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How low income neighborhoods change: Entry, exit, and enhancement ☆

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Abstract

This paper examines whether the economic gains experienced by low-income neighborhoods in the 1990s followed patterns of classic gentrification (as frequently assumed) — that is, through the in migration of higher income white, households, and out migration (or displacement) of the original lower income, usually minority residents, spurring racial transition in the process. Using the internal Census version of the American Housing Survey, we find no evidence of heightened displacement, even among the most vulnerable, original residents. While the entrance of higher income homeowners was an important source of income gains, so too was the selective exit of lower income homeowners. Original residents also experienced differential gains in income and reported greater increases in their satisfaction with their neighborhood than found in other low-income neighborhoods. Finally, gaining neighborhoods were able to avoid the losses of white households that non-gaining low income tracts experienced, and were thereby more racially stable rather than less.



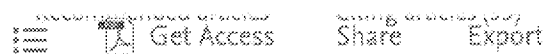
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Keywords

Neighborhood change; Gentrification; Displacement



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The research in this paper was conducted while the authors were Special Sworn Status researchers of the U.S. Census Bureau at the New York Census Research Data Center (Baruch). Research results and conclusions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Census Bureau. This paper has been screened to insure that no confidential data are revealed. We are particularly grateful to Keren Horn for her research work on this project, and Rosemary Hyson, formerly at Baruch's RDC.

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