The University of Chicago

The Neglected Toll of D.C.'s Transformation Away From "Chocolate City"

Examining the socio-emotional effects of D.C.'s rising gentrification and displacement on Black residents from the start of then-Mayor Anthony Williams' term in January 1999 through February 2022.

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A thesis submitted for partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Arts degree *Public Policy Studies*

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Abstract

At the end of the 20th century, Washington, D.C. was known as "Chocolate City" for being America's first majority-Black city and its bustling Black nightlife. However, beginning especially with Mayor Anthony Williams' "Envisioning a Future Washington" plan in 1999, the nation's capital became "Cappuccino City"—a rapidly gentrifying locale where white newcomers were increasingly displacing longtime Black residents. While the existing literature captured the economic implications of D.C.'s gentrification through statistics, it fell short in describing its qualitative, socio-emotional effects on Black residents. Here, I have attempted to fill this gap, answering the question: what were gentrification's social and emotional effects on D.C.'s Black residents from 1999-2022? To do this, I utilized several methods. These entailed finding economic data to contextualize the issue, using my connections in the community to interview 17 individuals who experienced or oversaw gentrification in the District, and issuing an 11-question survey to my 12 Black interviewees that more quantifiably measured their responses to how welcomed, safe, and accounted for they felt in their neighborhoods. From this research, I found that D.C.'s gentrification was a complicated issue both because of the unique role of the federal government in advancing it and residents' varying perspectives around the issue's effects. I also found that gentrification placed a tremendous emotional burden on Black residents through rising living costs, an "us vs. them" dynamic with white residents, unresponsive elected officials, and overpolicing. Afterwards, I made four policy recommendations: build affordable recreational centers, establish more affordable housing, utilize alternative public safety measures, and provide more economic stimulus for D.C.'s Black entrepreneurs. I hope that this project sheds light on the concerns of D.C.'s Black residents and ultimately moves city officials to enact policy change.

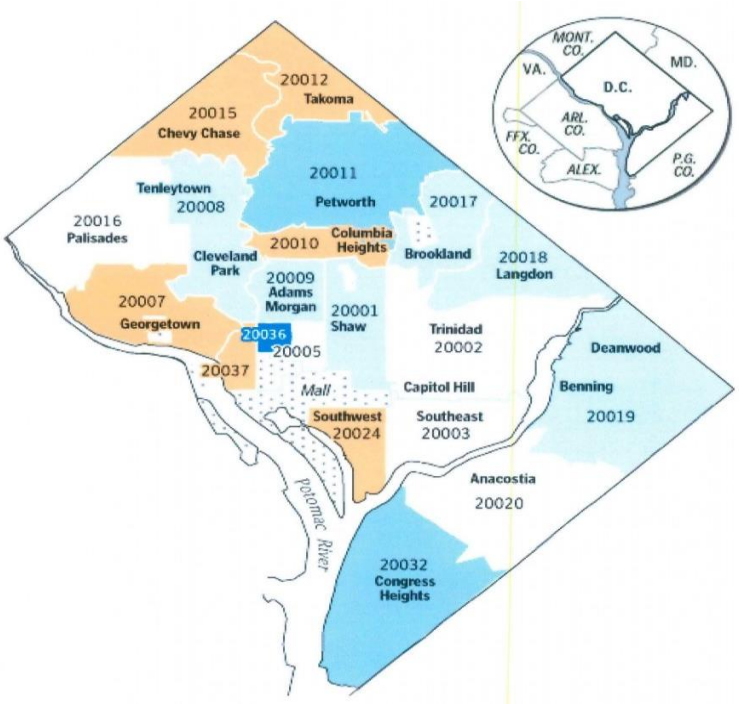

Figure 1: 2021 Map of D.C.'s neighborhoods, including Columbia Heights on the Northwest side and Anacostia on the Southeast side (Danielle 2015).

Acknowledgements

This thesis goes out to all the longtime Black residents of Washington, D.C. who have often been forgotten by their white peers and elected officials amidst the capital city's rampant gentrification. I hope this project captured your voices well and, through this exposure, leads to more favorable policy change.

The project could not have been completed without the tremendous help of my thesis seminar preceptor Kelsey Berryman, and principal investigator Chad Broughton. This support entailed looking over each of the written sections and providing feedback on the paper's content, structure, and grammar. I am forever grateful.

I would also like to thank my classmates for their assistance throughout this process. During workshops in my weekly thesis seminar, they provided advice on how to refine my paper. Additionally, seeing the sheer determination to complete their theses motivated me to work harder on my own.

Lastly, I want to express my gratitude for all my project's interviewees. Thank you to Dr. Kathryn Howell, Dr. Sabiyha Prince, Dr. Derek Hyra, Councilmember Brianne Nadeau, Mr. Solomon Weldeghebriel, Ms. Virginia Ali, Mr. Tony Hamilton, Mr. Nate Richardson, Ms. Semeya Richardson, Ms. Alex Baca, Mr. Daniel Del Pielago, Mr. Arthur Jones II, Mr. Arnold Nguele, Ms. Stacie Lee Banks, Mr. Anthony James, Ms. Islah Abdullah, and Ms. Jackie Smith for taking time out of your busy schedules to meet with me over Zoom and complete the post-interview surveys.

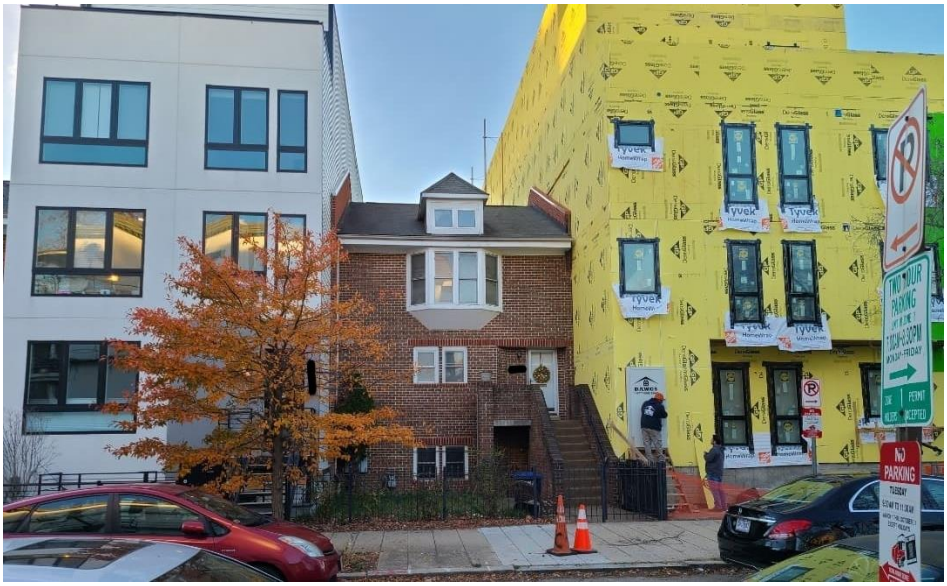

Figure 2: Image of a townhouse in D.C.'s Columbia Heights neighborhood that has been blocked off by the construction of upscale condominium complexes on both sides.

Introduction

Is there something to Washington, D.C. other than the city's historical monuments and government institutions? Admittedly, Washington, D.C. has long been known as the epicenter of politics and changemaking. But, the nation's capital has also consisted of nearly 700,000, predominantly-Black residents who have established a rich culture in the city ("U.S. Census").

In 1957, D.C. was nicknamed "Chocolate City" after it became the first U.S. municipality to have a majority-Black population and contained cultural elements such as "Black Broadway" and "go-go" music (Sheehy 15; Ruble; Lang). The l960s race riots and 1980s war on drugs, however, devastated these communities (Prince 2). In hopes of revitalizing these areas in the early 2000s, then-Mayor Anthony Williams promoted redevelopment in the city to attract new residents (Smith). Succeeding mayors Adrian Fenty, Vincent Gray, and Muriel Bowser only strengthened this policy (Delgadillo). Ultimately, D.C.'s redevelopment led to economic gains for the city. But what became increasingly clear was that Black residents were being left out of these gains (Delgadillo).

For D.C.'s Black population, the harms caused by the move to attract outsiders negated many of the benefits the former could have received. One reason for this was that those who moved into the city were mostly wealthy, white individuals who were attending the city's universities or working for the federal government (Baca & Finio). As these new residents resided in predominantly Black neighborhoods, property taxes and rent rose tremendously, forcing many Black residents to leave the city (Dwyer). As a result, from 1970 to 2017, D.C.'s Black population dwindled by 50% in neighborhoods such as Shaw (Ruble; Gringlas).

While the existing literature largely captured the economic implications of D.C.'s gentrification—or the removal of low-income individuals from neighborhoods in favor of

wealthy individuals—and displacement—or the situation where "residents can no longer afford to remain in their homes due to rising housing costs"—it fell short in explaining the social and emotional consequences of the city's redevelopment and shifting demographics ("Tools"). Outside of one analysis on the mental health effects of gentrification, I believed that the literature did not sufficiently address the qualitative effects of this issue on D.C.'s Black residents since Mayor Williams' term in the early 2000s (DeStefano 2).

In this investigation, I intended on filling this critical gap by responding to the following research question: *what socio-emotional effects has gentrification in Washington, D.C had on its Black population?* Closing this gap entailed deploying a mixed-methods approach. To do this, I first incorporated quantitative data through government and nonprofit reports that provided background on gentrification's economic effects on D.C.'s Black residents. Then, I included qualitative research through 17 semi-structured, one-on-one Zoom interviews with scholars, local business owners, elected officials, activists, and residents.

To supplement these interviews, I also sent over Google surveys to the interviewees. More specifically, I issued the surveys to the 12 out of 17 interviewees that were Black and brown and that had lived in Washington, D.C. for at least the last 10 years. I did not survey academic scholars who had researched D.C.'s gentrification from a broader lens but rather ordinary residents that had lived in the city and experienced the effects of its rapid social and economic changes firsthand. Furthermore, I surveyed Black residents across various ages, genders, and neighborhoods to account for the diverse experiences of D.C.'s residents. Ultimately, these survey participants included three children, two college students, one cab driver, one security officer, one journalist, one activist, one grandmother, and two business operators (Appendix A). Seven of these individuals were male and five of them were female.

The ages of these individuals spanned from 14 at the time of interview to 89 years old, and the neighborhoods covered included Columbia Heights, Shaw, U Street, Anacostia, Potomac Gardens, and Mayfair. The 11-question surveys asked these individuals to select an option from 1-4 that best described how safe and welcomed they felt in their communities, how racially and economically diverse their neighborhoods were, and how much culture remained in D.C. from previous decades, among other questions (Appendix C). My purpose for issuing this survey was to quantify the social and emotional effects on D.C.'s Black population so that they were more easily measurable and, thus, understandable for those who read this report or wish to follow up on the research I conducted.

After utilizing these methods, I uncovered several findings about the social and emotional effects of D.C.'s rising gentrification on its Black residents. Firstly, through my exploratory interviews, I found out why and how gentrification in D.C., more than many other U.S. cities, was a difficult issue with a very complex history. D.C.'s unique federal government presence, lack of taxable property, and former mayor Williams' economic legacy in the city left some of the business owners I interviewed especially conflicted on how to approach the issue of gentrification and its effects. Nevertheless, my interviews with business owners, activists, and working-class residents painted a clearer picture of gentrification's social and emotional effects on D.C.'s Black population. From these interviews, I gathered that longtime and Black—two terms that I will use together or interchangeably throughout the paper, given D.C.'s continued majority-Black population—residents, or those who lived in the city for at least 10 years, bore the brunt of the city's rising costs of living. Many struggled from the emotional toll of trying to stay afloat and, for some, being forced out of their own neighborhoods altogether. I also discovered that D.C.'s gentrification has produced an emotionally-straining "us vs. them" social

dynamic that has marginalized and isolated many of my Black interviewees. Many of these same interviewees also acknowledged that they feel emotionally drained from not feeling like they were being heard by their elected officials and having to confront the problem of overpolicing that was affecting their communities.

Ultimately, by collecting this information, I thoroughly explained gentrification's social and emotional effects on Black residents in the nation's capital in the last two decades. In the end, I completed a project that, through the incorporation of pertinent community voices—including several children who were not surveyed in previous research—shed light on gentrification and its effects on D.C.'s longtime residents. And with the findings from this investigation, this may move elected officials to better address the concerns of affected individuals that may have been unaccounted for before this project.

Literature Review

Background and Existing Research

For most of the 20th century, D.C. was known for its rich culture produced predominantly by its longtime Black residents. Until the 1970s, D.C.'s social, cultural, and economic vibrancy was the talk of the country. The "Black Broadway" neighborhood became a staple along the U Street corridor and was known for its "thriving Black-owned businesses and nightlife" (Mellendorf). Artists such as Chuck Brown contributed to the city's vitality by introducing go-go music, an "infectious musical style" that became D.C.'s anthem (Ruble). Ultimately, "Black Broadway" provided a cultural and economic boom for the city and led to the rise of the "Black Aristocracy" (Carlson). During the 1960s, D.C. was also known for its contributions to the civil rights movement. Leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. resided in the city and devised protest strategies at sites such as Lincoln Temple United and Metropolitan

Baptist churches (Mellendorf; Brown). In all, D.C. was largely defined by its Black residents and the rich culture they fostered during this time.

However, in the decades that followed, D.C. suffered tremendous economic losses. During the 1968 riots that started in response to Dr. King's assassination, residents broke into establishments across the U Street corridor and Columbia Heights neighborhood as violence swept the city's streets (Sheehy 15). As a result, many Black business owners and middle-class families moved out of the city (Carlson). Meanwhile, residents who remained in the city had to grapple with their neighborhoods' central stores and restaurants shutting down, devastating the local economy, and increasing crime substantially (Wogan). Crime rose more after the crack-cocaine epidemic sweeping through the U.S. ravaged D.C.'s majority-Black neighborhoods in the 1980s and early 90s (Mellendorf). As the War on Drugs hit the streets of the nation's capital, much of the economic and cultural vibrancy that exuded from D.C. in the decades prior was lost. Black residents were arrested and incarcerated for drug crimes at higher rates (Mellendorf). More Black residents also left the city altogether and moved to nearby suburbs, such as Prince George's County, Maryland, in hopes of finding economic opportunities and safe housing (Ruble). The latter part of the 20th century in the nation's capital was marred by social ailments that made living conditions difficult for D.C.'s Black residents.

When faced with economic issues in the nation's capital, city officials responded with initiatives they believed would revitalize the city's neighborhoods, but ultimately only displaced longtime residents. While redevelopment efforts had been underway in D.C. since the first seizures of Black-owned land after the Civil War, urban renewal efforts were most prominent following World War II (Smith; Lindsay-Herrera 1). After the war, the federal government purchased 560 acres of land to build homes and a commercial district in Southwest D.C. to

attract wealthy residents to lower-income neighborhoods (Lindsay-Herrera 1-2). This policy resulted in the displacement of nearly 24,000 residents and 1500 businesses in Southwest, and "the destruction of the social fabric, [that made] it difficult, if not impossible, for the former residents to maintain an ongoing sense of community with their former neighbors" (Lindsay-Herrera 5). In the end, federal leaders were unsuccessful in revitalizing Southwest D.C., instead leaving Black residents who remained in the area with few economic opportunities and rising crime (Lindsay-Herrera 8-9).

This lack of success, however, did not stop city officials from prioritizing redevelopment to revitalize D.C.'s neighborhoods in the following decades. In 1999, Mayor Anthony Williams was elected and, through his "Envisioning a Future Washington" plan, sought to attract over 100,000 new residents to raise tax revenue in the city's struggling neighborhoods (Sheehy 18; Smith). To make D.C. more attractable, Williams targeted its majority-Black and low-income neighborhoods that were hit especially hard by the 1968 race riots and ensuing crack-cocaine epidemic (Smith). Williams established new transit and commercial options, including a new subway stop along the neglected U Street Corridor, bike lanes downtown, and big box stores such as Target and Bed, Bath and Beyond in Columbia Heights (Sheehy 20; Wogan). Through this work, Williams also brought 20,000 new jobs into the city (Sheehy 18). Ultimately, he was successful in attracting new residents. However, many of these individuals were wealthy, white adults who worked in politics or were students who attended the city's prestigious private schools (Smith). Thus, while the city's revenue grew tremendously, so did rent costs and

property taxes (Lawrence 3). Income inequality rose as wealthy newcomers benefited disproportionately from D.C.'s rapid redevelopment.

In the years since, other mayors aimed to increase the city's tax revenue to revitalize D.C.'s neighborhoods. In 2007, Mayor Adrian Fenty sought to bring down poverty levels and make D.C. more appealing to wealthy families by addressing the city's struggling public schools. After appointing Michelle Rhee as the Chancellor of D.C. Public Schools (DCPS), he and Rhee immediately began to fire teachers and institute new standards of learning (Sheehy 20). Ultimately, both officials proceeded too quickly in enacting these reforms, leading to the closing of several schools and a reversion of DCPS back to its struggling state (Sheehy 20). Mayor Vincent Gray, meanwhile, introduced more retail establishments such as the Skyland Town Center into Southeast DC after being elected in 2011 (Delgadillo). While Gray, more than his predecessors, supported D.C.'s longtime residents by increasing accessibility to health care services and full-service grocery stores in low-income areas, he did little to protect vulnerable, majority-Black Ward 7 from over-policing (Delgadillo). Current mayor Muriel Bowser, meanwhile, raised D.C.'s minimum hourly wage to $15 and successfully instituted more affordable housing and childcare services to D.C. residents (Sheehy 22). However, Bowser also

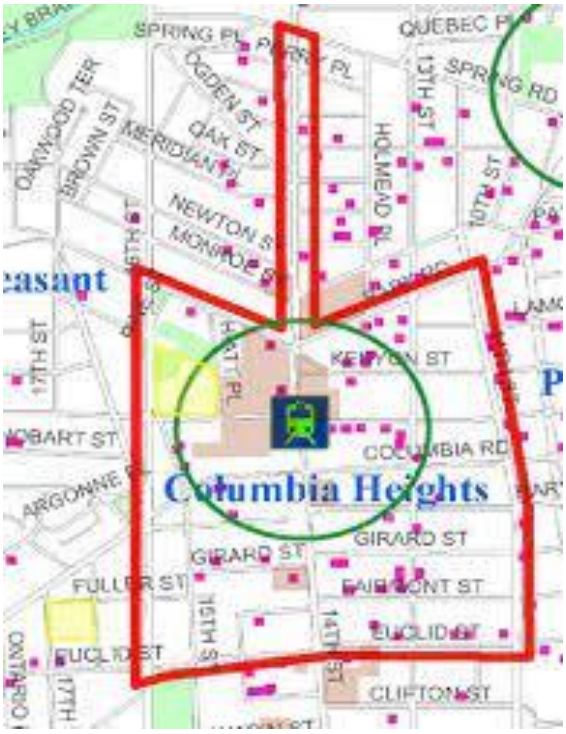

Figure 3: Map for D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams' "Envisioning a Future Washington" Columbia Heights-U Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan in the early 2000s (Brookings 2003, 13)

constructed more high-end condominiums in neighborhoods such as Columbia Heights and Anacostia, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic (Wogan; Goodnight). Through this development, the mayor "squeez[ed] out the poor and middle class while reaping the benefits of a growing economy" (Wogan). Thus, gentrification continued in the District, even as city leaders attempted to resolve it.

Gentrification's effects were vast for residents, particularly for the Black population. Economically, higher property taxes made it less affordable for longtime Black residents to remain in the city. D.C. home prices also averaged over $520,000, making it harder for lower and middle-income residents to move into the city (Wogan). And for those who wished to lease instead of purchase homes, rising rent also made this difficult. In Columbia Heights, for example, rent prices went up by over 50 percent after 2000 (Wogan). The city government also tore down more public housing complexes in areas such as Ward 7 and Ward 8 to make way for newer—and more expensive—public amenities (Dwyer). As a result, more Black residents moved out of the city and wealthy, white residents moved in to take advantage of the city's new housing, retail, and employment options (Wogan). From 1980 to 2015, D.C. lost 135,000 Black residents while simultaneously gaining 66,000 white residents (Baca & Finio). Black residents also experienced higher rates of evictions, especially after Mayor Bowser's efforts to establish new high-end stores and restaurants that raised living costs in the city (Richardson et al. 5; Goodnight). Because of these policies, D.C. had the "highest percentage of households making more than $200,000 a year and the greatest income divide among the rich and poor in the country" (Sheehy 26). Ultimately, D.C.'s gentrification ravished its Black population economically while bolstering its new, white population.

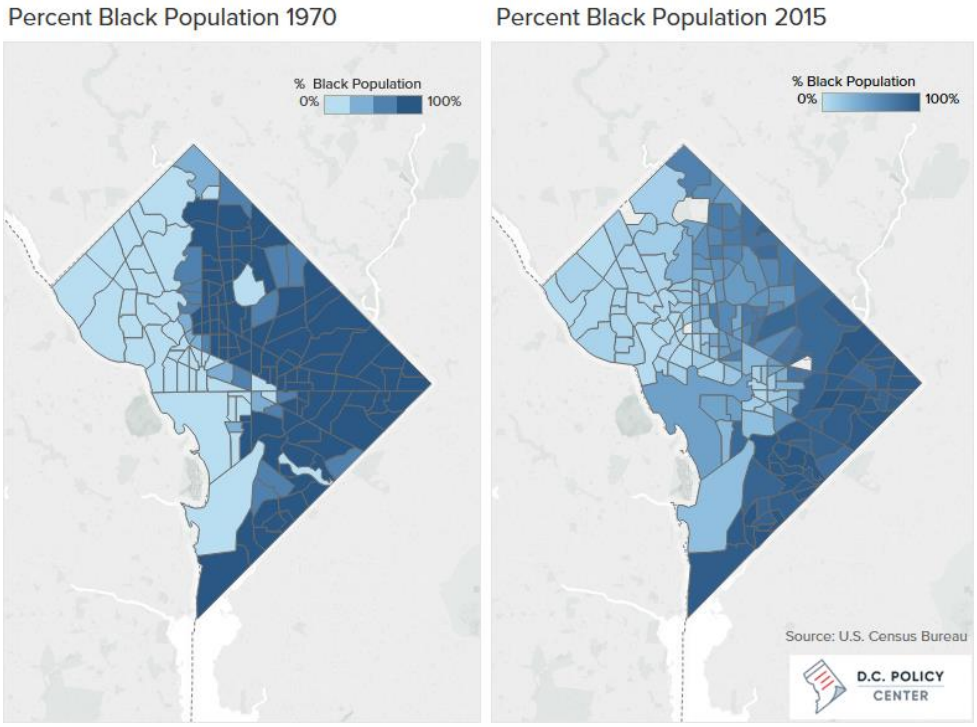

Figure 4: Map of Black Demographic Change in the District from 1980 to 2015. During this time, D.C. saw thousands of its longtime Black residents move out of the city and thousands more white, wealthy individuals move into the city (Rusk 2017).

The city's gentrification also hurt Black residents in less quantifiable ways. As about 20,000 Black residents were displaced from 2000 to 2010—allowing for D.C. to become the most gentrified city in the U.S.—and thousands more white newcomers flooded predominantly Black neighborhoods, many of these locales were rid of their established identities and culture (Velasco & Taylor; Mellendorf; DeStefano 26). Mayors Williams, Fenty, and Gray shut down venues that once defined these neighborhoods and propped up new sites that catered to the city's growing young, white, and wealthy population (Wogan). In Columbia Heights, gone were the "1950s-style waffle shop, the laundromats, [and] the barbershops where neighborhood men used to congregate", and in their place were the "frozen yogurt shops, a vegan bakery, a Greek tapas restaurant and a coffee shop specializing in crepes" (Wogan). As gentrification spread, the D.C.

city council also emphasized “development-directed policing” to “protect and respond to the priority of newer residents and businesses, who [were] disproportionately white and more affluent...and surveil and criminal[ize] behaviors of long-term residents, who [were] disproportionately Black and Latinx” (Velasco & Taylor). Through these efforts, city leaders sought to attract and retain wealthy, white residents to boost the local economy.

Overall, redevelopment in Washington, D.C. had a tremendous impact on both its new and established populations. The resulting economic and educational opportunities attracted white, wealthy residents into the city. For longtime Black residents, on the other hand, this development led directly to the gentrification of their neighborhoods. Many Black residents bore higher living costs and were confronted with more policing to make white residents feel comfortable moving into and staying in the city (Velasco & Taylor). Gentrification also contributed to thousands of Black residents leaving the city, often where they had lived for generations, for suburbs such as Prince George’s County that promised lower living costs and more opportunities for employment and establishing their own neighborhoods (Ruble). Thus, gentrification was detrimental to D.C.’s Black residents as city officials seemingly prioritized attracting wealthier, white residents to the city over reinvesting in its existing population.

Theory and Existing Research

Contests Over Space

Several theoretical frameworks explained D.C.’s gentrification. Dr. Kathryn Howell’s central concept in her “For the Kids” piece was one of these theories (Howell). To explain how gentrification reflected various battles over space, particularly in urban environments, Dr. Howell first highlighted the distinction between how white children and children of color were embraced in D.C. She noted that the city’s economic growth “created a clear demarcation in which older African American and Latino children are feared and discouraged from using public

spaces, whereas amenities are built to accommodate young white children" (Howell 8). Dr. Howell then discussed how adults continually contended over space in areas such as the Trolley Turnaround park in Columbia Heights. She explained that before 2012, the park served as a space where many Black adults convened over drinks and card games (Howell 8-9). Black residents fought to preserve this purpose but, to reduce loitering and make the park more welcoming for families moving in, the District's Department of Parks and Recreation redeveloped it. The agency replaced much of the area where adults could mingle with abundant play equipment for young children (Howell 9-10). With this change, families flocked to the park, taking up space where Black residents had once felt welcomed (Howell 12). Trolley Turnaround park demonstrated just one example of how longtime residents and newcomers waged battles over space in a rapidly-gentrifying D.C. neighborhood—a struggle that white newcomers ultimately won.

Other instances of longtime, predominantly-Black Washingtonians fighting for communal space against new, mostly white residents also supported Dr. Howell's framework. One prominent struggle over physical space in recent years was reflected through the 2019 Howard University protests. The struggle stemmed from white neighborhood residents using Howard's lawn—where students would host both formal and informal cultural events—to walk their dogs (Ruble). Due to Howard students' growing concerns that their space at the historically-Black university, long serving as a safe haven for Black youth, was disregarded and abused by wealthy, white newcomers, many students protested. After two weeks of demonstrations on the streets and through the media that saw Howard students and white homeowners challenge one another over their right to space in the neighborhood, the university's president banned all outside dog walking on campus (O'Neal). Nonetheless, the protests did not

end without Black students and white neighbors, the latter of whom moved into the neighborhood to take advantage of the economic opportunities available to them due to gentrification and displacement, publicly battling over physical space and the power granted by it to exist and thrive as individuals.

A prominent battle over *social* space, meanwhile, occurred through the #DontMuteDC movement. In early 2019, white residents who lived near a Metro PCS store in the Shaw neighborhood complained about the noise coming from go-go music that longtime Black residents had played on streets for generations (Kurzius; Ruble). Soon, the store owner banned the music, prompting a wave of protests—ultimately becoming the #DontMuteDC campaign that gained steam across the District—as well as a petition with over 80,000 signatories issued to store owners, company executives, and city officials (Ruble). Eventually, the MetroPCS president reversed the prior decision, allowing for go-go music to be played again in front of the store (Ruble). Much like at Howard University, however, this case revealed strong contests over space between longtime Black residents, who sought to maintain a neighborhood culture and identity that spanned decades, and white newcomers, who merely hoped to bring tranquility to their lives. And while the Howard and #DontMute examples resulted in both symbolic and tangible victories for longtime residents in their claims to space, similar "defeats" to that at Trolley Park appeared common amidst D.C.' s redevelopment.

Nonetheless, I made some assumptions with this framework. For one, I assumed that D.C.'s longtime Black residents and relatively new white residents fought battles over space largely because of the city's rising gentrification and the former's displacement, rather than due to typical, *temporary* conflicts over space that arise when new neighbors move into a neighborhood. Moreover, I assumed that many of these white residents who contended over

physical and social space in the nation's capital were those who had recently moved into the city because of gentrification, while the Black residents they fought were largely residents who were established in D.C.'s neighborhoods.

But, in the end, this theory explained the push-and-pull relationship that many remaining Black residents in D.C. had with white outsiders who moved into their neighborhoods and disregarded their established community (Kurzius). Wealthy, white outsiders moving into predominantly-Black, lower-income neighborhoods contributed to higher rent and property taxes that hurt longtime Black residents financially (Prince). Additionally, Black residents who saw wealthy, white individuals move in and Black neighbors be forced out often felt that their established places of residence, institutions, and norms were attacked by these newcomers (Kurzius). The reality that Black residents competed for their right to community, and the resulting mental and emotional toll on them, was a central focus of this study. This was most apparent through my interview and survey questions that asked residents how welcomed they felt by newcomers, and whether they still had safe havens amidst the constant migration of individuals in and out of D.C. and pushback from white neighbors.

Location Theory

In addition to Dr. Howell's framework, scholar Will Lawrence's location theory also explained gentrification's effects on neighborhood demographics and power dynamics in cities. Lawrence, however, explained what makes some cities so appealing to wealthy newcomers, and how these newcomers moving into urban neighborhoods was emblematic of a "perpetuating process of gentrification" (Lawrence 5). The scholar first noted that even with opportunities for employment being appealing to these individuals, high crime often deterred suburban residents from moving into a city (Lawrence 3). While local officials may address crime to protect existing Black and brown populations, Lawrence noted that these steps also contribute to a cycle of

gentrification (Lawrence 5). One of the appealing factors for suburbanites to move into a city is a decrease in crime, perhaps caused by lower-income neighborhoods having more retail spaces and police (Lawrence 3). As crime decreases, more wealthy suburbanites migrate to the city, subsequently driving up home prices in low-income neighborhoods and incentivizing developers to build more upscale businesses to satisfy newcomers' desires (Lawrence 5-6). The result is the displacement of low-income and minority residents in cities, in favor of wealthy outsiders whose migration is both an effect and cause of gentrification.

Lawrence's theory around how crime affected gentrification and displacement in cities seemed apt for Washington, D.C. Admittedly, I also made some key assumptions with this framework. One of them was that wealthy suburbanites in the greater D.C. region indeed contributed to this "cycle of gentrification", and not solely low-income individuals who fell in the same socioeconomic group as those living in D.C.'s low-income neighborhoods and would likely not have had as much of an impact in pricing out longtime residents. Additionally, I assumed that the net-loss of D.C.'s elected officials implementing policies to lower crime and poverty in the city, largely caused by the increased displacement of longtime residents due to rising costs of living, outweighed any supposed gain from these policies incentivizing longtime residents to stay in the city.

Nonetheless, D.C.'s history encapsulated Lawrence's theory. In the early 1990s, D.C. was known as the murder capital of the U.S. and was on the heels of a crack-cocaine epidemic that ravished many of its predominantly-Black, low-income neighborhoods (Izadi). As crime rose, city leaders including Mayor Williams hoped to make the city safer. Instead of reinvesting into D.C.'s struggling communities, however, Williams and his successors sought to attract new, wealthy residents to increase revenue and lower crime (Sheehy 21). This plan did lower the

crime rate, leaving it at a 50-year low in 2011, and boost D.C.'s economy (Izadi). However, the economic gains from these initiatives were not spread evenly. White suburbanites who moved into the city in the late 1990s and 2000s, as crime went down, benefited most from the availability of more educational, employment, and retail opportunities (Izadi). By residing in the city, white newcomers also indirectly forced out longtime Black residents who could no longer afford rising rent, home prices, and property and sales taxes (Prince). And for those longtime residents who remained in the District's economically-segregated neighborhoods, many became impoverished, as evidenced by D.C.'s poverty rate going up from 28 percent to over 33 percent from 1990 to 2011 despite the decrease in crime (Izadi). This history, then, only seemed to validate Lawrence's analysis on crime and how the flow of wealthy, white suburbanites into cities serves as both a cause and effect of urban gentrification and displacement.

Much like Dr. Howell's concept of contests over space in urban locations, Lawrence's location theory grounded my research. In the literature, Lawrence explained how city leaders' efforts to protect existing marginalized populations most affected by crime often ended up working against these individuals and, instead, contributed to their replacement by wealthy outsiders (Lawrence 2-3). Lawrence's general discussion around the cyclical nature of gentrification and its relation to public safety and the migration of wealthy, white individuals into cities was important in explaining the never-ending emotional distress Black residents have been subjected to in D.C. Even as local leaders such as Mayor Bowser took well-intentioned measures to reduce crime so that Black residents were better protected, the District's important standing in the region and abundant work opportunities left many longtime residents constantly concerned about their eventual displacement ("Mayor Bowser Kicks Off"). Location theory was important in illustrating how fear contributed to the emotional instability of many longtime

Black residents. Thus, my methods for this study were influenced by Lawrence's concept so that I could provide a stronger assessment of gentrification's impacts on these individuals. This was evident when I asked D.C. Ward 1 Councilmember Brianne K. Nadeau why the city's increased development and reduced crime during the late 2000s and early 2010s were correlated with rising displacement of Black residents. It was also clear when I asked Black community members in post-interview surveys how safe they felt in their neighborhoods and whether their answer was influenced by white newcomers moving into the area. In the end, Lawrence's location theory undergirded my approach in tackling how D.C.'s Black residents were socially and emotionally affected by the city's growing gentrification.

While much of the existing literature strongly captured the economic implications of D.C.'s gentrification and offered some understanding of its social and emotional effects through research such as Taylor DeStefano's study on the effects of the city's gentrification on mental health outcomes, it fell short in incorporating first-hand, qualitative accounts of how the city's redevelopment and shifting demographics affected longtime residents, including through related issues such as overpolicing and the closing of Black-owned businesses.

Through this research, and the incorporation of contests over space and location theory, I resolved some of the limitations and gaps in the existing research. I interviewed Black residents—including youth, activists, business owners—as well as elected officials who had experienced gentrification first-hand or played a significant role in advancing it in D.C. Additionally, in my interviews, I asked questions about the social and emotional effects this gentrification had on their lives, going beyond the surface-level economic statistics that defined much of the existing research on this issue. Lastly, I came into the project with an important personal connection to the issue. Much of the existing research on this issue involved scholars

who were outsiders to the area, and who solely observed D.C.'s gentrification from a bird's-eye view. In other words, I found that many of these individuals did not have much lived experience with this issue, other than engaging with it in an academic space. For this project, I sought to utilize my connections in the community, particularly with youth and small business owners, to investigate the issue of D.C.'s gentrification further, all while accounting for voices that were not included in previous research.

Methodology

To analyze the effects of gentrification more completely in the nation's capital, I conducted a mixed methods study. To first provide background on the issue, I gathered quantitative data from 19 combined local and national news articles, government reports, and scholarly literature focused on gentrification's tangible, economic effects on D.C.'s Black population, including rising rent and business operation costs, property taxes, home values, and sales prices. To collect data on historical trends in tax rates and changing neighborhood demographics, for example, I used the D.C. Government's March 2020 Tax Rates report, the D.C. Fiscal Policy Institute's "Evolution of DC Tax Rates Since the Early 2000s" report, and the Journal of Urban Health's report on gentrification, neighborhood change, and population health in the city. Ultimately, this data contextualized the gentrification issue in the nation's capital.

My own experiences confronting gentrification in D.C. and reading the existing literature on the issue also led me to gather qualitative data for this paper, particularly through interviews. My childhood was largely spent visiting my uncle's D.C. home and interacting with those who lived in his Columbia Heights neighborhood. As the block was being gentrified and Black residents were forced out and wealthy, white outsiders moved in, my cousins and their remaining Black neighbors would often voice to me how isolated they felt in their own neighborhood and

upset that city officials did not address their living concerns. While these conversations generally motivated me to investigate D.C.'s gentrification, they also pushed me to center the voices of Black residents so that I could more completely assess this issue. Previous studies such as Dr. Howell's examination of gentrification's effects on the safety of children further informed me of the power of *semi-structured* interviews. While these interviews may limit researchers to strictly qualitative data that may be hard to measure, I found that this method often helps to capture the personal stories of those most affected by the issue—ones that often cannot be told through mere statistics. Thus, after recalling my experiences engaging with Columbia Heights residents and researching secondary sources, I included semi-structured interviews in my study.

In gathering this qualitative data, I first sought out scholars who could provide macro-level assessments of how gentrification has been reproduced and addressed by city officials since Anthony Williams' mayoral term. I reached out via email, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter to distinguished academics and elected officials I found through an initial search of online news reports and scholarly publications. Then, I wrote up a standard, 11-question interview guide that asked respondents whether they have been able to maintain and build relationships with community members over the years, what their experiences have been like witnessing and confronting D.C.'s gentrification, and how have their interactions looked like with local businesses and elected officials. Afterwards, I conducted 30-50 minute, Zoom-recorded exploratory interviews with scholars including Drs. Howell, Sabiyha Prince, and Derek Hyra (Appendix A). I also interviewed D.C. Ward 1 Councilmember Brianne Nadeau, who serves the rapidly-gentrifying neighborhoods of Columbia Heights and U Street (Appendix A). In all, these interviewees offered insight into the history of gentrification in the city and its social and emotional impacts on D.C.'s longtime residents and business owners.

In addition to interviewing scholars to provide a broader lens on gentrification, I also interviewed community members who have been directly affected by this issue. To secure these interviews, I utilized opportunity and snowball sampling, both interviewing Black residents who simply had the time to talk to me and interviewing those recommended by these same residents. In all, I engaged with small business owners, community activists, and ordinary residents, including children, who had important stories to share on gentrification and its effects ("The Role"; Appendix A). On Zoom sessions lasting between 20 and 45 minutes, depending on the length of responses, I interviewed individuals including co-founder and owner of the historic Ben's Chili Bowl Virginia Ali, Vice President of Lee's Flower Shop Stacie Lee Banks, EmpowerDC activist Daniel del Pielago, Greater Greater Washington organizer Alex Baca, and three children who I used pseudonyms for to protect their identities (Appendix A). These residents also came from various areas of D.C., including the Columbia Heights, U Street, Anacostia, and Navy Yard neighborhoods—areas of the city that have been heavily gentrified as a response to crime and poverty (Lindsay-Herrera 3-4). In the end, I interviewed various individuals who were affected by gentrification and were not included in the existing literature.

After collecting this qualitative data, I analyzed it so that it could ground my investigation. Learning from my previous experience engaging in qualitative research through the public policy major, I decided to first upload the audio Zoom files of the interviews on the *Otter.ai* transcription service. After receiving the Microsoft Word transcripts from this site, I color coded themes that came up across the 17 interviews I conducted. This process was helpful in both pulling out themes among the interviews and individual quotes that would support them in my research. So, while this data analysis method was time-consuming and favored consensus

themes in this research over outlier claims, it still was useful in uncovering common socio-emotional effects of D.C.'s gentrification on Black residents.

I also sought to quantify the information gathered from these interviews to better measure and convey gentrification's social and emotional effects on D.C.'s Black residents. To complement the latter semi-structured interviews, I made Google surveys that attempt to measure four distinct outcomes: how physically and emotionally safe Black residents feel in their neighborhoods, how well Black residents know their neighbors, how bearable Black residents feel the costs of living (i.e., rent and housing costs, retail prices, and sales and income taxes) are in the city, and how responsive public officials are to Black residents' concerns (Appendix C). On the surveys, I asked the study's subjects to mark on scales of 1-4—with room left for further explanation—their response to these outcomes, addressed over 11 questions, with the last question being reserved for additional information the respondent would like to share (Appendix C). Ultimately, these surveys translated and quantified the sentiments of relevant stakeholders on D.C.'s gentrification into more consumable values for those who examine this project and perhaps those who would like to build on it in the future.

Through the combination of economic-based research, qualitative interviews, and quantitative surveys, the project's methodology provided valuable insight into D.C.'s gentrification. Nonetheless, one may still believe that because of my own negative experiences confronting gentrification in the nation's capital, personal bias hindered this research project. I took several measures, however, to reduce this bias. I framed the survey questions so that they did not sway the participant in choosing a particular answer, instead leaving a broad scale that accounts for positive and negative responses. Additionally, to reduce sampling bias more specifically, I interviewed subjects from all backgrounds with various views on gentrification in

D.C., including government officials who helped advance it. By taking these steps, I intended to minimize my own experiences and instead bring others to the forefront. However, this methodology still bears some limitations. Firstly, I was unable to interview more of the policymakers who were primarily responsible for the gentrification situation in Washington, D.C., despite attempts to reach individuals such as current mayor Muriel Bowser. Additionally, I was unable to survey entire communities through my research because of time constraints, instead strategically selecting individuals who were representative of D.C.'s Black population. However, I believe these limitations can be resolved through further investigation on this issue.

Findings

To assess my central research question of how gentrification in D.C. affected community members socially and emotionally, I conducted 17 interviews with community members. These individuals included local scholars, elected officials, activists, and everyday residents. Through these conversations, I gathered perspectives from various individuals who studied, implemented, and were directly impacted by D.C.'s gentrification over the last 23 years. Part of the reason for this was to make my findings generalizable across D.C.'s Black population, especially with the limitation that I could not interview or survey every Black resident in the city.

From these interviews, I found five common themes around gentrification and its socio-emotional effects on longtime Black residents that I included in this section. I first pointed out the complexity and uniqueness around the history and effects of gentrification in the nation's capital. Then, I discussed how Black residents bore the emotional brunt of D.C.'s rising costs of living. Afterwards, I dove into the "us vs. them" dynamic that formed between remaining Black residents and white newcomers who effectively competed over space in the city. I also explained how several Black residents felt neglected by their own elected officials, believing that these

leaders focused on making D.C. more attractive to outsiders and not on resolving the issues affecting longtime residents. Finally, I discussed how gentrification-caused overpolicing in the city's neighborhoods only further strained Black residents.

D.C.'s Capital Status, History, and Residents Have Complicated Its Gentrification

Gentrification Was Uniquely Tied to the Federal Government and Williams' "Envisioning" Plan

While sharing similarities with other U.S. cities, gentrification in Washington, D.C. was unique. Dr. Hyra, for one, explained that unlike in other big cities such as Chicago where gentrification affected various racial and ethnic communities, gentrification and displacement in the nation's capital disproportionately harmed African Americans due to the city being majority-Black for much of its history (Hyra Interview). While also pointing out that the lack of affordable housing in D.C. only helped increase gentrification, Dr. Hyra explained that D.C.'s unique status and size further contributed to this rise:

> The city council has sort of a limitation in that almost 40% to 50% of the properties in Washington are not taxable, because they either are universities, or government agencies, or embassies. So, it is very hard for the city to bring forward the tax base revenue that they need to run the city. And the real estate industry puts so much money into the campaigns of the politicians that it makes it very difficult for political officials to say "no" to high income development, and "yes" to affordable housing. So, when the city is thinking about how they are going to raise sufficient revenue to run the city, they are always thinking, how do we take underutilized properties and redevelop them for higher income, so we can tax it and then bring in more money for the political coffers to run city programs. (Hyra Interview)

Dr. Hyra pointed out that because D.C. housed several non-taxable organizations, caused by its combined position as a federal city and college town, there was less property to generate the tax

base revenue that city officials needed to operate the city. Thus, these same officials sought to "take underutilized properties and redevelop them for higher income" to attract more wealthy individuals and upscale businesses to D.C. By bringing in this wealth, however, the city focused less on constructing affordable housing, thus leaving many lower-income residents to grapple with rising costs of living with little financial support from the D.C. government. As a result, more low-income residents were forced out of their homes (Izadi).

Grounding the issue of unstable affordable housing was also D.C.'s unique federal-city government dynamic. Ward 1 Councilmember Brianne Nadeau, representing the highly-gentrified areas of Columbia Heights and the U Street Corridor, explained that the federal government's desire to construct affordable housing complexes in D.C. only to have the city government handle most of the finances for this work left the latter scrambling.

> The biggest portfolio of affordable housing is the DC Housing Authority, which is a quasi-governmental entity that has housing stocked that is, in many cases, undignified and unsafe. And it's tricky because this is housing that was mandated to be built by the federal government, and then the federal government bailed on it financially. And so every authority has been left holding the bag with portfolio housing that they can't afford to maintain. And so, they look to us as the local government to try to…pay $100 million. That's a pretty big chunk of money for us. So, the public-private [redevelopment] is often what we turn to which sometimes people do not like. (Nadeau Interview)

Here, Councilmember Nadeau explained that the federal government was at least somewhat to blame for the recent affordable housing problems in D.C. While the federal government may have had good intentions in issuing such housing in the District, such as allowing longtime Black residents to remain in the city, Nadeau claims that their unwillingness to finance these projects

put much of the burden on the city government to maintain them. And because, as Dr. Hyra mentioned, the city government was capped in the amount of tax base revenue it could generate from public property, it struggled to protect housing that subsequently became "undignified and unsafe". Furthermore, as the D.C. government looked to outside, "public-private [redevelopment]" to generate wealth and make up for the large costs of housing in the city, they may have further gentrified neighborhoods by raising the costs of living and forcing some low-income residents to move out.

In addition to affordable housing, the federal government's unique role in pushing homeownership altogether, alongside local government and real estate companies, in the nation's capital also contributed to much of the city's gentrification. In the case of Columbia Heights in particular, Dr. Howell explained that all three community stakeholders promoted homeownership "like it was going out of style" with incentives such as no teaser rate loans—or interest rates on mortgages that start off slow after the initial purchase but typically increase over one's residence—and no down payments, ultimately causing homeownership to "explode" in the neighborhood (Howell Interview; Rafter). She noted that the stakeholders' push for more homeownership in Columbia Heights seemed to be a good idea as it encouraged more long-term investors in the area, rather than attract temporary residents or visitors who may have not contributed as much to the community (Howell Interview). However, as predominantly-white and affluent individuals flooded the neighborhood, property taxes soared (Howell Interview). Thus, many longtime, Black residents were likely displaced as they could no longer afford to stay in the area.

Lastly, in assessing how public policy allowed gentrification to become so widespread across the District during the first two decades of the 21st century, one must consider the lasting

impacts of Mayor Williams' "Envisioning a Future Washington" redevelopment plan. This is because many of those I interviewed still attributed Williams' lack of foresight exhibited in his 1999 plan to deepening the gentrification problem. Nadeau, for example, pointed out that while Williams' plan was another policy that may have been implemented with the intention of revitalizing the District and improving the lives of established residents, it instead "left city officials [like herself] to play catch-up to account for the plan's damaging effects" (Nadeau Interview). Williams' construction of more big-box stores and upscale condominiums in previously low-income neighborhoods, largely to boost tax revenue in the city, left leaders such as Nadeau scrambling to combat the displacement of thousands of longtime Black residents (Nadeau Interview; Sheehy 2020; Wogan). Thus, Nadeau and others conveyed that Williams' economic policies in the late 1990s and early 2000s left a legacy of gentrification in D.C. that persists.

Varying Perspectives among D.C.'s Black Residents Further Complicated the Issue

While the policies I discussed thus far contributed to the complexity and uniqueness of gentrification in the nation's capital, much of this complexity also lied in the internal struggles some residents had around the benefits and drawbacks of this change. Dr. Howell provided a glimpse into this struggle.

> What [longtime Black residents] do talk about is missing the sense of community. Sometimes they miss, like being able to know their neighbors talking to their neighbors. But they *also* say, 'I can go to the shop with all my kids, and we can sit down to a meal. We couldn't do that before.' 'I can go to my best friend at midnight, and go and have hot chocolate. And we just talk and we talk and it's so great, because I can walk in my neighborhood and feel safe. (Howell Interview)

By explaining that some longtime residents "miss[ed] the sense of community" in their rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods yet enjoyed the safety they felt when walking outside and spending time with friends—a sentiment also shared by about 58% of the respondents I surveyed—Dr. Howell demonstrated residents' mixed feelings around gentrification in D.C. (Appendix D3). Through these varying public sentiments, even amongst the same people, the issue of gentrification in the city and its effects on the city's Black population was further complicated.

The issue became even more complicated when assessing gentrification's effects on Black businesses that were operating in D.C. for decades. Stacie Lee Banks, the president of one of the last remaining civil rights-era, Black-owned businesses on U Street in Lee's Flower Shop, explained why:

> The MetroPCS incident occurred when new residents were complaining about [the playing of go-go music]...starting off the #DontMuteDC campaign. But [gentrification] has also been bittersweet for us because it has also brought a whole new audience…a whole new customer base to us (Banks Interview).

Through this statement, Banks uncovers the internal struggle she had when assessing the positives and negatives of gentrification, both as a native Washingtonian and operator of one of the few Black-owned businesses remaining in the District from the 1960s. By referencing the #DontMuteDC campaign and MetroPCS incident, Banks implied that as gentrification brought more white people into the District, longtime Black residents were forced to

Figure 5: Image of the MetroPCS storefront in D.C.'s Shaw neighborhood. The storefront was at the center of controversy around residents' ability to play go-go music in public spaces.

compete over physical and social space in their own neighborhoods. But, she then pointed out that this same influx of white residents into D.C., that challenged her right and that of other Black natives to effectively exist in their hometown, brought a new customer base over time to her business. In the end, both Banks' engagement with gentrification and Dr. Howell's conversations with other Black residents only further demonstrated the incredible complexity that surrounded gentrification and its effects on D.C.'s Black population.

Rising Living Costs Placed Immense Emotional Burden on Longtime Residents

While D.C.'s rising gentrification led to higher costs of living for all residents, Black residents suffered the most. As city officials prioritized building high-rise condos and upscale businesses in lower-income neighborhoods to incentivize wealthier individuals moving into the city, Black residents paid higher rent and property taxes and were even displaced when they could no longer afford to live in the city (Goodnight; Watson). Nadeau noted that one of the biggest reasons why Black residents bore the brunt of D.C.'s rising costs of living was because so few of them were homeowners (Nadeau Interview). She explained:

> So, I think a lot of our families…might never be able to buy, which means they're constantly struggling with increasing rent. And even when you look at the advantages given to homeowners…so, you know, there's a higher percentage of white people who own homes in the District of Columbia. That's probably true in most cities. And when you're a homeowner, you get tax breaks. You get a tax break for being a homeowner every year on your IRS federal taxes that renters do not get. (Nadeau Interview)

In this comment, Nadeau explained that because longtime Black residents often did not have the financial means to become homeowners, they had to rent out their residence. With the increased flow of white residents in predominantly Black neighborhoods, Black residents were put at a

double disadvantage to their largely wealthy, white peers. Black residents first had to grapple with the volatility of rent prices in the District that, Nadeau noted, stemmed from more white residents purchasing homes in communities across the city. Secondly, Black renters were not afforded the tax break that white homeowners received from the IRS. As a result, Black residents' emotional stress remained high due to the financial reality around renting an apartment or home as D.C. rapidly gentrified.

This burden became even more apparent after interviewing longtime Black and brown residents and activists in the city. Firstly, 21-year Columbia Heights homeowner and cab driver Solomon Weldeghebriel had to deal with rising costs of living firsthand. While living in a small townhouse in his rapidly-gentrifying neighborhood, Weldeghebriel found these housing costs and other living expenses to be increasingly unbearable—a sentiment seemingly shared by all the Black residents I surveyed (Appendix D8 & D9). He noted:

> For us working class people, it is very sad. You have to pay a lot of property taxes. And because they turn the houses from one [residence] to eight [luxury condominiums], it hurts a lot. And I have tried to sustain a roof over my family's head without moving them for as long as possible. But, I don't know what's going to happen in the future because the city likes to increase the property tax by about $400-500 every year. Eventually, I may have to give up some property and unfortunately leave. (Weldeghebriel Interview)

Weldeghebriel expressed that it became more difficult to stay afloat in his Columbia Heights neighborhood. Due to property taxes increasing every year, he lived in constant fear of being forced out of the place he has called home since immigrating to the U.S. from Eritrea in the 1990s. This fear was only further heightened with real estate developers constantly constructing luxury condominiums around Weldeghebriel, effectively conveying the message that his time to

leave the neighborhood was coming soon. Weldeghebriel, like perhaps so many other D.C. residents over the years, had to deal with the difficulties of raising a family in the rapidly-gentrifying city. Despite the increasing costs of residing in D.C. and the allure of potentially selling his home to a wealthy buyer, Weldeghebriel tried to remain in D.C. so that he did not have to uproot his family of seven and could still work conveniently as a city cab driver. Thus, he was stuck dealing with gentrification's steep financial consequences, ultimately becoming mentally and physically exhausted from having to provide for his family while simultaneously fending off real estate developers that wished to move him out.

Furthermore, this emotional strain for D.C.'s Black residents was only multiplied for those who were forced out of their homes and displaced. In her research on mental health outcomes for displaced individuals in D.C., DeStefano first found that anxiety and depression was much more prevalent in children from rapidly-gentrifying areas than from neighborhoods that remained low-income (DeStefano 6). She explained that this disparity was caused by Black children's persistent concern over their family's worsening financial situation and the never-ending possibility of being forced out of their neighborhoods. Empower DC community organizer Daniel Del Pielago also noted that displaced residents struggled seeing their "neighborhoods be erased", and losing their ties to them because of development (Del Pielago Interview). Displaced individuals, then, not only had to grapple emotionally with their own housing instability but also the prospects of ending relationships they had formed over the years with neighbors and the community at-large.

Anthony James and Arnold Nguele faced such experiences with displacement in D.C. On being forced out of his childhood home, University of Chicago junior and Southeast D.C. native James felt tremendous emotional strain:

> We had [big-box and real estate] businesses coming into the city that raised rent values…and there were landlords who kicked out the tenants, and tried to replace them…I personally experienced this recently when about two years ago, my mom was removed out of our [childhood] home. (James Interview)

Taking advantage of the D.C.'s government's desire for development and wealthy residents, real estate developers successfully forced out James' family. He went on to describe this displacement as "frustrating", especially after his family held out for as long as possible, even through rising living costs. Meanwhile, Hope College freshman and Columbia Heights native Nguele also felt devastated after being forced out of his neighborhood during his high school years. He expressed that the newcomers in the neighborhood made him feel like he "lost [his] home because [his] family did not have enough money", and that as soon as he moved to a different high school in Maryland, he had "lost a lot of friends and [networks]" (Nguele Interview). Nguele had to grapple with feeling like an outsider in his own neighborhood, and an outcast in Maryland because of the social networks he lost after being forced out of D.C. In the end, James and Nguele similarly experienced the social and emotional costs of gentrification pricing familiar faces *and* eventually themselves out of their D.C. neighborhoods.

Gentrification Created A Straining "Us vs. Them" Between Black and White Residents

Black Residents Felt Isolated and Unsafe Amidst Newcomers

For many Black residents in the nation's capital, the city's gentrification left them feeling isolated and unsafe through the resulting us vs. them social dynamic with white newcomers. In an interview, Prince explained that gentrification often "generates privilege and increase [in wealth] for some, and on the other hand, is generating vulnerability for many African Americans…and [that] even though [gentrification] is framed as a solution, it just generates more privilege" (Prince Interview). Even as cities look to gentrification to boost revenue, lower crime,

and ultimately diversify predominantly-Black neighborhoods—which may lead some to assume that the influx of white newcomers into neighborhoods serves as a net-positive for Black residents—this social change may only further wealth disparities across such locations. Real estate developers, wealthy homeowners, and work professionals may be able to, on the one hand, take advantage of the new, upscale amenities that cities offer to attract more outsiders. Meanwhile, low-income residents who lived in these same cities for years may become more vulnerable to skyrocketing costs of living that make it more difficult for them to stay.

While the conversation thus far has underscored the economic advantages that wealthy newcomers maintain over established residents, this "privilege" also extends into the social and cultural space. As more wealthy outsiders move into cities and immediately claim territory that was occupied by generations of families, they effectively showcase their domination over longtime residents and disregard for established neighborhood identities. Southwest D.C. native and associate producer of "CBS This Morning" Arthur Jones II explained this when describing his story of being raised across from the Nationals Park Major League Baseball (MLB) stadium that underwent construction from 2006 to 2008 and has since hosted Washington Nationals games and other entertainment events. Over the years, I remember walking to Nationals games with family and friends and not really thinking twice about the effects of those events on the surrounding communities. It was difficult to think of Nationals Park as being anything but an economic boom and unifier for the community with city officials expressing that the stadium would lead to a "rebirth of the Anacostia waterfront" and the media reporting that the baseball team brought in more than $8 million in revenue to the nation's capital after they won the 2019 World Series (Gillespie et al.; Satterfield). Even Lawrence's location theory provided some counter framework to suggest that D.C.'s Black residents would have benefited from an MLB

stadium project that city officials hoped to bring down crime and, through more jobs, lift people out of poverty. But, Jones rebutted with a different, gloomy picture of being Black while growing up near the stadium. A picture that captured the rest of Lawrence's theory that suggested such crime prevention measures do more harm than good for existing residents by furthering gentrification:

> So as a child from 11 years old to a teen, before I graduated high school, I would hear every national anthem check, I would hear every security system check, I would hear every home run. So [the stadium] changed the way I grew up. And there was so much traffic, there was so much going on, there's so many more people in the neighborhood. That was really big as far as my upbringing…and a lot of the Black people moved out. Because the owners of the stadium were like, 'Hey, we're gonna give you money. So you can leave, we can turn this [neighborhood] into the next New Georgetown, the new Georgetown waterfront, and we're gonna put all these parking lots here, so everyone can get to the game easily. And basically, my parents and a half a dozen other homeowners just stood our ground and stayed…and we have had an interesting relationship with the neighborhood ever since. (Jones Interview)

Jones explained that he did not experience the same joy around Nationals home games that others did when visiting the stadium from other areas of D.C. and the suburbs. Nationals Park only disrupted the peace in Jones' neighborhood, as outsiders walked throughout the area and residents routinely heard the crowd noise from the stadium. Additionally, as Nationals Park's owners situated themselves in the Southeast community, Jones' expressed that they did not take a liking to the predominantly low-income communities that surrounded the stadium. The owners sought to build parking lots and retail stores, effectively establishing a "New Georgetown", to

make the watching experience more enjoyable for fans who flocked to the neighborhood. But while doing so, they attempted to force low-income residents out of the area, thus fostering a tremendous rift between the baseball organization and the stadium's surrounding communities. And since the stadium was completed in 2008, this us vs. them dynamic only worsened as Jones' parents and other longtime, low-income homeowners continued to stand their ground and the organization remained adamant about building their "New Georgetown", despite the additional living expenses created for such homeowners.

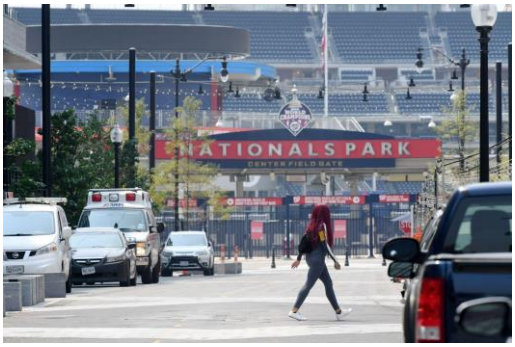

Figure 6: Image of Nationals Park, D.C.'s Major League Baseball (MLB) stadium completed in 2008, and its surrounding Southeast D.C. neighborhood. The relationship between the ballpark and surrounding community has been contentious over the years.

Furthermore, through the example of white, billionaire baseball owners constructing a multi-million-dollar ballpark in a low-income, predominantly-Black community in Southeast D.C., Jones validated many of Prince's sentiments around how gentrification is not a solution to crime and poverty and, instead, furthers privilege for some and vulnerability for others. With Nationals Park, this privilege fell along racial and socioeconomic lines. For one, MLB historically avoided housing a baseball team in Washington, D.C. during the late 20th century over fears of crime and an overwhelming Black population that would make it less safe for white fans to visit the ballpark (Bayne). And even as these fears lessened, to the point where Nationals Park was completed in Southeast D.C., 63% of the Washington Nationals fanbase was white—one of the highest percentages in an already predominantly white MLB (Silverman). Thus, Nationals Park served to increase the profits of white billionaire owners while also catering to a

predominantly-white audience that was willing to come into Southeast D.C. and spend money to attend games and purchase from upscale food and retail options. Meanwhile, the surrounding, mostly Black and low-income communities did not receive many of the economic gains from the ballpark. Jones also expressed that the perceived social benefits of the stadium, including more socioeconomic integration and less crime, did not pan out in his childhood neighborhood. He explained that many low-income residents felt detached from the baseball festivities (Jones Interview). He also claimed that while crime city-wide may have gone down since the construction of Nationals Park, shootings were still common only a few blocks from the stadium, as evidenced by the July 2021 shooting incident that caused fans to flee the ballpark (Jones Interview; Delaney & Alvarez). Through this life experience around the ballpark, then, Jones demonstrated one way gentrification generated privilege and wealth for some in D.C., while making others more economically and socially vulnerable.

Howell's theory of contestation over space only provided further explanation of how gentrification creates an "us vs. them" dynamic between D.C.'s longtime residents and newcomers. She explained that "[D.C. gentrification] patterns occur across space…and however you want to define whiteness, there's an 'in' crowd and there's an 'out' crowd, and the out crowd does not get to have [this space]" (Howell Interview). Howell illustrated that gentrification and "whiteness" coincided in D.C.'s gentrification. Amidst this gentrification, white newcomers were included in the "in crowd" that got to shape neighborhoods across the District, while longtime Black residents were the ones that were marginalized through this process. We saw a glimpse of these different "crowds" through Jones' Nationals Park story in Southeast and Southwest D.C., but over time, they became apparent across the nation's capital.

Black residents, firstly, were a part of the "out crowd" that felt left out socially in their own neighborhoods. Nate Richardson described the impact of this social exclusion in his Columbia Heights neighborhood:

> I feel uncomfortable…because I don't know the neighbors I see walking. It's just not 'homey' out….it's just not how it was before. Like, even when it comes to making friends with neighbors, even if they were Black, I just didn't grow up with them. It's not the same. (N. Richardson Interview)

His sister Semeya Richardson, then, only expounded on the isolation they felt as their longtime, mostly Black neighbors moved out and white neighbors moved in:

> We were friends with our [mostly Black] neighbors, but then they moved out and there are condos next door now [that house newcomers]. So, it's so many other people. And it's harder to meet new people that way. Because it's almost like I don't even know who's next to me. It's kind of weird in a way. Because a lot of people know their neighbors, but I don't. And it's mostly adults moving in, too, and not kids my age. I feel that that is a big reason why I did not really know anybody my age closeby. (S. Richardson Interview)

The Richardsons conveyed that being a part of the "out crowd" in their own neighborhood entailed being left out of the loop with their new neighbors moving in, including being unable to form the same relationships with them that they were able to create with their longtime Black neighbors. The influx of residents in and out of the neighborhood, then, lessened the Richardsons' opportunities to engage with their neighbors and a "homey" community that was both friendly and cooperative. Given that both Richardsons were youth, this product of gentrification and displacement was likely even more difficult to handle. They were at the point in their lives when making friends and engaging with the community were especially important

to their development as people. Forming relationships were critical in this developmental stage, and the Richardsons were deprived of the opportunity to form them while being relegated to the "out crowd".

By being excluded, Black residents also experienced a loss of established community traditions, engagement, and culture, as their new white counterparts immediately claimed territory in D.C.'s rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods. Nguele first explained the uninviting atmosphere that took over his Columbia Heights neighborhood:

> Gentrification did take away from the community itself and it definitely did take away from the type of people there…the community and liveliness of it all is not there anymore. So for kids that are growing up there, they are not going to get the same type of childhood…it's definitely changed for sure. (Nguele Interview)

Gentrification not only altered the demographic makeup of Nguele's neighborhood but also, through this alteration, shifted the entire energy of the neighborhood. No longer was it a community that was welcoming to all, including for young children who grew up in it; it became one that was characterized more by the inclusion of new residents than by the established identity created by generations of Black residents living in it. S. Richardson only expounded on this loss of community when describing how many of the bonding activities that she engaged with growing up disappeared as more Black residents moved out for white residents:

> We would have a little garden in the playground. And you could go there and just like plant stuff. And there were these people that were in charge of planting. All the kids would come and take turns and just [plant] together. And I don't think they do that anymore. And for Easter, they had a really big Easter egg hunt…for everybody. They don't do that anymore, too. (S. Richardson Interview)

In Richardson's neighborhood, gentrification contributed to the loss of neighborhood activities such as children playing on the playground and planting at the local park, as well as Easter egg hunts and community barbecues. As more wealthy white residents flooded Columbia Heights, simultaneously raising the costs of living and forcing Black residents out, Richardson witnessed how many of the traditions that helped her engage with the neighborhood as a child were also forced out to make room for her new neighbors.

While Nguele and Richardson communicated how gentrification further isolated and othered many Black residents, especially Black youth, D.C. high school student Jackie Smith and longtime Southeast D.C. native Tony Hamilton revealed how gentrification even more dramatically affected the community fabric of D.C. Smith started by describing a symbolic experience while traversing the nation's capital:

> So, we are walking on the street, and we pass this white man. And [my friend and I]...we always say hi to people on the street. And so he's walking towards us, and we are like, 'hi!' And he looked at us. And he looked back and he kept walking. And then we traveled a different way and see a white, female [professional] that's coming up on the corner. We said 'hi' to her. She just kept walking. And that is *so* not comforting. When you encounter a young or older white person, as a [Black] young person, they just look at you, like… 'I see you on the news.' That's the type of [message] you get…there is just no other way to describe it. It is just like they take one look at you, and…they don't see you. They just think…you are going to do something to harm them or that you are not a good person because of your skin [color]. (Smith Interview)

Through her recollection, Smith illustrated how new white residents that moved into her D.C. neighborhood effectively viewed herself and other Black residents as threats rather than as

companions. From Smith's comments, there seemed to be a rift between established and new residents that was characteristic of the "us vs. them" dynamic between D.C.'s remaining Black residents and white newcomers, primarily based on race and cultural upbringing. As a result of new residents refusing to welcome longtime residents with open arms, the region at-large suffered from a lack of personal engagement that was most apparent through Smith's experience of walking D.C.'s streets. Furthermore, through D.C.'s gentrification, the city and its Black residents in particular, suffered from a loss of culture. Hamilton stated, "The biggest negative of gentrification is that there is no culture in D.C. D.C. is just like any other city now. It has no type of uniqueness to it. It has no ring to it. There is no more go-go music playing around" (Hamilton Interview). While referencing the erasure of D.C.'s music scene that could be traced back to the city's mid-20th Century "Black Broadway", Hamilton highlighted how gentrification produced a reduction in Black culture. As white residents moved into D.C.'s once predominantly-Black neighborhoods, they chipped away at the cultural "uniqueness" of the nation's capital, transforming it into any other rapidly-gentrifying city in America. Black residents, thus, had to sit idly by as the communities they grew up in, ones largely founded on this rich culture, transformed into spaces more claimed by wealthy, white outsiders.

The surveys I gave to each of these Black D.C. residents only further demonstrated the loss of community identity and culture in the city's neighborhoods. For example, in response to the question of how well the Black interviewees knew their neighbors, 75% of them chose the "not so well" option (Appendix D4). These survey results indicated that as white residents moved into D.C. and subsequently displaced longtime Black residents, the Black residents who remained in the city were stripped of their connections with past neighbors and confronted with new neighbors who were not adamant about establishing relationships with existing residents.

Due to this reality, it was likely difficult for neighborhoods to hold onto existing ties and form new ones with the constant movement of residents in and out; this is apparent from the survey results, too, as about 50% of respondents believed that their neighborhood identity was "somewhat weak" or "very weak" (Appendix D6). Lastly, on the issue of D.C.'s Black culture being erased as more white residents took up space in the nation's capital, the survey results also delivered a strong message. When asked how much culture respondents believed remained in D.C. from previous decades, including Black Broadway and go-go music, about 58% responded with "very little" (Appendix D7). Thus, the survey findings apparently confirmed what Black residents noted in the verbal interviews: gentrification's pitting of new white residents against existing Black residents in D.C. only chipped away what was left of the vibrant Black community that defined the city for much of the 20th century.

Furthermore, this us vs. them dynamic in D.C.'s neighborhoods also spilled over into local schools, disproportionately harming Black youth. In my interviews with Black youth in the District, they pointed out the challenges of being Black and coming from low-income communities while going to schools seeing an influx of mostly privileged, white students. S. Richardson stated:

> When you are a kid [at school] and have all that stuff…it's not normal, obviously, for them to have all that stuff…and some people intentionally [flaunt], which is weird. But, when I am in that type of environment, I feel awkward and isolated. (S. Richardson Interview)

S. Richardson expressed that as more wealthy, white students attended her high school, she felt "isolated" as one of the few students who was Black and did not grow up with much wealth. Richardson also explained that not only did these new students make her feel "awkward"

because they took up the most physical and social space in the school but also because they routinely flaunted their wealth and privilege to students who had neither. This flaunting only further marginalized students like Richardson, fueling an us vs. them divide between Black and white students that made it especially difficult for the former to maximize their educational opportunities and grow as young people. Smith encountered a similar experience at her arts high school, as rich white students flooded it in recent years:

> To seek out more funding, [our school] moved into this big building in the center of Georgetown. Now, there are so many more wealthy, white students that are coming to attend this school. I was hosting auditions for the school, and I saw two black students. There were 23 people that auditioned. It is crazy. This is supposed to be a school that helps underserved children…children who do not have the opportunity to go to [arts] schools like this. And a lot of the white students, they are coming…from the nice suburbs. (Smith Interview)

By contrasting the school's homogenous theater casting with its purpose in the community, Smith demonstrated how even institutions that historically benefited D.C.'s Black populations were transformed amidst the city's gentrification. White students coming from wealth often replaced Black, "underserved children" at these schools, depriving the latter of educational opportunities and career pathways that they may have had without the influx of wealthy, white students. City officials, meanwhile, sought to incentivize more wealthy students attending the city's schools as a means of generating revenue by moving these institutions into major commercial and entertainment districts such as Georgetown. But, by doing this, city and school leaders sent the message that their low-income Black students did not matter, both by indirectly reducing the number of spots available to them and not providing the ones admitted with the

resources they needed to cope with the disruption of social bonds and higher costs of attendance. Ultimately, both Richardson and Smith's experiences illustrated how white students and local leaders sought to marginalize and replace Black students in their own schools across the District.

Lastly, in D.C.'s rapidly-gentrifying neighborhoods altogether, some Black residents grew to feel more *unsafe* in their neighborhoods. However, instead of pointing to increased crime, gang activity, and violence as reasons for this lacking sense of security, Black residents expressed that the mere influx of white residents caused this feeling. James noted:

> I did not appreciate the [wealthy, predominantly white] newcomers coming into the area. It made me feel unsafe, I will say, not just because you think they were the army or anything, but just because…the power that they hold. I felt that my neighborhood would have been taken from me, in a sense. And it was like, that's the reality of the situation. You feel like you're being pushed back into a corner until you're the one who's going to get scooped out next. (James Interview)

Much like what Jones expressed about growing up in a low-income neighborhood that was taken over by wealthy, white businessmen who effectively had complete control over the area, James mentioned that the sight of white newcomers moving into his community frightened him because of the "power that they hold". More specifically, James was constantly fearful of their ability to completely disregard existing residents and community traditions and transform the community where they now resided into something solely to the newcomers' liking. This entailed everything from white residents nonchalantly walking their dogs on historically Black community spaces to white developers replacing affordable housing with upscale condos that only wealthy newcomers could afford. In the end, then, James could not help but feel that he was "being pushed back into a corner". For him and so many other Black residents living in D.C.'s low-income

neighborhoods, the biggest threat to their safety and overall way of life was not crime but rather wealthy, white newcomers coming into these communities, neglecting longtime residents, and ultimately forcing them out.

Black-owned Businesses Were Caught in the Crosshairs of Residents'"Us vs. Them"

In addition to gentrification's us vs. them effect playing out through everyday interactions between D.C.'s longtime Black residents and white newcomers, Black-owned businesses also became a focal point for this dynamic. For one, gentrification brought in more white outsiders who were either not aware of or simply did not support D.C.'s historic Black-owned businesses, making it more difficult for these enterprises to stay afloat in the city's rapidly-gentrifying neighborhoods. Virginia Ali, founder and owner of the historic Ben's Chili Bowl that has been on D.C.'s U Street corridor since the Civil Rights Movement and served Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., President Barack Obama, and others, expressed that D.C.'s gentrification erased much of the Black culture that once defined the corridor:

> When Duke Ellington, Count Basie, or some of those big bands came to play, there were those beautiful social clubs that we had in those days. We got dressed up in our finest tuxedos and evening gowns and just had a delightful time. There were many social clubs because we were limited. So many places to go. They entertained us and we [as Black establishments and people] were proud people that came out looking good at all times. There was a lot of pride and a lot of dignity in the community. We were able to live together and to be able to support each other. Now, there is little of that…we are scattered all over the city now. We still have [Ben's]. And there's another [Black-owned] business across the street. But for the most part, it's a new neighborhood without much of this support…young, white, educated people moved in, and it is different. (Ali Interview)

Ali explained that while U Street was previously a hotspot for everyday Black residents and popular musicians to convene and have a "delightful time", through gentrification, it became an area where "young, white, educated people" flocked to and took up space. She believed that this U Street transformation harmed the community's existing Black residents and Black-owned businesses such as Ben's. She explained that the area lost much of its "pride" and "dignity", especially as much of the Black support system that Ben's and other businesses relied on to remain fixtures in the community went away. Banks, president of one of the other last remaining Black-owned businesses on U Street in Lee's Flower Shop, also spoke on the lack of support many Black business owners received amidst D.C.'s social and economic changes. She most notably harped on the strain for Black-owned businesses caused by new businesses moving in:

> We just embrace the Black-owned businesses that have been able to stay on this block like Industrial Bank and Ben's Chili Bowl. We cling to each other because we are the last resort and last holdouts with rents and property taxes going up so high around the neighborhood. It is also difficult to feel connected to the other businesses because a lot of them are owned by larger companies or not by the people that are running them. So, we haven't felt that connection to them. (Banks Interview)

Banks, here, described several issues with larger companies moving into the historically Black U Street neighborhood. She first pointed out that Black-owned businesses became a "last resort" for residents who found more comfort in shopping at larger retailers or restaurants that they recognized. Furthermore, as these larger companies moved in and raised the costs of living and operating a business, many of the neighborhood's Black-owned businesses were forced out, isolating those that were remaining. Lastly, with more large companies that had little to no roots in the community moving into the U Street corridor, Lee's, like Ben's, was stripped of the social

networks it utilized to stay afloat. The neighborhood, whether it be the residents who shopped there or businesses that occupied it, was no longer the same, leaving the few Black business owners left to struggle without their longtime community safety net.

In addition to marginalizing Black business owners, the replacement of Black-owned businesses with big-box companies further informed D.C.'s Black residents that they were losing space to exist in their de-facto battle with white newcomers. D.C. natives James and Hamilton both explained that the vast number of small businesses that covered city streets when they were growing up were no longer there. James expressed his sadness for larger corporations like Starbucks pushing out many of these businesses, while Hamilton communicated his grief for the replacement of Black-owned corner stores with "big dog" businesses (James Interview; Hamilton Interview). While both stated that they were irked by the corporate environment that had enveloped their neighborhoods, and the subsequent loss of familiar faces leading local businesses, 57-year D.C. native Islah Abdullah hammered this message home:

> I have always been concerned about Black [business] owners. The percentage now feels like 0%. When I came to DC many, many years ago, there were more Black-owned businesses there. And next thing I knew, I looked around, and we had people of different races and different colors coming in and taking over them [across] the D.C. area. And you ask yourself, "Why don't [Black residents] run businesses in our own communities anymore?" And so, I was very disappointed, and felt disrespected. I was always hoping and praying that we see more of our people and our color [running] more stores in our neighborhoods. And…you know a business helps you develop your own life and that of the community. So, we need more [Black] ownership of our businesses. (Abdullah Interview)

Abdullah expressed the importance of Black-owned businesses and how their removal in D.C. represented a loss of community pride for herself and other longtime Black residents. Abdullah frequented many of these businesses growing up in the city and seeing them get replaced with new businesses run by non-Black residents, while seemingly a positive through the neighborhood's diversification, left her feeling that one of the last reminders of D.C.'s rich Black history was being erased. This, then, left Abdullah to only ponder if there would be more Black-owned businesses established in D.C. Because, if not, Abdullah implied that a lack of Black ownership in the nation's capital would only stunt the "develop[ment]" of D.C.'s Black population, preventing it from maintaining the little space it still has in the ever-changing city.

Black Residents Were Strained by Unresponsive Elected Officials

Additionally, amidst D.C.'s social and economic changes over the last two decades, Black residents encountered elected officials not responding to their concerns. Among the residents I interviewed for this project, about 67% believed that their elected officials were unresponsive to their concerns, particularly around rising costs of living (Appendix D10). With residents feeling that their voices were not being accounted for by policymakers, many experienced an additional emotional strain to that of struggling to get by financially in their rapidly-gentrified communities.

Black youth conveyed that they were often dismissed by these officials and treated as if they did not have a voice in gentrification and displacement. S. Richardson, for example, tried to relay to her local councilmember how isolated she and her peers felt from the influx of wealthy, white residents into local neighborhoods and schools. She also spoke out about rising costs of living in her community and how real estate developers badgered her parents into selling the family's longtime home after already buying out the rest of the neighborhood. Despite these

efforts, she received little to no response from her elected officials. In referencing these officials, Richardson said, “I don't think they take me seriously and care about me [as a Black child]. Because they are just like, ‘oh, yeah, well we will look more into that’ and then do not do anything. And it hurts” (S. Richardson Interview). Here, Richardson expressed her frustration with not feeling heard by her city leaders. While Richardson pleaded with them to allow her family to live in peace in the neighborhood she grew up in without the constant worry that they would have to move, Richardson simply felt that they were not responsive to her because she was a youth and, thus, she held little power to push forward policy change.

Furthermore, even when local schools offered up programs that allowed for more community dialogue with city officials, little to no change was accomplished from many of these initiatives. Over the years, James was concerned with the lack of affordable retail, food, and housing options available to Southeast D.C. residents. By participating in his high school’s “Pathways to Power” program during his junior year, James felt that he finally had a space where he could communicate his concerns to elected officials and, ultimately, accomplish some of the same policy changes that Richardson desired. This may lead some to counter, then, that Black youth were accounted for by their representatives. However, James quickly found out that these officials were not really determined to push forward such changes:

> I was a part of an organization called Pathways to Power in high school [where] I started to have relationships with public officials. But I did feel that most of what they were saying and the results [were] very performative. When we said our concerns, they tried to circle back to a different issue that we weren’t really concerned about to just change the topic. (James Interview)

James noted that the elected officials he engaged with at his high school were not in the business of addressing the issues raised by himself and other youth. They, then, felt disempowered in the broader community fight against D.C.'s rising gentrification that was disproportionately affecting Black residents. This lack of response from D.C.'s officials only further alienated longtime residents. The dismissal of community voices, compounded with the city government's further investment in upscale retail and housing options to attract wealthy outsiders into D.C., left many longtime residents feeling neglected by their own government amidst the social and economic changes that were occurring around them.

Overpolicing Produced More Fear and Stress for Black Residents

Lastly, one effect of D.C.'s gentrification that much of the existing literature did not discuss was overpolicing. Overpolicing, or the measure of "policing excessively, as by maintaining a large police presence or by responding aggressively to minor offenses", became common in communities across the District, particularly low-income and predominantly-Black neighborhoods (A. Erika). Lawrence, one of the few scholars who did discuss this issue, pointed out that overpolicing often occurs when city governments strive to make such neighborhoods seem "safer" so that they could attract more wealthy residents to them (Lawrence 3-4). Del Pielago, nonetheless, conveyed the drawbacks of this increased police presence on Black and brown residents:

> As I speak to younger folks, they feel overpoliced…feel bothered by the [heightened] police presence in their neighborhoods amidst gentrification. With what we see on the news every day, [Black and brown youth] simply have a fear of what police can do when they're in their neighborhood or are in close proximity to them. (Del Pielago Interview)

Del Pielago spoke about how police took up more space in the District amidst its social and economic changes. Furthermore, he spoke to how overpolicing caused many Black and brown youth to feel unsafe amidst the gentrification of their neighborhoods. These youth simply could not exist in their communities without looking over their shoulder for a police officer—a reality that del Pielago mentioned was especially problematic given "what we see on the news every day" with police committing violence against Black people, and the potential damage these reports could do on the latter's psyche. Ultimately, overpolicing did not make many Black residents safer but instead was another way gentrification made Black residents feel more vulnerable and threatened by their new surroundings.

Furthermore, Nguele, James, and Hamilton all experienced overpolicing while growing up in gentrified neighborhoods in Northwest and Southeast D.C. Nguele first noted that he "definitely [saw] some issues with how the police ran things…how they were posted up in front of a lot of places in the community, and how they watched over certain places and people" (Nguele Interview). Through this comment, Nguele revealed how present police officers were in D.C.'s rapidly changing neighborhoods and conveyed that they effectively created a surveillance state over Black and brown residents. This, then, only added on to the vulnerability these residents felt from seeing white outsiders flood their communities. James spoke about this vulnerability created by overpolicing:

> I have definitely seen an increase in policing in my [developing] area with police trucks parked outside or across the street from my home. And it has made me feel unsafe. Just because, you know, as a Black man, and being in that area and the stereotypes associated with people who come from Southeast DC, I was worried about how my interactions would look with the police. (James Interview)

James, like Nguele, expressed that the increased police presence in his developing neighborhood growing up threatened his way of living. Both felt that they were unable to really exist in their communities with police officers watching their every turn. Hamilton expressed a similar sentiment:

> There are huge issues with overpolicing. It is a fine line between policing and stalking someone. And when you step over that boundary, you are not a police officer. You are a criminal yourself…like stalking is an actual crime. You are committing [this crime] with a badge. That is not how you police people, but that is often what happens [in Southeast D.C.]. (Hamilton Interview)

Hamilton further expressed that policing in Southeast D.C. exceeded what was needed to prevent crime and, instead, became a means for the city government to exert control on vulnerable Black residents who may not have even remained in their neighborhoods for much longer. To make matters worse, as longtime Southeast D.C. native Arthur Jones II and Lawrence noted, while the mayor and other city officials may have given off the perception that more police equated to less crime and more public safety in these neighborhoods, many of these same communities—especially those around Nationals Park—were not "safer". Even apart from the general uneasiness felt with police occupying more space, Black residents still dealt with rampant crime in their overpoliced neighborhoods (Jones Interview; Lawrence 2-3). Thus, overpolicing only worsened gentrification's emotional strain on Black residents through both the city's greater surveillance over their lives and the impact this heightened monitoring had, as Lawrence's location theory underscored, on attracting white outsiders into the city and consequently fueling more gentrification.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings gathered from the qualitative interviews and surveys, I crafted four policies that I believed would best address the gentrification concerns of D.C.'s Black residents. Keeping in mind residents' fears that gentrification would price them out of their homes and city officials' desire to use gentrification to socioeconomically diversify D.C.'s neighborhoods, I first proposed that the mayor and city council build more recreation centers. I put forward this policy as a way for the city to get what it wants in neighborhood integration while not simultaneously increasing costs of living. I also recommended that the city also establish more affordable housing with better maintenance standards. I thought this policy would resolve residents' quells with both the quantity and quality of housing in D.C. amidst rising gentrification. Furthermore, to better address the heightened safety concerns of the Black residents I engaged with, I suggested that the city replace at least some officers in overpoliced neighborhoods with alternative safety measures such as greater mental health resources and more neighborhood watch groups. And to better support Black entrepreneurship that has historically meant so much to D.C., I suggested that the D.C. government provide more grants to existing and future Black business owners. By implementing any or all of these policies, I believe that the city would be better served to limit gentrification's social and emotional harm on Black residents.

Building Recreation Centers to More Inexpensively Integrate D.C.

While the displacement of Black residents for wealthy, white newcomers in low-income neighborhoods was one effect of gentrification, another was the heightened segregation of low-income areas from redeveloped communities. In his interview, Hyra explained that this result occurred particularly between the U Street and Columbia Heights neighborhoods. As then-Mayor Vincent Gray poured money into the Columbia Heights neighborhood through the establishment

of the Skyland Town Center, the U Street corridor received little development and reinvestment (Hyra). Instead, the historic area continued to consist largely of low-income Black residents who were served inferior quality retail and recreational options (Hyra).

Soon, however, D.C.'s Department of Parks and Recreation elected to build a neighborhood skate park where children from Shaw and other parts of the city could meet (Hyra). The community became more integrated, both as visitors flocked to the area to practice at the skatepark and as job and affordable retail options were established around the park (Hyra). Residents grew to love the park and the opportunities it presented, but Hyra noted that a similar policy was not adopted in many other highly-segregated areas in the city.

I believe, however, that other areas of D.C. would benefit from the establishment of more recreation centers such as gyms, pools, and community parks, especially by utilizing the tax base revenue that would have gone to establishing upscale enterprises and perhaps a low but measurable admission fee of $5 a week for some of the more expensive pool and gym facilities. The establishment of these such centers in all four geographical quadrants of the District would allow city officials to proceed with their desires to socioeconomically diversify D.C.'s neighborhoods—a fact that was seemingly borne out with 100% of survey respondents describing the racial and economic diversity of their communities to be "very diverse" or "somewhat diverse"—while also reducing the chances that these diversifying areas price out many of the Black residents that called them home for generations. Additionally, as discussed in the findings section, youth in the developmental stages of their life require community engagement to grow as people. These recreational centers would allow for more of this engagement without much of the threat, again, that the diversification of neighborhoods poses to Black residents' living situation. The policy could then be evaluated through an annual survey

delivered to these residents that asks them whether the recreational amenities foster more engagement without making it more unbearable to live in the city. And if D.C.'s lawmakers follow a similar approach to the Shaw plan and supplement these recreational facilities with more job and educational options in the communities surrounding these venues, the city government would be more equipped to revitalize struggling areas of the nation's capital without furthering gentrification and displacement.

Establishing Affordable Housing with Better Maintenance

Although there were efforts over the last decade to establish more affordable housing in the nation's capital, what became apparent through my background research and qualitative interviews was that there was still a large shortage of affordable housing (Sheehy 22). As I discussed in the literature review, the city removed several public housing complexes in Wards 7 and 8 and, in their place, established more upscale retail amenities that they believed would revitalize the community (Wogan). The result was the displacement of nearly 70,000 Black residents from 1980 to 2015 who could not afford to keep living in the District, as well as unbearable costs of housing for those who remained in the city (Baca & Finio; Weldeghebriel Interview; Appendix D8). Additionally, not only was there a shortage in the number of affordable housing units but also those that had been established were largely "undignified" and "unsafe" for residents, largely because the city government could not raise the sufficient tax-based revenue that was needed to run these often federally-instituted units (Nadeau Interview). The lacking quantity and quality of housing complexes in D.C. only furthered the strain on both Black residents who elected to remain in the city and those who were forced out.

Two ways that Mayor Bowser and the city council can develop more affordable housing include placing more units that are possessed by for-profit companies in the hands of the city

government and reallocating D.C.'s short-term resources to housing. Firstly, the city can buy out more privately-owned properties, particularly those that already appear to serve little to no public use. We saw this buying-out process successfully occur in cities such as Dallas, Texas, where the local government purchased a 347-unit abandoned apartment building and converted it into affordable housing, and even underfunded Gary, Indiana, where the city bought underutilized privately-funded elementary schools and used them to create more housing units (Berg). While D.C. is uniquely cash-strapped because of their lack of taxable city property, the city can take advantage of the little use these properties generate—especially abandoned schools, since the city still has several of them since Michelle Rhee's term as Chancellor of D.C. Public Schools in the late 2000s—to the negotiation table with private property owners (Hyra Interview). The city could also increase their capital by redirecting temporary funds for homeless shelters to more permanent affordable housing, as well as securing greater, less-regulated outside funding through "affordable-housing trust funds" (Berg). Ultimately, D.C.'s government would be better equipped to create more living spaces for low-income residents.

The D.C. government can also feasibly maintain low housing costs at these facilities. The city, for example, instituted the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act in 1980 that already maintained some affordable housing by allowing residential tenants the first opportunity to purchase individually or collectively an entire complex once landlords put it up for sale (Abello). While this policy over the last 40 years has prevented some affordable housing complexes from closing and being transformed into upscale condominium units, including the Wah Luck House in D.C.'s Chinatown, one of the issues with this policy is that it only allows for a 45-day window for tenants to choose whether they want to buy out the property (Abello). This oftentimes left tenants scrambling to find enough money to make this purchase. If this window was perhaps

extended to 90 days and supplemented with additional housing subsidies or loans for tenants who wish to buy affordable housing units, then the city government would likely be able to maintain the affordability of such units. Mayor Bowser could also continue what she did with the Audi Field project and ongoing RFK stadium project in buying out land to help local sports organizations build arenas in the city, while mandating the creation and maintenance of affordable housing units around them (Austermuhle). While these policies would allow for the city to maintain the affordability of housing, I will not recommend rent control for public housing units in low-income neighborhoods given that this policy historically limited how many low-income residents could live in a city and raised the costs of other non-publicly funded homes and apartments for such residents (Smith).

Lastly, the D.C. government could also better maintain the quality of affordable housing units by adopting *Local Housing Solutions*' "housing policy toolkit". Firstly, the city could adopt a more proactive and less reactive approach to tenants' nuisance reports, including utilizing data and trends to better target inspections as well as training local nonprofit groups to survey affordable housing units in the area and report findings to the Housing Authority ("Improving"). Additionally, the D.C. government would also be better served to institute a more remedial and less punitive code enforcement strategy ("Improving"). In other words, the government could focus more on helping landlords resolve maintenance issues through tax incentives or subsidies rather than punishing them for code violations ("Improving"). And if these landlords consistently neglect the property, then the government could transfer ownership to organizations that would better preserve it ("Improving"). Lastly, the city could further assist elderly tenants who may especially not have the funds or strength to repair their units by also providing them with tax relief and even weatherization, or "modifications done on existing buildings to improve energy-

efficiency and cut down utility costs, such as the installation of new windows and doors" ("Improving"). The effectiveness of these could then be evaluated through annual records of the number of code violations at each public housing project, with the yearly trend in violations signifying whether the policy was successful. Regardless of the measures D.C. officials choose to adopt, the city must address its affordable housing issue to reduce gentrification's tremendous strain on Black residents.

Replacing Additional Police Officers with Alternative Safety Measures

Several of the scholars and community stakeholders I engaged with expressed concern for overpolicing—an issue largely fueled by gentrification and city officials' desires to make the city seem safer so that they could attract new residents and revitalize D.C.'s neighborhoods (Lawrence 3-4). Activist Del Pielago, for example, discussed how the youth he interacted with conveyed their fears of constantly being watched by police (Del Pielago Interview). D.C. natives Nguele, James, and Hamilton only communicated more concern for the greater police presence in their communities. Nguele and James said that they too felt like they were living in a "surveillance state" that was especially threatening to them as young Black men, given the stereotypes associated with them and the constant stories of law enforcement brutalizing those in their demographic (Nguele Interview; James Interview). Hamilton, meanwhile, reiterated these issues, even going so far as to say that some officers in his Southeast D.C. community no longer worked to serve and protect the community and instead "stalk[ed]" Black residents (Hamilton Interview). Overpolicing undermined Black residents' ability to exist in their neighborhoods.

To reduce overpolicing's harm while making neighborhoods safer, I propose the city adopt more neighborhood watch programs, or crime-prevention groups where "neighbors look out for each other's safety, property and homes in a systematic and sustained way". After the

September 11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. Pentagon, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) established training for residents who wished to start neighborhood watch programs ("Neighborhood"). However, the introduction of these programs overlapped with more police (A. Erika). If the city prioritized and perhaps required neighborhood watch groups while reducing the police presence in D.C.'s Black and low-income areas, then they would be putting public safety in residents' hands. This may empower residents, making them feel like they have more responsibility in the functioning of their communities. And through this empowerment and friendly atmosphere fostered by residents working together and not fearing police at every turn, fewer Black residents may be threatened by city officials' desires to make neighborhoods safer. Through these engagement groups, Black residents may also develop such a strong voice on community matters that city leaders have no choice but to address their concerns, resolving the unresponsiveness issue expressed by my project's interviewees (Appendix D10).

Nonetheless, there are some hurdles for city officials to overcome before implementing such a policy. For one, it will take convincing the public that neighborhood watch programs could provide a suitable replacement for additional police presence across the city, especially with crime rising over the last few years (Pottiger). Additionally, this policy may frustrate some police officers and residents who want to maintain existing relationships with one another and not have to effectively establish public safety from scratch. There is also the potential financial challenge of city officials supplying greater mental health and financial resources to communities to account for all angles of public safety in a city with less police. But the policy is still feasible. These neighborhood watch groups may grow on residents, especially as they see familiar faces working together towards the common goal that is public safety. Additionally, Mayor Bowser could overcome any potential financial challenges by reallocating funds away from MPD, and by

utilizing some of the $4.3 million in investment that is already going towards a similar, school-centric Safe Passage Program ("Mayor Bowser Invests"). Lastly, such a policy could also be evaluated via both annual crime reports and survey responses on how safe, welcomed, and supported community members feel post-implementation. Lower crime rates and glowing responses, then, could rule this policy a success. Altogether, D.C.'s transition away from overpolicing and towards alternative community measures could accomplish *both* safer and more welcoming neighborhoods, including for the city's Black residents.

Granting More Funds for Current and Future Black Entrepreneurs

Through this investigation, it was also evident that amidst the growing us vs. them divide that occurred between Black residents and white newcomers, Black-owned businesses suffered tremendously. While these businesses in the late 20th century were integral to D.C.'s thriving Black cultural scene, several of them shut down since the 1990s (Wogan). The few Black-owned businesses that remained throughout the last two decades, meanwhile, struggled with soaring property taxes and rent prices (Banks Interview). They also encountered a changing neighborhood, largely attributed to Black residents being priced out of their homes and white, often wealthy individuals moving into the once predominantly-Black neighborhoods where the last few Black-owned businesses operate (Banks Interview). Furthermore, the establishment of more upscale retail, entertainment, and restaurant options, from the start of Mayor Williams' term in 1999 through Mayor Bowser's term in 2022, further threatened these Black-owned businesses, forcing them to constantly compete over customers (Banks Interview). While the two Black business owners I interviewed in Ali and Banks said that they received some government loan assistance to remain in operation over the years, they both believed that the city government could be doing more to help them. Meanwhile, D.C. resident Abdullah expressed her

disappointment that so few Black-owned businesses remained in the neighborhood she resided in for 57 years, and implied that if the city did not foster any more Black ownership, she would lose what little pride and space she had as a Black woman living in her rapidly-gentrifying neighborhood (Abdullah Interview). The issue of so few Black-owned businesses operating in the District was important to longtime residents, as it represented the removal of a vibrant culture that they spent years cultivating.

Thus, I recommend that the D.C. government further assist current Black-owned businesses and the creation of future ones as well. One way the city can do this is by providing more small-business grants that, unlike the loans already given, do not have to be paid back by Black business owners. These grants also do not have to be publicly-funded. The city already partnered with private initiatives such as Comcast RISE in 2021 and 2022 that provided $10,000 grants to 100 minority business owners across the District ("Comcast"). It could simply build on these partnerships, working with more corporations so that the city could provide similar grants to every Black-owned small business that fits the RISE grants' criteria of operating for at least three years and consisting of a maximum of 25 workers ("Comcast"). Additionally, supporting the next crop of Black-owned businesses will be important as well. To do this, the city could implement a mentorship program for Black small business owners that is modeled after the 2021 New York City's Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) initiative. The New York program provided prospective minority and women small business-owners with professional networks, mentorship, and contracting opportunities ("NYC"). D.C. could adopt a similar plan that accounts for prospective Black entrepreneurs, offering a pipeline for future Black-owned businesses in the city.

However, there may be implementation challenges. Both initiatives, including the financial grants that may be mostly covered by private corporations, will likely cost D.C.'s government capital—a resource that it is simply short on. Additionally, the public-private grants will likely require tremendous time on the part of the city as they constantly leverage community partnerships to fund them. There is also volatility in establishing and operating a business that may limit the immediate gains of such initiatives. Nonetheless, the programs will boost the chances that more Black-owned businesses will remain in business and be created in the nation's capital. The city could also impose an added 2% tax on newly-established, non-minority owned businesses to further finance these projects. Ultimately, the success of these initiatives will be evaluated by the number of Black-owned small-businesses that are established and maintained over a 10-year period after implementation. Their success could also be measured through post-policy surveys that ask whether Black business owners feel supported by the D.C. government.

Conclusion

From the start of then-Mayor Anthony Williams' term in 1999 through Mayor Muriel Bowser's term in 2022, Washington, D.C. transformed from a city once known for its thriving Black nightlife, businesses, and residents to one where much of this Black culture was erased and in its place were white professionals and upscale businesses ("Tools"). Black residents felt neglected as city officials sought to attract white, mostly wealthy individuals by investing in high-end retail and housing options while funneling little capital to existing residents despite rising costs of living (Ruble). The results were that Black residents suffered trying to remain in the city, with nearly 70,000 of them being priced out of the city over a 35-year period (Baca & Finio). Before this project, much of the research on this issue focused on sheer numbers: how much rent and property taxes went up, how many Black residents were displaced, and how many

white newcomers moved into D.C. to take advantage of the city's increasing housing, employment, and retail opportunities. Previous scholars paid less attention to the more intangible social and emotional effects of gentrification, particularly on D.C.'s Black population.

Through my investigation, I sought to uncover these effects. To do this, I utilized a mixed methods approach. I gathered economic data on D.C.'s gentrification to first contextualize the issue. Then, I utilized my D.C.-area connections to secure 17 interviews with scholars, elected officials, activists, business owners, and everyday Black residents who researched gentrification, were responsible for its rise in the nation's capital, or were directly impacted by it. Ultimately, I found that D.C.'s gentrification was complicated both by the unique presence of the federal government in the city and some residents' conflicting attitudes around gentrification's effects. Nevertheless, I found tremendous agreement among the Black residents I interviewed that gentrification has imposed social and emotional harm on them. Residents first spoke to the exhaustion they experienced while trying to keep themselves and their families afloat amidst skyrocketing costs of living. They also communicated that they were constantly fighting for physical and social space with their new white neighbors who neglected the established identity and norms of D.C.'s historically-Black neighborhoods. Because of these battles, Black residents conveyed that they no longer felt welcomed nor safe in their own communities. Other residents expressed that elected officials' lack of responsiveness to the former's concerns and the influx of police in D.C.'s neighborhoods, alongside white newcomers, only furthered these feelings of isolation. In the end, the findings painted a clearer picture of how gentrification affected Black residents socially and emotionally.

Based on these findings, I also crafted four policy recommendations that I thought would best resolve these issues for Black residents. I suggested that city leaders establish recreational

facilities to follow through with their desires to integrate the city, albeit more affordably. I also recommended that the city create more affordable housing complexes with better maintenance standards, replace the additional police officers in neighborhoods with alternative safety measures, and provide more financial grants and mentorship opportunities for current and future Black business owners.

While in the end I was able to assess gentrification's effects more comprehensively on D.C.'s Black population, there are areas of future research that arise from this investigation. One could develop a neighborhood-by-neighborhood breakdown of gentrification in D.C., rather than broadening the focus on the city at-large, and interview more councilmembers and Mayor Bowser. Additionally, there could be more focus on gentrification's effects on specific aspects of D.C.'s Black culture, including food and music. One could also research the effects of D.C.'s gentrification on the suburb Prince George's County's Black population given that, as I found in my literature review, many of D.C.'s longtime Black residents moved to Prince George's to seek out more opportunities and re-establish their own communities (Ruble). Lastly, even while some of this project's findings on D.C.'s gentrification may not be very generalizable to other U.S. cities, given D.C.'s unique federal government control and Black history, the methods used in this project and general theme of longtime residents feeling isolated as wealthy newcomers moved in may be common among all gentrifying cities. Thus, one could even examine gentrification's social and emotional effects in other locations.

Nevertheless, my hope with this investigation is that it highlights the broad concerns of residents who are often neglected in discussions around D.C.'s gentrification and moves elected officials to promptly enact policies that address them. And with my strategy to make gentrification's qualitative, socio-emotional effects more measurable through the accompanying

survey results and generalizable through my interviews with Black residents of various ages and backgrounds, I hope this makes it easier for readers to both consume this project and build on it in the future.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Methods' Interview Table for Research Data

- Exploratory Interview with Scholars and Elected Officials (underlined)
- IRB-approved Interviews with Activists, Business Owners, and Working-Class Residents

Interviewee Name	**Affiliation/Title**	**Date of Interview**	**Duration of Interview**
Dr. Sabiyha Prince	*Independent Scholar*	08/23/21	54:33
Dr. Kathryn Howell	*Urban and Regional Studies Planning Scholar, VCU*	08/23/21	48:38
Dr. Derek Hyra	*Associate Professor, American University*	08/30/21	52:26
Brianne K. Nadeau	*Councilmember, D.C. Ward 1*	09/09/21	23:56
Solomon Weldeghebriel	*Columbia Heights, DC Resident/Community Member*	01/04/22	32:46
Virginia Ali	*Co-Founder and Owner, Ben's Chili Bowl*	01/04/22	31:17
Tony Hamilton	*Longtime Resident of D.C. (about 10 years)*	01/05/22	43:51
"Nate Richardson" (Pseudonym)	*Child, D.C. Native*	01/05/22	20:36
"Semeya Richardson" (Pseudonym)	*Child, D.C. Native*	01/05/22	24:58
Alex Baca	*Policy Manager, Greater Greater Washington Neighborhood*	01/06/22	49:31
Daniel del Pielago	*Organizing Director, Empower DC*	01/07/22	23:33
Arthur Jones II	*Associate Producer,*	01/07/22	52:36

	CBS Mornings/CBS News		
Arnold Nguele	*College Student at Hope College, D.C. Native who now lives in MD*	01/07/22	20:57
Stacie Lee Banks	*Store Owner of Lee's Flower Shop, D.C. Native*	01/28/22	34:32
Anthony James	*College Student at The University of Chicago, D.C. Native*	01/29/22	31:54
Islah Abdullah	*D.C. Native, 57 years*	02/07/22	41:57
"Jackie Smith" (Pseudonym)	*Child, D.C. Native*	02/07/22	20:51

Appendix B: Interview Guide

D.C. Gentrification Interview Guide

Questions	**Notes**
First, I'm going to ask you for some basic demographic information about yourself, both for the purposes of getting to know a little bit more about you and to be of reference when I am actually writing the thesis...	
1. What is your racial identity?	
2. What is your gender identity and/or pronouns?	
3. Where in DC or the greater metropolitan area do you currently reside and/or are based out of? And for how many years? Could you talk a little bit about your life history in the area, including your employment and/or education?	
Now, I'm going to ask you about your experiences/work in the community, as well as thoughts on the gentrification issue in DC...	
4. How often do you engage with communities of color in the city?	
5. What methods did you use to maintain and build relationships with members of the community over the years?	
6. *IF BUSINESS OWNER*: How strong or loyal has your customer base been over the years, and have you noticed the demographics of these customers change much?	

7. What has your engagement looked like with community organizers? And how about public officials who "technically" are elected to push forward positive change in the city's communities?	
8. What have been your experiences over the years witnessing and confronting the very issue of gentrification in Washington, D.C.? a. How do you believe it has changed the city, for better or for worse - particularly in DC's Black communities (this could range from the economic implications of this rapid change to the social and cultural effects as well)? b. Do you feel a sense of isolation from your community due to the rapid gentrification that has taken place in it?	

9. What have your interactions looked like with businesses in the area, particularly those that are small and/or locally-owned? Have they changed amidst the rapid economic, demographic, and cultural changes we are seeing in the city?	
10. What do you believe is the biggest barrier to accomplishing true equity and a prosperous future for all Washingtonians? a. How should the city and its elected officials go about addressing this problem?	
11. What should those outside the city - including those in the immediate suburbs - do to ensure that DC's often forgotten communities are protected from gentrification and displacement?	

Appendix C: Post-Interview Survey Questions

PBPL BA Thesis Post-Interview PRELIMINARY Survey Questions

Thank you for participating in the interview! Building off the prior conversation, completing this survey will help provide some quantifiable data that will demonstrate how D.C.'s rising gentrification has affected you socially and emotionally.

Although the scales are offered, feel free to add anything else that was not accounted for elsewhere in the spaces below for the last question. Thanks again!

nalazar@uchicago.edu (not shared) Switch account

* Required

Please provide your name. *

Your answer

How would you describe the racial and economic diversity of your neighborhood *when you FIRST moved in*? *

- 1 - Very Diverse
- 2 - Somewhat Diverse
- 3 - Somewhat Uniform
- 4 - Very Uniform

How would you describe the racial and economic diversity of your neighborhood *now*? *

- ◯ 1 - Very Diverse
- ◯ 2 - Somewhat Diverse
- ◯ 3 - Somewhat Uniform
- ◯ 4 - Very Uniform

How safe do you currently feel in your DC neighborhood? *

- ◯ 1 - Very Safe
- ◯ 2 - Somewhat Safe
- ◯ 3 - Somewhat Unsafe
- ◯ 4 - Very Unsafe

How well do you know your neighbors? *

- ◯ 1 - Very Well
- ◯ 2 - Somewhat Well
- ◯ 3 - Not So Well

How welcomed do you currently feel by your neighbors? *

- ◯ 1 - Very Welcomed
- ◯ 2 - Somewhat Welcomed
- ◯ 3 - Somewhat Unwelcomed
- ◯ 4 - Very Unwelcomed

How strong do you believe your neighborhood identity to be? *

- ◯ 1 - Very Strong
- ◯ 2 - Somewhat Strong
- ◯ 3 - Somewhat Weak
- ◯ 4 - Very Weak

How much culture do you believe remains in D.C. from previous decades (i.e., Black Broadway, Go-Go Music, Mambo Sauce, Black-owned businesses, etc.)? *

- ◯ 1 - Very Much
- ◯ 2 - Some
- ◯ 3 - Very Little

How would you describe current rent and housing costs, and taxes, in DC? *

- ◯ 1 - Very Unbearable
- ◯ 2 - Slightly Unbearable
- ◯ 3 - Tolerable
- ◯ 4 - Very Bearable

How would you describe other costs of living in the city (i.e., retail prices, sales and income taxes, etc.)? *

- ◯ 1 - Very Unbearable
- ◯ 2 - Slightly Unbearable
- ◯ 3 - Tolerable
- ◯ 4 - Very Bearable

How responsive do you believe your elected officials are to your concerns, particularly around the rising costs of living? *

- ◯ 1 - Very Responsive
- ◯ 2 - Somewhat Responsive
- ◯ 3 - Somewhat Unresponsive
- ◯ 4 - Very Unresponsive

How aware are you of housing policies in place in D.C.? *

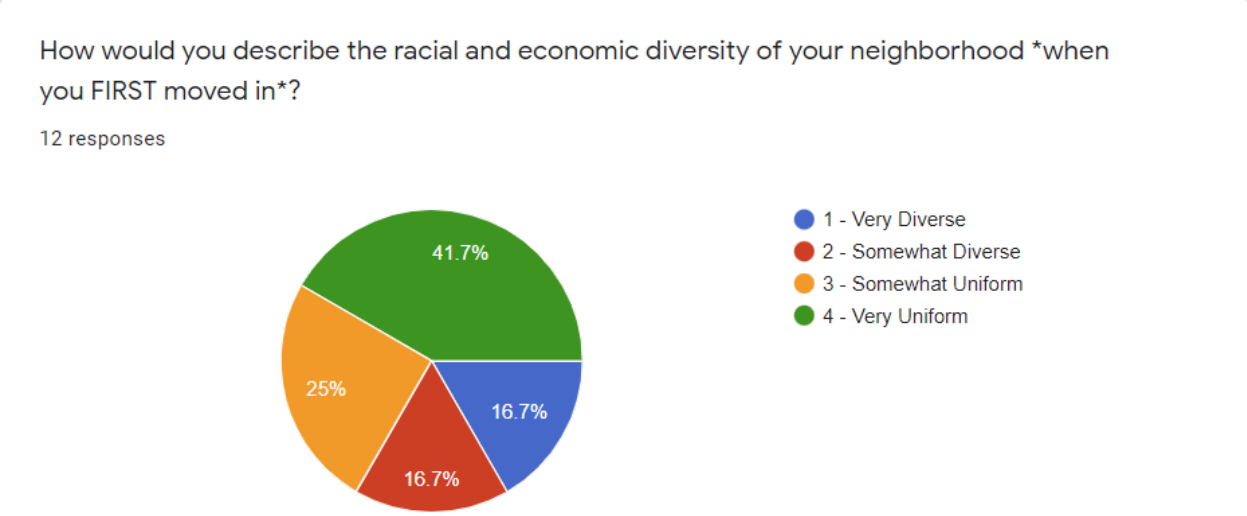
- ◯ 1 - Very Aware
- ◯ 2 - Somewhat Aware
- ◯ 3 - Very Unaware

Feel free to include any additional information on what is like to live in Washington, D.C. right now. Thanks again for participating in the study!

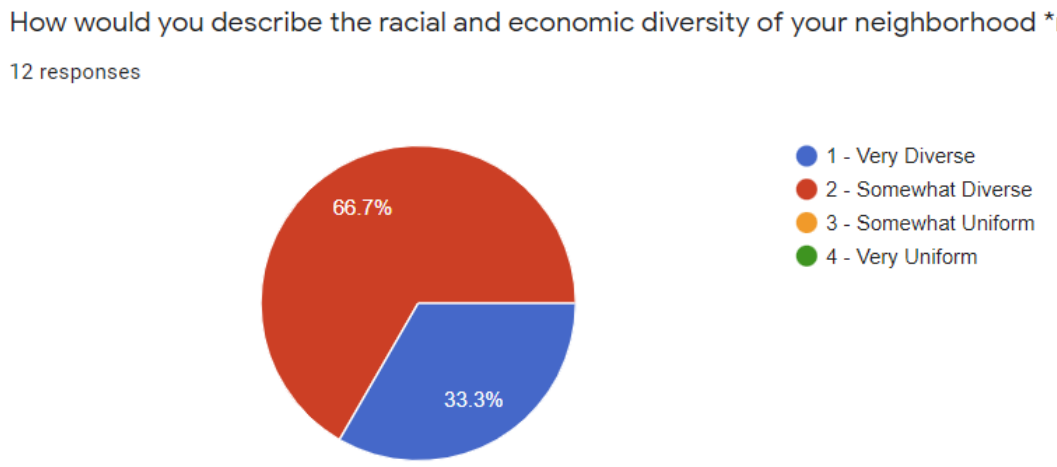
Your answer

Appendix D: Post-Interview Survey Responses

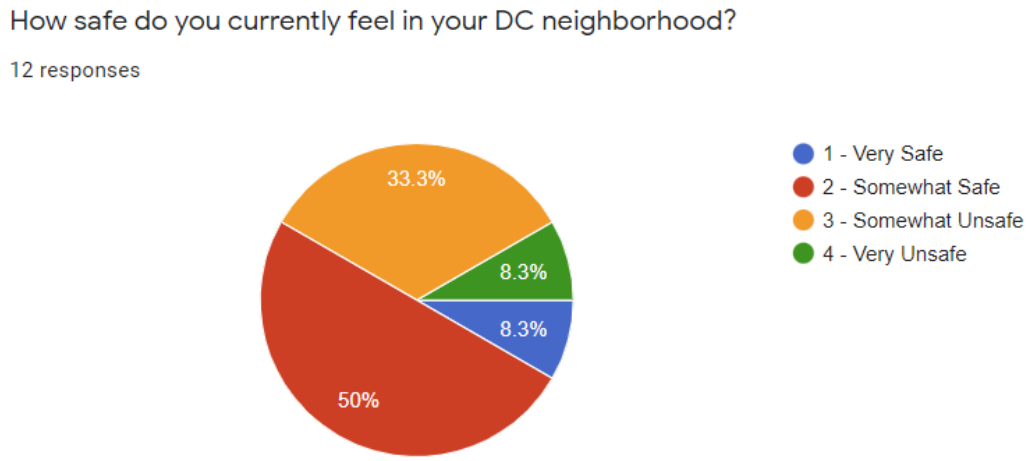
Appendix D1: How would you describe the racial and economic diversity of your neighborhood when you first moved in?



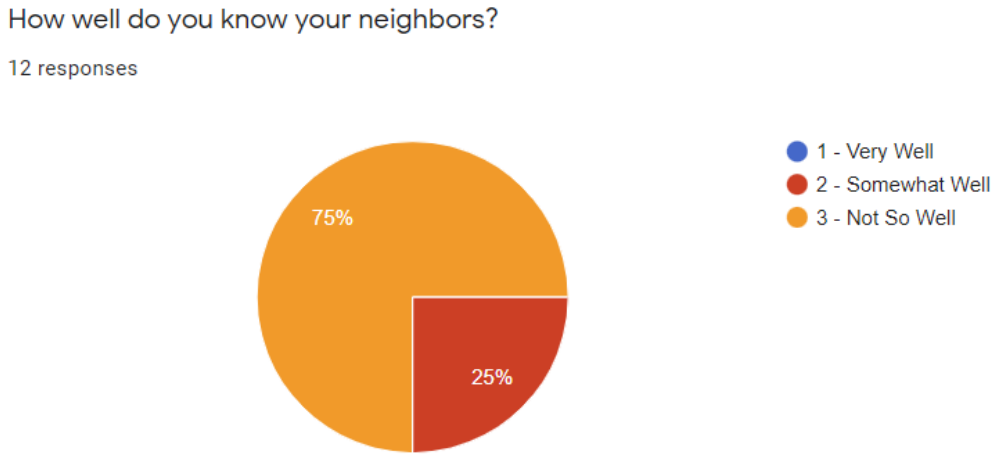
Appendix D2: How would you describe the racial and economic diversity of your neighborhood now?



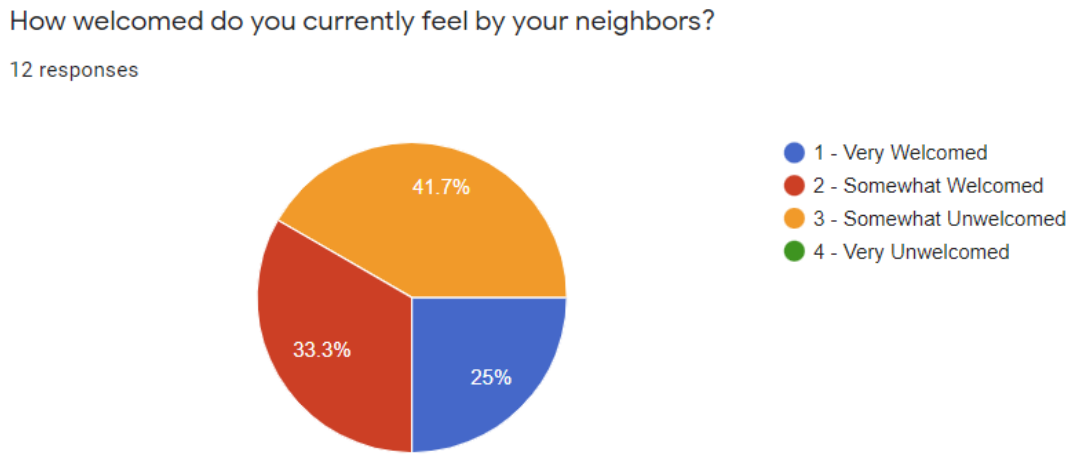
Appendix D3: How safe do you currently feel in your D.C. neighborhood?



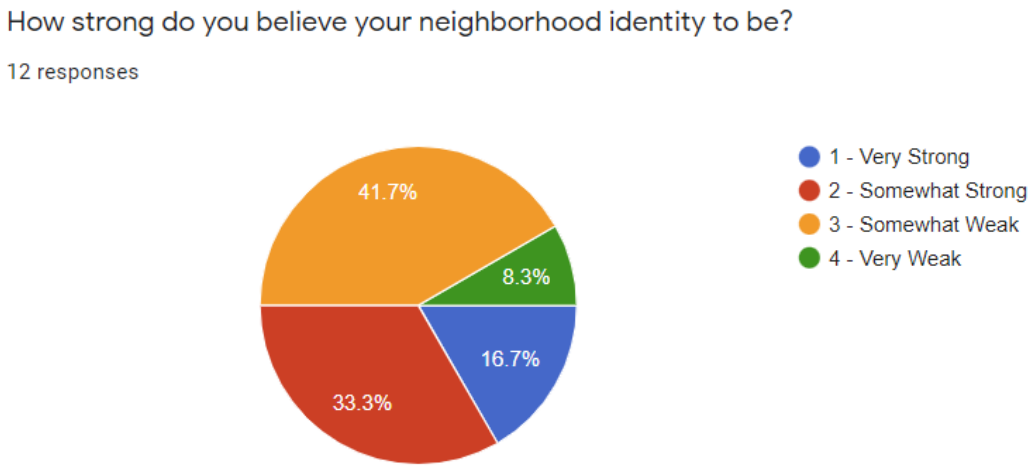
Appendix D4: How well do you know your neighbors?



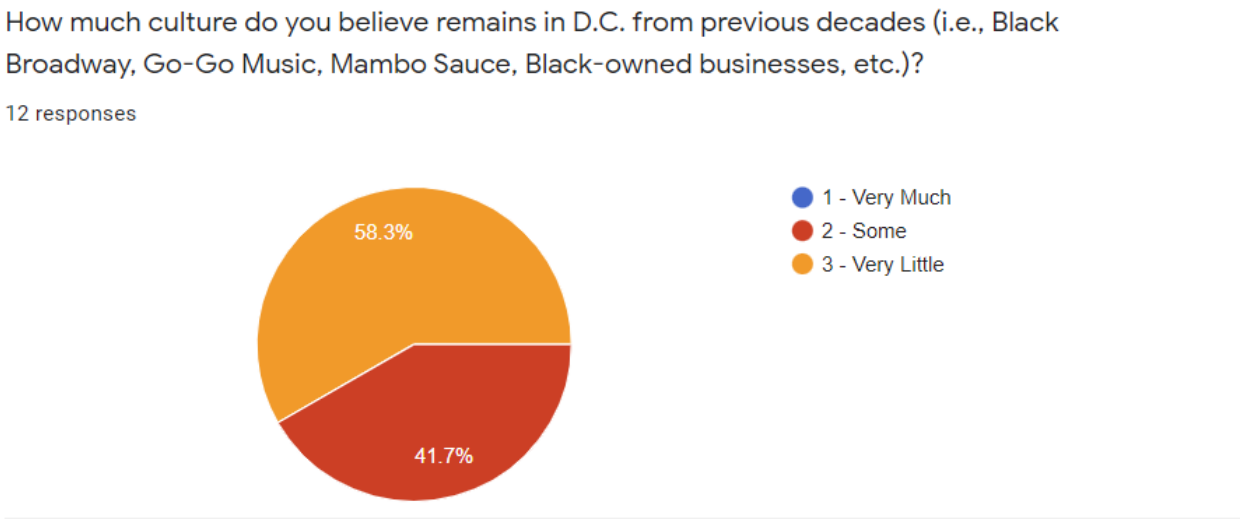
Appendix D5: How welcomed do you currently feel by your neighbors?



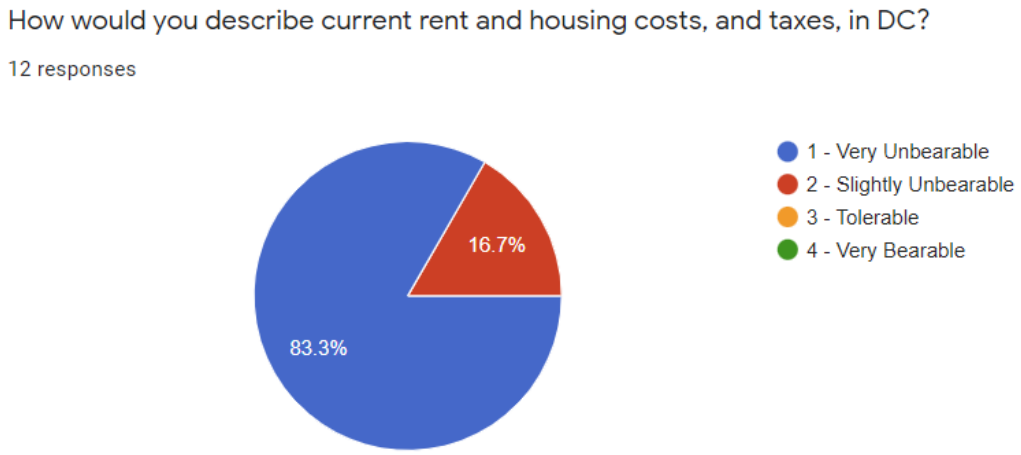
Appendix D6: How strong do you believe your neighborhood identity to be?



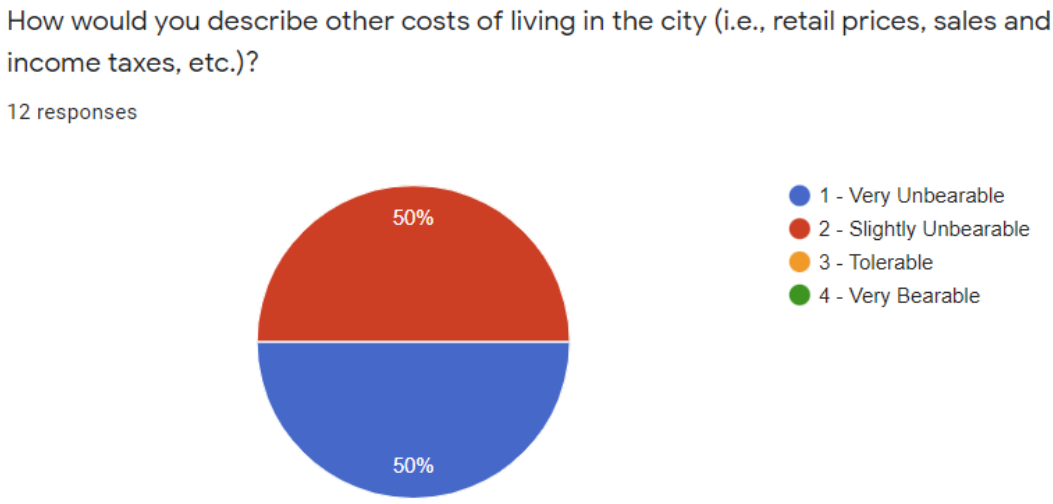
Appendix D7: How much culture do you believe remains in D.C. from previous decades?



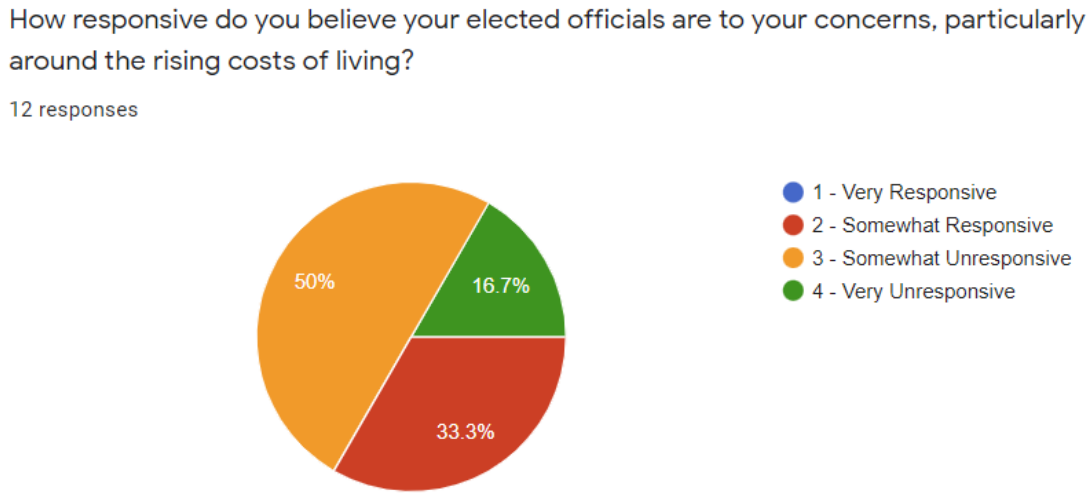
Appendix D8: How would you describe current rent and housing costs, and taxes?



Appendix D9: How would you describe other costs of living in the city?



Appendix D10: How responsive do you believe elected officials are to your concerns?



Appendix D11: How aware are you of housing policies in place in D.C.?