The Legacy of Colonization, The Damage of Gentrification, The Strength of Community:

Examining Displacing Phenomena Throughout History in the City of Brotherly Love

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April 2023

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Acknowledgements

I am tremendously grateful for the time, energy, and wisdom of **Adam Waterbear DePaul, Gail Loney, Jacqueline Wiggins, and Josh Graupera**. This project exists because of you. I am also deeply indebted to the fantastic **Vassar College Dining Service employees**, this institution is carried on your shoulders. Everything I have learned over the past four years, every topic and concept covered in this paper, I have been introduced to or guided towards by many amazing instructors. Specifically, I would like to acknowledge my iconic advisor, the one and only **Professor Tim Koechlin**, as well as--in no particular order--**Professors Leonard Nevarez, Lisa Brawley, Molly Nesbit, Jasmine Syedullah, Tagreed al-Haddad, John Elrick, Yu Zhou, Tobias Armborst,** and **Adedoyin Teriba** (Dartmouth still doesn't know how lucky they are). I genuinely do not know how to thank **Miles Gomez-Younkin** for engaging in so many thoughtful conversations on gentrification, and for his great ideas and a great interview. I also do not know how to thank my wonderful parents, **Michelle** and **Joel**, for the same. **Estella**, my long-suffering angel, I would have given up half-way through if not for your care and support. To **anyone** I have unintentionally left off of this list, I am truly sorry, and your aid and support mean just as much to me.

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Introduction:

If Philadelphia is the City of Brotherly Love, it has a Funny Way of Showing it

Philadelphia's moniker must bear an ironic tinge for many residents of its more disinvested neighborhoods, scorned and neglected as they have been by 'the city of brotherly love.' North Central Philadelphia, particularly the areas stretching from Girard College's main gate at Corinthian and Girard Avenues to Broad Street, and up Broad through a neighborhood that is more and more defined by the creeping influence of Temple University, has changed a great deal even over the course of my life. A life that is only about two decades long, and spent largely in Fairmount, Philadelphia, a higher-income, majority-white neighborhood that borders the geographic center of this project to the south and southwest (Fig. 1). Growing up, while I was not sheltered from the realities of long term urban disinvestment and gentrification-fueled displacement, I very much accepted the staggering inequalities between my neighborhood and some of those surrounding it as objective fact. I certainly noticed the distinctive, rapidly constructed, cheaply made, 'modern' apartments springing up in the lower-income, predominantly Black neighborhoods bordering my own. It definitely registered with me that the inhabitants of these new structures, and increasingly, the people out walking their dogs and parking their cars in these neighborhoods were getting younger, whiter, and wealthier, but I did not apply much critical thought as to why these changes were and are still taking place, and what their implications are.

These alterations to the highly-visible built environment of older, often disinvested Philly neighborhoods--the apartments that rise overnight like clusters of

mushrooms, with their garish painted metal panels and their simple, 8-bit design--are the most readily apparent manifestations of the gentrifying forces at work in the city. Just as mushrooms are the 'fruiting bodies' of subterranean fungal networks, which are themselves hidden and hard to map, these flashy, impersonal, incongruent structures are the fruiting bodies of equally elusive and complex processes of displacement and sustained wealth disparity.

The aim of this project is to interrogate these processes, to examine how gentrification is impacting the firmly rooted Black community of North Central Philadelphia, to examine how colonization impacted and continues to affect Indigenous and marginalized residents of the modern Eastern Seaboard, to discuss these systems of oppression together, and to provide a number of minor and tentative solutions, as well as a number of questions intended to continue this imperative conversation on combating displacement.

Chapter 1:
Gentrification Origins and Applied Theory

Generally speaking, gentrification is the state and private sector-led displacement and exclusion of an established community from the historically disinvested or affordable area they call home by means of rapid and dramatic increases in the cost of living in the area, and the appearance of new businesses and institutions designed for wealthier newcomers that largely alienate the original inhabitants, culturally and otherwise. During the post-WWII era, in the later 1950s and throughout the 1960s, "most cities in the US experienced slow bleeds of capital thanks to deindustrialization and white flight, which eventually made their inner cities ripe for gentrification" from the 1970s onwards. One of the primary driving forces of displacement through gentrification are capital-seeking developers who realized that "by charging the highest rents they can to poor people and skimping on repairs, milking buildings for all they're worth," they would then "benefit from kicking out those residents, making repairs, and charging much more money to new residents."[1] A triumph for developers, and an ugly situation for anyone standing between them and their profits.

Very frequently, those 'in the way' are communities of color--those who maintain that the relationship between gentrification and race is purely coincidental are not considering a holistic picture of displacement. "The lived experience of race has a spatial dimension, and the lived experience of space has a racial dimension" writes acclaimed scholar Dr. George Lipsitz. "People of different

[1] "Chapter 2: How Gentrification Works," in *How to Kill a City: Gentrification, Inequality, and the Fight for the Neighborhood*, by P. E. Moskowitz (New York, NY: Nation Books, 2017).

races in the United States are relegated to different physical locations by housing and lending discrimination, by school district boundaries, by policing practices, by zoning regulations, and by the design of transit systems." Unsurprisingly, these racialized spaces do not all offer their inhabitants equal opportunities and quality of life. "Race serves as a key variable in determining who has the ability to own homes that appreciate in value and can be passed down to subsequent generations" continues Lipsitz.

> Inheritance based on home ownership enables white families to pass on the benefits of past and present discrimination to succeeding generations. Putatively race-neutral tax policies subsidize those forms of income most likely to be secured, in part, from discriminatory practices. The home mortgage interest deduction, the local property tax deduction, and the favored treatment of income derived from inheritance and capital gains provide enhanced rewards for racism and subsidies for segregation.[2]

Essentially, America's economic and tax systems make no adjustments for the openly unequal and racist policies that stood for nearly two hundred years, and indisputably favor homeowners over renters. Home ownership can be very difficult to obtain when you have little generational wealth (your ancestors owned land and left behind inheritance), and your nation only conceded that you are a full human person and deserving of the associated rights in the 1960s. Today, nearly fifty-eight percent of Black households in the US pay rent to live in their homes, as do about fifty-two percent of Latinx households and a little less than forty percent of Asian households. Comparatively, about twenty-eight percent of white households rent

[2] Lipsitz, George. “The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape.” *Landscape Journal* 26, no. 1 (2007): 10–23.

their homes.[3] They are, of course, paying rent to landlords where, in Philadelphia, seventy-three percent of them own less than eighteen percent of the rental units in the city, and an exclusive two percent own more than fifty percent of all rental properties.[4] The history of Western capitalism dictates that the two percent will eventually, inevitably shrink towards one percent and the fifty percent of property they own will gradually swell towards the total. Should that occur, the few, or sole landlord(s) would have unprecedented power over quality of housing, location, neighborhood design, and more. With this in mind, it is not hard to see how people of color are disproportionately affected when owners and developers begin "milking buildings for all they're worth". Indeed, a 2019 Philadelphia-based study by Joseph Gibbons et al. found that "the average gentrifying tract" saw an uptick of about 5% in the white population, while the Black population diminished by around 12%.[5] Arriving at similar conclusions to Lipsitz, Dr. Amanda Boston explains that "racialized displacement engendered by exclusionary redevelopment" is largely due to "issues of housing affordability, police violence, labor exploitation, healthcare access, educational inequality, and political participation, among other issues which are broadly consequential yet have distinctly racial operations and consequences."[6]

Though I believe most urbanists and those who have studied or experienced gentrification would whole-heartedly agree with this summation, there are those

[3] Desilver, Drew. "As National Eviction Ban Expires, a Look at Who Rents and Who Owns in the U.S." *Pew Research Center* (blog). Accessed December 10, 2022.
[4] Howell, Octavia, and Elinor Haider. "Who Are Philadelphia's Landlords?" The Pew Charitable Trusts, February 24, 2021.
[5] Gibbons, Joseph, Michael S Barton, and Timothy T Reling. "Do Gentrifying Neighbourhoods Have Less Community? Evidence from Philadelphia." *Urban Studies* 57, no. 6 (May 1, 2020): 1143–63.
[6] Boston, Amanda. "Gentrifying the City: From Racialized Neglect to Racialized Reinvestment." Digital forum. *Items* (blog), September 1, 2020.

who emphasize and interrogate different aspects of gentrifying processes in efforts to better understand this phenomenon and how it is connected to other societal ills. The actual term 'gentrification' was first used in a publication by the British scholar Ruth Glass in 1964 to describe patterns of displacement she was observing in London.[7] However, as the study of gentrification has advanced and become more nuanced, some scholars are arguing for less generalized models of how it takes place, encouraging gentrification research that both considers how gentrification fits into global historical processes more broadly, yet also centers local contexts. Margaret Ellis-Young's 2021 article "Gentrification as (settler) colonialism? Moving beyond metaphorical linkages" is one such addition to the body of work on this topic. In this piece, Ellis-Young explains how "much of the literature on gentrification that engages with settler colonialism continues to do so metaphorically", and posits that

> Drawing parallels between gentrification and settler occupation as asynchronous processes and/or in abstraction from a contemporary Indigenous presence in “settler cities” masks ongoing anti-Indigenous articulations…gentrification is one way the settler colonial project continues to attempt to eliminate Indigenous ties to Indigenous land.[8]

This positioning of gentrification helps to demystify these displacing processes and show that they are not new phenomena, but indeed derived from centuries-old European actions and logics that have shaped world history. Metaphorically discussing settler colonialism and modern gentrification--treating them as similar concepts but not realizing or acknowledging that "evolving but always violent

[7] “Chapter 2: How Gentrification Works,” in *How to Kill a City: Gentrification, Inequality, and the Fight for the Neighborhood*, by P. E. Moskowitz (New York, NY: Nation Books, 2017).
[8] Ellis-Young, Margaret. “Gentrification as (Settler) Colonialism? Moving beyond Metaphorical Linkages.” *Geography Compass* 16, no. 1 (January 2022).

enactments of Indigenous erasure take place in and through urban space," and that these in turn "support settler society's continued occupation of Indigenous land, dominance over its organization, and associated wealth accumulation"--can limit our understanding of both phenomena.[9]

When colonialism and gentrification cease to be discussed in a contextual vacuum, and are instead viewed as different manifestations of the same capitalist and settler logics being forced onto long-established, marginalized populations--be they indigenous communities or lower-income communities of color--connections between these two sets of processes begin to take on new significance. Karsgaard et al. discuss the origins of settlers rechristening places, as well as the driving forces behind this well documented phenomenon. "By overwriting epistemologies, languages, histories, and relationships through such symbolic naming practices, settlers are able to maintain dominion over the land and thus over resources" write the authors.

> Colonial toponyms thus contribute to processes of “accumulation by dispossession”, whereby settler society and history become naturalized on the land, which is taken up within a capitalist system…Many naming practices, however, are banal, shrouding the dispossessive nature of settler colonialism for capital gain, including the violent, racialized nature of this dispossession…they may be presented as positive reframing of places for demarcation, commodification, and development within modern property relations.[10]

Renaming places, people, landmarks, etc., is clearly essential to the settler colonial project for a variety of reasons. The effectiveness of this colonial tool is attested to

[9] Ibid.
[10] Karsgaard, Carrie, Maggie MacDonald, and Michael Hockenhull. “Rename and Resist Settler Colonialism: Land Acknowledgments and Twitter’s Toponymic Politics.” *First Monday* 26 (January 8, 2021).

by the sheer number of locations and countries whose 'official' names still reflect the whims of centuries of european travelers and colonizers, and not the traditions of their indigenous populations. Importantly, Karsgaard and co-authors MacDonald and Hockenhull highlight that dispossessive naming practices play a significant role in "development within modern property relations", i.e. gentrification. The fact that gentrifying processes exhibit similar rebranding behaviors to settler colonialism, for the purpose of achieving similar goals, deserves a closer examination especially in light of the knowledge that there is a direct and traceable link between the two.

To dive deeper, to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon and see it in action, Jackelyn Hwang's 2006 study of South Philadelphia neighborhoods proves to be very illuminating. Out of fifty six respondents, Hwang found that

> A total of 23 respondents, who were all minorities, named the neighborhood "South Philly," which generally refers to a large region of the city, and 25 minority respondents used conventional neighborhood boundaries to identify their neighborhoods...They often referred to the character of South Philly directly in terms of race, particularly as a traditionally African-American area...White respondents, by contrast, tended to define the neighborhood using a variety of names, unconventional boundaries, and intermediate-sized spatial areas that were based on socioeconomic status and perceptions of crime.[11]

Here the clash between an established population of color and--though it is doubtful they see themselves this way--white settlers is evident. Looking at a contemporary map of this area (Fig. 2), one may be hard-pressed to find the same South Philly that Hwang's older respondents of color fight to keep alive underneath

[11] Hwang, Jackelyn. "The Social Construction of a Gentrifying Neighborhood: Reifying and Redefining Identity and Boundaries in Inequality." *Urban Affairs Review* 52, no. 1 (January 1, 2016): 98–128.

the multitude of new districts and titles. "Where I live is still South Philly" says James (a fifty seven year old, Black respondent) resolutely. "The City Hall is doing the name changing...They are creating borders...They are just trying to push people out...They are trying to call it Center City, but it's not. It's South Philly."[12] The gentrifying--the butchering--of South Philly into the various zones that are recognized by real estate agents, developers, mapping companies, and increasingly more residents today bears striking similarity to the colonial redivision of continents and other people's land because they are rooted in the same logics and systems. "People in power through time, including settlers, colonialists, developers, planners, and the real estate industry, have used their power within these ever-shifting social conditions to realize their own desires for capital within this space," writes the scholar Jessica Ty Miller, "increasing the potential for non-white, non-wealthy, and non-politically connected people to become displaced."[13] As long as settlers maintain power in colonized nations, and as long as capital accumulation is the basis of the western economic system, these cycles of displacement will likely continue, and just as gentrification is a modern manifestation of the same forces behind colonialism, some phenomenon or set of processes may eventually distinguish itself from gentrification unless there is a concerted effort to combat displacement and inequality in cities around the world.

One potentially overlooked way to begin this work requires nothing more than our minds and the stories we tell ourselves and others. "The stories that

[12] Ibid.
[13] Miller, Jessica Ty. "Temporal Analysis of Displacement: Racial Capitalism and Settler Colonial Urban Space." *Geoforum* 116 (November 1, 2020): 180–92.

suggest that poverty, cultural practices, or immigration status, for example, define land values," writes scholar Rachel Brahinsky, "...play a central role in the reproduction of capitalism's racialized property markets."[14] Basically, the reality of many people--consciously or unconsciously--subscribing to the concept that these factors affect a building or piece of land's value *is* precisely what bestows value upon them. Perhaps this seems like a pointless philosophical debate, but different perceptions of space and value lie at the roots of many deep-seated social and economic issues around the globe, and particularly in the United States. Dr. George Lipsitz argues that different 'spatial imaginaries,' frameworks for viewing and interacting with spaces, play a large role in reproducing American socioeconomic inequalities. "Not all people who are white consciously embrace the white spatial imaginary," writes Lipsitz. Even so, all white people benefit from a white spatial imaginary being codified into American legislation. "The white spatial imaginary establishes contract law and deed restrictions as supreme authorities," he continues. "It makes the augmentation of private property values the central purpose of public associations, and pursues the ideal of pure and homogenous space through exclusiveness, exclusivity, and homogeneity."[15] Defining this framework is the reliance on *exchange value* over *use value*, as exchange value accrues more benefits to those in a capitalist system who have access to generational wealth and pre-existing assets, as the United States' white ruling class does. To those excluded and victimized by the system, use value becomes far

[14] Brahinsky, Rachel. "The Story of Property: Meditations on Gentrification, Renaming, and Possibility." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 52, no. 5 (August 2020): 837–55.

[15] Lipsitz, George. "The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape." *Landscape Journal* 26, no. 1 (2007): 10–23.

more relevant than exchange value, and while again, as race is a constructed concept, not all Black and marginalized people subscribe to the Black spatial imaginary. However, "all blacks are subjected to it," as racial bias dictates how darker-skinned people are perceived in the US.

> Relegated to neighborhoods where zoning, policing, and investment practices make it impossible for them to control the exchange value of their property…ghetto and barrio residents turn segregation into congregation. They augment the use value of their neighborhoods by relying on each other for bartered services and goods; by mobilizing collectively for better city services; by establishing businesses geared to a local ethnic clientele; and by using the commonalities of race and class as a basis for building pan-neighborhood alliances…to increase the responsibility, power, and accountability of local government.[16]

These distinct imaginaries are two out of an unknown number of ways that human beings can conceive of space, but one happens to be enshrined in American laws and policies, and one has developed in response to these. Though these concepts carry a great deal of weight and have become foundational tenets of the capitalist world, they are also stories, passed from generation to generation. "For each narrative about the exchange value of place," writes Brahinsky, "there are countless alternatives about how to understand cities and our role in them. These counter-narratives, often emerging from the grassroots, can chart a path toward a more humane urbanism."[17] Though it is doubtful that the white spatial imaginary could be usurped overnight, or even within the next decade or more, recognizing that it is a story may be the first step in this direction. It is a tale that wields great power, yet at its core it is just that: a narrative that needs to be told again and again

[16] Ibid.
[17] Brahinsky, Rachel. "The Story of Property: Meditations on Gentrification, Renaming, and Possibility." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 52, no. 5 (August 2020): 837–55.

to maintain its influence. If humanity can recognize this, and begin to put more faith in Brahinsky's "countless alternatives," perhaps the promise of a more peaceful and equitable future is still within our reach.

Chapter 2:

A Brief History of Displacement in Philadelphia

The geographic area recognized by most people today as central and southern New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, and Delaware is the rightful homeland of the Lenape people and was once unquestionably governed and administered by them (Fig. 3). Unami (also called Lenape) is the language of the Lenape, and in both language and culture they are related to other Algonquian peoples, yet distinct in their own way. Lenape society at the time was largely situated in towns along the Lenapewihittuck, later given the name "Delaware River" by the English.[18] The land that Philadelphia has since been built on, as noted by a settler of Swedish descent in the 1650s, once supported six different Lenape communities, each represented and led by its own sachem. Sachems, community leaders with complex roles and responsibilities, are often referred to as "kings" or "chiefs" in European accounts.[19] The wealthy English Quaker (Religious Society of Friends) William Penn established the colony of Pennsylvania and within, the city of Philadelphia in 1681, buying the right to erect his settlement with--among other things--tools, guns, ammunition, clothes, Wampum beads, and Dutch currency at a meeting of sixteen local Lenape Sachems in the summer of 1682.[20] Penn, in the centuries since his death, has been practically canonized for his treatment of the Lenape: compensating them for use of and access to their land. The scholar Jean Soderlund writes that

[18] "Introduction," in *Lenape Country: Delaware Valley Society Before William Penn*, by Jean R. Soderlund (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015)
[19] Amy C. Schutt, *Peoples of the River Valleys: The Odyssey of the Delaware Indians* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007)
[20] "CHAPTER SEVEN Negotiating Penn's Colony, 1681–1715," in *Lenape Country: Delaware Valley Society Before William Penn*, by Jean R. Soderlund (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015)

> Mythology created in the mid-eighteenth century to subjugate the Lenapes and divest them of their remaining territory in eastern Pennsylvania reinforced the earlier legend of the benevolent William Penn to suggest that Lenapes had never controlled their country economically or politically or had any substantial impact on the evolution of Delaware Valley society.

The mythos surrounding Penn and the early years of his experimental colony tends to skip over "the period from 1615 to 1681 when the Lenapes dominated trade and determined if, when, and where Europeans could travel and take up land."[21] As the seventeenth century drew to a close, the bloated european colonies along what is now the United States' eastern seaboard grew faster still. With thousands of settler colonists voyaging across the Atlantic Ocean to occupy more land, "Europeans soon pushed Lenapes and old settlers from prime lands along the river and their central position in the economy and society."[22] Faced with fleeing for their lives or assimilating and taking their culture and practices underground, a long-standing falsehood about the absence of Lenape in Pennsylvania was born.[23] This lie, actively or passively upheld, is reinforced by the state's refusal to acknowledge any Indigenous peoples or groups. "Despite being a major hub for the Lenape people," writes Kenny Cooper for the Philadelphia-area PBS station WHYY. "Pennsylvania has no federally recognized tribes. In fact, Pennsylvania is one of only a few Eastern states that doesn't recognize any native tribes".[24]

While they were the first, the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania have not been the only people in the region forced to engage in the unending and exhausting fight

[21] "Introduction," in *Lenape Country: Delaware Valley Society Before William Penn*, by Jean R. Soderlund (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015)
[22] "CHAPTER SEVEN Negotiating Penn's Colony, 1681–1715," in *Lenape Country: Delaware Valley Society Before William Penn*, by Jean R. Soderlund (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015)
[23] DePaul, Adam Waterbear. "The Lenape Nation: History & Culture -Part 2." Zoom Event, March 7, 2023.
[24] Cooper, Kenny. "'We Just Want to Be Welcomed Back': The Lenape Seek a Return Home." *WHYY* (blog), July 30, 2021.

against displacement and colonialism. In his foundational and widely-referenced 1899 work *The Philadelphia Negro*, sociologist, philosopher, and Black studies intellectual W. E. B. Du Bois includes a succinct history of Black life in the city, as well as some information on Black communities across the rest of the state. Current historical consensus dictates that the first Black residents of Pennsylvania were victims of race-based slavery, which existed in the region before even the name and boundaries of the state did. The Quakers, now often associated with the abolition movement, took some time to earn that connection. Prior to the arrival of William Penn and his colonists, Dutch and Swedish settlers held African and African-descended people in enslavement along the Lenapewihittuck (the Delaware)--a practice which Penn permitted to continue after his purchase of the colony. It was not even until the late 1690s when Quaker groups began to question the institution of slavery, and it was not until 1775 that their stance had developed to the point of excluding slaveholders from Quaker society. By 1790, writes Du Bois, there were over ten thousand African-descended people--free or enslaved--living in Pennsylvania.[25] Leaping forwards a few decades, "beginning with 1850" writes Du Bois, "the improvement of the Negro was more rapid. The value of real estate held [by Black residents in Philadelphia] was estimated to have doubled between 1847 and 1856." However, he then notes that "the proportion of men in the trades remained stationary".[26] Is this improvement then, or more of an eerie glimpse into the future where gentrification and unbridled real estate speculation uproot and

[25] DuBois, W. E. B., Elijah Anderson, and Isabel Eaton. “The Negro in Philadelphia, 1638–1820.” In *The Philadelphia Negro*, 10–24. A Social Study. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996.
[26] DuBois, W. E. B., Elijah Anderson, and Isabel Eaton. “The Negro in Philadelphia, 1820–1896.” In *The Philadelphia Negro*, 25–45. A Social Study. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996.

displace established Black communities? If land is becoming exponentially more expensive, but occupational opportunity and material conditions remain relatively the same for Black Philadelphians--who at this time were *legally* second-class citizens with minimal rights compared to the white settler ruling class--it is only a matter of time before they are pushed or bought off of their properties, evicted by rising rents or tempted to sell due to financial pressures or the badgering of real estate agents.

By the time the Professor began his study in August of 1896, there were over forty thousand Black residents living in Philadelphia.[27] But "What happened after W. E. B. Du Bois left Philadelphia?" asks sociologist Marcus Anthony Hunter. Examining Black life in the city from "the 1920s through the early 1940s", he found

> that three decades after Du Bois left Philadelphia, black and white community organizations commissioned a study of “Negro migrants” in the black Seventh Ward. They found insufficient water supply and toilet facilities, defective sanitary equipment, overcrowding, leaky roofs, plaster and paper falling off the walls, and windowless rooms. Du Bois had earlier documented similar deprivations...[28]

This revelation only provides more support to the idea that DuBois' observed "improvement" in the condition of Philadelphia's Black population was more of an increase in their land value than anything, which does not necessarily translate to the betterment in quality of life for the whole community, or even for the majority. The authors of a 2016 study "suggest that gentrification redistributes less advantaged residents into less advantaged neighborhoods, contributing to the

[27] DuBois, W. E. B., Elijah Anderson, and Isabel Eaton. “The Scope of This Study.” In *The Philadelphia Negro*, 1–4. A Social Study. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996.
[28] Hunter, Marcus Anthony. “Black Philly After The Philadelphia Negro.” *Contexts* 13, no. 1 (February 1, 2014): 26–31.

persistence of neighborhood disadvantage.[29] To some extent, this assertion seems to hold true even during the early 20th century, demonstrating how rising demand and property values in a comparatively cheap and disinvested area--hallmarks of modern gentrification--often pave the way for the creation of continuously, cyclically neglected and disinvested neighborhoods. Indeed, "landlords responded to the increased black population by refashioning apartments and rooming houses," writes Dr. Hunter, "dividing existing residences into several “new” rooms or apartments — many of which lacked heating, bathrooms, or adequate plumbing." Unsurprisingly, the result of this was that Black families were living in increasingly awful places--small, dingy, and unsafe in a plethora of ways. With the catastrophic collapse of a Seventh Ward apartment building on December 19th, 1936, in which seven people died (including a woman named Lucy Spease and her three children, Bernice, Samuel, and Helen) and over twenty four were injured, "The tragedy became the catalyst for an unprecedented period of housing reform and construction in Philadelphia, including several housing projects designed to supply affordable housing to the city’s poor and working class black residents." Though the mayor's initial response to the tragedy consisted of evicting Black Seventh Warders from buildings dubbed 'unfit for habitation', the backlash from this "halted [Mayor] Wilson’s forced evictions and facilitated the development of the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) in 1937." Firstly intent on building projects designated for Black residents, the new city-run housing organization had twenty million federal dollars in their pocket and their sights set on " two neighborhoods in

[29] Ding, Lei, Jackelyn Hwang, and Eileen Divringi. “Gentrification and Residential Mobility in Philadelphia.” *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 61 (November 2016): 38–51.

North Philadelphia as the sites for what would become the James Weldon Johnson and Richard Allen Homes." To those hailing from the cramped, dystopian world of the cheapest Seventh Ward accommodations money could buy (or rent, more likely), any shot at an upgrade may have been worth it, as evidenced by the significant numbers of Black Seventh Ward residents who " migrated to North Philadelphia between 1937 and 1940, taking up residence with relatives and friends who already lived in the area. This migration not only shrunk the population of the black Seventh Ward," notes Dr. Hunter, "but also led to the decline of its key black institutions."[30] Today, this transformation has progressed much further. The Seventh Ward, carved up into small, gentrified neighborhoods, is now largely unrecognizable from its heyday as the city's center of Black life and culture. Those whose perception of Philadelphia is anchored in the later half of the 20th century and the 2000s would presumably imagine that role to be filled now by North Philly. Indeed, beginning largely with the post-WWII generations several neighborhoods north of Center City became nexuses of Black life, "the heart and soul of the city. When I think of North Philadelphia," writes journalist, involved community member, and North Philly native Marilyn Kai Jewett, "I think of it as the place from where the best and brightest of the city's Black community arose."[31]

The time period detailed in Ms. Jewett's article before it shifts to a discussion on present day gentrification and displacement focuses on the 1950s through the '70s and early '80s. Reminiscing about her upbringing, Ms. Jewett

[30] Ibid.
[31] Jewett, Marilyn Kai. "Commentary: North Philadelphia Residents Fight for Its Future, Call to Stop Gentrification and Displacement." Generocity Philly, July 21, 2021.

recalls that North Philly "was a village where everyone protected us children, including the so-called “bums”, and that "there were also many Black-owned businesses in the community. We really didn’t have to shop outside of North Philly for anything" she says. Quoting prominent community members, some of whom I had the honor of interviewing for this project, they echo Ms. Jewett's praise for the neighborhood. Ms. Jacqueline Wiggins, who grew up in the area during the '50s and '60s, remembers it being "a nice place to live". Ms. Cora Turpin, raised in the same era, remembers that "there was much community spirit. Guys used to harmonize on the corner stoops. There was no violence or fear thereof." To summarize why North Philly was such a fantastic place to grow up: "Overall, I was protected, loved and cared for." recalls Ms. Gail Loney. "It was the people, the community, that’s what made growing up in North Philly great."[32]

Marilyn Kai Jewett and her peers--other long-time residents of North Philly, specifically the neighborhood of North Central Philly--began to notice a significant departure from the neighborhood of their youths around two decades ago. "I and others love the essence and spirit of North Philadelphia, but we don’t like what’s been happening there for the past 10 to 15 years" she writes. Alongside the gentrifying phenomena frequently discussed in the mainstream, such as rapidly rising prices and cultural displacement, other displacing phenomena, rooted in the same capitalist and settler logics which bred colonialism, are taking place as well. "The names of neighborhoods have been changed and the official boundary of North Philadelphia has been moved to the Cheltenham Avenue cityline by the media

[32] Ibid.

and those who have never lived there." says Ms. Jewett. "Residents of Logan, Olney, Fern Rock and Oaklane [neighborhoods in *northern* Philadelphia but not the actual neighborhood of *North Philly*] would be surprised to know they now live in North Philadelphia." Other culturally/communally damaging occurrences from the past twenty years or so include

> Former Mayor John Street's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI)...Philadelphia's 10-year property tax abatement on new housing and questionable city zoning decisions...Couple that with Temple University's further encroachment into North Philadelphia, self-serving government officials and unscrupulous developers, and you have an unholy covenant that's hard for citizens to defeat.[33]

Truly unholy, this nosferatu of undying, systemic processes of displacement and disinvestment has complex origins, and has had devastating effects on North Central Philadelphia. "Real estate acquisition was identified as a key element of NTI from the start", writes John Kromer, the city's Director of Housing from 1992 to 2001. "One of the "NTI Framework Goals" was to "improve the City's ability to assemble land for development," and this goal quickly assumed high priority status." John Street, Mayor of Philadelphia from 2000 to 2007, continued to implement his Neighborhood Transformation Initiative throughout both of his terms in office. With a five year budget of seventy four million dollars for land acquisition alone--ultimately rising to eighty nine million due to outside funding--NIT was able to purchase over 6,000 vacant properties in its first several years.[34]

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[33] Ibid.
[34] Kromer, John. *Fixing Broken Cities: The Implementation of Urban Development Strategies*. London, UNITED KINGDOM: Taylor & Francis Group, 2009

NIT's secret to success? For many years, Philadelphia had reserved its use of eminent domain to acquire land "for major economic development ventures such as the Pennsylvania Convention Center and was rarely used in neighborhoods". However this began to change in the 1990s with the back-to-back administrations of Mayor Ed Rendell. "Under the Street Administration, eminent domain continued to be used as the primary method for assembling property for development", writes Kromer. The land banks created from these acquisitions had great potential for reinvestment and jumpstarting positive change in North Central, but perhaps due to the profit-driven ideology behind them, they did not benefit the existing community.[35] As explained in a 2018 newspaper article written by long-time North Central resident and heavily-involved community activist Gail Loney,

> City officials were supposed to make land bank laws to help the people in the neighborhoods acquire the land, but it didn't and doesn't work. You realize that you can't purchase any of these properties because they won't sell them to you. Unbeknownst to the public, these properties were already designated for housing authority agencies and various city programs, while some are sold to developers and others acquiring them through eminent domain for a variety of purposes.[36]

Masquerading as a solution to disinvestment in the city, the NTI compounded existing issues of housing scarcity and the gargantuan barriers that stand between low-income, majority Black or POC neighborhoods and improved material conditions and quality of life. Indeed, neighborhoods were transformed, but for who?

[35] Ibid.
[36] Loney, Gail. "Gentrification = Colonization!" *Stadium Stompers Newsletter*, May 1, 2018, Vol 3 edition.

Ms. Jewett's article also mentions the ten year property tax abatement. John Kromer calls it "one of the most important of several contributors to the revival of downtown Philadelphia during the 1990s." Implemented in 1997 under the second Rendell administration, the abatement did much to bring development to Center City, but significant pushback occurred against the abatement in 2000 when the eligibility criteria were expanded. The uproar was largely, concedes Kromer, "based on the fact that the abatement provided the greatest direct benefit to the wealthiest investors, developers, and property owners — those with the most capital to spend in the city's hottest real estate markets." How did this policy affect disinvested residential districts? Not positively. "although the tax abatements were offered citywide," continues Kromer, "most of them ended up in or near downtown and upscale neighborhoods." He provides the example of a two hundred and sixty-four dollar 2005 tax bill for a luxurious penthouse, while the tax bill for a nearby rowhouse was almost forty-five hundred dollars.

> Many residences in weaker Philadelphia neighborhood real estate markets were century-old homes in need of upgrading: reroofing, repointing, rewiring, repainting, or the repair or replacement of heaters, sewer laterals, and water lines. Most owners of these residences had little access to capital to finance such improvements, which, when completed, would generate little or no added market value eligible for abatement. And the completion of this work would not reduce their existing, unexempted property taxes; the preexisting $4,400 tax bill for the Mitchell Street house would not decrease, no matter how much upgrading the owner might be able to afford to complete.[37]

Upon closer examination, Philadelphia's ten year property tax abatement was a tax abatement for those who needed it least. It both enabled those with pre-existing

[37] Kromer, John. *Fixing Broken Cities: The Implementation of Urban Development Strategies*. London, UNITED KINGDOM: Taylor & Francis Group, 2009

resources to buy and develop more land more widely, geographically and figuratively speaking, while managing to ignore--or even further disinvest in the neighborhoods that were the most in need of community-centered development and maintenance. While it cannot be said that settler-colonial american cities have ever truly supported their low-income and marginalized residents--certainly not to the extent of whiter and wealthier residents--there is a distinct turning-point in history when many post-industrial western cities explicitly became machines for making profits rather than for making communities.

"The harsh economic climate of the 1970s, and the dislocation and disorientation that accompanied it," writes sociologist Dr. Miriam Greenberg, "provided ideal conditions for the imposition of controversial neoliberal reforms like corporate tax breaks, the deregulation of the housing market, and deep cuts in public spending." Neoliberalism, in essence, is an economic and political ideology ultimately rooted in the desire to remove restrictive barriers--such as human rights and environmental considerations, as well as government oversight and regulation--from the global market economy, and guided by the belief that an unfettered market with no government interference is the ideal economic model. This "increasingly absolutist “neoliberal,” free market ideology…would gain credence with the anti-government attacks of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s." As this guiding principle was adopted and refined by the Reagan administration in the United States, it manifested in corporate subsidies and tax breaks, greatly reduced government and state funding to welfare programs and public services, and more prolific and purposeful development. These

conditions, compounded by politically motivated fund-slashing and ongoing white flight and already-present urban disinvestment "drove many cities to the brink of fiscal crisis, unable to raise funds through taxes or state aid to cover basic operating expenses." Thrust into a tough position, to say the least, and under pressure to participate more actively in the market by those in local and federal positions of power, "cities jettisoned their long-term “managerial” approach, geared towards sustaining the welfare state, and turned instead to short-term strategies of “entrepreneurial” development, through which urban space and resources served as a motor for rapid capital accumulation", writes Dr. Greenberg. "Urban growth machines" based in the local real estate and business sectors, and strongly linked to city government, pushed pro-growth, free market agendas, regardless of their social or environmental sustainability."[38] Already at odds with the United States' fiercely capitalist ideology and highly privatized economic system, the government-funded welfare and public services traditionally provided by municipalities were put under immense strain as the nation shifted its focus away from a more balanced public-private political and economic structure towards one that diverted as much effort and as many resources as possible to the endless quest of capital accumulation and the increasing of profits. Needless to say, this drastically intensified the poverty, displacement, worsening of socioeconomic and geographic mobility, and general mistreatment experienced by Black, Indigenous,

[38] Miriam Greenberg, *Branding New York: How a City in Crisis Was Sold to the World* (London, UNITED KINGDOM: Taylor & Francis Group, 2008)

and other marginalized communities which had been dealing with such issues since before the inception of the settler-colonial, racial-capitalist american state.

Cities and national governments, however, have not been the only entities to double-down on privatization, development, and apathetic welfare policies in the past half-century or so. Colleges and universities, including those in dense urban residential areas, have long been engines of development and economic opportunity, sometimes at the expense of surrounding communities. They too heard the siren song of neoliberalism in the 1970s and '80s, and have spent the time since plotting and implementing lofty development goals, curating and delineating (and expanding) their borders, militarizing and reorganizing private security and police forces, and generally enlarging their roles in local economies--metamorphosing into microstates contained within cities. Casting aside more heavy-handed land acquisition methods, easily branded by observers as ultimately classist or racist maneuvers, institutions of higher education began "opting for market-oriented strategies" intended "to stimulate private development. In this manner, the neoliberal university 's role in reshaping its urban environs" became "at once more powerful and less visible."[39] Enter Temple University, the largest educational institution in North Philly and a key investigation of this project. The charismatic Baptist preacher Russell Herman Conwell secured a charter for 'Temple College' on the fourteenth of May, 1888. "The gist of the Temple Idea", writes retired Temple history professor Dr. James Hilty, "was summarized by an early advertisement,

[39] Carpenter, Bennett, Laura Goldblatt, and Lenora Hanson. “The University Must Be Defended!: Safe Spaces, Campus Policing, and University-Driven Gentrification.” *English Language Notes* 54, no. 2 (September 1, 2016): 191–98.

which stated, 'Temple College is the pioneer in the work of providing an education for working people...Temple College does not exist as a private enterprise for the purpose of gain but as a 'Peoples' University' to give all possible help to those who enter its walls." While this rhetoric is optimistic and could be considered radical, even today, the specter of future conflict and displacement rears its head as Dr. Hilty later writes that "Conwell, like his counterparts in industry and big business, sought always to expand." Now, one hundred and thirty-five years later, the school is still expanding per the wish of Conwell and with the participation of every administration succeeding him.[40] While Temple in many ways is still committed to its originally stated goal of serving under-resourced and working class students as "a 'Peoples' University"--84% of full-time undergraduates were awarded financial aid in the 2021-'22 school year, 30% of the class admitted in 2022 are First Generation students (neither parent graduated from college), and out of Philadelphia's 'big three', Temple has the highest Black undergraduate enrollment: 15.8% compared to University of Pennsylvania's 7.76% and Drexel University's 7.6%--many of its neighbors may find a keen sense of irony in the wording of the early advertisement.[41] After decades of moderately-paced expansion and development, North Central Philadelphia began to feel the pressure of the encroaching institution in earnest with the combined effects of Temple's state

[40] Hilty, James W., Ann Weaver Hart, and Matthew M. Hanson. "The Man, the Speech, the 'Temple Idea.'" In *Temple University*, 1–21. 125 Years of Service to Philadelphia, the Nation, and the World. Temple University Press, 2010.

[41] 1. "TEMPLE UNIVERSITY AT A GLANCE 2022–2023." Institutional Research and Assessment, December 2022.
2. "UPenn Common Data Set 2021-22 Rev. Jul 2022." University of Pennsylvania Institutional Research & Analysis, July 14, 2023.
3. "Drexel University Common Data Set 2021-2022." Drexel University OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION, 2022.

affiliation, beginning in 1965 (which resulted in a flood of funding), and the aggressive development policies promoted by the iron-fisted administration of University President Paul R. Anderson, inaugurated July of 1967.[42] Spawned from community outrage relating to these circumstances, the Charrette of 1969 began to take shape. Generally defined, "A charrette is a meeting in which all project stakeholders aim to resolve conflicts and find solutions." Temple's Steering Committee for Black Students presented Anderson with a list of demands in the spring of 1969, including such actions as the creation of Black and Asian studies departments, admission of two hundred or more financially assisted Black students, "and verbal and written assurance that Temple has no intention of expanding any more east or west of Broad Street unless approved by the black community." Additionally, "The group also demanded that all new and existing facilities be accessible to the black community, including Paley Library and Geasey Field." Beginning on the first day of December, 1969 and concluding on February 6th, 1970, North Central residents and community members, Temple administrators, Temple students, and both local and state politicians gathered together to share their thoughts and frustrations about Temple's physical growth. The ultimate Charrette Agreement of 1970 stated that the school would consult its neighbors ahead of possible future development or expansion, and would establish "a Committee for Continuing Dialogue made up of community and representatives of the university and public agencies." Despite the extensive negotiating and

[42] Hilty, James W., Ann Weaver Hart, and Matthew M. Hanson. “Vehicle for Social Change, 1965–1982.” In *Temple University*, 98–139. 125 Years of Service to Philadelphia, the Nation, and the World. Temple University Press, 2010.

involvement from varied and high-profile figures, the Charrette, unfortunately, never wielded any legal power or ratified a contract with enforceable ramifications.[43] Marilyn Kai Jewett laments the fact that "Temple immediately reneged on" the agreement, and in the end, she estimates "that between 1965 and 1975, 7,000 Black families were displaced by Temple's expansion".[44] By the end of Anderson's reign in 1973, over 2.6 million square feet of space had been added to the University's holdings.[45]

Time has done little to subdue Temple's appetite for growth. In an article published on the last day of 2014, Peter Moskowitz writes of a massive 1.2 billion dollar expansion plan introduced in 2010. He also writes of a man named James Johnson who, from around 2009 until the time he was interviewed by Moskowitz in 2014, experienced an 80% rise in the rent of his barber shop.[46] Rapidly skyrocketing real estate values are often the most experienced and visible manifestations of gentrification, and Temple University, mere blocks from Johnson's barber shop, has had an undeniable role in the displacement of the established North Central community for over a century.

The history of Philadelphia, as with all settler-colonial cities, is predicated on displacing practices and phenomena. These cities, like all others, also evolve and transform constantly. Indeed, though the settler city may reproduce through processes of inequality, this does not mean that they cannot foster rich

[43] McGoldrick, Gillian. "Defining a Charrette Agreement - The Temple News." Temple News, May 3, 2016.
[44] Jewett, Marilyn Kai. "Commentary: North Philadelphia Residents Fight for Its Future, Call to Stop Gentrification and Displacement." Generocity Philly, July 21, 2021.
[45] Hilty, James W., Ann Weaver Hart, and Matthew M. Hanson. "Vehicle for Social Change, 1965–1982." In *Temple University*, 98–139. 125 Years of Service to Philadelphia, the Nation, and the World. Temple University Press, 2010.
[46] Moskowitz, Peter. "Philadelphia Universities' Expansion Drove Wider Gentrification, Tension." AlJazeera America, December 31, 2014.

communities and forms of grassroots resistance. Despite its controversial past and present, I love Philadelphia, as do those whose voices guide the next section. Anyone who truly loves Philly, would want it to be a Philly for all people--a true city of brotherly love.

Chapter 3:

Interviews and Observations

Studying and writing about colonialism and gentrification can be bleak work. Though I could never be so bold as to claim *expertise*, as these shadowy, complex processes come more and more into focus, there is seemingly less and less room for hope to contend with the mind-bogglingly tight grip they have on many people's lives. Something that has helped to restore my hope, however, is the generosity and openness I was met with while requesting interviews. I was at first surprised by, and then invigorated by the willingness of those I contacted to discuss these heavy and potentially traumatic issues, to share with me their experiences, thoughts, and opinions. The theoretical background, the historical context, mean little if they are not bolstered by and in conversation with contributions from community members who live, work, and study in North Central Philly everyday. Real people with vast reservoirs of experience and knowledge who have personal, ancestral, and emotional stakes in the struggle against forces of displacement and disinvestment.

Adam Waterbear DePaul, M.Ed. has a measured, wise, and calming voice, even when he is discussing the brutal displacement and genocide of his people--a people who despite all of the efforts to eradicate them are still thriving, and still in Pennsylvania, despite commonplace narratives regarding Indigenous people of the East Coast. " ...The fallacy of the “Last Indian” has an emotional stronghold because of the desire of many to be done with the painful history of how indigenous populations were treated" writes the Rev. Dr. John R. Norwood, a member of Southern New Jersey's Nanticoke Tribe. "If it is a 'thing of the past,' then the burden

of current culpability regarding how tribal communities are still being treated is nothing that need be considered. The fallacy also allows scholars and cultural enthusiasts to treat an area's indigenous culture as a thing of the past and not as a living reality."[47] Professor DePaul is the Chief of Education and Tribal Storykeeper of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania. One of his aims is to stamp out misconceptions such as the "Last Indian" fallacy described by Rev. Norwood by speaking and teaching at colleges and universities, holding public lectures and Q&As, and embarking every four years on the Rising Nation River Journey, a canoe voyage along the Lenapewihittuck (the Delaware River) where participants engage groups in cities and towns up and down the river in treaty renewals, peace agreements, and land acknowledgements.[48]

Speaking on the phone with me, Adam says that William Penn genuinely did respect the Lenape people that he interacted with. He cites letters where Penn praises the intelligence and culture of the Lenape when it was quite uncommon for europeans to do so, and confirms that Penn was resolute in making fair deals with the Indigenous people. "You get to see first hand that he speaks very highly of our language, our people" says DePaul.[49] Nevertheless, no matter how pure one person's deeds and intentions may be, as long as they are embedded in and operate out of systems of oppression such as colonialism, their actions will do little to change the ultimate trajectory of that system--as is true today. William Penn was not able to impress his integrity and Quakerly values upon all of his fellow

[47] Norwood, John R. *We Are Still Here! The Tribal Saga of New Jersey's Nanticoke and Lenape Indians*. Native New Jersey Publications, 2007.
[48] Lenape Nation of PA. "Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania." Accessed March 8, 2023.
[49] DePaul, Adam Waterbear. Conversation With Adam Waterbear DePaul. Phone call, March 5, 2023.

colonists--nor even upon his own sons. After the colony of Pennsylvania had passed into their hands came the notorious 'Walking Purchase' of 1737, where the younger Penns arranged to buy a piece of land from the Indigenous residents measured in the distance a person could walk in a day. Hiring three men to run as quickly as they could along an unagreed upon, pre-cleared route instead, the lying Penns stole a great deal of territory from the Lenape.[50]

I ask Adam if it is a stretch to think of that mass displacement as directly connected to the contemporary mass displacement resulting from gentrification in the Philadelphia area. "You're asking that question cautiously" he replies, with what I imagine to be something of a grin. He agrees that these two processes of displacement, separated by hundreds of years, are indeed related phenomena, and cites the "taking over" and "eventual elimination or complete silencing" of the native or preexisting group's culture as key elements of both colonialism and gentrification.[51] Professor DePaul is far more familiar with where the american settler colonial project stands in terms of its "eliminating" and "silencing" goals than most people are today. As discussed earlier, the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania is not recognized in any capacity in the state, and has been rejected for federal recognition as well. In fact, none of the four Lenape homeland groups are federally recognized in their own ancestral lands, now known as the east coast states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and New York.[52] The small Office of Federal Acknowledgement, embedded within the Office of the Assistant Secretary

[50] Schutt, Amy C. “Sharing Lands and Asserting Rights in the Face of Pennsylvania’s Expansion, 1682–1742.” In *Peoples of the River Valleys*, 62–93. The Odyssey of the Delaware Indians. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007
[51]DePaul, Adam Waterbear. Conversation With Adam Waterbear DePaul. Phone call, March 5, 2023.
[52] ibid

- Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior, is what gets to decide which Indigenous groups 'deserve' federal recognition and the benefits that come with it, and which groups--for whatever reason--do not. This office claims to arrive at its judgements "by applying anthropological, genealogical, and historical research methods", but Adam is quick to point out contradictions and failings in this system.[53] He explains how federal recognition is largely based on evidence of long-term governmental contact with a given Indigenous group, and evidence of "continued presence" (vague and interpretable) in an area. As colonization metastasized in North America and spread westward, the Lenape people were essentially faced with two options: outrun European influence and stay ready to move as it advances, or hide in plain sight by appearing to assimilate and taking cultural practices and beliefs underground. If neither of those sounded very appealing, the alternative would likely involve a violent mob of bloodthirsty colonists.

Today, many of those who struck out to outpace colonialism have gained federal recognition in Wisconsin, Oklahoma, Ontario, and elsewhere. However, those who remained who carefully, secretly, passed down their culture and beliefs for generations have not been afforded the same benefits. "Most of us remained through intermarriages between Lenape and colonists" Adam says, "The proof is undeniable, it's in township records, it's in genealogies", but for whatever reason the Office of Federal Acknowledgement disagrees.[54] Does "continued presence" really mean being in an area for a significant period of time? Does it mean countless

[53] "Office of Federal Acknowledgment (OFA) | Indian Affairs." Accessed March 30, 2023.
[54] DePaul, Adam Waterbear. Conversation With Adam Waterbear DePaul. Phone call, March 5, 2023.

generations of your ancestors lived on, worked, and maintained the land? Or does it merely indicate that the American military has records of encountering and waging war against a specific Indigenous group in one area over an extensive time period? One thing is for certain, that through a set of specific yet arbitrary requirements, the United States government still perpetuates Indigenous displacement by seeking to determine which groups qualify for recognition and the perks that accompany it, and which do not.

"Our community has been sold to the highest bidder", Ms. Gail Loney says of North Central Philadelphia and the gentrification that for a considerable amount of time has been doing much to disrupt and unseat the long-established majority-Black community of the neighborhood. "This is still North Central, this is still a community" she tells me over the phone. Perhaps the largest, and certainly the most obvious mode of displacement plaguing the neighborhood right now is what Ms. Loney calls "studentification". Relatively self-explanatory, she uses this phrase to describe the complex assortment of negative effects that Temple University's neoliberal and expansionist agenda has had on her community. Outside of official, university-related development such as sports complexes and academic buildings, the difficulties of housing Temple's approximately thirty thousand students have fallen almost entirely on the surrounding area (Fig. 4).[55] While former university president David Adamany unveiled a 1,044-bed residence hall in 2001, no school-affiliated student housing was built for the following twelve years. "In the decade-plus of stagnated dorm expansion, off-campus housing boomed." writes

[55] Loney, Gail. Conversation With Gail Loney. Phone call, February 16, 2023.

Emily Rolen for the Temple News. "University estimates place the number of students living off-campus at between 7,000 and 10,000, with the majority coming since 2000."[56] Temple may not have been personally building places to accommodate their students during this time, but they certainly were not sitting idly by either. "Between 2001 and 2008", writes Temple historian Dr. James Hilty, "the university worked with private contractors to stimulate the development of over 1.5 million square feet of new residential and commercial space, representing a private investment of approximately $200 million in the surrounding community, with plans for more to come."[57] This institution-private partnership--to borrow a phrase from Marilyn Kai Jewett, an "unholy covenant"--unleashed a fresh wave of unrestrained, gentrifying development upon North Central. Today, whole blocks seem to have been razed, replacing the old Philadelphia brick rowhouses with glistening, soulless apartment units (Fig. 5), and the established North Central community with students and young professionals, many of whom are 'just passing through' and lack a sense of commitment or care for their neighbors and environment. Though it is unfair to generalize and to say that all Temple students living off-campus in North Central are obnoxious, untidy, and disrespectful, they can be perceived this way by neighborhood residents. Overflowing or incorrectly managed domestic garbage and raucous parties consistently disturb those in the

[56] Rolen, Emily. “After History of Tensions, a Surge in Gentrification - The Temple News.” Temple News, April 29, 2014.
[57] Hilty, James W., Ann Weaver Hart, and Matthew M. Hanson. “From Sidewalk Campus to Urban Village.” In *Temple University*, 220–79. 125 Years of Service to Philadelphia, the Nation, and the World. Temple University Press, 2010.

community. "Nobody is holding them accountable" says Gail. The university and the private landlords remain silent.

Ms. Loney is a founding member of the North Central community organization Stadium Stompers. Established in November of 2015 to combat Temple's plans for a enormous new sports arena, the group has since broadened its scope, cementing its role as a neighborhood-led, grassroots advocacy organization, fighting for the rights and needs of North Central's under-resourced, majority-Black community. Our discussion turns to the Charrette Agreement of 1969. "It's been time for another one" she says.[58] Many agree with her. Among them is retired Temple Professor James Kelch, who was also part of the original charrette negotiations. “The whole idea of a charrette — its time has come again,” he says. “It would serve both Temple’s interests and the community’s interests to come together and try to work it out, instead of just going ahead and doing things and expecting the community to react.”[59] One problem that is delaying a 21st century charrette, says Ms. Loney, is that Temple wants to hand select the individuals involved in the deliberations, demonstrating their unwillingness to genuinely work with their neighbors to find solutions that will work for both parties. "They live in our neighborhood," Gail says, yet "they try to dictate to us what they want".

While the community of North Central struggles to enter into negotiations and to be heard by those guilty of generating displacement in their neighborhood, more apartments--some towering over their surroundings--are being built. "Monstrosities", Ms. Loney calls them, that block sunlight and refreshing breezes

[58] Loney, Gail. Conversation With Gail Loney. Phone call, February 16, 2023.
[59] McGoldrick, Gillian. “Defining a Charrette Agreement - The Temple News.” Temple News, May 3, 2016.

with their physical presence, and due to their ability to accommodate far more residents than a typical rowhouse, they drastically increase the population density of the neighborhood. This can lead to parking becoming exponentially more difficult to find, meaning older residents must double-park in order to carry shopping inside, or must park sometimes blocks away from their homes, making their lives more complicated and taxing. Additionally, though this may not seem like a controversial move, the designation of bike lanes on some streets can reduce parking as well, compounding an already notable issue. The trend that Ms. Loney notices in these 'improvements' is that they are billed as amenities, however, much as Mayor John Street's NTI program begs the question: "neighborhood transformation for whom?", who are these 'amenities' really for? The apartment complexes, the bike lanes, these are changes intended to attract new people to the area. Young professionals--specifically university students or those who recently were--tend to be more able to ride bikes, to carry them up to their apartments, to afford the rents in those apartments, and to have enough space in them, as many live alone or with a partner, while a family may need to live somewhere with more space. "I don't want to live on the 13th floor," says Gail, as single-family homes become a rarer sight among the taller multi-unit buildings. As private interests and Temple University continue to operate in North Central as they see fit, unheeding of community demands as they continue to extract capital from the neighborhood without conferring any of the benefits on the established residents, the locale is remade. The physical landscape and those who occupy it are at risk of being replaced by a totally new one, designed by an agenda of profit-accumulation, within a matter of

decades unless something is done to disrupt the prevailing trends and supply North Central's established population with resources and explicitly community-supported investment.[60]

Ms. Jacqueline Wiggins, like Ms. Loney, is another prolific community activist, long time North Central resident, and an original member of Stadium Stompers. Born in Portsmouth, Virginia, "we moved north slowly" she says of her family, who eventually settled in North Philadelphia. Beginning in the late 1950s and early '60s however, the combined results of national deindustrialization, white flight to the suburbs, and mass disinvestment of welfare and social programs crippled strides in Black self-determination and improving material conditions all over the country, and North Central was no exception. "By late '58, '59, lights would go out. We lived on the 11th floor" recalls Ms. Jackie. "I was a kid looking around like, 'why are things so out of sorts?" As disinvestment persisted and intensified, and as the effects of the burgeoning crack epidemic began to be felt, more and more people left the neighborhood. The product of these phenomena is that "you're left with those folks who are struggling" she says. After moving out of Philly in 1979, it would be ten years before Ms. Jackie returned to the city, and shortly after that she noticed distinct redevelopment activity in North Central. "I start with Rendell" she says when I ask about gentrification in North Philly, and with the ten year property tax abatement and extensive use of eminent domain to acquire land defining his administrations, it is not hard to see why Ms. Jackie's displacement timeline begins with him.[61] Now, in 2023, similar modes of gentrification still target North Central.

[60] Loney, Gail. Conversation With Gail Loney. Phone call, February 16, 2023.
[61] Wiggins, Jacqueline. Conversation With Jacqueline Wiggins. Phone call, March 17, 2023.

At the end of last year, Philadelphia City Council attempted to pass a bill, the goal of which was "to incentivize the development of affordable housing along the North Broad Street Corridor through tax exemptions."[62] Ultimately put on hold after community backlash, Ms. Jackie says that the legislation was conceived of without any resident input, reeked of backroom deals between private developers and city councilmembers, and would put the creation of affordable housing in the hands of the free market, a historically ineffective practice which often times has the effect of exacerbating community erasure and displacement. "These changes are not for the current residents" she states.[63]

In having the honor to speak to Ms. Jackie, I also learned about several important figures in Philadelphia's Black history. The Rev. Dr. Leon H. Sullivan--the "Lion of Zion"--lead the congregation of historic Broad street church Zion Baptist for thirty eight years, influencing the policies of U.S. presidents--meeting with all sitting heads of state from Lyndon Johnson to the elder Bush-- as well as maintaining relationships with other legendary activists such as the Rev. Dr. Jesse Jackson and Nelson Mandela himself. A firm believer in Black self-determination, Rev. Sullivan organized a boycott of racist businesses in 1958, and in 1964, began opening Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OICs). The first of these was "a job-training center at an abandoned jail at 19th and Oxford Streets. Today," writes Valerie Russ for the Philadelphia Inquirer, "there are centers throughout the U.S. and Africa." Rev. Sullivan also used funds donated from his congregation to

[62] Philadelphia City Council. “COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE HAS LEGISLATION INTRODUCED AUTHORIZING TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING ALONG NORTH BROAD STREET,” December 16, 2022.
[63] Wiggins, Jacqueline. Conversation With Jacqueline Wiggins. Phone call, March 17, 2023.

jumpstart a for-profit entity (Zion Investment Associates), and a non-profit entity (the Leon H. Sullivan Charitable Trust). By means of the investment firm, the Reverend and his associates were able to develop several apartments in majority-Black neighborhoods, as well as Progress Plaza which, after opening in 1968, may well have been the city's first Black-owned shopping center.[64]

Additionally, I am informed about Ms. Nellie Rathbone Bright--"please read about her" says Ms. Jackie. Dutifully, I learned that after Ms. Bright graduated from University of Pennsylvania in 1923 with a degree in English, she became a teacher, and later a principal within the Philadelphia public school system. The late 1920s saw Ms. Bright participate in starting "the literary magazine Black Opals to encourage African American writers and the city's black literary community", and upon her 1952 retirement from the school system, "taught in-service courses on African American history for teachers at the Fellowship House."[65]

The rich Black history of North Philadelphia, and the work done for the advancement of the community by these iconic figures is at risk of being erased by the gentrification and displacement which are indiscriminately reworking the physical and cultural fabric of the area. Lastly, thinking about the impulse within the colonialism-gentrification continuum to rename appropriated or 'conquered' areas, I ask Ms. Jackie about names she hears that are used to refer to North Central. Either totally fabricated or belonging to another neighborhood but misapplied to the area, "Society Hill North", "Strawberry Mansion", "Brewerytown",

[64] Russ, Valerie. “A City and Church Are Celebrating the Late Rev. Leon H. Sullivan, the ‘Lion of Zion,’ for His 100th Birthday.” https://www.inquirer.com, October 14, 2022.
[65] https://www.inquirer.com. “Activist Nellie Bright Put Her Community First,” June 8, 2014.

"Sharswood", and "Temple Town" are some of the incorrect labels thrust onto the community.[66] "Google Maps caused an uproar earlier this year when it labeled the area around Cecil B. Moore Avenue, a historically black and low-income community, TempleTown" writes Peter Moskowitz. Though "the company quickly heeded community demands to change the neighborhood name on its maps", the insult would not be forgotten.[67] "I live in North Central," says Ms. Jackie passionately, "it will always be North Central."[68]

Older long-time residents are not the only ones who feel this way. "I feel like part of the community, or part of a family" says artist, activist, and prominent Stadium Stompers member Josh Graupera, who moved to North Central in 2014, and recently closed on a house in the neighborhood with their partner. "For the most part it's senior citizens and families" they say. Though the area "was a working-class Black neighborhood when we moved in", says Josh, "In terms of the landscape I've seen it change so much." Aside from the "Lego-buildings" springing up all over the place, Josh compares North Central to Brooklyn, New York, in the sense that while recent gentrifying development has actually produced a highly racially and ethnically diverse area, what all those new residents have in common is that they can afford the rising prices which are totally inaccessible to the average, established North Central resident. Additionally, Josh notices license plates from all over--Washington DC, New York, California--and notes that they tend to have new neighbors every year, which emphasizes the transient situations of many new

[66] Wiggins, Jacqueline. Conversation With Jacqueline Wiggins. Phone call, March 17, 2023.
[67] Moskowitz, Peter. “Philadelphia Universities’ Expansion Drove Wider Gentrification, Tension.” AlJazeera America, December 31, 2014.
[68] Wiggins, Jacqueline. Conversation With Jacqueline Wiggins. Phone call, March 17, 2023.

arrivals. These folks not only can afford to live in North Central while many long-timers are displaced, they also generally leave before they develop a sense of belonging or obligation to the community, hastening the cultural and historical erasure of the neighborhood. This can generate a dangerous narrative where developers, city council, and other wielders of local power can point to the increasing heterogeneity of the neighborhood's make-up as a sign of vaguely defined 'progress', and relieve themselves of concerns about the erasure of the older predominantly-Black community and its complex and important history.

Though they completed their degree elsewhere, Josh attended Temple for a time in the late 2010s. They recount how, during new student orientation, when thousands of students--many unfamiliar with the city--are adjusting to college life, the university sought to impress upon them the "danger of the neighborhood." "Everybody's freaked the fuck out to leave campus" Josh says, recalling the rhetoric Temple employed to categorize the surrounding area as unsafe and frightening. Not only does this narrative not account for the fact that Temple's own policies and actions have worked to further disinvest in and gentrify North Central, contributing to higher crime rates and substandard infrastructure, but it also serves to validate the school's continued remaking of the neighborhood and erasure of its culture, indoctrinating Temple students against their neighbors and in support of their institution's neoliberal policies from the start.[69]

In dire need of the perspective of a current Temple student, I call up Temple senior, Political Science major, and my best friend Miles Gomez-Younkin. Miles

[69] Graupera, Josh. Conversation With Josh Graupera. Phone call, March 14, 2023.

cannot distinctly recall if the university was still using a 'scared straight' tactic in regards to North Central during his orientation or not, however, he does remember that a student by the name of Liam McDowell had to publicly answer for a tik-tok video they had posted referring to the neighborhood as "the ghetto". McDowell had been a tentative "Owl Team Leader," a position in which current students are "responsible for assisting with summer orientation for new students." Although after the post achieved viral status and they began to face heavy condemnation from their peers, McDowell learned that the Owl Team Leader role had been "rescinded when Temple administration was made aware of the video".[70] While this appears to indicate an increase in the level of awareness towards and solidarity with North Central among the student population since Josh's time at the university, the same cannot be necessarily said for the school's administration. While some areas of campus are available for public use, such as the student center and its food court, and the library during select hours, "none of the gyms are open to the public", Miles says. "Maybe they could open the rec. center gyms to local kids in the afternoons...they could easily do that, but they definitely don't."[71] It is striking that even small gestures Temple could make to improve their standing in the area seem not even to be considered, as if they do not care that there is significant tension between surrounding residents and the school.

"They don't actually give a shit about anyone who actually lives here" expresses Josh Graupera, Though for off-campus students, ignoring the neighbors

[70] Evans, Colin. "Temple University Student Condemned for Calling North Philadelphia 'the Ghetto' in TikTok Video - The Temple News," December 11, 2019.
[71] Gomez-Younkin, Miles. Conversation With Miles Gomez-Younkin. Phone call, April 6, 2023.

is impossible.[72] Miles describes how kids gather at corner stores after school, church-goers congregate by their houses of worship every Sunday, and students and locals alike can be spotted in grocery stores--to anyone who lives in the area it is clear that there is an extant community, unrelated to Temple, but like oil and water, "those communities don't really mix" he says. "there was no community between the two communities." While the general tension with the university and the common local perception of Temple students as rude and disruptive certainly do not set the stage for instances of friendly mingling between the groups, "we don't really have a choice" but to live in North Central, says Miles. "The dorms are really expensive and conditions are not great," he explains. "I know a lot of people who didn't even live in a dorm freshman year...Temple needs to build more proprietary housing." Until then, if the current trends continue, community resentment of Temple will continue to rise, as will housing scarcity in the neighborhood.[73]

I ask what it is like to rent in North Central as a student. His roommate had already been living in the apartment for a few months when Miles moved in, however, between signing his lease agreement, but "before I even picked up my key," Miles says, the building had switched management and was owned by a different developer. It changed hands for at least a second time just in the year that he lived there. During the transition, Miles was accused of failing to supply a document related to renters insurance, and fined immediately. In fact, as the new landlords sheepishly discovered, they had merely lost the document among a flurry

[72] Graupera, Josh. Conversation With Josh Graupera. Phone call, March 14, 2023.
[73] Gomez-Younkin, Miles. Conversation With Miles Gomez-Younkin. Phone call, April 6, 2023.

of emails, quietly removing the fine after learning of their mistake. The broader implications of this are unnerving. With so much falling through the cracks amid the constant exchanging of properties between developers, what other documents go missing? How many renters have had to pay fees or fines or resubmit papers due to organizational shortcomings on their landlord's end? The spontaneity and even carelessness with which these apartments are bought and sold gave Miles the impression that these developers "treated each property as if they were shorting a stock," an unfortunate but all too common phenomenon.[74]

The above issue is related to what is known as the 'financialization of housing,' summarized as the increasingly dominant role that private entities and corporations play in the housing sector, and the shift towards viewing homes as financial assets and pieces in the 'free market game' rather than first and foremost as places where people live. "A focus on capital and investors, just like austerity measures…and (further) privatization, are severing housing from its social function," contend scholars Ingrid Leijten and Kaisa de Bel. "Financialization detaches housing from a human rights discourse including rights-based entitlements governments must secure."[75] This phenomenon plays a significant role in most instances of gentrification, as when homes are heavily commodified, traded like barrels of oil or sacks of wheat, displacement of lower-income residents via rapidly rising speculative property values cannot be far behind.

[74] Ibid.
[75] Leijten, Ingrid, and Kaisa de Bel. "Facing Financialization in the Housing Sector: A Human Right to Adequate Housing for All." *Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights* 38, no. 2 (June 1, 2020): 94–114.

Speaking with Miles also revealed to me a 'piece of the puzzle' that I had not even known I was looking for. As mentioned earlier, since 1965 a great deal of Temple University's funding had come from the government.[76] However, about a decade ago, conservatives in the Pennsylvania legislature massively reduced the school's state funding, says my friend. He encourages me to investigate more closely. "In 2011, the state approved a 19 percent cut in higher education funding to Temple's state allocation," writes Lindsay Bowen for the Temple News, decreasing it "from $172 million to $139 million." This loss of funding forced the school to drop about one hundred and thirteen million dollars from its 2009 to 2013 budget. "Eight years ago, state allocations made up nearly 65 percent of Temple's budget" reports Bowen in 2018, "This year, state funding makes up only 10 percent of the budget..." Due to this change, tuition is increasing, as well as student debt.[77] Having a huge and consequential portion of its budget taken away may leave the university with no other option but to seek more out-of-state students who can afford to pay full tuition, and if these students cannot secure Temple student housing--which is likely as the institution has desperately struggled to build any since its budget was slashed over ten years ago--they will inevitably turn to renting in North Central, where their affluence and potential lack of understanding or respect for the existing community will doubtlessly intensify the effects of gentrification. This sizable reduction in state support could also be partially responsible for Temple's increasingly profit-seeking policies and growing reliance on private entities to fulfill

[76] Hilty, James W., Ann Weaver Hart, and Matthew M. Hanson. "Vehicle for Social Change, 1965–1982." In *Temple University*, 98–139. 125 Years of Service to Philadelphia, the Nation, and the World. Temple University Press, 2010.
[77] Bowen, Lindsay. "State Funding: A Piece of Temple's Tuition Puzzle - The Temple News," September 11, 2018.

the school's needs, real or perceived. Ultimately, then, waning governmental support for higher education can actually have indirect but devastating effects on the communities surrounding these institutions, demonstrating both the complexity of allocating public funds, and importance of continuing to use public monies to support social programs and public services.

My parents, Michelle and Joel, moved into the house that they live in today--the house I grew up in and have lived in my whole life--in 1999. They had been living closer to Center City, Philadelphia's downtown, but began their search for a home when the building they were renting in was sold and they could not afford to purchase their rental unit from the new owner.[78] After much consideration of cost and location, they settled on a rowhouse in Fairmount--now an affluent, predominantly white neighborhood situated directly south and slightly to the west of North Central. However, my neighborhood was not always this way. "Your neighborhood was gentrified when I was in highschool," Ms. Jackie tells me over the phone. While the area "used to be Spanish" with some Irish residents as well, by the time my parents got there this was seemingly not the case.[79] "It was not an apparent community to us" says my dad, "it was a dwindling community" composed mostly of older Ukranians, many of whom spoke little or no english.

When my parents relocated, their new home had been essentially functioning as a frat house and was thoroughly "trashed": housing several generations of Temple's crew team had left the rowhouse dirty and unmaintained,

[78] Salerno-Ziegler, Michelle, and Joel Ziegler. Conversation With Michelle and Joel. In person, March 15, 2023.
[79] Wiggins, Jacqueline. Conversation With Jacqueline Wiggins. Phone call, March 17, 2023.

with vines creeping in through broken windows and bike-tire marks decorating the walls of the living room. My parents, having met in architecture school, knew they had their work cut out for them, but felt that because "there was nothing original left [of the interior detailing] in the house...it made us free to do what we wanted as architects," says my mom. Many other younger, white-collar professionals moving to Fairmount at this time were artists or designers, those who were not hesitant to undertake significant renovations to their homes, and who were less fazed by the condition of the neighborhood than wealthier, more elite homebuyers might have been. To my design-conscious parents, the block they moved into felt special, in part due to the congruency of the rowhouses. At the time, though it was not the million-dollar prime real estate it is today, the area was not severely neglected or disinvested, and none of the buildings had fallen into bad enough disrepair to be demolished. On account of this, they are all about the same material and height (Fig. 6). For my mom, thoughtful design plays an essential part in uniting communities, "there's something that brings the block together when the houses are similar," she says. This speaks to a phenomenon which is highly visible in North Central, where gaps in the older housing stock resulting from demolished buildings are filled in by developers with jarringly conspicuous structures--referred to as "bad neighbor" buildings by my mother. Often clad in materials that heavily contrast with the adjacent houses and designed to stand out from them (Fig. 7), some of these structures also tower over their surroundings (Fig. 8), creating visual disruption in the urban fabric and inherent power dynamics between older, shorter structures and tall, glistening new ones. This effect likely alienates established

communities from newcomers drawn by the recently completed apartments, sustaining resentment and standing as a visual reminder of the physical and cultural displacement that inevitably will follow. "A house on a street should be face-on" insists my mom, decrying the habit of the designers of these new apartment buildings to add gated stairs and secured entrances (Fig. 8, Fig. 9), "If you turn that facade and give everyone a private entrance, then you shouldn't live in a city!" she says. These design choices play to racial and socioeconomic bias and perpetuate notions about neighborhoods being 'unsafe,' further alienating long-time residents and stunting the ability or willingness of new arrivals to engage with their neighbors and community.

Fairmount, to my parents, felt like a place "where we thought it would be nice to raise a family." They were not alone. Following a well-documented trope of gentrification, after the wave of artists and designers put time and resources into renovating their houses, property values began to rise and developers and wealthier home-seekers started to take notice of the neighborhood. "People who moved here wanted to root here" say my parents. The presence of people with enough 'disposable' time and income contributed to a chain reaction of reinvestment which has guided Fairmount to its present status as a well-off, tight-knit community.[80]

Walking the streets of North Central, however, the sense of loss is palpable. The omnipresent construction and its associated debris (Fig. 10), the spaces in between buildings where decayed or torn down houses once clearly stood (Fig. 11),

[80] Salerno-Ziegler, Michelle, and Joel Ziegler. Conversation With Michelle and Joel. In person, March 15, 2023.

the neglected infrastructure, all contribute to the impression that one is traversing a warzone when passing through certain areas of the neighborhood. As Gail Loney describes it, writing in the Stadium Stompers Newsletter, "Your neighborhood looks, as someone told me once, like Beirut, and you can't do a thing about it!"[81] The destruction is wrought by a gradual war, one waged by the forces of colonialism, gentrification, and racialized capitalism against low-income, marginalized communities.

One of the most readily obvious signs of North Central's disinvestment and struggles is the proliferation of waste and debris on its streets, sidewalks, and lots. Fingers are commonly pointed at the area's student demographic, felt to be incompetent in proper waste disposal procedures, and apathetic to the overall good of the neighborhood. "Nobody is holding them accountable," laments Ms. Loney.[82] My friend Miles freely admits that "most Temple students actually think that the trash problem is our fault," but correctly asserts that "there are bigger issues at play that contribute to that problem." Aside from the construction debris generated on site, often heaped in vacant spaces beside freshly-completed buildings, "there's a huge problem with all the illegal dumping happening in these lots," adds Miles, "students aren't responsible for that."[83] Indeed, the presence of existing debris from the efforts to physically remake the neighborhood may attract contractors from other parts of town, potentially signaling to those unwilling to pay for disposal services that more rotting junk thrown on the pile would not be noticed. As trash

[81] Loney, Gail. "Gentrification = Colonization!" *Stadium Stompers Newsletter*, May 1, 2018, Vol 3 edition.
[82] Loney, Gail. Conversation With Gail Loney. Phone call, February 16, 2023.
[83] Gomez-Younkin, Miles. Conversation With Miles Gomez-Younkin. Phone call, April 6, 2023.

accumulates, those who feel little or no obligation to the neighborhood and community may feel less and less obligated to comply with proper disposal of household or construction-related garbage as indiscreet dumping is normalized. Another element of this issue are neglectful landlords, who consistently fail to supply the correct bins and containers for their renters.[84] Without proper waste storage, bags wait out on the curb all week, where they can be ripped open by any variety of actors and their contents strewn up and down the block. The presence of this debris and filth--abandoned building materials and kitchen trash alike--can have strong negative effects on a neighborhood, with the potential to lower morale, or even impact personal health and property valuation. As discussed by my parents earlier, the presence of residents who can spare time, energy, and resources, and invest that into their community (i.e. block clean-ups, fundraisers, organizing to push for more amenities in the neighborhood, etc.) often plays the largest role in community-led neighborhood revitalization.[85] In a disinvested, low-income area like North Central, who has the time? The money? The energy to regularly clean and maintain communal paths or gathering spaces? Those who might possess these are more likely to be wealthier newer arrivals--perhaps inhabitants of a shiny new multi-unit building--and revitalization efforts engendered by these folks run the risk of continuing to exclude more established, lower-income Black residents from taking a role in the reinvestment and future life of their community.

This section has hopefully illustrated the wide-ranging and complex network of apparently separate problems that together drive displacement and

[84] Ibid.
[85] Salerno-Ziegler, Michelle, and Joel Ziegler. Conversation With Michelle and Joel. In person, March 15, 2023.

gentrification. These interviews and observations serve as helpful and very real points of departure for conversations about how shadowy and more theoretical concepts exert control over physical and social urban landscapes. They also reflect real issues and complaints, and in that sense, could guide discussions on solutions to the concrete damage caused by nebulous and intangible processes of displacement.

Chapter 4:
Concluding Remarks

Over the course of this document, I have attempted to illustrate the incredible diversity of factors that have contributed to the routine displacement of marginalized and oppressed peoples in the Philadelphia region for the past four hundred or so years. Though the methods and contexts of this displacement may vary over the centuries, I have also attempted to communicate that they are born of the same foundational logics and ideologies, and that these cycles of inequality feed into themselves in not always obvious ways. The entity, or collection of ideologies and processes best encapsulated by Ellis-Young's "settler colonial project" and Lipsitz' "white spatial imaginary" is responsible for both European colonialism and the gentrification we observe today.[86] White supremacy and the quest for unbridled capital accumulation playing out on the landscape and the communities who inhabit it, mutating in its effects through the passage of time.

Ms. Gail Loney makes an excellent point in her article "Gentrification = Colonization!", published in the Stadium Stompers Newsletter. The apathy and unwillingness to negotiate displayed by the developers and institutions that are displacing the North Central community, she argues, mirrors the colonial concept of 'terra nullius', where European colonizers viewed the Americas as an untouched 'no-man's land' awaiting their conquest simply because they did not respect or care about the people who were already living there. Ms. Loney further relates this to

[86]1. Ellis-Young, Margaret. “Gentrification as (Settler) Colonialism? Moving beyond Metaphorical Linkages.” *Geography Compass* 16, no. 1 (January 2022).
2. Lipsitz, George. “The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape.” *Landscape Journal* 26, no. 1 (2007): 10–23.

the NTI's use of eminent domain to create land banks, which were not available to purchase for any local community members anyways.[87] The early settler-colonial state seized Lenape lands for development and the pursuit of capital accumulation, as did Ed Rendell and John Street employ eminent domain to seize little parcels of Philadelphia from the city's most disinvested communities, different methods to a similar result.

Evidence for the direct correlation between colonization practices and gentrification processes does not end there. When gentrification began in earnest in New York City during the 1980s, "realtors bluntly wrote about the city as a “frontier” and explicitly called up the ghost of Manifest Destiny, with its implied right to conquer," writes Rachel Brahinsky. To this day, "property is still sold through an explicit recruitment of white newcomers as nouveau aristocrats or as “pioneers.” The racial overtones of the pioneer metaphor are central to the image, suggesting that communities of color that live in disinvested neighborhoods are there for the conquering."[88] As per Ellis-Young's argument, the implication of colonization is no mere "metaphorical linkage."[89] The language and narratives used to justify the "conquering" of a neighborhood include the "colonial toponyms" described by Karsgaard et al., which "contribute to processes of 'accumulation by dispossession', whereby settler society and history become naturalized on the land, which is taken up within a capitalist system."[90] Renaming practices continue to play

[87] Loney, Gail. “Gentrification = Colonization!” *Stadium Stompers Newsletter*, May 1, 2018, Vol 3 edition.
[88] Brahinsky, Rachel. “The Story of Property: Meditations on Gentrification, Renaming, and Possibility.” *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 52, no. 5 (August 2020): 837–55.
[89] Ellis-Young, Margaret. “Gentrification as (Settler) Colonialism? Moving beyond Metaphorical Linkages.” *Geography Compass* 16, no. 1 (January 2022).
[90] Karsgaard, Carrie, Maggie MacDonald, and Michael Hockenhull. “Rename and Resist Settler Colonialism: Land Acknowledgments and Twitter’s Toponymic Politics.” *First Monday* 26 (January 8, 2021).

a central role in processes of displacement. Neighborhoods are more easily commodified by developers, real estate agents, and government actors when they are broken into bite-sized pieces and assigned new names to distance them from their established reputations and communities--to erase the culture that was there before and replace it with a more monetarily profitable substitute. This phenomenon was documented in South Philadelphia by Jackelyn Hwang in 2006, as Black South Philly was and continues to be buried under a barrage of newly bounded and rebranded districts, and is increasingly affecting North Central and the neighborhoods of North Philly, as seen in the plethora of inaccurate names Ms. Jackie has observed in reference to North Central, as well as the 'Google-Maps-TempleTown' debacle described by Peter Moskowitz.[91] Additionally, the use of these tactics can be found in a 2021 post to a Philadelphia real estate forum, in which real estate agent Jimmy O'Connor provides his property value breakdown for Philly neighborhoods. North Central, described only as "Brewerytown" and, more insultingly, "True Temple," scores a B+. "Still a couple teardowns on the block," writes O'Connor, "trendy bars and coffee shops starting to open."[92] Though to O'Connor it was surely an innocuous statement, "trendy bars and coffee shops starting to open" can be seen as a euphemistic way to discuss the extent of cultural erasure experienced by the established community, as well as the successes of the project of gentrification in generating profits from a disinvested

[91]1. Hwang, Jackelyn. "The Social Construction of a Gentrifying Neighborhood: Reifying and Redefining Identity and Boundaries in Inequality." *Urban Affairs Review* 52, no. 1 (January 1, 2016): 98–128.
2. Wiggins, Jacqueline. Conversation With Jacqueline Wiggins. Phone call, March 17, 2023.
3. Moskowitz, Peter. "Philadelphia Universities' Expansion Drove Wider Gentrification, Tension." AlJazeera America, December 31, 2014.

[92] O'Connor, Jimmy. "A Breakdown of Philadelphia Neighborhoods and Values." *Philadelphia Real Estate Forum*, May 2021.

area, as the "trendy," up-scale businesses are undoubtedly intended for wealthier patrons than those who traditionally reside in the neighborhood.

The ideology of neoliberalism has also factored prominently into several discussions throughout this project. This concept can be generally thought of as a sort of doubling-down on or expansion of the applications of the "white spatial imaginary," where anything that can be commodified and privatized and altered in order to increase its exchange value is done so with a vengeance. Appearing after the tumultuous yet promising 1960s, which witnessed Black Power, anti-war, civil rights, sexual freedom, and freedom of gender expression movements in the US, "neoliberalism has been a huge success from the standpoint of the upper classes," writes legendary urban theorist David Harvey. "It has either restored class position to ruling elites, as in the United States and Britain, or created conditions for capitalist class formation, as in China, India, Russia, and elsewhere."[93] As this ideology began to gain traction in American politics and state policymaking, over the next few decades it influenced progressively subordinate authorities, eventually attaining ubiquity and becoming the only viable policy framework of many cities, and even of colleges and universities nationwide. In Philadelphia, Temple University's neoliberal streak has created untold hardship and displacement in the surrounding community of North Central. Perhaps compounding this, Pennsylvania state budget cuts to institutions of 'higher education' in 2011--they themselves likely the result of intensifying neoliberalism within the state legislature--could have exacerbated Temple's negative impact on

[93] Harvey, David. “Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 610 (2007): 22–44. Page 34.

the neighborhood.[94] Following the reduction in funding, the institution now had even more incentive to admit greater numbers of students (for whom there is not enough school-sanctioned housing), especially those who could pay full tuition, as well as to take a more active role in capital accumulation, "opting for market-oriented strategies" with the goal of nurturing "private development."[95] Now over a decade out from the sharp decline in public funding, there is no doubt in my mind that heightened student presence, a higher percentage of those students being affluent, and the continuation of resource extraction activities by the university can only lead to the worsening of conditions for the long-suffering North Central Black community. As Carpenter et al. remind us, "the neoliberal university's role in reshaping its urban environs has become at once more powerful and less visible."[96]

Neoliberalism is just one way to discuss and contextualize the same idea and belief systems that make up the skeletons of both colonialism and gentrification. These are vicious cycles, where the displacement and hardship they cause in the name of profit accumulation is felt two-fold, as it tends also to prevent the oppressed and displaced from having the energy or resources to fight back, having to work multiple low-income jobs or regularly pick up and relocate to a more affordable living situation. Desperately looking for hope in this bleak image, David Harvey argues that

[94] Bowen, Lindsay. "State Funding: A Piece of Temple's Tuition Puzzle - The Temple News," September 11, 2018.
[95] Carpenter, Bennett, Laura Goldblatt, and Lenora Hanson. "The University Must Be Defended!: Safe Spaces, Campus Policing, and University-Driven Gentrification." *English Language Notes* 54, no. 2 (September 1, 2016): 191–98.
[96] Ibid.

> the idea that the market is about fair competition is increasingly negated by the facts of extraordinary monopoly, centralization, and internationalization on the part of corporate and financial powers…The more neoliberalism is recognized as a failed if not disingenuous and utopian project masking the restoration of class power, the more it lays the basis for a resurgence of mass movements voicing egalitarian political demands…and greater economic security and democratization.[97]

While Harvey delivers some small reassurance that the current highly unequal and destructive global order is unstable and unsustainable enough to last indefinitely, many are tired of solutions that ultimately peddle 'it will get worse before it gets better' narratives. It is still essential to keep in mind that altering the way these processes are discussed nationally or internationally--demystifying them--truly can jumpstart positive change, as Brahinsky reminds us, counter-narratives have the potential to "chart a path toward a more humane urbanism."[98] However, a poor, Black twenty-something waking up tomorrow in their North Central home will likely find their situation unchanged by recognizing the possibility for urban alternatives and the need to bring more attention to use value-focused initiatives. Smaller-scale, concrete local change may not address systemic oppression, but it produces more immediate hope and visible impact on the ground in communities.

The historic Dox Thrash House on Cecil B. Moore Avenue (Fig. 12) was saved from a private developer's wrecking ball when Beech Companies, a community-focused, local development group, secured the title to the building in the Autumn of 2020 with the assistance of donations and crowdfunding. Beech

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[97] Harvey, David. "Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 610 (2007): 22–44. Page 42.
[98] Brahinsky, Rachel. "The Story of Property: Meditations on Gentrification, Renaming, and Possibility." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 52, no. 5 (August 2020): 837–55.

Companies, long committed to affordable housing solutions in North Central, plan to convert the top floors into lower-cost rental units, and the ground floor into a community gallery space. The house is named for the artist-innovator Dox Thrash, a Black "painter and printmaker who moved to Philadelphia in 1925 after serving in World War I and attending the Art Institute of Chicago." Thrash was a co-inventor of the 'carborundum mezzotint' process, a printmaking technique still widely used today. After he left Philadelphia in 1959, the artist sold his house to "Shaykh Muhammad Ali Hasan," writes local journalist Kimberly Haas, "founder of the Black activist organization, the National Muslim Improvement Association of America, which he headquartered in the building he owned next door at 2338 Cecil B. Moore Avenue."[99]

Though perhaps it is a small victory in the grand scheme, the mobilization of the community to save and repurpose this symbol of local Black excellence and history should inspire some hope. The reclamation of the Dox Thrash House, the fierce activism of Stadium Stompers, these reveal unextinguished resistance in a community which is very much still alive. A community defined by great figures and great history--the memory of Rev. Dr. Leon Sullivan, Ms. Nellie Rathbone Bright, Dox Thrash, and the group that demanded a seat at Temple's drafting table in 1969 also speaks to the metaphoric fire that burns in the heart of this neighborhood. "Urban black Americans," Dr. Marcus Anthony Hunter reminds us, "were not simply victims of the vast changes impacting American cities throughout the twentieth century…Nor were they passive bystanders who watched the city change from the

[99] Haas, Kimberly. “In Sharswood, Dox Thrash House Saved to Anchor a Neighborhood.” Hidden City Philadelphia, May 13, 2021.

windows of their row homes. Black Philadelphians were and are agents of urban change — citymakers."[100] Ms. Loney observed that as the condition of North Central and the plight of its people worsened, community engagement and activism intensified in response.[101] Ms. Jackie remarked that "coalition building, it rises, it plateaus," and emphasized that "it needs to stay risen."[102] If grassroots, community-led groups are able to meet this challenge, to continue to nurture North Central's prolific heritage of activists and heroes and to expand public awareness of both that heritage and the erasure it faces, I am confident that the march of displacement and broader gentrification can be slowed, and hopefully someday repelled.

In the interim however, there seem to be a number of relatively insignificant changes implied throughout these chapters, that if implemented by Temple University and local developers and landlords, could potentially lead to improved relationships between institutions and the community, and positive results in the neighborhood more widely. As Miles suggests, making "the rec. center gyms" available "to local kids in the afternoons" could have all kinds of benefits.[103] This could reduce crime, bolster community perception of the school, and foster relationships between the North Central community and the Temple community, which could lead to more cooperation and understanding between the two factions. Similarly, if Temple used more of its facilities less exclusively, such as the library or computer services, the resulting ease of tensions could make life better for all

[100] Hunter, Marcus Anthony. "Black Philly After The Philadelphia Negro." *Contexts* 13, no. 1 (February 1, 2014): 26–31.
[101] Loney, Gail. Conversation With Gail Loney. Phone call, February 16, 2023.
[102] Wiggins, Jacqueline. Conversation With Jacqueline Wiggins. Phone call, March 17, 2023.
[103] Gomez-Younkin, Miles. Conversation With Miles Gomez-Younkin. Phone call, April 6, 2023.

participants. Additionally, the university needs to accept greater responsibility and accountability for students living off campus. The traditional mindset of 'not on campus, not our problem' has clearly had adverse effects on the surrounding area, and this issue could begin to be addressed by including a segment in new student orientation in which incoming freshmen would be educated about North Central, being taught to view the neighborhood as a vibrant community, taught about proper waste storage and disposal, and reminded to be courteous to neighbors. The school could even provide trash receptacles to off-campus students, or even just a subsidy for the bins. Anything would be better than the total inaction they demonstrate today. Oftentimes, though this should be no excuse for Temple's neglectfulness, landlords are at fault for the absence of garbage cans. If the city enforced more property violations and did their job in holding landlords accountable, as well as seriously cracked down on illegal dumping, the streets and open spaces of North Central would be less filthy for it, and residents may feel happier and more comfortable in their community.

The last objective I have for this project is to pose some questions that may add layers to the research surrounding topics such as gentrification and displacement, and aid in continuing and deepening this essential conversation going forwards. In her 2015 text *Lenape Country: Delaware Valley Society Before William Penn*, scholar Jean R. Soderlund contends that "from 1609 to 1630, the Lenapes welcomed the Dutch explorers and the promise of European commerce". To lend more credibility to this claim, Soderlund cites an officer on Henry Hudson's ship the *Half Moon*. "This day the people of the country came aboard of us," writes

English sailor Robert Juet, "seeming very glad of our coming, and brought green tobacco, and gave us of it for knives and beads."[104] This complicates more essentializing narratives about European colonization, as settler-Indigenous relations are often spoken of as a ferocious and bloody power struggle from the beginning. Similarly, in discussing the first signs of gentrification, Rachel Brahinsky notes that "in the short term, a small outmigration could have positive impacts on a given community, particularly in cases where struggling families receive large sums for homes that they are ready to leave in any case." However, we know how these stories end. "That trickle of outmigration," writes Brahinsky, "tends to become a flood that washes away communities."[105] Nonetheless, I am left with a question regarding the formative stages of these processes, processes known to have uprooted or snuffed out the lives of so many countless human beings. Are the above examples merely explained away by conceding that any real phenomenon will never have purely good or evil results, that it is a matter of perspective? Or is the idea worth exploring that colonialism and gentrification may have 'tipping points,' and that highly controlled applications--'microdoses'--of these logics could be used for good? Perhaps I am just wrong. Regardless, this question sat at the back of my mind throughout the research process. Another query that remains for me involves the categorization of processes of displacement, and if this needs updating. Margaret Ellis-Young briefly discusses the emerging theory around the

[104] Soderlund, Jean R. “A Free People, Subject to No One.” In *Lenape Country*, 12–34. Delaware Valley Society Before William Penn. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.
[105] Brahinsky, Rachel. “The Story of Property: Meditations on Gentrification, Renaming, and Possibility.” *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 52, no. 5 (August 2020): 837–55.

"settler colonial city", and differentiates it from the "colonial city".[106] This leaves me to wonder: should gentrification that occurs in the settler colonial city actually be classified as "settler colonial gentrification," and be studied and theorized about accordingly? How does this hypothetical form of gentrification differ from the gentrification that takes place in Europe, China, or other non-settler domains?

Over the course of this project, I have learned so much about so many things. The vast experience and wisdom of my interviewees left my head spinning and my heart full of gratitude. I improved my understanding of global processes of displacement and unequal wealth accumulation, as well as my understanding of my city and the people whose land it was built on. Perhaps the most important thing I learned, however, is how little I know, and how much more work there is to be done. It is this author's strong belief that the purpose of studying displacement should be to combat it.

[106] Ellis-Young, Margaret. “Gentrification as (Settler) Colonialism? Moving beyond Metaphorical Linkages.” *Geography Compass* 16, no. 1 (January 2022).

Figures

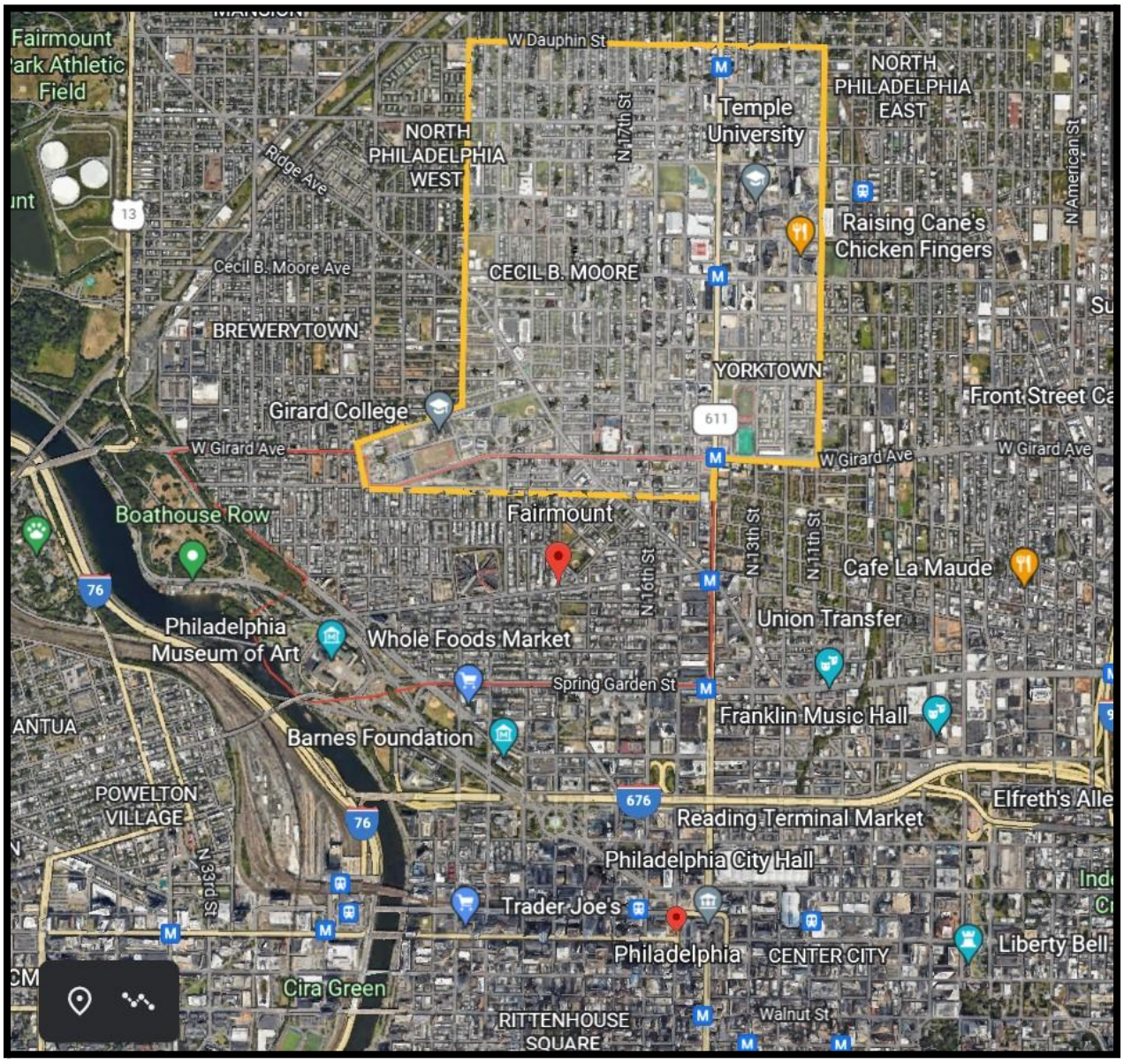


Figure 1-1: The yellow outline roughly covers the area focused on by the author, although other parts of the city are discussed as well. Fairmount is faintly outlined in red. Google Earth 2023.

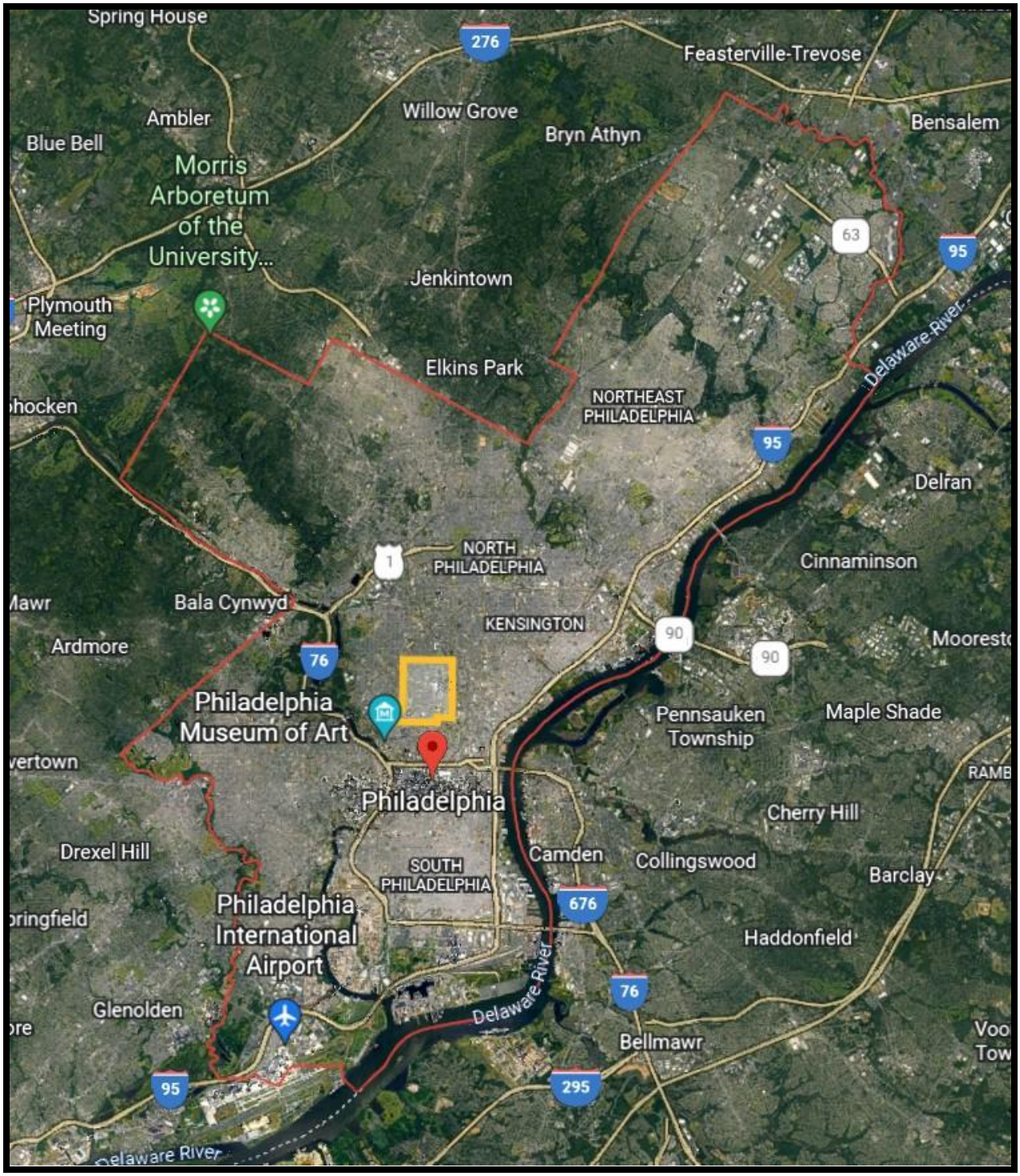


Figure 1-2: A full view of Philadelphia County, outlined in red, with this paper's area of focus again in yellow. Google Earth 2023.

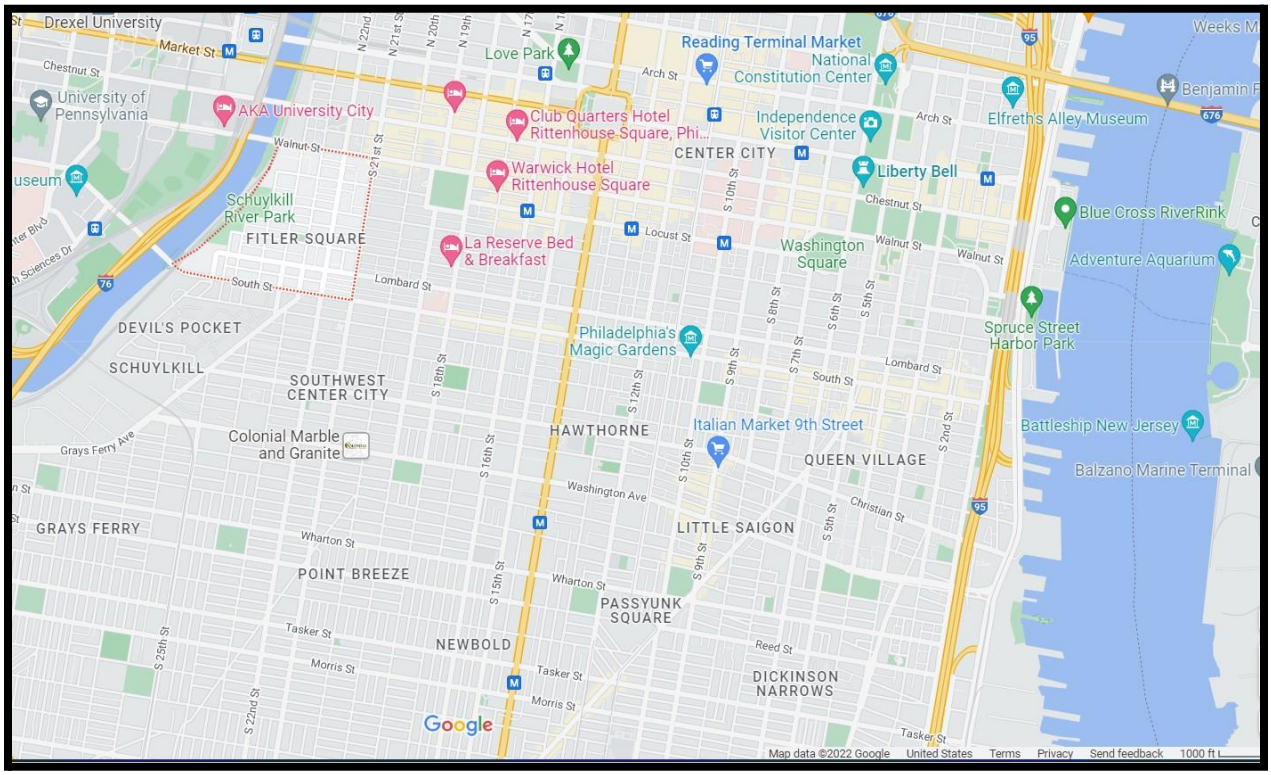


Figure 2: South Philadelphia today. Broad Street, where "14th Street" would be, runs South to North up the middle of the image and forms a square around City Hall with Market Street. Note the various names used to describe areas in Southwestern Philadelphia. One 'neighborhood' highlighted is Fitler Square, demonstrating the way in which this large, historically Black community was apportioned by the city and developers. Google Maps 2022.

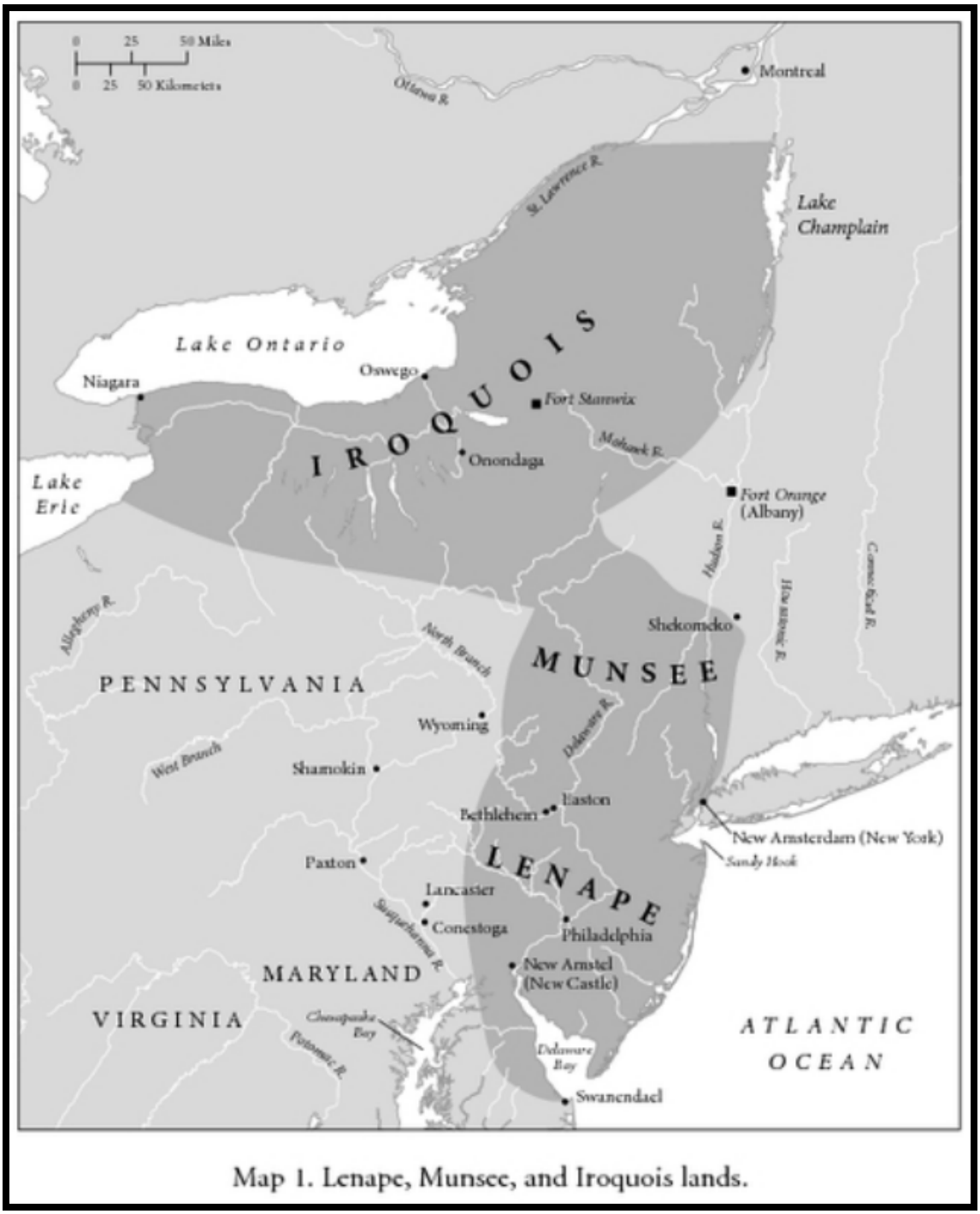


Figure 3: Indigenous territories superimposed on a settler-colonial map of the Eastern United States. Soderlund, Jean R. *Lenape Country: Delaware Valley Society Before William Penn*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.

Figure 4-1: Apartments in North Central marketing directly to Temple students. Note the implication of the school's mascot (the owl), and the use of color (red, Temple's foremost school hue) to indicate association with the university.

Figure 4-2: Again, note the color symbolism, the implication of the owl, and the purported "luxury" of the units.

Figure 5: A section of North Central at 24th and Ingersoll Streets.

Figure 6: A section of the author's parents' street in Fairmount. Note the obvious continuity in the houses' size and appearance.

Figure 7: Aside from the height of the structure, this house has almost nothing in common with its neighbors.

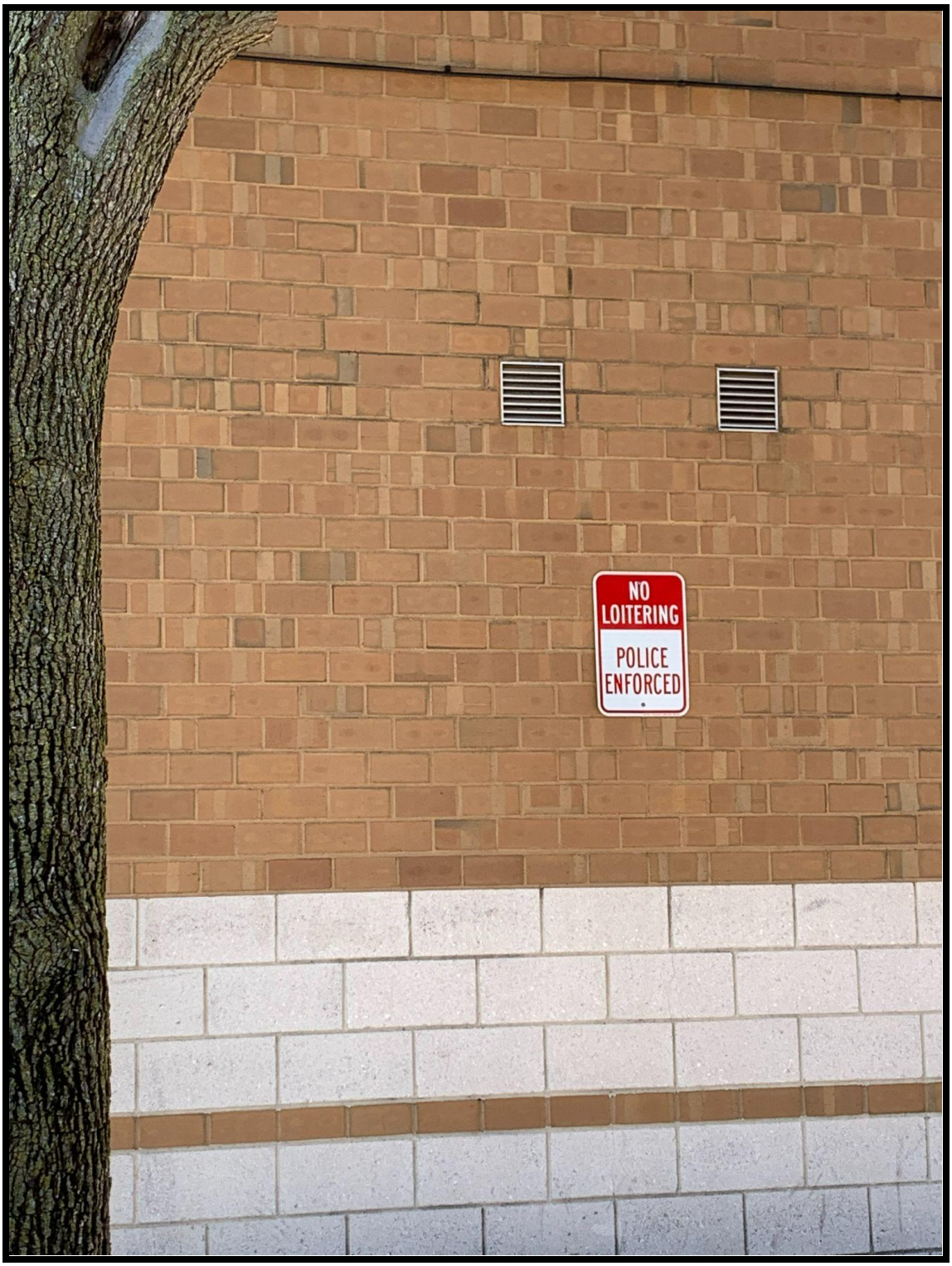
Figure 8: The buildings on the right are roughly twice the height of the older buildings across the narrow street from them. As if this did not create an uncomfortable enough power dynamic, if you look closely you can identify the elevated, side-stair entrances to the newer buildings, entrances which reinforce isolated living and perpetuate 'dangerous neighborhood' narratives.

Figure 9: An apartment building by 15th Street and Girard Avenue--set back, gated, and totally disconnected from the rest of the area.

Figure 10: A brand new building at Master and Bouvier Streets stands next to a dirt lot filled with trash and debris.

Figure 11: This image is able to capture several aspects of gentrification. Note the taller, more recent (more expensive) looking buildings peering through a gap in the old North Central housing stock. I find that there is a distinct and eerie sense of the neighborhood being 'remade' conveyed through this image.

Figure 12: The Dox Thrash House and former National Muslim Improvement Association of America headquarters at 24th Street and Cecil B. Moore Avenue.



Miscellaneous Figure 1: A no loitering sign on 15th Street and Girard Avenue.

Miscellaneous Figure 2: A building on Master Street.

Miscellaneous Figure 3: Graffitied banner fastened to a fence surrounding a Temple sports complex at Broad Street and Girard Avenue.

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