1 Introduction

THE GHETTO, the inner city, the 'hood—these terms have been applied as monikers for black neighborhoods and conjure up images of places that are off-limits to outsiders, places to be avoided after sundown, and paragons of pathology. Portrayed as isolated pockets of deviance and despair, these neighborhoods have captured the imagination of journalists and social scientists who have chronicled the challenges and risks of living in such neighborhoods (Anderson 1999; Bourgois 1995; Wilson 1987). But what happens when commerce, the middle class, globalization, if you will, comes to these forlorn neighborhoods? When whites who were a rare sighting are suddenly neighbors? We are accustomed to focusing on the social pathologies, government neglect, and the causes of the inner city's inexorable decline. We thus know how people feel about the crime, the lack of opportunity, and feelings of being left behind or looked over. But we know less about how people feel when the fortunes of their neighborhoods brighten. How do people feel when gentrification comes to the 'hood?

This book addresses these questions by examining the experience of gentrification from the perspective of residents of two black inner-city neighborhoods. Despite the voluminous literature that has developed on gentrification in the past few decades, this is a vantage point that has been overlooked so far. To the extent that others have analyzed gentrification from the perspective of indigenous residents, displacement, and to a lesser extent concerns about political influence have drawn nearly all the attention. But as this book will show, these are hardly the only forces coloring indigenous residents' perceptions of gentrification.

This book argues that indigenous residents do not necessarily react to gentrification according to some of the preconceived notions generally attributed to residents of these neighborhoods. Their reactions are both more receptive and optimistic, yet at the same time more pessimistic and distrustful than the literature on gentrification might lead us to believe. Residents of the 'hood are sometimes more receptive because gentrification brings their neighborhoods into the mainstream of American commercial life with concomitant amenities and services that others might take for granted. It also represents the possibility of achieving upward mobility without having to escape to the suburbs or predominantly white neighborhoods. These are benefits of gentrification typically not recognized in the scholarly literature.

Yet the long history of disenfranchisement, red lining, and discrimination also inspires a cynicism toward gentrification that might not be evidenced elsewhere. Though appreciative of neighborhood improvements associated with gentrification, many see this as evidence that such amenities and services are only provided when whites move into their neighborhoods. Moreover, many see these improvements as the result of active collaboration between public officials, commercial interests, and white residents. Though much has been written about displacement and somewhat less about the political consequences of gentrification for indigenous residents, this dimension of cynicism toward gentrification has not been explored.

The influx of the gentry into previously decaying neighborhoods also poses the possibility of enhancing the indigenous residents' opportunities for upward mobility through the much heralded poverty deconcentration posited by scholars as a possible elixir for the ills of the inner city and manifested in housing programs like HOPE VI and Moving to Opportunity (MTO). Both of these housing programs are premised on the notion that introducing the poor to more affluent neighbors either by moving them to the suburbs (MTO) or bringing the middle class to the 'hood (HOPE VI) is beneficial to poorer residents. Yet the gentrification literature is virtually silent on whether the promise of poverty deconcentration works in the case of gentrification as well. This book shows that the gentry do indeed hold forth the promise to bring benefits to indigenous residents, but in ways more limited than the poverty deconcentration thesis would suggest. In addition, the income mixing concomitant with gentrification is no guarantee for upward mobility. Thus this book also makes clear that the connection between gentrification and neighborhood effects is one that we overlook at our own peril if we wish to have a complete picture of neighborhood dynamics.

Prior writings on gentrification have tended to treat residents who are indigenous to these neighborhoods as bystanders who are victimized by the gentrification process. For example, Wilson and Grammenos (2005) describe how real estate interests and the media demonize a choicely located Puerto Rican neighborhood in Chicago to prime it for gentrification. Here the residents of this neighborhood are potential victims unless they are able to recognize and counter the threat that this demonizing poses.

Those who sought to explain gentrification by looking at the supply side focused on developers, landlords, and capital (Smith 1979), whereas those seeking to explain gentrification from the demand side focused on the forces that created the gentry and led to gentrification (Ley 1996). In these narratives capital and the middle or upper classes assume the leading roles, and indigenous residents are background characters at best.

Hence, gentrification has been depicted as the manifestation of changing cultural, demographic, and economic circumstances among the new middle class, and elsewhere it has been described as representing the bourgeoisie's revenge on the underclass of the inner city (Ley 1996; Smith 1996). This is not to say that these depictions are wrong or inaccurate, but they only tell part of the story. The cultural changes that may have contributed to the onset of gentrification in the 1990s shed little light on how gentrification changes our understanding of life in the gentrifying black inner city. Likewise, Smith (1996), though sympathetic to the indigenous residents of the Lower East Side, nevertheless did not make them central to his interpretations much beyond the class antagonisms that his Marxist reading stresses. I argue that indigenous residents' experience with gentrification, particularly in black inner-city neighborhoods, is worthy of a starring role itself.

That significant gaps in our understanding of gentrification persists despite a voluminous literature developed over several decades that perhaps reflects the chaotic nature of gentrification as a concept (Beauregard 1986). As such it means different things, under different circumstances, to different people. This chaos results from the differing manifestations of gentrification and its differing ways of impacting people in its wake. Therefore gentrification must be examined from a multitude of angles and perspectives if we wish to understand this dynamic.

The black inner city of America is surely a singular and unique phenomenon that demands its own perspective when considering gentrification. Here I am referring to the countless central city neighborhoods that were transformed from white to black as a result of the great migration of blacks from the rural South to urban centers across America. These are neighborhoods that almost invariably also experienced a withdrawal of resources and subsequent decline. This history is unique in urban America, reflecting the importance of race, or more specifically black race, as a master trait that trumps other categories in social life. This is especially true in the realm of neighborhoods where the history of the black inner city has been a class apart. Unlike no other group in American history the majority of blacks were confined to racially homogenous neighborhoods throughout much of the twentieth century. Although European immigrants of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also clustered in ethnic enclaves, these enclaves were seldom homogenous even if associated with one particular group (Massey and Denton 1993). Moreover, the majority of the immigrant group typically lived outside of the enclave. Likewise, today recent immigrants from Asia and Latin America live in neighborhoods that are much less racially isolated than those resided in by the typical black. As Massey and Denton conclude, "when it comes to housing and residential patterns race is the

dominant organizing principle" (Massey and Denton 1993, p. 114). Thus, the black inner city is unique and set apart from the rest of the metropolis.

This unique experience sets the stage for a unique vantage point on gentrification. It is a viewpoint colored by decades of red lining, spatial isolation, and urban renewal. As the book illustrates in graphic detail, it is also a history that breeds cynicism about gentrification. But it is also one that breeds hope and relief about the opportunities that come with gentrification, opportunities that might seem mundane elsewhere in urban America. But this viewpoint is also a part of the story of gentrification. This book therefore adds another angle to the still evolving picture of gentrification.

The significance of this alternative perspective became clear while conducting the research presented here. This volume grew out of a desire to explore how gentrification was experienced by the indigenous residents of affected neighborhoods. For reasons I discuss in more detail later, two predominantly black neighborhoods served as the setting for this research. This unwittingly (and perhaps naively) colored the focus of this project to one considering the unique ecology of the black inner city. The book hence became an argument about the experience of gentrification under the unique circumstances of the black inner city.

Motivation for the Book

This book was originally motivated by a desire to answer questions raised by a research project that aimed to empirically document the amount of displacement due to gentrification in New York City. Despite years of writing on gentrification and a popular wisdom that equated it with displacement, there was very little sound empirical evidence that demonstrated the magnitude of the relationship between gentrification and displacement. It was this relationship that Frank Braconi and I hoped to document (Freeman and Braconi 2004).

Much to my surprise, our research findings did not show evidence of a causal relationship between gentrification and displacement. Poor residents and those without a college education were actually less likely to move if they resided in gentrifying neighborhoods. That similar results were found in a study in Boston (Vigdor 2002) served to suggest further that perhaps we were onto something. These surprising results generally sparked three types of responses: unquestioned acceptance from those with an ax to grind against community activists and the left, incredulity, and curiosity. Those with an ax to grind interpreted these findings as proof that community activists were liberal ideologues without valid arguments against gentrification (Cravatts 2004; Tierney 2002). A second

type of response was skepticism. Many people were skeptical because the results were not consistent with their personal observations of change in gentrifying neighborhoods. Perhaps the most common response, however, was curiosity.

I include myself among this last group who wanted an explanation for the surprising results. While disseminating our findings, we hypothesized various reasons for these counterintuitive results. We suggested that gentrification might be associated with greater residential satisfaction and hence less motivation to move. Or perhaps rent regulation was effective in dampening displacement. Truth be told, this was all speculation. We really did not know why gentrification appeared to lower mobility rates. Beyond the possibility of displacement, we did not have a sense of how gentrification impacted or was perceived by indigenous residents.

The voluminous literature on gentrification offered an obvious place to look in an attempt to explain these counterintuitive findings. This literature, however, offered an incomplete picture on how gentrification impacted indigenous residents or how they perceived this type of neighborhood change. Although the advent of gentrification in the 1970s did spark scholarly interest in gentrification and its impact on indigenous residents, much of the initial writing focused on identifying and measuring the extent of displacement. Despite the focus on quantifying displacement, these early efforts for the most part did not yield credible estimates of the relationship between gentrification and displacement. These studies almost uniformly failed to include a counterfactual or simply considered all moves to be displacement. Without knowing how much displacement would occur in the absence of gentrification, one cannot assume that any observed displacement is due to gentrification. Highlighting this point, an early summary of the literature concluded that "the major conclusion from this survey of studies of displacement in revitalizing areas is that very little reliable information exists" (Sumka 1979, p. 486). The methodological shortcomings of these earlier studies were the impetus for the displacement study conducted by Frank Braconi and me (Freeman and Braconi 2004). Nevertheless, the notion that gentrification impacted indigenous residents primarily by displacing them was etched in both the public's and much of the scholarly community's imagination, as summed up here by two of the most respected writers on gentrification:

> It is often argued that the benefits of gentrification are far greater than the costs (Schill and Nathan 1983). Whether this is true is doubtful, but more important it is beside the point. The benefits and costs are so unevenly distributed that one has to look not at some overall equation but at different segments of the population. There are distinct losers as well as winners, and the consistent losers are the poor and working class who will be displaced as

> gentrification proceeds, and who will confront higher housing costs in tight markets. (Williams and Smith 1986, p. 220)

Likewise, in seeking to provide an empirical assessment of the experience of gentrification in North American cities, Slater (2004) deliberately focused on displaced residents. Although such a focus is appropriate for highlighting the hardships associated with displacement, it perforce obscures insight on other ways that gentrification might impact residents.

There were exceptions to this displacement-centric literature. Notably, several authors chronicled the political conflicts that arose in the wake of gentrification. Auger (1979) described how in South End, Boston, long-term residents' desire to see affordable housing built in the neighborhood conflicted with the gentry's aims to maximize property values by making their neighborhood an exclusive one. The Queens Village section of Philadelphia was described as one where residents were initially ambivalent about gentrification but grew increasingly bitter about rising housing inflation (Levy and Cybriwsky 1980). This bitterness galvanized some long-term residents into acts of vandalism toward the gentry. Henig (1982) chronicled the increasing pragmatism of formerly radical community groups as newcomers to the neighborhood devoted their concerns to more pedestrian matters. In one of the more multifaceted analyses of gentrification in a specific neighborhood, Abu-Lughod (1994) detailed the many ways that gentrification led to battles over the use of public space, provision of affordable housing, and disposition of vacant buildings and land owned by the city on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. The story that Abu-Lughod tells is one of long-term residents battling to maintain the affordability, diversity, and anarchic and bohemian nature of the Lower East Side. More recently, Wilson, Wouters, and Grammenos (2004) describe how community-based coalitions struggled to resist gentrification by painting developers as "greedy capitalists" and Pilsen as a cohesive and supportive community for indigenous residents but a space of danger for would-be gentrifiers.

When coupled with the displacement studies and concerns about displacement, what emerges from the literature is a picture of gentrification acting to displace indigenous residents and/or sparking political conflict between these residents and the gentry over competing visions of the neighborhood's future. Neither of these conclusions explains why we found lower turnover rates in gentrifying neighborhoods. Nor do these conclusions satisfactorily answer the more global question of how gentrification affects indigenous residents. As Slater, Curran, and Lees (2004, p. 1142) write:

> Yet the true nature of the consequences of gentrification for people living in the neighborhoods experiencing it is an issue on which there has been

> almost total silence. In short, academic inquiry into neighborhood change has looked at the role of urban policy in harnessing the aspirations of middle class professionals at the expense of looking at the role of urban policy in causing immense hardship for people with nowhere to go in booming property markets reshaped by neoliberal regulatory regimes. A focus on the practices of the middle class gentrifiers and how their practices are facilitated by urban policy does not tell us anything about what policy driven gentrification does to communities that fear widely acknowledged disruptions brought about by public and/or private reinvestment. Middle class gentrifiers are only one part of a much larger story.

Slater points out the need for scholars to explore how gentrification impacts the residents living there, but he also assumes that displacement and other hardships will be the primary experience for the residents of gentrifying neighborhoods. But the experience of gentrification might be more nuanced than that.

Indeed, the stories of political contestation hint at gentrification being more complex than was typically portrayed. For example, writers on gentrification in various communities including the Lower East Side (Abu-Lughod 1994), Adams Morgan (Henig 1982), and Pilsen (Wilson, Wouters, and Grammenos 2004) illustrated the many competing interests in these neighborhoods that did not always neatly cleave between long-term residents and the gentry, allowing one to infer that not all of the residents were necessarily opposed to gentrification. By focusing on the political contestations, however, the experiences of everyday residents in gentrifying neighborhoods was muffled by the din of political conflict. This is not to say that a focus on the political conflict stemming from gentrification is wrong, only that it does not provide a complete picture of how residents are impacted or experience the changes taking place in their neighborhoods. For one thing, the most active and vocal residents are not necessarily representative of the entire neighborhood and are likely different, perhaps being most concerned about the changes taking place—hence their activism. Moreover, political combat does not lend itself to nuanced positions. Rather the protagonists must stake out a position and fight for it. In this way the characters in many of these stories appear one-dimensional, singularly focused on stopping gentrification or maximizing property values. As will be shown later in this book, such narrow depictions may not do justice to the complex ways residents experience gentrification.

I concluded that we needed a far better understanding of gentrification from the vantage point of residents living in these neighborhoods. Such an approach could perhaps shed light on why residents of these neighborhoods appeared to be less likely to move in New York City during the 1990s. Moreover, given the increasing attraction in housing and

community development circles toward mixing incomes, it seemed plausible that this approach might shed light on the wisdom of the poverty deconcentration thesis.

This volume grew out of my efforts to better understand gentrification from the viewpoint of poor persons indigenous to these neighborhoods. To really get a sense of what was happening in the neighborhoods, I began talking with residents. Who would better know their motivations for staying or the struggles they went through to be able to stay? I chose Harlem as a case study because its rich history as the symbolic capital of black America proved irresistible. It is also a neighborhood I have come to know intimately, living and working on its boundaries. Harlem is a neighborhood where the initial stages of gentrification were readily apparent with trendy restaurants, new housing, and surprise of surprises—whites moving into the neighborhood. I also chose to study Clinton Hill in Brooklyn, New York, another predominantly black neighborhood experiencing gentrification. Choosing two mostly black neighborhoods enabled my analysis to make comparisons across neighborhoods without the confounding influence of race.

Choosing two predominantly black neighborhoods, however, injected race into the thesis of this book in an unanticipated yet overwhelming way. Through the course of my research, the topic of race repeatedly reared its head in a manner more compelling than my original focus on residential mobility and displacements. The book hence became a story about how residents of black neighborhoods view gentrification as much or more so than a story about displacement and mobility in gentrifying neighborhoods. Taylor (2002) and Patillo (2003) have examined the issue of gentrification in two predominantly black neighborhoods. They are sociologists, however, and their work focuses on how the black gentry and other black residents relate to one another in the context of the gentrification process. Taylor and Patillo illustrate the role that middle-class blacks' desires to connect with their blackness plays in spurring gentrification, as well as the way their class differences sometimes puts them at odds with other black residents of gentrifying neighborhoods.

In contrast, my motivation to understand how gentrification impacts people in addition to my pragmatic concerns about how planning and policy can create better cities drove the focus of this book to be more about how residents experience the process of gentrification. This is a necessary first step toward understanding how gentrification impacts residents.

Although I initially set out to see how gentrification is perceived through the eyes of the poor, my interviews suggested that class was not necessarily the all-important lens that I thought it would be in shaping how people viewed and made sense of gentrification. Folks with no more

than a high school education told similar stories to those with advanced degrees in their perspectives on gentrification. Through the course of my interviews I also learned that as much as the loss of the black middle class in the inner city has been lamented (see Wilson 1987), there were still plenty of longtime black middle-class residents in inner-city communities like Clinton Hill and Harlem. Because the black middle class was very much part of the fabric of Clinton Hill and Harlem and because class was not proving to be a central organizing theme in my initial interviews, I thought it wise not to exclude them from my research. I therefore expanded my sample to include both college graduates and the nonpoor.

Nevertheless, despite the intrusion of race into my central thesis, this book still meets one of its original objectives: providing a perspective on gentrification that heretofore had been taken for granted if not ignored. The indigenous residents of gentrifying neighborhoods, excepting perhaps middle-class homeowners, were assumed to be displaced or concerned about the ensuing cultural and political shifts resulting from gentrification. In this book I paint a richer and more nuanced picture of gentrification as seen from the eyes of these residents.

Research Strategy

The counterintuitive findings on displacement and the dearth of literature that might explain these findings convinced me that our understanding of gentrification from the viewpoint of indigenous residents was poor indeed, so poor that an exploratory approach rather than one with preconceived hypotheses would be more likely to yield fruitful insights about the perception of gentrification by indigenous residents. Although I had some preconceived ideas and questions I wanted to answer, I wanted to frame my research in such a way to allow previously unanticipated questions and answers to emerge. In these unanticipated themes especially compelling stories might emerge. Indeed, the importance of race in coloring how residents perceived gentrification is an example of an unanticipated topic of significance emerging.

An exploratory approach with these motivations pointed toward an inductive approach that allows the research to influence both the questions and answers. Such an approach is better suited to a qualitative interpretive inquiry rather than a positivist deductive approach. The latter approach assumes well-developed maxims that can be quantified and empirically verified. Although there certainly are some aspects of gentrification that would fit these criteria, the counterintuitive findings of my earlier research (and as I show in detail in the next chapter) and lack of research from the vantage point of indigenous residents all convinced me that a more open-ended qualitative approach was desirable. The

research reported here should thus be viewed as the first phase of a research project that will help us understand the myriad ways that gentrification affects residents and is viewed by them. Using an inductive approach, the book likely raises as many if not more questions than it answers. This also means that the ultimate objective here is to conceptualize how gentrification might impact and is perceived by indigenous residents, rather than making definitive claims about the exact relationship of gentrification to specific variables. Systematically verifying the relationships conceptualized here will be left to a later date.

The qualitative methods employed in the research include primarily in-depth interviews and to a lesser extent participant observation and content analysis of newspapers and other media. One-on-one interviews were the best way to give residents the opportunity to express their feelings and perceptions in a detailed and nuanced way. It was also the best way to establish the type of rapport necessary to encourage the study participants to express their views freely. Because most of my respondents were African American, my being African African probably facilitated this rapport.

The conversations I had with residents of Clinton Hill and Harlem serve as the raw data for the analyses presented in this book. Residents' descriptions of how they see their neighborhood changing and how they feel about this can be taken as straightforward accounts of their perceptions of how gentrification impacts them. Who better than they to relate their day-to-day experiences with gentrification? Our conversations also yielded residents' beliefs about why gentrification was manifesting itself the way it was—something I also discuss and analyze in great detail. Here, I not only report the residents' thoughts but also interpret the meaning of these perceptions. Because residing in a gentrifying neighborhood does not necessarily grant one additional insight into the complex forces that drive the gentrification process, this is a place where merely taking the residents' comments at face value would overlook the context that generates their beliefs.

Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to identify participants for in-depth interviews. Initial contacts were made through community groups and my own interactions in these communities. Anyone at least eighteen years of age who had been living in the neighborhood for at least three years was eligible to participate in the study. These criteria ensured that respondents had at least some experience with the changes under way in their neighborhood.

The interviews sought to elicit from respondents their perceptions about how the neighborhood was changing and how those changes were affecting them. Particular focus was given to changes in amenities, services, demographics, and neighborhood social interaction. The interviews also sought information about respondents' housing situations and their

TABLE 1.1. Sample Characteristics of Study Participants

	Total	Clinton Hill	Harlem
Percentage black	85%	100%	81%
Percentage Latino	15%	0%	19%
Aged 18–30	22%	10%	23%
31–45	47%	40%	46%
46–65	19%	40%	19%
65 and over	12%	10%	8%
Education			
High school graduate or less	43%	25%	45%
Some college	13%	20%	13%
College graduate	37%	55%	33%
Resides in Harlem	66%		
Owns home	19%	50%	10%
Rent regulated or subsidized (among renters)	50%	50%	51%
Median length of tenure (years)	17	19	14
Sample size	65	22	43

future mobility plans. Aside from that, participants were encouraged to discuss whatever they wanted related to their neighborhood and how it was changing. A conversational style where the interviewer establishes a rapport with the respondents was used to encourage the revealing of feelings and emotions and to enable the participants to volunteer their own impressions about topics not introduced by the interviewer. I conducted a total of fifty-one interviews (thirty in Harlem and twenty-one in Clinton Hill). A research assistant conducted an additional twenty-one interviews in Harlem, which she taped, transcribed, and analyzed separately (Patel 2003). This facilitated comparisons between my findings and those of the research assistant's and the dependability of the analysis or the extent to which my findings were not purely dependent on my sole perspective. Table 1.1 illustrates the socioeconomic characteristics of the study participants.

Table 1.1 shows that many of the residents I spoke with had been residing in their neighborhood for a considerable length of time with the median length being seventeen years. My sample is more highly educated than the general population of these communities and slightly older as well. Several of the respondents were highly educated and recently moved into the neighborhood and consequently might be thought of as the black gentry. Although only five or so individuals fit this profile, their inclusion in this study did lend additional insight into social relations between those who might be thought of as gentrifiers and long-term residents—a point I explore in chapter 5. Taken together, table 1.1 suggests the sample includes people from a broad range of backgrounds and circumstances.

In addition to interviewing, I also attended several conferences, workshops, and community meetings, some that were designed to specifically address the issue of gentrification. I even served as a panelist at a conference on gentrification in Harlem. These forums proved to be invaluable as sources of additional insight on residents' perspectives toward gentrification. These forums are places where people had a chance to express their feeling about the changes taking place in their community. I also used these forums to recruit participants for in-depth interviews.

Moreover, as someone who lives on the edge of Harlem (or in Harlem, depending on the definition), I experience this neighborhood as part of my everyday existence. I shop in Harlem, go to movies in Harlem, and eat in Harlem. Sometimes the topic of gentrification came up in everyday conversations, as was the case of one of my visits to my barbershop as the dialogue below attests:

college student: Have y'all heard about gentrification?
[Some nods, puzzled expressions, a few uh-huhs.]

college student: That's where they're taking these burnt out brownstones, fixing them up, and then selling them for half a million dollars. But this is people coming in from outside of Harlem.

barber: Word?

college student: No doubt. If we keep sleepin' in a few years won't be none of us livin' in Harlem. What we need to do is start buying some of these properties for ourselves.

This is a conversation I stumbled across while getting my haircut. It is illustrative of one of the perceptions of gentrification, that it is a process whereby the original black residents and blacks in general will no longer be part of the community. This conversation undoubtedly played some role in shaping how I think residents perceive gentrification, even though my observations of it were not planned.

I also experienced firsthand many of the changes in the neighborhood, the new restaurants and stores that made life more convenient, but also the downside of gentrification when my barbershop had to relocate because of rising rents. (My loss of a convenient place to get a haircut is of course minor compared to those whose livelihoods or homes were threatened by gentrification.)

Likewise, although I don't live or work in Clinton Hill, I have several friends that do. Consequently, I often socialized in the neighborhood, taking advantage of the new shops, restaurants, and cultural attractions that were dotting the area. My friends also related to me their everyday experiences, some of which were affected by gentrification. They described the new types of stores that were opening up and the public spaces that were off-limits to whites a few years ago but now had a white

presence. They described neighborhoods that formerly invoked fear but were now trendy. In this way my personal experiences in Clinton Hill and Harlem almost led to me becoming something of an accidental ethnographer. Although I did not set out to use ethnography as a major tool in my research, my day-to-day living made this unavoidable. Thus this accidental ethnography came to shape this book along with my interviews and participant observation.

Plan of the Book

The next chapter describes the sites of the analyses that inform the book. Two neighborhoods served as settings for in-depth case studies on gentrification in New York City, Harlem and Clinton Hill. The second chapter provides a brief history of each of these neighborhoods. The bulk of the second chapter, however, will focus on describing recent changes in these neighborhoods that make them suitable candidates for studying gentrification. Data from the decennial census will be used to describe demographic, economic, and social trends in these neighborhoods. Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data will be used to describe trends in housing investment. In addition, semi-structured interviews with key informants in these neighborhoods, including community leaders, planners, and politicians, will be used to further flesh out the contours of the changes taking place in these neighborhoods. This chapter will also set the stage for a better understanding of how residents in these neighborhoods view the changes taking place around them—the subject of the following chapters.

The third chapter describes indigenous residents' perceptions of the changes taking place around them and how they felt about these changes. Gentrification was not a subtle change in the case study neighborhoods. It was a force that everyone appeared to be aware of, that people talked about and reacted to. This chapter explores some of the residents' reactions to gentrification. Sometimes these reactions were negative, as the following quote attests: "I don't have mixed feelings about the gentrification process. I see what it does; I see the difficulty that people face. That's my concern. I love the neighborhood. I love the people. When I see something steam-rolling them, I don't have mixed feelings . . . Community organizer/Resident of Harlem" (as quoted in Chamberlain 2003).

Negative sentiments such as these are consistent with a pejorative view of gentrification that pervades much of the writing on this topic. The impression one gets from typical complaints about gentrification is that it is an unwelcome threat to current residents. These negative sentiments have motivated some to mobilize against gentrification. Although negative reactions were certainly an important theme, many residents welcomed the changes taking place in their community due to gentrification.

This chapter thus also explores in detail an often ignored facet of the gentrification process—the perceived benefits flowing to current residents. This chapter describes the facets of gentrification that residents were appreciative of. The findings described serve as a corrective to the prevailing view of gentrification solely as a disastrous occasion for current residents. A more balanced view that takes account of both the good and the bad of gentrification will result from this chapter and the book in general.

Chapter 4 describes how indigenous residents interpreted the gentrification in their neighborhoods. The dramatic change that gentrification represents—reversing decades of white flight and disinvestment—cries out for explanation. Scholars have been eager to offer theories that explain why and how gentrification occurs. The residents of affected neighborhoods have also crafted explanations for the dramatic changes swirling around them. This chapter describes the way that residents interpret the change. This includes their explanations for why gentrification was occurring and the meaning of whites moving into their neighborhoods. The role of race as a marker of socioeconomic status and as a determinant of who gets what is a recurring theme in this discussion. More specifically, the perceptions that whites command and obtain better services and amenities wherever they live is a source of appreciation, resentment, and resignation. These feelings and their meanings are discussed in this chapter.

The mixing of the gentry with long-term residents has the potential to be both combustible and complementary. By mixing residents from different classes, ethnicities, and races, gentrification can create a potentially explosive scenario as residents negotiate suspicions and differing expectations and norms. But the process also has the potential to enrich neighborhoods by creating more diverse communities. Moreover, the literature on neighborhood effects suggests that such neighborhood-level relationships are important in determining one's life chances. Chapter 5 explores how residents of gentrifying neighborhoods view their interactions with the newcomers in their midst. How are localized relationships affected by an influx of residents of a different class and sometimes race?

My findings show that social ties rarely cross class and racial lines. Gentrification is increasing the socioeconomic diversity of the Clinton and Hill and Harlem, but the social networks within these neighborhoods seem impervious to the changes taking place around them. This chapter discusses the lack of social interaction between gentrifiers and others in the community and the implications of this finding for theories about neighborhood effects and policies that promote socioeconomic integration.

My research also shows that by introducing individuals from a different class and sometimes racial background, gentrification was found to

spark clashes that center on differing norms and expectations. Norms are established collectively in a neighborhood. Through the actions of individuals acting in concert, such norms come to take hold. People who have lived in the neighborhood or one with a similar culture and therefore norms will know what type of behavior is deemed acceptable and appropriate. Gentrifiers, however, often come from backgrounds where different types of norms are deemed acceptable. Chapter 5 describes some of the clashes that stem from differing sets of norms between gentrifiers and long-term residents. The sources of these clashes and the means that communities used to mediate these clashes are explored.

Chapter 6 describes the planning and policy implications of the research presented in this book. As a planner, I aim more for more than a clearer understanding of the gentrification process in the context of the black inner city. Rather, the desire for praxis drives the effort to broaden our understanding of gentrification. I begin chapter 6 by summarizing my findings and describing the applicability of them to other people and settings. Although my findings are not based on a systematic survey drawn from a probability sample, I can nevertheless use judgment, logic, and prior research to infer beyond the people and settings on which this book is based. Put another way, although I cannot describe the experiences, perceptions, or relationships detailed later in this book with any degree of statistical precision, that does not mean the findings are irrelevant to other settings. The beginning of chapter 6 describes which findings are likely to be relevant elsewhere and the types of settings in which these findings may or may not be relevant.

The remainder of chapter 6 addresses the planning/policy implications of the themes discussed earlier in the book. Prefacing my discussion with stated concerns for the most disadvantaged among us and a desire for a more equitable metropolis, I describe planning/policy initiatives that will foster equity in the face of gentrification. Despite my stated bias toward equity and the redistribution of resources, I do not ignore the political obstacles that such redistributive policies confront. I therefore attempt to craft policies that would seem possible to overcome likely political objections.

The final chapter will discuss the theoretical implications of this work. I focus on three themes. The first theme I discuss in chapter 7 is the meaning of the ghetto in the face of gentrification. The term *ghetto* originally described walled-off sections of cities where Jews were confined in European cities during the Middle Ages. *Ghetto* also aptly described the black experience in urban America, for although there were no physical walls to confine blacks, the economic, political, and social forces were able to achieve virtually the same effect. The civil rights era was supposed to change everything. Although ghetto walls may have weakened

somewhat, making it easier to escape, they seemed as strong as ever in keeping others out. The middle class, capital, and certainly whites avoided the ghetto as always and perhaps in some ways more than before. Thus, the conceptualization of the ghetto persisted as a place of isolation, metaphorically on another planet.

Gentrification, however, changes this equation. Walls that were formerly solid seem porous now, at least from the perspective of who is moving into the ghetto. Does our conceptualization of the ghetto need to change in the face of gentrification? Or is gentrification merely a temporary interlude that will reshuffle the location of the ghetto but do nothing to change its relation to the larger society? The final section of this book addresses these questions concluding that gentrification does indeed change the relationship between black inner-city neighborhoods and the larger society, but for all the changes fundamental inequities for ghetto residents seem likely to persist.

The second theme centers on prior conceptualizations of gentrification in the scholarly literature. As mentioned earlier, these conceptualizations tended to place indigenous residents, particularly black inner-city residents, in support roles at best. Here I reconsider the meaning of gentrification in light of the findings described herein. This reconsideration intends to give indigenous residents a starring role in our narratives on gentrification beyond the story of displacement.

The last theme discussed in chapter 7 is what the research presented here suggests about ongoing debates over neoliberal urban policy. Policies that emphasize the private sector role as well as a retraction or reforming of the welfare state to revitalize the inner city are usually thought to fall under this rubric. To the extent that this neoliberal policy regime encourages gentrification, the reactions of residents to the gentrification process are germane to this debate. Here I discuss how the research presented in this book can help inform this debate.

Thus, this book provides a more complete understanding of the gentrification process as it relates to indigenous households and will inform both the scholarly debate on the process of gentrification and the actions of planners, policy makers, and community-based organizations who are currently struggling to address the ramifications of gentrification in many neighborhoods.