of ethnic neighborhoods or subcolonies of established bohemian neighborhoods,”¹⁷¹ such as Williamsburg in Brooklyn, New York, where the residents that were displaced were Hispanic and Jewish.

Magill explains that traditional hipsters were “college-educated young adults who resisted entering the traditional workforce after their studies and instead adhered to the old Romantic notion that commercialism was bad for the soul.”¹⁷² However, at some point, their decision not to partake in economic-based competition caused them to get sidelined into a “race far more subtle: the race to cool.”¹⁷³ This shifted their mentality towards one that favored seeking out authenticity; thus, establishing their need for a more authentic kind of life. Sociologist Bjørn Schiermer notes that hipsters’ desire for authentic creations of others provides them with an openness that has the ability to transcend barriers of culture, generations, and class:

Hipster culture’s quest for the authentic is so strong that it may transcend usual cultural borders, generational gaps and social distinctions in search for genuine cultural expressions. Running counter to the ironic strain, hipster culture is characterized by a hitherto unseen openness for the authentic creations of others.¹⁷⁴

In their search for authenticity, hipsters reject name brands in favor of creating their own image through “their own perception of the coolness of off-

¹⁷¹ Grief, “Positions,” 6.

¹⁷² Magill, *Sincerity*, 197.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 198.

¹⁷⁴ Bjørn Schiermer, “Late-Modern Hipsters: New Tendencies in Popular Culture,” *Acta Sociologica* 57, no. 2 (May 2014): 179.

brand names."¹⁷⁵ Self-expression is therefore manifested in their quest for self-discovery and creative individual style. Contradictory to the initial resistance towards capitalist commercialism, hipster culture uses the very thing it once denied as the primary means of self-expression, consumerism. Writer Douglas Haddow notes that hipsters are connected through "a global network of blogs and shops that push forth a global vision of fashion-informed aesthetics,"¹⁷⁶

Hipsters share, display, and are defined by an aesthetic of "ironically-presented low cultural symbols and appropriated countercultural fashions."¹⁷⁷ However, this aesthetic does not reflect the hipster's high socio-economic status. Instead, hipsters choose to borrow material items from marginalized populations whose use was "historically limited to a distinct group of consumers."¹⁷⁸ The trend of adopting symbols from another class or minority is, as cultural commenters suggest, "motivated by the aspiration to rebel against their own class or to achieve coolness only attainable through the gritty realism of these groups."¹⁷⁹ This artificial appropriation of different styles from different eras represents hipsterism as "a culture lost in the superficiality of its past and unable to create any new meaning."¹⁸⁰ In this sense, hipsters have lost their appreciation for the search for self-identity and true authenticity. Yet, the hipster's search for novelty may therefore be "a source of symbolic capital in its own right, showing a

¹⁷⁵ Nordby, "What Is The Hipster?," 57.

¹⁷⁶ Douglas Haddow, "Hipster: The Dead End of Western Civilization," *Adbusters Magazine*, July 29, 2008, <https://www.adbusters.org/magazine/79/hipster.html>.

¹⁷⁷ Henke, "Postmodern Authenticity," 117.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ Haddow, "Hipster."

person's ability to spot or create trends and thereby demonstrate independent style."¹⁸¹ Furthermore, their openness and tolerance towards all kinds of styles and a diverse range of people can be seen as a source of cultural capital, which is "understood not only as knowledge of highbrow culture or the crossing of cultural boundaries, but also as familiarity with trendy cultural products."¹⁸²

Unfortunately, the hipster's primary goal of achieving individuality has become cheapened by the ever-increasing popularity of hipsterism in mainstream society. Part of the irony is that the hipster's attempt to be "cool" while staying under the radar has backfired because that whole notion has in of itself become cool. Hipster wannabes have taken hipsterism to the next level by taking what was a solitary act of finding individuality to a wider audience and making it a collective act of conformity. Writer Kelsey Henke explains that, "Individuals who consciously try to distance themselves with a nonconformist lifestyle find themselves unable to avoid popular culture."¹⁸³ Hipsterism has transformed from a means of expressing individual authenticity into a mass consumer trend that has been pervasive on the Internet and is marketed and sold as part of today's pop culture. The technology of the information age allows anyone easy access to its style influences, making it easier to participate in the counterculture and ensuring its longevity.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ Janna Michael, "It's Really Not Hip to be a Hipster: Negotiating Trends and Authenticity in the Cultural Field," *Journal of Consumer Culture* (Prepublished June 25, 2013): 4-5.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁸³ Henke, "Postmodern Authenticity," 125.

¹⁸⁴ Nordby, "What Is The Hipster?," 55.

Since it is hipster wannabes who are responsible for making hipsterism popular, they are the target of marketing campaigns by companies that make the entire hipster aesthetic available to “anyone willing to pay top dollar to imitate the counterculture.”¹⁸⁵ “Hipster” stores offer clothing, shoes, accessories, housewares, art, and music that mimic the quirky, kitschy, independent lifestyle of the hipster. Nordby notes the appeal of “hipster” stores:

Stores like Urban Outfitters are appealing because they offer consumers an opportunity to try hipster styles without the long process of finding their own in discount stores. It also offers them the opportunity to be ‘hip’ without the risk of being too different than others.¹⁸⁶

Thus, the hipster imitator or “wannabe” can be characterized as “one who adopts hipster styles without adopting any of the basic values of hipsterism, including frugality and creative originality.”¹⁸⁷ The hipster wannabes in contrast to true hipsters have a greater presence in society because they self-identify as hipsters.¹⁸⁸ Therefore, what is being seen today is more likely than not the hipster wannabe, which is a false image of what the hipster actually represents.

The anti-hipster movement is primarily driven by society's disdain towards the hipster's widespread presence in everyday life. This is due in part to society's inability to distinguish between true hipsters and their imitators; thus, using the image of overspending bourgeoisie youth as the basis of their perceptions. The negative stereotypes about hipsters cheapen true hipsterism, create hipster hatred, and ignore their ideologies. Consequently, the hipster becomes a

¹⁸⁵ Nordby, “What Is The Hipster?,” 59.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 59-60.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 58.

multifaceted social character whose ideologies and behaviors become tangled with irony, cynicism, and contradiction.

Although true hipsters and hipster wannabes share many characteristics, one key difference is the wannabes' high level of consumption. While both groups use consumerism as a means of self-expression through fashion, true hipsters are typically frugal and prefer to shop at thrift stores, and wannabes are generally excessive and prefer to shop at high-end boutiques and hipster stores. Another key difference is that once the trends they discover or create become widely known, true hipsters will quickly dismiss them in search for new ones while the hipster wannabes will continue to perpetuate their popularity. Due to this, both true hipsters and hipster wannabes can be seen as trendsetters who are harshly criticized and tend to be discarded for what some perceive as being shallow and fake, or inauthentic. This perception lends to the anti-hipster movement and ongoing "hipster bashing." However, researcher Janna Michael notes that "There is a subtle yet crucial distinction between setting a trend and following it. ... A trendsetter may well be authentic, but following trends – which is the more common way of being trendy – seems to be at odds with authenticity."¹⁸⁹ While the hipster subculture is complicated, a summary of the similarities and differences between true hipsters and hipster wannabes is presented in [Table 7](#).

True hipsters can be seen as being authentic in that they create and discover new trends, but inauthentic because of their reuse of cultural objects

¹⁸⁹ Michael, "It's Really Not Hip," 5.

from the past and their inability to maintain one uniform identity, moving from one to the next. Yet, it could be said that their need for constant style shifts is due in part to the unwanted attention that wannabes bring to their subculture. Michael highlights that, "Trends are in a reciprocal relation with a longing for individuality, self-expression and legitimization of one's own personal style."¹⁹⁰ Without the unwavering popularity towards hipsterism that the wannabes create and perpetuate, true hipsters might actually be able to stop changing themselves every time their styles and personas become popular, and find their own authentic individuality away from the public, independent of peer-groups or conventions. It is possible to create genuine individual expression from the combination of authentic and inauthentic reuse of past cultural objects and styles.

Hipster wannabes, on the other hand, may always be considered inauthentic because they mimic true hipster styles and rarely attempt to find their own. They are trendsetters in that they follow hipster trends closely and when new ones arise, they are the first to exploit them to mainstream popular culture as if they were the ones that uncovered or created them. In this case, they are trendy because they follow the trends of hipsters, but are also inauthentic because they do so. The only way for hipster wannabes to believe that they are living an authentic lifestyle is to keep buying into the trends they made popular and to keep exploiting hipster trends as their own in order to compensate for their inauthenticity. By acting as though they discovered or

¹⁹⁰ Michael, "It's Really Not Hip," 5.

created a new trend, hipster wannabes are validating their so-called attempt to have original ideas and be authentic. In this sense, hipster wannabes as excessive cultural consumers rich in cultural capital, should be more easily perceived as being authentic because “they are more likely to appear natural and at ease within the post-industrial consumer society. They seem to comprehend commodities, signs and the arts despite the ever accelerating pace with which trends follow one another in basically all fields of everyday life.”¹⁹¹ Yet, they overcompensate by being too hip and trying too hard to fit in by buying mass-produced authenticity, which again indicates a lack of personality and individual taste, or inauthenticity.

As gentrifiers, hipster wannabes share similar characteristics with Brown-Saracino's social homesteaders. Like the homesteaders, the hipster wannabes desire to live in authentic space and affordable housing for the middle class, but this desire can be seen as an attempt to regain some form of authenticity. Regardless of whether or not their intention is to improve the space through a mixture of high culture and certain original features, the hipster wannabes are imposing their consumption-based culture on these neighborhoods and in essence, changing the character and the urban fabric of these areas. Brown-Saracino writes that for homesteaders, their motivations for relocation vary, but argues, “Once in a place, they celebrate its characteristics, ranging from landscape to social diversity writ large,”¹⁹² and the same can be said about

¹⁹¹ Michael, “It's Really Not Hip,” 6.

¹⁹² Brown-Saracino, *A Neighborhood That Never Changes*, 10.

hipster wannabes as well. The appreciation that homesteaders have for the diversity that old-timers provide as objects of symbolic preservation falls in line with the similar appreciation that hipster wannabes have for the low cultural symbols and material items they borrowed from marginalized populations as a means of achieving coolness. In both instances, the homesteaders and the hipster wannabes are attempting to obtain a sense of authenticity that is not their own.

In this sense, the hipster wannabes are imposing their notions of authenticity (consumption), which is really centered around inauthenticity (imitated hipster trends), on neighborhoods and gentrifying them into inauthentic spaces of consumption. Accordingly, these neighborhoods reach the tipping point and ultimately undergo what Zukin calls a "crisis of authenticity" where there is a loss of cultural vitality and the conspicuous display of wealth or opulence. The hipster wannabes, as newcomers and gentrifiers, increase their power over space, consumption, and perceived authenticity by promoting retail gentrification and displacing longtime residents and retail establishments.

Unfortunately, the hipster neighborhoods across the United States more likely than not are filled with hipster wannabes and the true hipsters have probably moved on to other neighborhoods that have not been tainted by the fakeness of the so-called hipsters. This is the case in the Mission District.

Table 7: Summary of Similarities and Differences Between Hipsters and Hipster Wannabes

Similarities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration of nonconformity and creativity • Embrace their own individuality • Seek out authenticity; need for a more authentic kind of life • Implicit membership in the dominant class (middle to upper class) • The desire to create a fashionably rebellious image; first to uncover or create obscure cultural influences • Openness and tolerance towards all kinds of styles and a diverse range of people can be seen as a source of cultural capital • Share, display, and are defined by an aesthetic of ironically-presented low cultural symbols and appropriated countercultural fashions • Use of consumerism as the primary means of self-expression
Differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Hipsters</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aversion to labeling oneself as a hipster ○ Prefer to stay under the radar ○ Quirky, kitschy, independent lifestyle ○ Rejection of name brands in favor of the coolness of off-brand names ○ Favor thrift stores and vintage clothing ○ Search for novelty can be seen as a source of symbolic capital • <u>Hipster Wannabes</u> (diverge from hipster ideology) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-identify as hipsters ○ Prefer to be a part of mainstream pop culture ○ Adopts true hipster style without adopting hipster ideology of frugality and creative originality ○ Transform hipsterism (hipster image/fashion) into a mass consumer trend that is marketed and sold as part of today's pop culture ○ Favor high-end boutiques; heavily tied to material and cultural consumption

Sources: Data from Nordby (2013); Grief, Ross, and Tortorici, eds. (2010); Henke (2013); Magill (2012); Lanham (2013); Michael (2013); Schiermer (2014).

CHAPTER 5

Gentrification in the Mission

Now that the two perspectives (geographic/spatial and sociological), context (San Francisco and the Mission District), and agents (hipsters/hipster wannabes) are laid out, it is necessary to examine the gentrification of the Mission District. The growth and transformation of the Mission District has followed an urban morphogenetic sequence of neighborhood change in three instances: 1) becoming a predominantly Latino community through ethnic succession, 2) gentrification by artists in the 1970s and yuppies during the 1980s to 2000s, and most recently, 3) gentrification by contemporary hipsters and hipster wannabes in the 2010s.

Due to the timing of Godfrey's research (1980s) on the Mission District, he only described its morphogenesis into an ethnic community. However, it has subsequently been subject to the gentrification life-cycle of a nonconformist community. This exclusion of the Mission District's gentrification may be due in part to the process being its early stages and neighborhood change was not as prominent then as it was in the Haight-Ashbury District. In a more recent anthology (2004) on the Hispanic/Latino population in the United States, he authored a chapter on the Mission District that examines how the area has been contested, transformed, and reinvigorated by community action in spite of intense pressures of gentrification and urban renewal. While gentrification is reviewed, it is not in the urban morphogenesis context.

Continuing his earlier line of research, this chapter discusses the process of gentrification in the Mission District as it occurred in two consecutive, but distinct

periods. It outlines each period using the life-cycle of nonconformist communities described by Godfrey.

Figure 12 shows a diagram of the two periods and their stages. Gentrification in the Mission first began during the 1970s following *ethnic consolidation* by Central Americans in the 1960s and subsequent neighborhood decay due to disinvestment by the late 1960s. The downward filtration of housing stock offered affordable housing to artists and yuppies who settled in the neighborhood during the first wave of gentrification. The second wave can be seen as a continuation of the previous wave including the arrival of hipsters in the 2010s and the current intensification of *bourgeoisie consolidation* by hipster wannabes. While both waves of gentrification included changes to the residential and retail landscape, the second wave is described with an emphasis on commercial gentrification as it is linked to the consumption preferences of hipster wannabes.

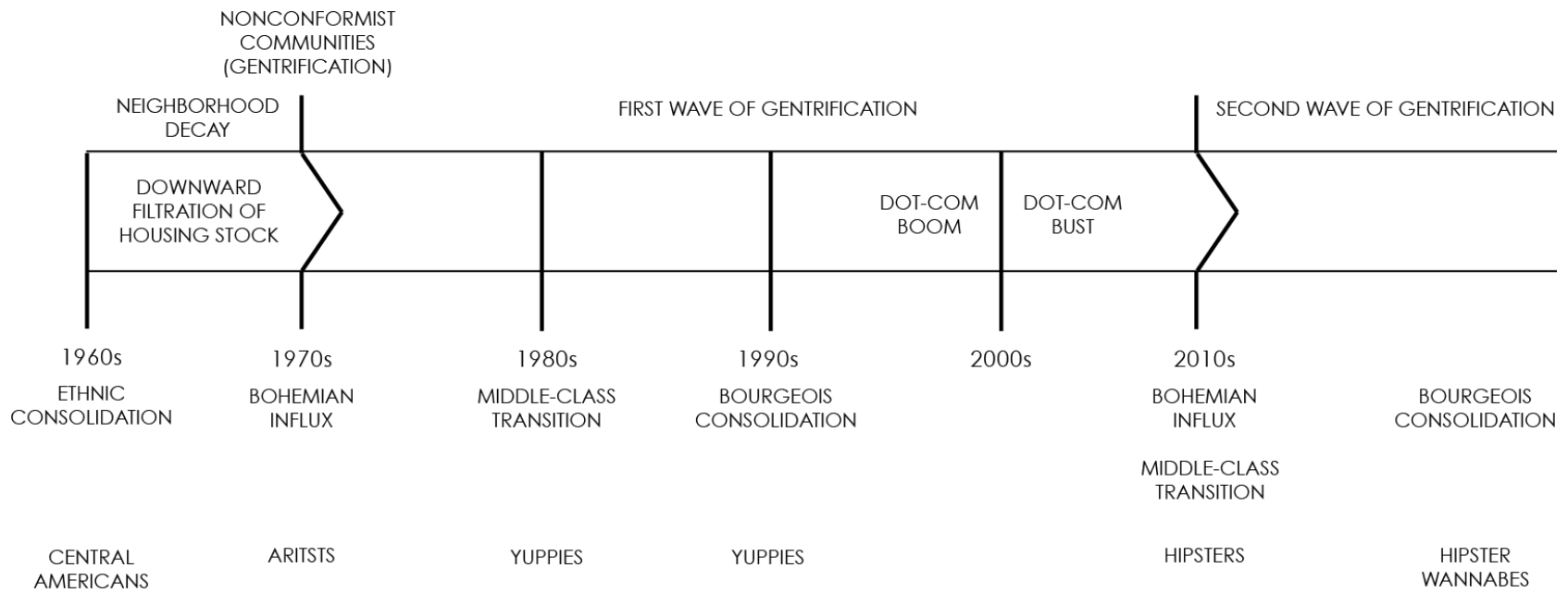


Figure 12: Diagram of Gentrification of the Mission District

Source: Godfrey, 1988, 48-9. (Diagram by Author)

First Wave: Influx of Artists and Yuppies

The first *bohemian influx* occurred when artists were attracted to the cheap studio and warehouse space in the northeast industrial corner of the Mission District and began developing a community in that area during the 1970s.¹⁹³ Their quest for urban artistic expression stemmed from the counter-culture movement in the 1960s. These “urban pioneers” favored the neighborhood's charm. There was little displacement. Their presence signaled to those who were once hesitant about the safety and run-down appearance of the Mission District that the area is attractive and livable, leading to more people hearing about the neighborhood and migrating there.

The *middle-class transition* began in the 1980s when the neighborhood saw the first signs of young urban professionals settling in the area. These early yuppie newcomers, fresh to the Mission or to San Francisco, “discovered the good weather, reasonable rents (if you lived with several friends), and the open-minded spirit of the neighborhood.”¹⁹⁴ While their lifestyle mixed with the existing culture, their arrival also marked an increased demand for new entertainment amenities, such as movie theaters, restaurants, bookstores, and nightlife. Similar to the previous stage, the yuppie presence signaled to those who were still hesitant about the safety and run-down appearance of the Mission District that the area was becoming more attractive and more livable, leading to a large influx of yuppies.

¹⁹³ Lees, Slater, and Wylie, *Gentrification*, 259.

¹⁹⁴ Hooper, *Images of America*, 8.

Bourgeoisie consolidation occurred during the dot-com boom in the 1990s as large numbers of young urban professionals moved into the area. The Mission has many qualities that attracted these newcomers, such as its warmer and sunnier climate, proximity to city hall and the financial district, easy access to major freeways, and affordability compared to other San Francisco neighborhoods. The influx of yuppies into the Mission brought a subsequent demand for adequate housing. Consequently, the massive employment growth in the Bay Area exceeded housing production in the city and only 1 housing unit was created for every 3.14 jobs from 1990 to 2000.¹⁹⁵ According to researcher Nancy Raquel Maribal, more than one thousand Latino families had been displaced by the late 1990s and early 2000 during the height of the dot-com boom.¹⁹⁶ Involuntary displacement of these residents was due in part to evictions from Owner Move-Ins (OMIs) and the Ellis Act.¹⁹⁷

In addition to residents, local-serving businesses in the area also faced displacement as they were subject to commercial gentrification by the incoming dot-com companies and an increasingly hip nightlife scene. With eighty percent of local-serving businesses renting their space, several factors led to their displacement, such as rent increases, new market competition, and inability to adapt to new market opportunities.¹⁹⁸ According to researcher Simon Velasquez Alejandrino, 50 percent of the businesses that existed in 1990 along Valencia

¹⁹⁵ Alejandrino, "Gentrification in San Francisco's Mission District," 14.

¹⁹⁶ Nancy Raquel Mirabal, "Geographies of Displacement: Latina/os, Oral History, and The Politics of Gentrification in San Francisco's Mission District," *The Public Historian* 31, no. 2 (May 2009): 13.

¹⁹⁷ Alejandrino, "Gentrification in San Francisco's Mission District," 20-22.

¹⁹⁸ Kennedy and Leonard, *Dealing with Neighborhood Change*, 45.

Street were gone by 1998.¹⁹⁹ They were mostly local operations that catered to the low-income Latino community. Non-profit organizations and other community institutions in the neighborhood were also disappearing due to the decline of their constituency and eviction pressures. During the height of the dot-com boom, the growing belief was that “the new businesses opening up in parts of the Mission District were symbols of revitalization and renewal.”²⁰⁰

The “live/work” ordinance passed in 1988 opened the door for a construction boom of expensive live-work lofts in the area serving the growing market for upscale housing. They were marketed to young homebuyers and promoted the live/work lifestyle.²⁰¹ Under this ordinance, such buildings are considered as commercial structures that are exempt from city fees and regulations and are allowed in industrial zones.²⁰² With its cheap industrial land, North Mission provided a prime location for these new housing types. The Residential Builders Association (RBA), a major local developer, took advantage of loopholes in the ordinance and built over six hundred of these lofts in the Mission,²⁰³ focusing on vacant lots and especially the conversion of existing buildings.²⁰⁴ Not only were these new residences too expensive for the artists to afford, but they also were being illegally inhabited by the dot-com businesses

¹⁹⁹ Alejandrino, “Gentrification in San Francisco’s Mission District,” 21.

²⁰⁰ Mirabal, “Geographies of Displacement,” 22.

²⁰¹ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 260.

²⁰² Tom Wetzel, “Dot-Com Influx and the Luxury Loft Boom,” last modified 2000, <http://www.uncanny.net/~wetzel/lofts.htm>.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 260.

looking for affordable commercial space.²⁰⁵ Author Rebecca Solnit best describes this situation:

Live/work spaces have become infamous as cheaply built condominiums at sky-high prices almost no artist can afford. From near downtown to the city's poorest southern reaches, these angular modernist structures with glaring walls of glass pop up between industrial buildings, old Victorians and other older buildings, directly displacing numerous small businesses.²⁰⁶

Newcomers saw displacement caused by the dot-com boom as “a necessary part of the economic (re)volution of the Mission District”²⁰⁷ as they only focused on the new housing and amenities made available. Gentrification continued in the Mission District and other neighborhoods in San Francisco regardless of the dot-com bust in 2000 and slowing housing market. Kennedy and Leonard note that, “Twenty-something workers at Silicon Valley firms are much more inclined to live in a dynamic city such as San Francisco than quiet and expensive suburbs near their jobs. Many newcomers in the Mission District are attracted to the cultural diversity there.”²⁰⁸

Hackworth and Smith's second-wave of gentrification not only correlates with Godfrey's gentrification life-cycle, as noted earlier, but also with this initial wave of gentrification in the Mission District when the process was implanted in the previously disinvested central city neighborhood. Similar to the second-wave in New York City described by Hackworth and Smith, the presence of artists and an arts community in North Mission was a key correlate of residential

²⁰⁵ Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*, 261.

²⁰⁶ Rebecca Solnit, *Hollow City: The Siege of San Francisco and the Crisis of American Urbanism* (London: Verso, 2000): 103.

²⁰⁷ Mirabal, “Geographies of Displacement,” 15.

²⁰⁸ Kennedy and Leonard, *Dealing with Neighborhood Change*, 12.

gentrification in the neighborhood. Following the *bohemian influx* of artists, the first wave of gentrification in the Mission also corresponded with Hackworth and Smith's third-wave, as developers began to rework the neighborhood with the support of the state and the passing of the live/work ordinance.

As discussed earlier, the process of gentrification is complex: it varies depending on location and it is always in flux. The next wave of gentrification occurring in the Mission District adds another level of complexity to the situation. Not only can it be seen as an intensified continuation of the first wave, but it also involves a new type of gentrifier: the contemporary nonconformist hipster and its subtype, the hipster wannabe. The next section discusses this current wave of gentrification in the Mission District and examines the roles of the hipster and hipster wannabe as gentrifiers in the morphogenesis of the neighborhood.

Second Wave: Influx of Contemporary Hipsters

In this wave, both the *bohemian influx* and *middle class transition* occurred simultaneously when hipsters began settling primarily in West Mission during the early 2010s. Like the artists of the first wave in the 1970s, they were attracted to the social diversity and cultural character of the Mission District, which complemented their subcultural identification. Since hipsters are more likely to belong to the middle and upper classes, the *middle class transition* is not so much a transition, rather an intensification of middle class settlement in the

neighborhood. The hipster subculture intensified as the presence of hipsters in the neighborhood attracted hipster wannabes to the area. The hipster wannabes brought with them high-end boutiques and restaurants or what Sharon Zukin describes as “boutiquing”²⁰⁹ using new entrepreneurial retail capital and market appeal that aided in *bourgeois consolidation*. Due to their interests in the architectural heritage and historic distinction of the existing architecture of the Mission, the hipster subcultural community has become the revitalizing force leading renovation projects and establishing new businesses in the area.

Although true hipsters and hipster wannabes both favor small boutiques, bookstores, art galleries, and cafes that celebrate the coolness of being authentic by being different, their ideologies diverge in their views on mainstream culture. The true hipster lifestyle, on one hand, opposes the conformity found in corporate culture and mass-produced goods. On the other hand, the hipster wannabe lifestyle indirectly supports conformity by perpetuating trends that are mass-produced for consumption and is more likely to support retail gentrification. Thus, commercial spaces in West Mission have become consumption spaces for hipster wannabes and other affluent residents in the area. Such gentrified consumption led to the displacement of local businesses along Valencia Street as dollar stores and produce stands have given way to high-end bistros, art galleries, and indie designer boutiques. Unfortunately, the hipster culture has become so popularized in today's society

²⁰⁹ Sharon Zukin, Valerie Trujillo, Peter Frase, Danielle Jackson, Tim Recuber, and Abraham Walker, “New Retail Capital and Neighborhood Change: Boutiques and Gentrification in New York City,” *City & Community* 8 (2009): 48.

by hipster wannabes that the symbols of their individualism and authenticity have now been mass-produced and made available to everyone.

Here we can see that each group had a different set of motives for entering and settling in the neighborhood: ethnic – access to affordable housing in the inner-city through downward filtration; nonconformist – the charm and culture of run-down, low-income neighborhoods with a Victorian landscape. This difference has led to different kinds of transformations of the built environment. The Latino community struggles to maintain its presence in the Mission as their culture is constantly under attack by the gentrification that threatens to displace residents and businesses. Mission Street is not only the heart of San Francisco but also the heart of the Latino community.

The Mission Today: the Hispanic Barrio & the Hipster's Paradise

The Mission has and continues to have the highest concentration of Latino immigrants in the city.²¹⁰ Although many Latino middle-class families and artists have moved out of the area causing the Latino population to drop, Mexican and Central American immigrants continue to reside in the neighborhood in spite of rising rent and housing prices, and represent a large population residing in a diverse mix of residents. However, this population is particularly vulnerable to

²¹⁰ Mirabal, "Geographies of Displacement," 13.

gentrification pressures since many are renters with low incomes, language barriers, and questionable American citizenship.²¹¹

Aside from the diverse racial/ethnic cultures of its residents, the neighborhood also has strong ties to the city's art, food, and music cultures as well as the lifestyle cultures of gays, lesbians, and hipsters. Not only have all of these cultures made the Mission a unique place to live and visit, they have each played a role in shaping the neighborhood into what it is today.

The Latino culture is deeply rooted in the artistic and cultural institutions that were founded during the social and cultural renaissance of the late 1960s and early 1970s by Latino artists and activists who sought to promote the Latino aesthetic and cultural traditions. Murals by the Chicano Art Movement were used as vehicles of social, political, and revolutionary activism to push for social and political justice for Mexican-Americans (see Figure 13). This sense of community and collectivism is in contrast to the hipster subculture that values individualism. However, many of these murals now serve as a "must-see" for San Francisco tourists and are one reason, if not the only reason, why tourists ever venture into the Mission Core. Unlike Chinatown, a popular ethnic enclave in San Francisco, the Mission does not rely heavily on tourism and is not marketed as a tourist attraction.

²¹¹ Kennedy and Leonard, *Dealing with Neighborhood Change*, 45.



Figure 13: *The Culture Contains the Seeds of Resistance* (1984)

Source: Mural by O'Brien Theile and Miranda Bergman in Balmy Alley; <https://flic.kr/p/brieuq>

Changes in consumption patterns and preferences first emerged in the Mission when gentrification during the 1990s and 2000s shifted the neighborhood's demographics and culture leading to a large younger, more White American population (e.g. yuppies). These changes also altered the types of stores on Valencia Street and laid the groundwork for the influx of hipsters and hipster wannabes to further transform the street into a trendy location for high-end boutiques and high-caliber multi-ethnic specialty restaurants. The Mission's food culture brings those looking for local, authentic Mexican food at one of the neighborhood's dozens of taquerias and those looking for Michelin-rated restaurants all within the same area. Granted, they may not be located next to each other or even on the same block, but they exist within the same neighborhood.

Consumption patterns in the Mission are further defined by the presence of hipster wannabes who, like hipsters, “seek to be the first to uncover or create obscure cultural influences”²¹² but then turn them into the latest trend. As their identity is linked with the middle to upper class, hipster wannabes have the necessary financial resources to indulge in the material goods that define their subculture. Their preference towards popularizing aesthetics that are “hip,” “alternative,” “ethnic,” or “thrift store chic” has spurred commercial gentrification and increased retail activity partly because it provides a cultural means of social distinction. Here we see that consumption spaces for the affluent supply their demand for material needs as well as their less tangible needs for social and cultural capital.²¹³

The Mission District is so popular with hipsters that it is often referred to as a hipster neighborhood and in 2012, it ranked second in the inaugural list of America's Best Hipster Neighborhoods compiled by *Forbes* magazine and Nextdoor.com, a private social network neighborhoods. After analyzing quantitative data on more than 250 neighborhoods in the biggest U.S. cities, the list was narrowed down to twenty based on several key characteristics: walkability, the number of neighborhood coffee shops per capita, the assortment of local food trucks, the number and frequency of farmer markets, the selection of locally owned bars and restaurants, and the percentage of

²¹² Nordby, “What Is The Hipster?,” 52.

²¹³ Zukin et al., “New Retail Capital,” 47.

residents who work in creative fields.²¹⁴ Also factored in was Nextdoor's Neighborhood "Hipness" Index, which is based on "how often words associated with hipness appeared on each Nextdoor neighborhood's site pages,"²¹⁵ including survey results conducted by Nextdoor in which members commented on their communities. The Mission earned its title as the second best "hipsterhood" in the U.S. for its "bevy of mom-and-pop eateries and watering holes, thrift shops and galleries"²¹⁶ as well as "the highest concentration of street murals in the city."²¹⁷ According to Dabney Lawless, a vice president of Nextdoor.com, the Mission is "a great neighborhood for young trendsetters"²¹⁸ because rents are lower in the Mission than many other city neighborhoods.

Analysis of Demographic Data

This section examines the demographic changes in the Mission District using census data from three consecutive decades (1990, 2000, and 2010) as a means to present quantitative evidence that exhibits changes due to gentrification in population characteristics within the spatial form of the neighborhood. The demographic fields covered include: statistical data on no-fault evictions (OMI and Ellis Act), racial/ethnic population composition, diversity, residential segregation, and income segregation.

²¹⁴ Morgan Brennan, "America's Hippest Hipster Neighborhoods," *Forbes*, September, 20, 2012, <http://onforb.es/UkWOt6>.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

Data from the San Francisco Rent Board, shows that the Mission District had 148 no-fault evictions with a rate of 8.6 evictions per 1,000 renters in 2009-2012, one of the highest numbers in San Francisco.²¹⁹ The Mission has also consistently had the highest number of no-fault evictions relative to other neighborhoods in the city. Evictions that involve rent-controlled units are required to be reported to the San Francisco Rent Board as it is mandated by law; however, those that involve non-rent controlled units are not required to be reported so there is nothing to compel filing with the Rent Board. Therefore, the data only represents the evictions that were filed and may not capture an accurate number of evictions that occurred.

Gentrification during the 1990s and 2000s has shifted the demographics towards a larger and younger White American majority population with a decrease in the Latino population (see Table 8). However, the Mission has and continues to have the highest concentration of Latino and Latin American immigrants in the city.²²⁰ While the White population remained a stable 52.4% during 1990 to 2000, it increased by 4.5% to 56.9% by 2010. It is also important to note that the non-Hispanic White population, although smaller than the Hispanic/Latino population, increased slightly during 1990 to 2000 reaching 32.5%, but then increased significantly in 2010 by 7.3% to 39.8%. There was only a slight decline in the Hispanic/Latino population during 1990 to 2000, from 51.9% to 50.1%, a 1.8% change. However, by 2010, the Hispanic/Latino population

²¹⁹ San Francisco Rent Board, "San Francisco Rent Board: Statistics," last modified 2014, <http://www.sfrb.org/index.aspx?page=9>.

²²⁰ Mirabal, "Geographies of Displacement," 13.

declined further by almost 10% (9.1). One interesting trend is the decrease among the other race groups (Black/African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaska Native) between 1990-2000, but all had a slight increase in 2010. This increase has aided in maintaining the neighborhood's racial and ethnic diversity.

According to the 2007 ESRI Diversity Index, the Mission District is one of the most ethnically diverse neighborhoods in San Francisco with the third highest score of 78.7.²²¹ This translates to a probability of 78.7% that two persons, chosen at random from the same area, will belong to different racial or ethnic groups. This Diversity Index was developed by the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) and includes both ethnic and racial diversity. It is calculated using six single-race groups (White, Black, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, Some Other Race) and one multiple-race group (two or more races). Each of these race groups is then divided into two ethnic origins: Hispanic and non-Hispanic. According to this method, if an area is ethnically diverse then racial diversity is compounded.²²²

²²¹ Sustainable Communities Index, "San Francisco: Indicator HH.3.a Ethnic Diversity," last modified 2014, http://www.sustainablecommunitiesindex.org/city_indicators/view/54.

²²² Sustainable Communities Index, "Indicator HH.3.a Ethnic Diversity," last modified 2014, <http://www.sustainablecommunitiesindex.org/indicators/view/137>.

Table 8: Population by Race and Hispanic Origin in the Mission District, 1990-2010

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
White (%)	52.4	52.4	56.9
Non-Hispanic or Latino White (%)	29.7	32.5	39.8
Hispanic or Latino (of any race) (%)	51.9	50.1	41.0
Black or African American (%)	5.0	3.5	3.7
Asian or Pacific Islander (%)	14.3	11.5	12.9
American Indian/Alaska Native (%)	0.9	1.2	1.3
Some other race (%)	27.4	25.1	18.9

Source: U.S. Census

Census tract maps reveal that residential segregation among Hispanics or Latinos and non-Hispanic Whites is quite apparent in the Mission District, especially along Valencia Street (see Appendix D, Figures 2 and 3). In 1990, there was a high concentration of Hispanics located in the Mission Core as well as a high concentration of non-Hispanic Whites located in West Mission, which correlates to the influx of yuppies during the time. In 2000, both North Mission and West Mission had an increase of non-Hispanic Whites. However, the concentration of Hispanics/Latinos remained the stable and in the Mission Core. In 2010, the concentration of Hispanics/Latinos did not change significantly from 2000. However, there is a significant increase in the non-Hispanic White population, as the group has settled in all areas of the Mission District including the Mission Core. Thus, it is clear that the strong physical street divide between the non-Hispanic White population and the Hispanic/Latino population is no longer a boundary for the non-Hispanic Whites but continues to be one for the

Hispanics/Latinos. These findings correlate with the hipsters' and hipster wannabes' ideals of openness and acceptance of diversity.

While the median household income in the Mission has always been lower than that of San Francisco, both have continued to increase during the period between 1990-2010 (see Table 9). Due to the influx of the middle-class yuppies and hipsters, the neighborhood has encountered dramatic shifts in median household income among its census tracts. The differences can be seen especially along Valencia Street, one of two main commercial thoroughfares in the Mission that has undergone gentrification (see Appendix D, Figure 4). The recent encroachment of Google and Apple buses has brought more attention to the economic divide and income inequality present in the Mission as they arrive in the Mission daily to shuttle their "Techies" to and from Silicon Valley and Mountain View.

Table 9: Median Household Income for San Francisco & the Mission District, 1990-2010

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
San Francisco (city)	\$33,414	\$55,221	\$82,210
Mission District	\$26,526	\$48,227	\$62,840*

Source: U.S. Census

* Based on ACS 2006-2010, 5-year estimates

Further examination of census tract maps also reveal that Valencia Street, a boundary between West Mission and the Mission Core, is once again a dividing line in terms of median household income. Comparing the three census tracts that make up West Mission (202, 207, 210) with the three census tracts that are directly across Valencia Street to the east in the Mission Core and part of

North Mission (201, 208, 209), the data shows a significant income gap in 2010 (see Table 10). Between contiguous tracts, 210 and 209 show the largest gap in 2010, which is almost a difference of \$50,000.

Table 10: Median Household Income in the Mission District by Census Tracts, 1990-2010

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010*</u>
WEST MISSION			
Census Tract 202	\$26,162	\$44,541	\$54,520
Census Tract 207	\$32,823	\$57,056	\$88,850
Census Tract 210	\$30,212	\$51,659	\$94,461
NORTH MISSION			
Census Tract 201	\$16,711	\$26,228	\$38,579
MISSION CORE			
Census Tract 208	\$19,551	\$40,740	\$56,346
Census Tract 209	\$23,514	\$42,209	\$47,407

Source: U.S. Census

* Based on ACS 2006-2010, 5-year estimates

The effects of the socio-economic and cultural divide that are presented in the quantitative demographic data are also reflected in the physical spaces of the neighborhood including the two primary commercial thoroughfares (Mission and Valencia Streets) and are supported by the findings of my fieldwork. My field observations highlight characteristics of both the built environment as they pertain to gentrification and neighborhood change, such as construction, and the social characteristics of the area observed.

Field Observations

Late afternoon on a Monday, I began my ethnographic journey on the northwest corner of 16th Street and Valencia and continued walking east along 16th, which is considered a secondary commercial artery of the neighborhood. The vehicular traffic was moderate while the pedestrian traffic was light. I noticed a number of restaurants, bars, and produce/convenience stores that were spread out along the street as well as a few small retail shops tucked in between them. While the establishments are predominately Latino/Hispanic, it was surprising to see an Asian restaurant among them (see Figure 14).



Figure 14: An Indian & Pakistani Restaurant on 16th Street
Source: Photograph by Author, Monday afternoon 4:30-5:30 PM

Once I reached the corner of 16th Street and Mission, the character and atmosphere shifted as it became more lively and bustling. This corner is the location of one of two BART stations along Mission Street; the other is on 24th Street. The types of people also changed; there were more families with children and older people walking around.



Figure 15: Sidewalk Use on Mission Street

Source: Photographs by Author, Monday afternoon 4:30-5:30 PM

I continued walking south on Mission Street and I found that walking down this street was reminiscent of walking down a typical busy street in New York. It was colorful and diverse, and had its fair share of local stores and services that sat closely next to one another. It was definitely more dense and space seemed to be limited as stores overfilled with produce and merchandise spilled out onto

the sidewalk (see Figure 15). Similar to 16th Street, the establishments on Mission Street were predominately Latino/Hispanic, but there were a significant number of restaurants and stores representing other ethnic groups that added diversity to the street (see Figure 16). The types of businesses varied, ranging from places of worship to check cashing places, produce stores to 99-cent stores, ethnic fast food shops to local bars, Laundromats to medical clinics. Not only were the businesses diverse, but the patrons and pedestrians were as well. The architecture and condition of the buildings still showed signs of updated Edwardian and Italianate styles mixed with the typical twentieth century strip mall style (see Figure 17).



Figure 16: Diverse Mix of Retail and Restaurants on Mission Street
Source: Photograph by Author, Monday afternoon 4:30-5:30 PM



Figure 17: Examples of Architectural Styles on Mission Street
 Source: Photographs by Author, Monday afternoon 4:30-5:30 PM

As I continued walking south towards 21st Street, the streets were cleaner and the buildings were in better shape. I also noticed a large crane that rose high above the neighborhood's low-rise buildings and stuck out like a sore thumb (see Figure 18). I was immediately drawn to it as I tried to figure out what kind of construction would need such a massive piece of machinery. Much to my dismay, it was for a new condo/theater conversion project at 2558 Mission Street called Vida. It is currently being built between 21st and 22nd Streets including the existing site of the historic New Mission Theater (see Figure 19).



Figure 18: Large Crane in the Mission District Skyline
Source: Photograph by Author, Monday afternoon 4:30-5:30 PM



Figure 19: Vida Under Construction (L), Rendering of Completed Project (R)
Source: Photograph by Author, Monday afternoon 4:30-5:30 PM; rendering: <http://www.vidasf.com>



Figure 20: Rendering of Main Elevation of Vida Along Mission Street

Source: <http://www.vidasf.com>

According to the Curbed SF website, this mixed-use building will be the tallest condominium project at 85-feet with eight floors and the second-tallest building (after the New Mission Theater) in the Mission District.²²³ The residential portion, adjacent to the theater, will have 114 one- and two-bedroom units over ground-floor retail and 89 parking spaces (see Figure 20). The theater itself will be converted into a five-screen multiplex with a main theater, four smaller screening rooms, a restaurant, and a bar/lounge. Sale of the first release of condos began in late March of this year with price tags reaching above \$1,000 per square foot. The smallest unit available is 494 square-feet with one-bedroom and no parking spot; it is listed at \$573,000. The largest unit available with one-bedroom is 834

²²³ Tracy Elsen, "Vida in the Mission Tops Out, Releases Floor Plans," *Curbed SF*, March 10, 2014, http://sf.curbed.com/archives/2014/03/10/vida_in_the_mission_tops_out_releases_floor_plans.php.

square-feet with parking and is listed at \$851,000. As for the two-bedroom units, most are listed above \$1 million and range from 905 to 1,071 square-feet with the cheapest being 872 square-feet and having a balcony at \$927,000.²²⁴ Given the median household income of each census tract in the neighborhood, the cost of these condos is out of reach for many of the current residents in the Mission (see Table 10). The new retail stores will more likely than not cater to the affluent condo residents and will also be out of reach for many of the current residents.

Within the block between 22nd and 23rd Streets, there was a high concentration of chain stores along the western side of the street (see Figure 21). Once I reach 24th Street, the BART station was bustling with people coming and going. As I headed west toward Valencia Street, I noticed that 24th Street, supposedly being the other secondary commercial artery in the neighborhood, lacked the number of restaurants and stores on 16th Street. Due to this, it seems as though it is mostly used as a high-traffic connector street between Mission and Valencia for those heading to and from the BART station.

The laidback energy of 24th Street continued onto Valencia as I turned the corner and headed north up Valencia, back to my starting point. Compared to Mission Street, Valencia had moderate to light vehicular and pedestrian traffic; the diversity of the street and people disappeared; and everything became somewhat homogenous. Instead of a variety of retail stores, food shops,

²²⁴ Tracy Elsen, "Vida Sales Office Open and Selling on Mission Street," *Curbed SF*. April 9, 2014. http://sf.curbed.com/archives/2014/04/09/vida_sales_office_open_and_selling_on_mission_street.php.

produce markets, and local services like those on Mission Street, Valencia Street is lined with cafes, sit-down restaurants, and independent boutiques (see Figure 22). The types of people on this block were mostly yuppies and hipsters who traveled either alone or in small groups.



Figure 21: Map Showing Chain Stores Along Mission Street Between 22nd and 23rd
Source: Illustration by Author



Figure 22: Storefronts Along Valencia Street

Source: Photograph by Author, taken on a Monday afternoon 4:30-5:30 PM



Figure 23: Sidewalk Conditions Along Mission Street (left) and Valencia Street (right)

Source: Photograph by Author, taken on a Monday afternoon 4:30-5:30 PM

One difference I noticed while walking down both Mission and Valencia Street was related to the width and state of cleanliness of the sidewalks. The sidewalks along Mission Street seemed to be narrower and dirtier compared to the sidewalks along Valencia Street, which were wider and cleaner (see Figure 23).

Another difference I noticed was that there was little to no overlap between the types of patrons that frequented Mission Street and those that frequented Valencia Street. This may be because of the differences in the types of stores and services each street has and because the groups may not need or be able to afford what is offered on the other street. It is more likely for the yuppies and hipsters on Valencia to travel to Mission to get cheap take-out food, but less likely for the Latinos/Hispanics on Mission to travel to Valencia to get a gourmet cup of coffee. Therefore, in some sense, there is the possibility of occasional overlap, but it seems to be one-sided. While the neighborhood may be ethnically diverse overall, the experience on the ground tells a different story as these different groups are neither frequenting the same areas nor interacting with one another.

A summary of these observations is presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Summary of Field Observations on Mission and Valencia Streets

	<u>Mission Street</u>	<u>Valencia Street</u>
Pedestrian Traffic	Heavy	Moderate/Light
Vehicular Traffic	Heavy	Moderate/Light
Building Density	High	Moderate
Ethnic Diversity	High	Low/None
Atmosphere	Fast-paced; busy	Laidback; relaxed
Age	Children - Seniors	Young Adults - Adults
Single/Group	Families (Hispanic/Latino)	Friends (Yuppies/Hipsters)
Types of Retail/Eateries	Hispanic/Latino; Ethnic (Produce, 99-cent stores, Laundromats, medical clinics)	Cafes, sit-down restaurants, bars, high-end boutiques
Presence of Construction	Vida (new condo/theater conversion)	None
Presence of Chain Stores	High (22 nd -23 rd Street)	A few local chains
Condition of Existing Buildings	Older (16 th -20 th Street); Newer (21 st -24 th Street)	Newer (facade)
Condition of Sidewalks	Narrow, dirty	Wide, clean
Overlap of Patrons	Moderate/Low	Low/None

Source: Conducted by Author, Monday afternoon 4:30-5:30 PM

Personal Interviews

In addition to the demographic analysis and my own field observations, personal reflections obtained from the interviews captured a wide range of perspectives, which are important and necessary in gaining a comprehensive understanding of neighborhood change. Overall, most if not all of the respondents discussed several common topics, such as restaurants/bars, the park, diversity, high cost of living, and gentrification. However, each category of respondents (visitors, newcomers, newcomer/longtimers, and longtimers) expressed its own distinct set of observations and concerns.

The visitors tended to notice how busy and crowded the neighborhood seemed to be, but also how clean it was and how friendly the people were. Participant A, a local resident from Portrero Hill, noted that it has gotten busier because of the increased number of businesses in the area, which to him is both a good and bad thing as its popularity could lead to overcrowding. In terms of cleanliness, Participant G from Los Angeles and Participant H from New Jersey both commented on how clean the neighborhood was compared to where they were from.

Diversity, both cultural and ethnic, was seen as a positive aspect of the neighborhood that the visitors enjoyed; yet, its possible decline concerned some of them as the area faces the threat of becoming homogenous. Participant E and Participant L expressed this sentiment best when asked what their greatest concern was for the future of the neighborhood. In his response to the question,

Participant E stated, "I [hope] that it continues to be diverse across a number of different areas demographically and economically, and it doesn't become just a White, educated population." Participant L even went so far as to assume an eventual take over by techies:

Too many people trying to live here and the cost of rent...not being able to keep up with it. So it just gets overtaken by tech firm individuals and there's not room for like a very diverse socio-economic bracket. I feel like that would be a huge bummer to this neighborhood because it's super diverse, especially Excelsior.

While a majority of the visitors discussed some aspects of gentrification during their interviews, Participant V's description of what he saw occurring in the neighborhood best described the process of commercial gentrification:

There's a lot of smaller businesses that you see going out and kind of disappearing and a lot, a lot of fancy bars and really kinda 'boutique-y' restaurants and stuff popping up everywhere. It kinda seems like they're catering to a different class of people that weren't here before. ... Anywhere east of Valencia is going to be a lot different than anywhere west of Valencia.

When asked about how he felt about these changes, he went on to explain gentrification as a double-edged sword in that the positive and negative changes become an issue of "give or take" where the take outweighs the give:

I mean, it's give or take. It really depends. You can't have a neighborhood become really nice and really, really expensive and kinda more upper-class without kicking out a lot of people, who those people depend on to, you know, do their dirty work. So you're not going to have a million people ready to work at these cafes without having a place for them to live. ... You kind of see a lot of the culture disappearing, a lot of Latino culture kind of going away.

For the visitors, they tended to view themselves as removed from neighborhood with their main reasons for going to the Mission being the restaurants and entertainment venues. In this sense, they are similar to tourists

and the Mission to them is more of a destination where they can have a fun time in the city and then return back home someplace else. Because of this mentality, it is easy for visitors to like the changes, to like the new restaurants and stores, since they do not necessarily have to experience the negative effects associated with the changes aside from the high prices. Nevertheless, they did express unease with the implications of those changes. When asked if they would consider moving to the neighborhood, many of the visitors said they would if they could afford to do so; however, those who said they would not preferred the proximity of their current residence to work and other parts of the city.

Similar to the visitors who noticed how the neighborhood was busy and crowded, the newcomers also noticed how attractive and desirable the neighborhood has become, leading to the influx of people visiting and settling in the area. Many of the reasons why they chose to move to the Mission were the same ones that attracted visitors including the accessibility to public transportation, convenience of the neighborhoods' walkability, and proximity to friends, family, and work. Their decision was deliberate and they were lucky enough to find housing they could afford.

Newcomers Participant R and her husband Participant S had lived in Marin County for eighteen years before moving into the city and had rented a place in Cow Hollow for three years before deciding to purchase a house in the Mission where they have lived for the past three years. According to Participant S, they had been looking for a house they liked for quite a while. Much of their

decision to move to the Mission was predicated on Participant R's interest in and appreciation for the neighborhood's sense of community and diverse population. As an artist, Participant R had spent some time in the Mission before moving to the area and really liked that the neighborhood is free of judgment, accepting of lifestyle, and "not driven by what you do, how you look." At the time, she did notice that the neighborhood was changing and moving in a direction she wanted to see, "That it was becoming more...more of a destination for people who wanted to be near something different." In this sense, she saw the other side of the neighborhood's popularity as people using the neighborhood as a medium for learning and experiencing something new and different instead of just for its good restaurants, bars, and boutiques.

Since moving to the Mission, she has noticed that there are a lot of houses for sale, that the Google buses interrupt daily street activity, and that the some of the recent development on Valencia is replacing establishments that she would prefer to have stayed there with places that she would not patronize:

I think that there has been lots of development on Valencia too. Some of it is good, but a lot of it I think is, you know, not what I...it's not something I patronize. It's changing and pushing out the establishments that, you know, I would have preferred to stay. ...It makes me a little nervous that, you know, things would be lost that drew me to this area to begin with...

To this observation of gentrification, Participant S added that the neighborhood is "a lot more yuppie that it used to be. There's more people with cash. The prices have gone up a lot. Rents are ridiculous now."

Although she had only lived in the neighborhood for 3 months, Participant B used to visit the area when she was younger and indirectly mentioned

witnessing gentrification. When asked how others talk about the changes occurring in the neighborhood, she said that it depends; some of her coworkers in the tech industry really enjoy “the feel of this place, the community, the food,” but she has also heard stories from locals who are Latinos and “they see it changing where they are getting pushed out, where their own people don't really have a place.” For her, she sees the changes as being a trade-off in terms of “improvement versus not, better restaurants versus not.”

When asked if any of her neighborhood friends had moved away, she said that no, but mentioned that a lot of her coworkers are trying to move into the neighborhood and cannot because “the rent here gets so expensive, around \$3000-4000 a month that it becomes really prohibitive.” She noted that an alternative to combat the high rent barrier was to have a roommate or two to share some of the expenses.

Participant B also noticed the variation between the neighborhood's streets in terms of traffic and character: “You know one street is very busy, one street is very quiet. One street is a little more downtrodden. Other streets are a little more ‘hipster’. Other streets are more ethnic.” Similar to this observation, Participant O, a newcomer of two years, described the transformation of Valencia and Mission over the years:

In like the 7 years I've lived here [San Francisco], it's like the demographics have just like changed. Like first, Valencia got paved and then Valencia turned into a shopping mall, and then Mission a couple of years later gets paved and turned into a shopping mall, and 24th Street is turning into a shopping mall now. And it's like all the culture is going away, because people want to live in the Mission and don't understand it and they don't get it.

Like many, Participant O had negative feelings about these changes and the loss of community and culture, but he also talked about the positive benefits of this commercial gentrification in terms of higher patronage and greater profits:

Some of the local people have started to make money because of that. So that is a good thing. I'll say that 'cause, I mean there were some 'ma and pa' stores that were like probably just hanging on and then now they're like mentioned in some food write-up or something and they're the hot shit. You know, so that is a good thing.

Unlike the visitors and newcomers, the newcomer/longtimers offered an interesting perspective having previously lived in the Mission and then maintained their connection by either choosing to return or choosing to continue working in the neighborhood. They tended to have strong opinions about affordability and greater insight on neighborhood change seeing both the benefits and consequences of gentrification.

For Participants I, P, and Q, moving back to the Mission was a conscious and deliberate choice. Participant I originally moved to the Mission from San Diego in 2008 to attend college and lived in Portland before moving back two and a half years ago. Similar to Participant R, Participant I also wanted to live in a diverse neighborhood and said that the Mission was "the most dynamic neighborhood I could find" and he "immediately fell in love with it." Both Participant P and his wife, Participant Q, first moved to the neighborhood in 2000 from Japan because they really liked the restaurants and they had some friends who lived in the area. In 2003, they moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts where they lived until Participant P recently moved back a month ago for his startup

company. Participant Q plans to move back in a few months after completing school. For Participant P, "The Mission is...this is kind of my home neighborhood in San Francisco and I like it here, so it was a pretty easy decision to move back here."

However, Participant J was forced to move out of the neighborhood after a bad break up and not being able to find another place in the Mission. Although she currently lives in Oakland, she still has strong ties to the neighborhood as she commutes to the Mission three to four times a week for work. She was reluctant to leave the neighborhood and said, "If I could have afforded to stay here, I would have. It's just so much more convenient to be here." When asked if she would move back if it became more affordable, she said that she definitely would.

When asked what qualities of the neighborhood he would like to see change, Participant I discussed the issue of overall affordability, not just for housing but for food and goods as well. His concerns were that there is a lack of affordable housing and there is not enough being built to meet the demand. In terms of neighborhood changes he has seen, he said, "Definitely less Hispanic people, that's the first thing I noticed. More wealth." He went on to explain the good and bad of these changes:

You talk to immigrants and they're like, 'Yeah, it sucks I can't afford it, I'm under constant threat of eviction, but at the same time, like I can take my kids out for Halloween, which I used to not be able to do in the Mission.' So that to me is good and bad. Good it feels safer.

In relation to Zukin's description of the contention between gentrifiers and longtime residents that is visible in their behavior towards one another,

Participant I discussed one of his biggest complaints about newcomers. When asked if it is easy to make friends with newcomers, he replied:

You know if they made themselves more accessible, for sure. That is like one of my biggest complaints about newcomers is that you're not in the same places. I go out to cafes and stuff... Well, maybe the cafes I go to that's not the ones they're going to, but I can't think of one single 'techie' friend that I have so to speak.

The politeness between longtimers and newcomers in street encounters as described by Zukin and Participant I's complaint about newcomers are both expressed fittingly by the winning slogan for the Mission District: "Where Latinos and Hipsters Politely Ignore Each Other's Existence."²²⁵ This lack of interaction between newcomers and longtimers also supports the sense of division visible in the census tracts and in the field observations of Mission and Valencia Streets.

Participants P and Q shared similar views on the Mission being an edgy place and like, Participant I, they noted that the neighborhood has gotten safer compared to how it was when they left. Both of them also noticed an increase of yuppies and nicer restaurants and cafes in the area. Participant P called this a "social transformation" and explained how people used to have a negative attitude towards the Mission but their perceptions have changed as it has become attractive and popular:

I'm in the I.T. industry and I had a lot of friends in the Valley and all the kids lived down there in Mountain View and stuff. ... And I tell people live I lived up here and they're like, "That's insane! Why would you do that? It's very crappy living in the city. The Mission is a dive." And so the social

²²⁵ Andrew Sarkarati, "The Mission: Where Latinos and Hipsters Politely Ignore Each Other's Existence," *Mission Mission*, August 23, 2010, <http://www.missionmission.org/2010/08/23/the-mission-where-latinos-and-hipsters-politely-ignore-each-others-existence/>. *Mission Mission*, a popular blog that covers news and events in the Mission District, held a contest to determine what the motto of the neighborhood should be and had readers vote on their favorite slogan.

transformation that occurred because of the influx of young, single people with lots of disposable income is definitely affecting this place and in some bad ways.

In addition to noticing how expensive things are becoming and how the Mission is getting a lot more inaccessible because of that, Participant J explained that because she is from a smaller town she had a different understanding of the situation when people complain that they should be allowed to stay in the apartment they have lived in for 30-40 years:

I'm originally from a smaller town where everyone owns their houses so like I've always had that understanding like when you're renting, like even if you're renting for 30-40 years, it's not yours, that's not your property. You know that landlords do have to some extent, like they should be able to make money off of places that they own and that is why people buy these buildings, to rent them out. So I kind of have mixed feelings about stuff like that.

Many of the same issues and concerns were also expressed by the longtimers who have lived in the neighborhood long enough to see a wide spectrum of change. All three longtime residents, Participants D, N, and T, discussed gentrification in that the Mission District had on one hand, become more urban, more dense, more White, and more expensive, while on the other hand, was losing its cultural charm and its edge as the new people moving in are less interesting and more boring. They each have conflicting or mixed feelings about these neighborhood changes and are unsure about what they mean for the future of the Mission. Their responses are similar to the mixed reactions of the indigenous residents interviewed by Freeman in his study on two gentrifying inner-city African-American neighborhoods in that they are receptive and optimistic, yet at the same time pessimistic and distrustful of the changes.

Participant D has lived in and out of the Mission for fourteen years ever since she moved to the city in 1999 and spent some time living in different neighborhoods like Western Addition and SoMa (South of Market) before finally settling in the Mission District in 2000. Her decision to move to the area was based on it being affordable at the time, with easy access to fun entertainment. She also liked the new restaurants and the mix of cultures and people. When asked about how the neighborhood has changed in the time she has lived there, she noted that there have been a high number of evictions recently, specifically Ellis Act evictions. As the owner of a rent controlled 4-unit building, she offered an interesting perspective on the issues she faces being a property owner. During the interview, she went on to describe her situation and her reasons for wanting to buy the building:

The reason I could afford the building is because the rents they are bringing in are super low because they've been rent-controlled and they've [the tenants] lived there forever. When I bought the building, they were all really nervous that I would like try and get them out. I'm not interested in doing that, I'm just there to build equity and stuff. I didn't have some ulterior motive immediately.

She then explained how she is becoming conflicted because some of her tenants are renting out rooms in their apartment and making a profit while she is not:

...the other people, they are renting out their room separately so they are probably making money on the unit and I'm not. ... Say they lived there for 10 years and their lease is \$1000/month, they can charge – and they have 3 bedrooms – they can charge, you know, \$1000 for each one of those bedrooms and make money when the landlord can't. And the landlord can't really as long as one check is coming from one person, you don't know who's [paying]. The master tenant has more equity in the house than the landlord...it's just weird. It's really complicated.

Her situation is common in San Francisco where there is an unintended power share between landlords and master tenants (the “senior” tenant of a building who is the last remaining named tenant on a lease). As the person who collects rent from the subtenants and pays it to the landlord as well as being responsible for informing the landlord of repairs and other issues, the master tenant has more control over the building than the landlord. While the landlord can only evict all of the tenants through just-cause evictions, the master tenant has the ability to evict individual subtenants. New tenants do not have any relationship with the landlord and deal solely with the master tenant who serves as a substitute landlord, renting out units and managing the building. Therefore, master tenants serve a dual role as landlord and tenant.

Since the units in Participant D's building are rent-controlled, the master tenant can rent rooms at market-rate prices and make a profit so long as Participant D receives the correct rent-controlled amount from the master tenant every month. Unfortunately, as the landlord, Participant D has few options to turn the situation around. The only way she can make a profit is to remove all of the current residents as means of “resetting” the base rent amounts. In order to do so, she can take two routes: either offer buyouts to all of the tenants or evoke her ability to evict all of the tenants under the Ellis Act or OMI. As stated earlier, eviction is out of the question for her, so her only option is to buy out the tenants, which means paying them to vacate and waive any future tenants' rights they have. By doing so, she would literally purchase their future rights to the units so in a sense she would actually “own” the building.

However, the thought of having to do that leaves her feeling conflicted and makes her question whether or not she is contributing to the negative neighborhood changes.

Both Participant N and Participant T had mixed feelings towards the gentrification occurring in the Mission, seeing positive and negative effects. For Participant N, a Mission resident for 17 years, he saw the Mission transform “from being a sort of ethnic Latino community that was the essence of that to being now sort of a suburb of Silicon Valley.” On one hand, he likes the new energy this change brings, but on the other hand, he does not like the Google buses: “I could do without the Google buses at 5 in the morning going down my street.” He saw the neighborhood representing two extremes of the past and the future, with the old part of San Francisco history on one end and the all the young people that live in the city but work in Silicon Valley as the new part of San Francisco on the other end. For Participant T, a Mission resident her whole life (22 years), she said that the neighborhood has become a lot safer and she is happy there are more young people around, but for her “it is also a sign of something that’s changed in the neighborhood that I don’t particularly love.”

Although many of the participants, especially those that live in the Mission District, felt negatively towards the recent changes, none of them discussed being involved in trying to combat gentrification and none of their responses suggested such involvement. They all seemed to just accept that gentrification was happening and that there was nothing they could do about slowing or stopping it from changing their neighborhood. This mentality of feeling hopeless

has often resulted in residents either moving out of the neighborhood when they could no longer financially keep pace with the changes or sticking it out because they cannot afford to move anywhere else in the city.

In contrast to the Chipsters in Boyle Heights, who led a “gentefication” movement of community-led gentrification in hopes of saving the neighborhood from outside gentrification, there does not seem to be the same motivation for community-led gentrification in the Mission. While there were only two Hispanic interview participants, neither of them expressed the desire to save the neighborhood nor the inclination to preserve the Latino culture. However, this may have been due in part to not having familial ties to the Mission as it was not mentioned that either of their parents lived in the area in the past or that they themselves grew up there.

While the Mission is a desirable area to live, the issue of high rents becomes a barrier to access. Affordability was a popular topic that was brought up in almost all of the interviews. Many newcomers said that they were concerned about their rents increasing and the cost of living becoming too much to the point where they would no longer be able to live in the neighborhood let alone the city.

Participant C, a newcomer, discussed her concern that the neighborhood was going to get too expensive for even middle class people to live there and the same goes for the whole city: “San Francisco and Mission District is very desirable and I think that it is very competitive to live here. It's hard to make it, it's really hard to make it. I'm like barely making it...surviving.” The same

sentiment was also expressed by Participant I, a newcomer/longtimer, who can no longer afford to live in the neighborhood: "It's just not affordable for like, people who work, even college-educated people, like there's no way to live here now, which is kind of why I want to leave...it's just because I can't afford to live here anymore."

In the following chapter, the two perspectives (geographical/spatial and sociological) outlined in the first chapter will be applied to the agents (hipster wannabes) discussed in the fourth chapter to examine whether their presence either facilitates or hinders the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers living in the Mission District. Findings from the demographic analysis and data obtained from the fieldwork will serve as evidence.

CHAPTER 6

Discussion

Gentrification is a pervasive process of neighborhood change. Not only is it occurring in cities across the United States, but in other countries as well. While the causes of gentrification are generally similar, each location experiences the resulting effects differently due to economic, social, and cultural factors. There has been a significant amount of research conducted over the past fifty years. Early theories often followed a linear path based on political and economic drivers that failed to take into consideration cultural and socio-demographic aspects of the gentry as well as the differences in geography. Current research shows that the gentrification of the past is not the same as the gentrification we are experiencing today. Gentrification is an ever-changing process that affects different groups of people in different ways. What may be beneficial to one person may not be for another. Tangled within the process are racial and class tensions often due to inequities and struggles for power over space.

The production and consumption of space are both heavily tied in the gentrification process. Consumption-side theories focused on the demographic patterns of gentrifiers and their preferences as the main drivers of gentrification. Their demand for not only new spaces of consumption, but specific kinds of spaces dramatically changed the urban landscape that can be studied using the geographical concept of urban morphology. It was not until the beginning of this century that researchers began examining new spatial forms of gentrification, such as new-build developments and commercial gentrification. While the effects of residential gentrification were still prevalent, it is difficult to not notice these new types also occurring in urban cities.

It was speculated that the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers in the Mission District could be conducive to the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers and contribute to the slowing of gentrification of a neighborhood based on the interest of the hipster subculture in expressing authenticity and its openness to different cultures. However, the research identifies three important findings: 1) the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers hinders the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers, 2) there is a physical and social “divide” between longtime residents and newcomers, and 3) hipster wannabes play a large role in the current gentrification of the Mission District.

Using two varying perspectives, one from geography (urban morphogenesis) and the other from sociology (expression of authenticity), the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers in the Mission District was examined to determine whether the group facilitates or hinders the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers living in the gentrifying neighborhood. The two perspectives present gentrification as either facilitating or hindering coexistence: urban morphogenesis (facilitating) and expression of authenticity (hindering).

From the geographical/spatial perspective, urban morphogenesis facilitates the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers as physical changes to the urban landscape produced through gentrification can be seen as being positive. This belief is oftentimes held by those who stand to benefit from the production and transformation of space, such as developers and new businesses. These changes attract newcomers to the area, which increases the likelihood of them interacting and coexisting with longtime residents. As

Freeman notes, gentrification can also bring benefits to poorer longtime residents by creating mixed-income neighborhoods with more neighbors who are affluent.²²⁶ Thus, the role of affluent residents “as bridges to greater resources,”²²⁷ can be seen as facilitating coexistence by aiding in the preservation of longtime residents. Those who promote gentrification tend to only cite the positive impacts of the process as reason to support it, such as increased property values and increased social mix.

However, from the sociological perspective, the expressions of authenticity by gentrifiers can hinder the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers as gentrification leads to the loss of the authenticity found in the “original” features of a neighborhood that usually stem from the longtime residents and existing businesses. This belief is oftentimes held by those who stand to lose the power over their space as it shifts to gentrifiers who express their social and class distinctions through the process of gentrification and the consumption of space. The expressions of authenticity by gentrifiers are demonstrated in the “gentrification aesthetic,” in which they are driven by new modes of consumption to distinguish themselves from other social class groups by participating in the historic preservation of housing stock and encouraging the development of small boutiques and cafes. By doing so, gentrifiers are imposing their power over space to express new features of authenticity that reflect their new tastes and consumption preferences while displacing those of

²²⁶ Freeman, “Gentrification,” 160.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 160-161.

longtime residents. This leads to a “crisis of authenticity” and goes against the economic and social diversity promoted by Jane Jacobs.

In examining the role of hipsters as gentrifiers, it was necessary to understand that it is the hipster wannabes rather than the true hipsters that represent a new type of gentrifier. The hipster wannabe, a subtype of the hipster, was revealed as having a dominant role in the commercial gentrification of the Mission. By imitating the hipster aesthetic and turning it into a popular, mass-marketed trend, wannabes are the ones driven by consumerism and buy into the whole hipster image (literally) while ignoring the ideological foundations of true hipsterism. Therefore, when the role and impact of hipsters as gentrifiers in the Mission District are evaluated using urban morphology and authenticity, it becomes clear that the presence of hipster wannabes hinders the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers. The expression of authenticity by hipster wannabes is based on the consumption of space and material goods, and is demonstrated in the “gentrification aesthetic.” Findings from the demographic analysis and data obtained from the fieldwork conducted in the Mission District confirm that their presence hinders coexistence in the neighborhood.

In the examination of the findings from the demographic data, the Hispanic/Latino population in the neighborhood can to an extent help to represent the presence of longtime residents, while alternatively, the non-Hispanic White population could be taken to represent in part the presence of gentrifiers in the Mission District. The steady decline of the Hispanic/Latino population in the neighborhood indicates that the ability of longtimers and

newcomers to coexist has been reduced simply because the fewer longtimers there are, the less likely coexistence will occur. Based on the overall racial/ethnic composition of the neighborhood, it appears to be racially and ethnically diverse. However, a closer look at the census tracts presents a different picture.

Both the racial/ethnic and income distributions in the Mission District show that Valencia Street, the boundary between West Mission and the Mission Core, serves as a physical “divide” between the Hispanic/Latino population in the Mission Core and the non-Hispanic White population in West Mission. This divide perpetuates residential and income segregation as well as hindering coexistence between the two groups. Yet, it is interesting to note that this strong divide is no longer a boundary for the non-Hispanic Whites but continues to be one for the Hispanics/Latinos in terms of residential segregation. This could indicate the spread of gentrification by the hipster population as they move beyond the boundary line to gentrify other areas of the neighborhood, which would also hinder the ability to coexist.

As stated earlier, the effects of the socio-economic and cultural divide that are presented in the quantitative demographic data are also reflected in the physical spaces of the neighborhood including the two primary commercial thoroughfares (Mission and Valencia Streets) and are supported by the interviews. The physical and social characteristics of this divide along with the individual perceptions of the interview participants both demonstrate that the

presence of hipster wannabes as gentrifiers does indeed hinder the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers in the Mission District.

In this analysis of my field observations, those made in regards to Valencia Street are used to represent the presence of hipsters and the observations made regarding Mission Street are used to represent the presence of longtimers in the neighborhood. This designation is made because Valencia is the eastern border of West Mission, where there is a high concentration of non-Hispanic Whites, and the street has undergone a significant amount of retail gentrification. Mission Street, on the other hand is located within the Mission Core, where there is a high concentration of Hispanics/Latinos, and the street has undergone a minimal amount of retail gentrification.

The field observations revealed strong differences between Mission Street and Valencia Street in terms of features such as pedestrian and vehicular traffic, building density, types of retail and eateries, and presence of construction (see Table 11). The two main physical and social characteristics of the hipster Valencia Street that hinder the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers are the lack of ethnic diversity and the presence boutiques and cafes. As the presence of hipster wannabes as gentrifiers is shown to hinder the coexistence between longtimers and newcomers when examined through the sociological perspective, homogeneity and high-end retail stores are outcomes of the “gentrification aesthetic” and are used to express an authenticity that displaces longtime residents and local businesses. The types of retail and restaurants found on Valencia reflect these new tastes and consumption preferences and serve

affluent customers such as newcomers; thus, limiting their use by longtimers, which further hinders the coexistence of these groups.

The personal reflections obtained from the interviews captured a wide range of perspectives on neighborhood change in the Mission District and represent the views of visitors, newcomers, newcomer/longtimers, and longtimers. The physical and social characteristics that mark the presence of hipster wannabes and their expressions of authenticity which were discussed during the interviews include: the loss of cultural and ethnic diversity, commercial gentrification, rising costs of rent and goods, more upper-class residents, increasing number of restaurants and entertainment venues, displacement, and the loss of community. Many of the physical features are tied to affluence and consumption, and in that way, they hinder coexistence by not allowing longtimers the ability to share these spaces and thrive. Participant R, a newcomer of three years, had noticed that the some of the recent development on Valencia was replacing establishments that she would prefer stayed there with places that she would not patronize and this made her worried about how the things that drew her to the neighborhood to begin with would be lost. Participant O, a newcomer of two years, described the transformation of Valencia and Mission over the years and noted that Valencia Street had turned into a shopping mall and Mission Street soon followed. Many of the participants also noticed the same differences between Valencia and Mission Streets as I did in my field observations.

By using the sociological perspective of authenticity to examine whether or not the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers in the Mission District facilitates or hinders the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers, we can see that their coexistence is actually hindered by the presence of hipster wannabes. The hipster wannabe subculture that exists in so many “hipster” neighborhoods including the Mission District, in contrast to true hipsterism, is an inauthentic product of the pre-packaged so-called hipster aesthetic that wannabes buy into and believe to be the real thing. They do so in an attempt to regain some sense of authenticity even though the very act makes them inauthentic. Their excessive consumption hinders the coexistence of longtimers and newcomers and perpetuates a physical divide between the Mission Core and West Mission with Valencia Street as the boundary line. The pervasiveness of hipsterdom in today’s society gives wannabe hipsters the power to drive the consumer market towards whatever they deem to be trendy. Long gone are the days of the true hipster.

Although the Mission District is ethnically and culturally diverse overall, the census tract data and the experience on the ground tell a different story as these different groups are neither frequenting the same areas nor interacting with one another. The hindrance of coexistence generated by the new tastes and consumption preferences of hipster wannabes reflects their lifestyle, which is based on consumption through the production of space. This dependence on cultural consumption and the accumulation of cultural capital has implications for not only the affluent newcomers, but for the longtime residents of working-

class neighborhoods with affordable housing that are vulnerable to gentrification.

As a pervasive and complex process of neighborhood change that is brought on by the creation and subsequent transformation of the built environment, gentrification is ultimately tied to architecture and planning. With that said, these findings could be of interest to those who have the power to determine the urban landscape such as architects, city planners, and developers as well as to those who unknowingly have the power to influence the types of spatial forms built in the urban landscape such as gentrifiers. This knowledge could be of benefit to those in power by adding to the existing literature on the negative impacts of gentrification, highlighting the specific context of the Mission District in San Francisco.

Implications

Using the Mission District in San Francisco as a case study reveals that there are growing implications of gentrification for urban economics, politics, and social inequities in the restructuring of metropolitan cities and neighborhoods in the United States. The process of gentrification has broadened due to changes in urban development and the evolution of its spatial and physical manifestations. As a result, new spatial forms emerged in response to consumer demands for residential and retail space in urban neighborhoods. Relating to the fourth wave of gentrification, these implications focus on the widening income gap, polarized urban policies that favor the affluent, and the affordability crises for low-income renters. Linked with the demands for new spatial forms and the fourth wave of gentrification is the role of the architect and the need for architects to be better prepared to address the issues that arise from social, political, economic shifts in urban restructuring as designers of the built environment who require a sense of social responsibility. Yet, the education of an architect and the role of design in policy processes such as zoning and planning are not significantly linked to the trajectories or trends of real estate and gentrification.

One implication is that gentrification has the ability to increase residential and income segregation, which can perpetuate the acceleration of income inequality in a neighborhood. Income inequities overall in the U.S. stem from a much larger issue, the widening income gap, where the top tier of the

population is thriving and those at the bottom are not. Adding to the widening gap is the shrinking or disappearing of the middle class due in part to slow economic recovery from the Great Recession of 2009, which has seen the slowest job market recovery since World War II. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer as the middle-income jobs lost during the recession are being replaced by low-wage jobs. The loss of the middle class is affecting the structure and character of neighborhoods affected by gentrification. While gentrification typically involved the middle and upper classes entering a neighborhood and displacing lower-income groups, now it seems as though both the middle- and lower-income groups are being displaced by the upper class. There is, in a sense, an "income succession" that is occurring where these neighborhoods are no longer middle class as it is being replaced by the upper class. The neighborhood shifted from working-class to middle-class and now to upper class. Not only is the middle class being pushed out, but it is also being priced out of the urban-core neighborhoods where many of them want to live.

Tied to the widening income gap is another implication in that the rental market and new developments in gentrifying neighborhoods favor the affluent, which cause high-end rents to fall while midrange rents continue to rise. In tight housing markets like San Francisco, high rents in once affordable neighborhoods make it difficult for many middle- and lower-income to keep up and part of the reason for this is simple demand. More people are renters and less people are homeowners. To meet the demand from upper-income renters looking for housing, apartment developers are continuing to build more units, creating a

huge surplus of luxury apartments. There is little incentive to build anything other than expensive units as long as there is the demand. Similar to the live/work lofts in North Mission, the new condo/theater conversion project, Vida, on Mission Street is one example where the new housing is intentionally marketed to the affluent who can afford and demand luxury apartments and amenities. According to a recent article in *The New York Times* titled, "In Many Cities, Rent Is Rising Out of Reach of Middle Class," author Shaila Dewan states that "As a result, there are in effect two separate rental markets that are so far apart in price that they have little impact on each other."²²⁸ On one hand, there is a surplus of expensive units, and on the other hand, there is a shortage of affordable units. This shortage creates problems when the residents being displaced from gentrifying neighborhoods or those wanting to voluntarily move have limited choices in affordable housing. In San Francisco, the displaced have nowhere left to go in the city and the voluntary movers are "stuck" in their current housing because they cannot afford to live anywhere else.

Related to both the widening income gap and increasing rental market for the affluent, gentrification contributes to the suburbanization of poverty as residents who can no longer afford to live in the central city move to the outlying suburban areas. While there is a deconcentration of poverty in the central city, there is a subsequent concentration of affluence. In essence, the poor and middle-class are just being redistributed to areas with even more concentrated

²²⁸ Shaila Dewan, "In Many Cities, Rent Is Rising Out of Reach of Middle Class," *The New York Times*, April 14, 2014, <http://nyti.ms/1qzKeZ4>.

poverty. Although the working-class suburbs provide affordable housing, they lack the social services that help low-income people because those are typically located in urban areas where the poor had often been located. Another disadvantage is the lack of public transportation for low-income workers who have to endure long commutes to the central city. Instead of moving the poor away from areas of concentrated poverty, both poverty and inequality have to be addressed where the poor live, understanding that the areas of poverty and areas of wealth are interrelated. Gentrification does not benefit everyone by pushing the poor and the middle class to the suburbs. What it does is reconfigure the geographic lines of racial and economic inequality in favor of the upper class at the expense of everyone else.

Taken together, these implications suggest there is a definite need to protect the poor and middle class in gentrifying neighborhoods so that they are safe from displacement and to ensure that gentrification benefits all neighborhood residents. Cities with tight housing markets need to increase their production and preservation of housing to meet the demand especially affordable housing. Policies need to be put in place that reduce or freeze property taxes to protect long-time residents and low-income/moderate-income senior homeowners from rising property tax in gentrifying neighborhoods. There should also be non-market based approaches to housing and community development that prohibit large-scale luxury development in gentrifying neighborhoods and promote small- and medium-scale, mixed-income development. Aside from physical improvements, policies should empower local

residents and communities with rights, protections, and a voice in determining their own neighborhoods, much like the process of "gentefication" where the power is placed in the hands of the people.

However, there needs to be a joint effort and understanding among all those involved and affected by the gentrification process to minimize the negative impacts of gentrification. With that said, the responsibility of ensuring equitable and inclusive neighborhood development not only falls on the local government in charge of planning policies and the local residents who are the most affected by changes to the built environment, but also on the architects who design and plan the new spatial forms that transform gentrifying neighborhoods. The education of an architect includes an understanding of the role of design in terms of community and social responsibility as it relates to working in the public interest and improving the quality of life as well as reconciling the needs of the client, owner, and user groups, and of the public and community domains. Yet, this education is not significantly linked to urban issues such as the trajectories or trends of real estate and gentrification. Aside from understanding the legal responsibilities of buildings codes and zoning ordinances, architects are not typically taught the social impacts that surround these policies. In a sense, such things take a back seat to building aesthetics and functions as architecture students are oftentimes taught to look at the building as a pure, platonic object.

Thus, it is clear that civic engagement and public service need to be implemented and stressed in the education of architects as a means of instilling

social consciousness and reinforcing social responsibility. One way of doing so would require accredited architecture programs to include service learning or community immersion projects in the design studio curriculum that would allow students the ability to actively participate and use design as a tool for addressing the social, economic, cultural, and environmental issues facing local communities such as urban development, environmental justice, food security, community assessment, and sustainability through on-site experience in a local community working with community based organizations. This type of participation would allow students to use and transfer their theoretical design knowledge into empirical actions. By doing so, they would be able to see the direct impact their work can have on an organization and local community, enhancing their levels of civic engagement and awareness of community issues as well as building their understanding of social responsibility in architecture. One example of a community immersion project would be a design-build studio where students take active roles in designing and building something for the community such as energy-efficient and low-cost housing for low-income families. A more specific example of service learning is architect Samuel Mockbee's Rural Studio at Auburn University where students provided architectural services for the poor. In both examples, students work with real clients in real situations where the aesthetics of a design play a secondary role.

It is also important for architecture students to recognize the power of architecture and the role it has in shaping our lives – ultimately, they need to believe in the potential of architecture to improve the quality of life for everyone.

Using strong, creative, powerful, and inventive modern design, social consciousness and aesthetics can work together to help both the rich and most importantly, the poor without sacrificing one for the other. However, in order to educate architecture students on the social role of design, it is necessary for the faculty to have experience with and connections to the surrounding community (e.g. town and gown) that would provide relationships and environments necessary for fostering this type of learning.

For most architecture students, the only opportunity they have to examine the relationship between design and social issues is if they pursue advanced graduate degrees that allow them the proper means and guidance needed to do so. Nonetheless, many do not follow that path after receiving their undergraduate degrees and enter the field with an education that is focused solely on design. The new generation of architects is growing up in a world of globalization and inequality and they will need to be prepared to address the needs and challenges faced not only by the affluent but the poor as well. Architectural education provides students with a unique and useful skill set as well as the potential to be leading contributors in making a positive impact on society as designers of the built environment. By having a more comprehensive understanding of the ethical implications of their decisions with regard to social, political, environmental, and cultural issues, architects can become community advocates and agents of positive social change. Embracing their responsibility to community and public stakeholders will empower them to make responsible, well-informed design and professional choices.

Therefore, not only must architecture students understand and appreciate the concept of social responsibility in architecture, and learn to implement it into their own work, but also it is necessary for academic institutions and the profession to create a culture of civic engagement and public service that educates, inspires, and empowers new generations of architects. Although accredited architecture programs have certain requirements for social responsibility training, individual architecture schools and faculty may emphasize or de-emphasize aspects of the accreditation criteria within their individual programs. This calls for a need to formalize the importance of social responsibility within the profession of architecture and in the education of architects.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

This thesis focused on examining the process of gentrification and posed the following question: does the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers facilitate or hinder the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers in the neighborhood? Based on the literature, it was initially speculated that the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers could be conducive to the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers, and as a result, the hipster subculture would contribute to the slowing of gentrification occurring in a neighborhood. In seeking out a neighborhood in a city that is characterized by this phenomenon, the Mission District of San Francisco was chosen because it has a significant concentration of hipsters and has been experiencing waves of gentrification that threaten the established Latino community.

The research study followed a mixed method approach and used two varying perspectives (geographical/spatial and sociological) as the basis through which gentrification was examined. The geographical/spatial concept of urban morphogenesis was used to present gentrification as facilitating coexistence, while the sociological concept of authenticity was used to present gentrification as hindering coexistence.

Contrary to the initial hypothesis, this research indicates three important findings: 1) the presence of hipsters as gentrifiers hinders the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers, 2) there is a physical and social “divide” between longtime residents and newcomers, and 3) hipster wannabes play a large role in the current gentrification of the Mission District. The qualitative and quantitative data collected through interviews, field observations, and census

reports show that the presence of hipster wannabes is hindering the coexistence of longtime residents and newcomers by encouraging retail gentrification and perpetuating a physical and social “divide” between the two groups.

As hipster wannabes imitate and popularize the hipster aesthetic, their expression of authenticity reflects their new tastes and consumption preferences, and is demonstrated through what Michael Jager describes as the “gentrification aesthetic,” in which gentrifiers are driven by new modes of consumption to distinguish themselves from other social class groups in the neighborhood. This leads to a “crisis of authenticity” as the original features tied to the longtime Latino residents of the neighborhood disappear and are replaced by new features of authenticity from gentrifiers like the hipster wannabes who impose their power over the space.

The goal of this thesis was to highlight the lack of gentrification research from the architecture field and to offer a method from which architects and planners can examine the process of gentrification as it relates to architecture and the built environment in order to further understand the role design plays in the transformation of urban space. This research contributes to the literature on gentrification by presenting hipster wannabes as a new type of gentrifier and by utilizing concepts from geography and sociology that although related to gentrification had not previously been used to examine the process in such a context or in a similar manner. By combining approaches from geography and sociology, this thesis illustrates the importance of looking at gentrification at a microscale, since neighborhood approaches can easily mask important

differences between the areas within the neighborhood. Given that gentrifiers are typically described as having a negative impact on the neighborhoods they move into, it was of interest to examine the role of hipsters as gentrifiers and the possibility they could have a positive impact instead, supporting the belief that newcomers act as a bridges to greater resources for longtime residents. In addition, the ethnographic fieldwork conducted included interviews with longtime residents, which adds to the limited data on the experience and views of non-gentrifying groups in a gentrifying neighborhood.

Suggestions for Further Research

Further research could be conducted to examine the hipster subculture on a more academic level to better understand their ideologies and further the dichotomy between true hipsters and hipster wannabes. Other research could focus on examining the transformation of the Mission District through the larger perspective of city influences on its growth and development. San Francisco is undergoing several political, economic, and cultural shifts that most certainly affect the Mission District and other similar neighborhoods in the city.

I leave you with a quote from activist and author Rebecca Solnit on the future of gentrification:

[G]entrification is just the fin above the water. Below is the rest of the shark: a new American economy in which most of us will be poorer, a few will be far richer, and everything will be faster, more homogenous and more controlled or controllable. The technology boom and the accompanying housing crisis have fast-forwarded San Francisco into the newest version of the American future.²²⁹

²²⁹ Solnit, *Hollow City*, 14.

APPENDICES

Supporting Material

Appendix A

Fieldwork: Interview Questions

NEWCOMER | NEWCOMER/LONGTIMER | LONGTIMER

1. Personal Background (4 total)
 - a. What do you do for a living & how long have you been in that occupation?
 - b. What year were you born?
 - c. What is your ethnicity/race?
 - d. What is your highest level of education?

2. Residential Patterns (7 total)
 - a. Do you live in the Mission District?
 - i. If so, how long have you lived in the neighborhood & where did you live before then?
 - b. Do you rent or own?
 - c. Tell me about your decision to move to the neighborhood & your initial reaction to the area.
 - d. How is the neighborhood different from other places you have lived?
 - e. What qualities of the neighborhood do you most enjoy?
 - f. What qualities of the neighborhood would you like to see change?
 - g. How long do you imagine you will live here?
 - i. (If intends to stay): Is there anything that would change your intention to stay?
 - ii. (If intends to leave): Is there anything that would encourage you to stay?

3. Neighborhood Change (4 total)
 - a. How has the neighborhood changed in the time you have lived here & how do you feel about those changes?
 - b. Tell me about how others talk about those changes.
 - c. What are the best and worst changes you have witnessed?
 - d. What are your greatest concerns regarding the future of the neighborhood?

4. Social Networks (5 total)
 - a. Are you close to neighbors or others that reside in the neighborhood & how frequently do you interact with them?
 - b. (For newcomers): Was it easy to make friends when you moved here?
 - c. (For longtime residents): Is it easy to make friends with newcomers?
 - d. Have any of your neighborhood friends or acquaintances moved away?
 - i. If so, do you know why they did so?
 - e. Do you know of any other residents who have moved away and why they did so?
 - f. How do you describe the neighborhood to friends and/or family members that have never been here?

VISITOR

1. Personal Background (4 total)
 - a. What do you do for a living & how long have you been in that occupation?
 - b. What year were you born?
 - c. What is your ethnicity/race?
 - d. What is your highest level of education?

2. Residential Patterns (8 total)
 - a. Do you live in the Mission District? If not, where do you live?
 - b. What brings you to the neighborhood today?
 - c. How long have you been coming to the neighborhood & how often do you come here?
 - d. What was your initial reaction to the area?
 - e. How is the neighborhood different from other places you have been to?
 - f. What qualities of the neighborhood do you most enjoy?
 - g. What qualities of the neighborhood would you like to see change?
 - h. Would you consider or have you considered moving here?

3. Neighborhood Change (4 total)
 - a. How has the neighborhood changed in the time you began coming here & how do you feel about those changes?
 - b. Tell me about how others talk about those changes.
 - c. What are the best and worst changes you have witnessed?
 - d. What are your greatest concerns regarding the future of the neighborhood?

4. Social Networks (3 total)
 - a. Do you know anyone that resides in the neighborhood & how frequently do you interact with him/her?
 - b. Do you know anyone who has moved out of the area?
 - i. If so, do you know why he/she did so?
 - c. How do you describe the neighborhood to friends and/or family members that have never been here?

Appendix B

Fieldwork: Participant Demographics

Table B-1: Demographic Data of Interview Participants

VISITOR	<u>Age</u>	<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Occupation</u>
	---	---	---	---
A	37	Asian	Male	Management
E	33	Caucasian	Male	CEO
G	22	Asian	Male	Student
H	21	Asian	Male	Student
K	25	Caucasian	Male	Management
L	24	Caucasian	Male	Student
M	31	Caucasian	Male	Construction
V	25	Caucasian	Male	Student
	---	---	---	---
NEWCOMER				
B	33	Asian	Female	Operations
C	26	Caucasian	Female	Accounting
O	33	Caucasian	Male	Student
R	60	Caucasian	Female	Artist
S	63	Caucasian	Male	Lawyer
U	25	Caucasian	Male	Retail

	<u>Age</u>	<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Occupation</u>
NEWCOMER/LONGTIMER	---	---	---	---
I	26	Hispanic	Male	Journalist
J	24	Hispanic	Female	Development
P	39	Caucasian	Male	Technology
Q	40	Asian	Female	Technology
LONGTIMER	---	---	---	---
D	38	Caucasian	Female	Advertising
N	57	Caucasian	Male	Fitness Trainer
T	22	Caucasian	Female	Student

Source: Personal Interviews with Author

Appendix C

Demographics: San Francisco & the Mission District

Table C-1: Demographic Data for San Francisco & the Mission District, 2010

	<u>San Francisco (city)</u>	<u>Mission District</u>
Demographics*		
Total Population	805,235	57,298
Race/Ethnicity*		
Black/African American	6.1%	3.7%
Asian	33.3%	12.6%
White	48.5%	56.9%
Native American Indian	0.5%	1.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.4%	0.3%
Other/Two or More Races	11.3%	25%
% Latino (of any race)	15.1%	41%
Households*		
Family Households	43.7%	37.2%
Non-family Households	56.3%	62.8%
Average Household Size	2.3	2.4
Age*		
0-4 years	4%	4%
5-17 years	9%	8%
18-34 years	30%	38%
35-59 years	37%	36%
60 years and older	19%	13%

	<u>San Francisco (city)</u>	<u>Mission District</u>
Nativity and Language		
Foreign-Born	36%	40%
Educational Attainment (Residents 25 years and older)		
High School or Less	29%	36%
Some College/Associate Degree	20%	17%
College Degree	31%	30%
Graduate/Professional Degree	20%	18%
Income		
Median Household Income	\$71,416	\$62,840
Median Family Income	\$86,668	\$55,534
Percent in Poverty	12%	13%
Employment		
Unemployment Rate	7%	6%
Employed Residents	444,630	35,810
Managerial and Professional Occupations	50%	44%
Service Occupations	17%	22%
Sales and Office Occupations	22%	20%
Construction and Maintenance Occupations	5%	8%
Production and Transportation Occupations	6%	7%

	<u>San Francisco (city)</u>	<u>Mission District</u>
Housing Characteristics		
Total Number of Units*	376,942	24,848
Units Built During 2010	1,230	120
Occupied Units*	91.7%	93%
Owner Occupied	35.8%	22.9%
Renter Occupied	64.2%	77.1%
Vacant Units*	8.3%	7%
For Rent	3.4%	52.2%
For Sale only	0.8%	18%
Rented or Sold, not occupied	0.4%	3%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	1.5%	8%
Other vacant	2.2%	29.8%
Median Year Moved In to Unit (own)	1996	2001
Median Year Moved In to Unit (rent)	2005	2004
Structure Type		
Single Family Housing	33%	26%
2-4 Units	21%	29%
5-9 Units	10%	15%
10-19 Units	10%	13%
20 Units or more	25%	17%
Housing Prices		
Median Rent	\$1,264	\$1,106
Median Home Value	\$785,191	\$745,053
Median Rent as % of Household Income	26%	26%

Source: U.S. Census, ACS 2006-2010, 5-year estimates

* 2010 Census, Summary File 1

Appendix D

Census Tract Maps: Mission District

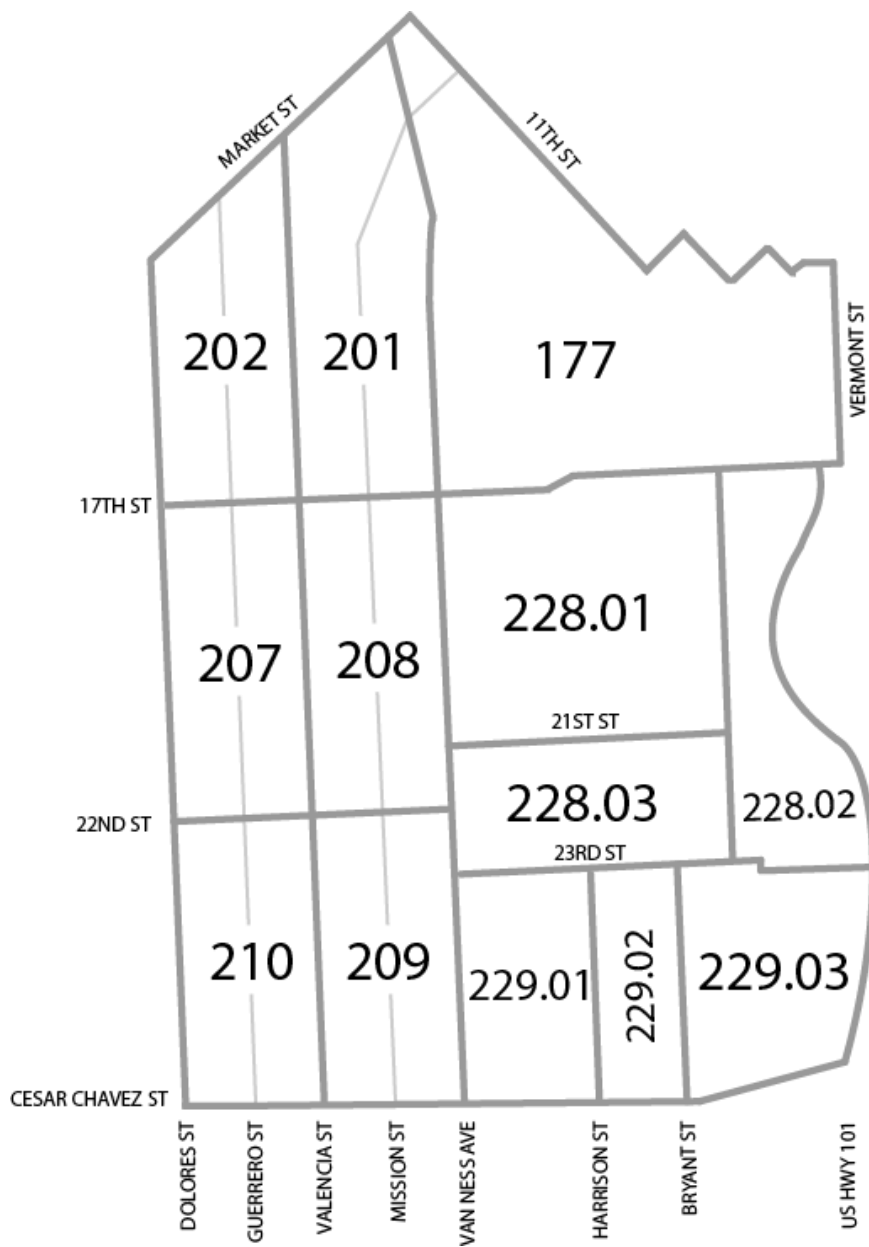


Figure D-1: Map of Mission District Census Tracts

Source: http://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/tract/st06_ca/c06075_san_francisco/DC10CT_C06075_004.pdf (Modified by Author)

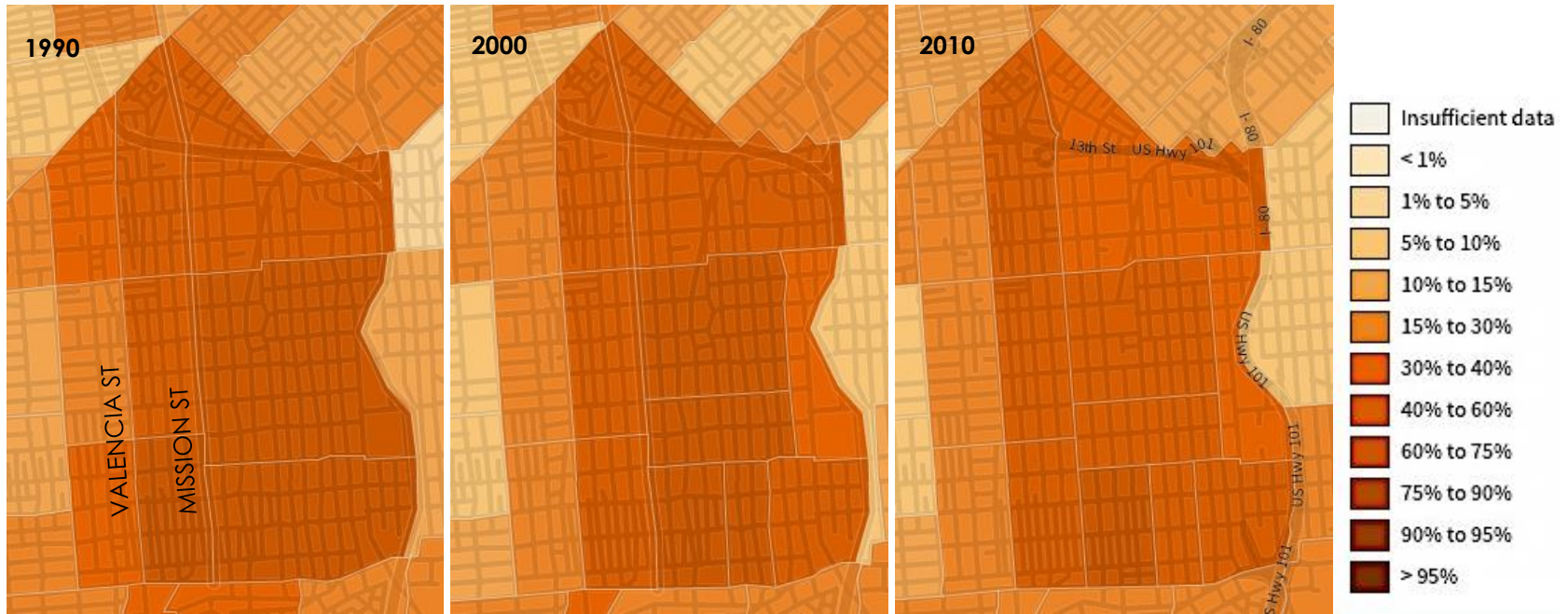


Figure D-2: Percent Hispanic by Census Tracts – Mission District, 1990 - 2010
Source: U.S. Census, Social Explorer

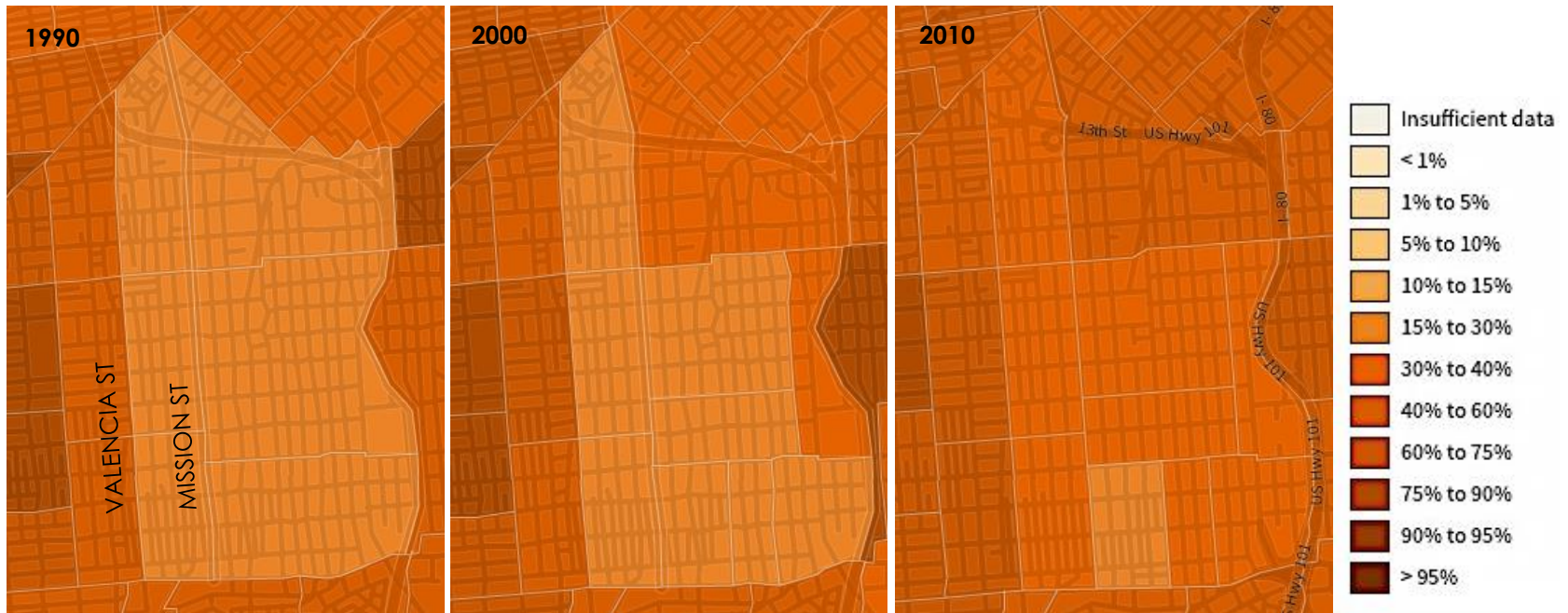


Figure D-3: Percent non-Hispanic White by Census Tracts – Mission District, 1990 – 2010

Source: U.S. Census, Social Explorer



Figure D-4: Median Household Income by census tracts – Mission District, 1990 – 2010

Source: U.S. Census, Social Explorer

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