ABSTRACT

WILLIAMS, KRISTIN N. Transforming Communities and Crime?: An Examination of Gentrification and Crime in St. Louis City. (Under the direction of Dr. Stacy De Coster.)

Despite the long-standing recognition in criminology that place matters, criminologists have paid surprisingly little attention to the expanding gentrification trend. The sparse research that exists regarding the relationship between urban reinvestment and community crime offers contradictory findings, likely due to methodological inconsistencies across studies. This dissertation weds scholarship from urban sociology and criminology to develop a theoretically-grounded operationalization of gentrification useful for assessing the extent to which gentrification influences decadal shifts in internal and external crime levels. Further, I draw on the social disorganization and collective efficacy perspectives to explore how gentrification shapes the social processes at work in a particular gentrifying area of St. Louis City that are relevant for both crime perpetration and crime control. The results indicate that crime generally declines in areas undergoing the reinvestment process, as well as communities proximate to gentrification that are characterized by concentrated disadvantage. The crime control benefits associated with reinvestment are likely the product of pockets of collective efficacy that exist among gentrifiers and local community leaders that are, in part, created and maintained through the exclusion of impoverished incumbents and that are important for the exercise of informal and formal social controls. The empirical and theoretical implications of these findings are discussed.
Transforming Communities and Crime?: An Examination of Gentrification and Crime in St. Louis City

by
Kristin N. Williams

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of North Carolina State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Sociology

Raleigh, NC

2014

APPROVED BY:

__________________________  __________________________
Stacy De Coster             William R. Smith
Committee Chair

__________________________  __________________________
Charles Tittle              Michael Schwalbe

__________________________
David Klinger
DEDICATION

For my grandfather, Clarence A. Marlow, Jr.

You are forever a part of who I am and in everything I do.

And for my nieces, Lauren and Jillian.

When in doubt, always dance.
BIOGRAPHY

Kristin N. Williams was born on August 19, 1983, in Kansas City, Missouri. She graduated from Shawnee Mission North High School in 2001 and attended college at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She graduated *summa cum laude* in 2005 with two Bachelor of Science degrees (Criminology & Criminal Justice and Sociology), as well as an honor’s certificate from the Pierre Laclede Honors College. She then pursued graduate study at North Carolina State University, where she earned a Master of Science degree in Sociology in 2008 under the direction of Stacy De Coster and began working toward a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Sociology in 2009. Kristin is currently a full-time faculty member at Wake Technical Community College in Raleigh, North Carolina.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When I began this academic adventure, I would have never imagined that one of the most difficult aspects would be writing the acknowledgments section. Of course, there are many people I would like to thank for helping me along the way, but expressing just how appreciative I am has proved to be an arduous task. For those acknowledged here, please know that these words will never do justice to how much you all have meant to me.

I am forever indebted to my advisor, Stacy De Coster, who has provided both the mentorship and friendship needed to survive graduate school. Her quick wit is only matched by her theoretical genius, and I am truly in awe of both. I am a stronger academic, instructor, and person because of her. David Klinger has been an invaluable mentor, as well. Without his persistence and unwavering faith, I would have never pursued graduate school. He helped turn a first generation college student into a Ph.D. graduate, which speaks volumes about the devotion he has to the success of his students. I feel very fortunate that I have been one of them and, more importantly, that I can call him my friend.

The other members of my dissertation committee not only have been instrumental during the dissertation process; they also have had an undeniable role in holding me accountable to the highest academic standards. To learn from a criminologist like Charles Tittle—whose work is of a quality for which we should all strive—has been a great honor. Bill Smith has taught me that research is both an art and a science, a fine balance that I work toward achieving thanks to his guidance. Michael Schwalbe has changed the way I see the
world and my place in it. He once said that is important to “find meaning in the struggle.” He has played an integral role in helping me find mine, a gift for which I will always be grateful. Although not an official member of my committee, Mike Carter offered words of encouragement when I needed them most. They all believed in me when I did not believe in myself, and that made all the difference.

This research would not be what it is without the support of grants provided by the National Science Foundation and the Graduate School at North Carolina State University. Such assistance allowed me to travel to my study site and explore more thoroughly how gentrification has been unfolding on the ground. Meeting the residents of Northcity—who generously shared their time and stories with me—was one of the most incredible experiences I have had as an academic. I can only hope that our paths cross again.

Of course, completing the dissertation would not have been possible without the love and support from my family and friends, who were always willing to stand by me despite the personal sacrifices often necessary to do so. Although so many people have helped me realize this goal, Jen Gathings, Alric James, and Anne Lumley deserve credit for salvaging my sanity through the process. They kept me believing and they kept me laughing. I could not ask for better friends. Also, I am beyond grateful for Geoff, who is and always will be my sun and rain.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES ......................................................................................................................... vii

LIST OF APPENDICES .................................................................................................................. viii

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ...................................................................................................... 1

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUALIZING GENTRIFICATION ................................................................. 10

- Defining Gentrification ............................................................................................................. 10
- Gentrification as a Racialized Process .................................................................................... 20
- Timing of Gentrification ......................................................................................................... 24
- Level of Analysis ..................................................................................................................... 26
- Summary .................................................................................................................................. 28

CHAPTER 3: GENTRIFICATION AND INTERNAL CRIME ......................................................... 29

- Gentrification and Crime ......................................................................................................... 30
- Gentrification as a Concept ...................................................................................................... 37
  - Operationalizing Gentrification ............................................................................................... 38
  - Timing of Research ................................................................................................................ 46
  - Summary .................................................................................................................................. 47

- Understanding the Link between Gentrification and Crime ................................................... 48
  - Summary .................................................................................................................................. 56

- Present Research .................................................................................................................... 57
  - Data and Measures .................................................................................................................. 59
  - Analytic Strategy .................................................................................................................... 68
  - Results ..................................................................................................................................... 70
Collective Efficacy ........................................................................................................ 132
Summary .......................................................................................................................... 148
Crime Changes Accompanying Gentrification ............................................................... 149
Explaining Crime Changes ............................................................................................. 151
Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 158

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS ......................................................................................... 164
General Conclusions ....................................................................................................... 164
Academic Implications .................................................................................................... 170
  Operationalizing Gentrification ..................................................................................... 170
  Spatial Interdependence ............................................................................................... 172
  Theoretical Foundation ............................................................................................... 174
Public Policy Implications .............................................................................................. 179

REFERENCES ................................................................................................................. 184

APPENDICES .................................................................................................................. 219
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Changes in Crime Counts by Neighborhood Type, 1991-2000.............................206
Table 2. Changes in Crime County by Degree of Gentrification ........................................207
Table 3. Crime Outcomes by Neighborhood Type, 2000......................................................208
Table 4. Crime Outcomes by Degree of Gentrification, 2000..............................................209
Table 5. Crime Outcomes by Neighborhood Type, 2009....................................................210
Table 9. Changes in Adjacent Crime Counts by Neighborhood Type and Degree of Gentrification, 1991-2000.................................................................214
Table 11. Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants ..............................................216
Table 12. Northcity and St. Louis City Crime Rates, 2000-2010............................................217
LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A. Descriptive Statistics for Independent and Dependent Variables for All Neighborhoods (N=77) ................................................................. 219

Appendix B. Descriptive Statistics for Independent and Dependent Variables by Year ........................................................................................................ 220


Appendix D. Descriptive Statistics for Independent and Dependent Variables for St. Louis Neighborhoods ..................................................................... 222

Appendix E. Map of St. Louis City Neighborhoods .................................................................................................................................223
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Gentrification, or urban reinvestment, has transformed the physical and social landscapes of communities across the United States. Beginning as a counter to the suburbanization and white flight movements of the 1960s (Zukin 1987), the gentrification process has evolved from a type of isolated urban revival to a “systematic, comprehensive policy for city building” (Smith 2008: 196). Evidence of the gentrification trend can be found in cities across the country, including New York City (Zukin 1982; Bowler & McBurney 1991; Wyly & Hammel 1998; Freeman & Braconi 2004; Curran 2007; DeSena 2009), Chicago (Helms 2003; Boyd 2008; Betancur 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011; Sampson 2012; Smith 2012), Boston (Vigdor 2002), Portland (O’Sullivan 2005), District of Columbia (Lee et al. 1985; Williams 1988), Seattle (Kreager et al. 2011), Milwaukee (Holden 2002), and Philadelphia (Galster & Peacock 1986).¹ The actual extent of gentrification is unknown, however, because national estimates of how many communities are being claimed and transformed by middle-class investors are unavailable.

Research based on data from a limited number of metropolitan areas suggests that between 6% and 35% of metropolitan residents live in areas that could be considered either gentrified or in the process of being gentrified (Wyly & Hammel 1999; Glick 2008). Other estimates offer that gentrification affected approximately 7% of the 37,000 inner city census tracts throughout the 1990s (Freeman 2005). Despite the scope of gentrification in urban

¹ Though there are numerous studies that document gentrification in cities outside the United States (e.g., London), they are beyond the parameters of this dissertation and will not be included here (see Atkinson 2000a; 2000b; 2008 for examples of this work).
areas, available evidence suggests that flight from the urban core continues to be aimed
toward the suburbs, though at a slower pace than in previous years (Kennedy & Leonard
2001; U.S. Census Bureau 2011). This is not to say that reinvestment efforts have failed to
attract newcomers; several cities have documented population growth in the urban core for
the first time in decades as a result of gentrification efforts (Birch 2005). Hence,
gentrification may not be a predominating trend, but it certainly is not a rare or “largely
irrelevant” trend (Bourne 1993: 188), particularly in cities that have been hard hit by
deindustrialization, suburbanization, and deterioration.

Gentrification recently has become a hot topic in urban sociology, perhaps because of
its persistence over time, pervasiveness throughout the country, and politicized nature. Urban
sociologists have been interested particularly in the potential consequences gentrification has
for individuals and communities. For instance, some have questioned the extent to which
urban reinvestment encourages diversity, or conversely, perpetuates class- and race-based
residential segregation (Atkinson 2008; Davidson 2008; Lees 2008; Walks & Maaranen
2008; Freeman 2009). Others have expressed concerns about displacement, or the
replacement of low-income (often minority) residents with middle-class (disproportionately
white) residents (Marcuse 1985; Beauregard 1986; Atkinson 2002; Slater 2006; Glick 2008;
see also Grier & Grier 1978). In addition, researchers have examined shifts in local
amenities, consumption patterns, and the symbolic ownership of neighborhood identity
(DeSena 2006; Deener 2007; Brown-Saracino 2009). Although changes in community crime
levels have been mentioned in the urban sociology literature (Atkinson 2002; McKinnish et
al. 2010), criminologists have paid little attention to the expanding gentrification trend. This is somewhat surprisingly, given the long-standing recognition in criminology that place matters (Shaw & McKay 1942; Sampson 2012). Further, the sparse body of research on the relationship between gentrification and crime offers contradictory findings (McDonald 1986; Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; Van Wilsem et al. 2006; Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011; Smith 2012).

It is likely that the empirical inattentiveness to gentrification in criminology stems from three interrelated methodological difficulties that arise in studies of urban renewal processes. First, there is no universal definition of gentrification. Counts of gentrification vary rather widely depending on the conditions used to identify the phenomenon. For example, those classifying gentrification in terms of class-based residential turnover consider more neighborhoods as gentrified or gentrifying than those who use racial demographic changes as an indicator as well (see Galster & Peacock 1986).

Second, diverse definitions give way to an assortment of measures, including but not limited to property values (Covington & Taylor 1989), resident educational attainment (Wyly & Hammel 1999), and number of coffee shops in an area (Papachristos et al. 2011; Smith 2012). Varying measures across studies provide disparate frequencies of the gentrification process. Those with the most stringent criteria, of course, conclude that gentrification is less common than studies with more lenient standards. Galster and Peacock (1986) demonstrate this point in their study of reinvestment by examining how a multitude of gentrification
indicators influence the counts of gentrified neighborhoods. Out of the sixty-five census tracts composing the city of Philadelphia, between thirteen and fifty-three were considered gentrified depending on the measure employed. Specifically, the change in median home values rendered the lowest frequency of gentrification while racial composition shifts produced the largest count of the phenomenon (Galster & Peacock 1986).

Third, there is a dearth of data necessary for measuring the types of changes associated with urban reinvestment, especially at a level of analysis that would accurately capture the changes associated with gentrification. Quantitative research on urban reinvestment typically has focused on shifts occurring in census tracts. While data at this level are convenient, they are not necessarily substantively meaningful in the study of spatially relevant phenomena like gentrification. Census tracts, by definition, are arbitrarily defined geographical units created for data collection and statistical ease. As such, they could lack the theoretical foundation salient for understanding community-level processes and outcomes (Elliott et al. 2006; see also Kirk & Laub 2010).

Finally, the prevalence of gentrification is challenging to document because, at any given time, communities are in different stages of the process. Many studies highlight only the neighborhoods that have been gentrified according to some predetermined criteria. Excluded from this research are areas that currently are undergoing transformation, making a precise estimation of gentrification difficult to ascertain. Although it is difficult to identify all the neighborhoods that have undergone the reinvestment process and pinpoint the
consequences associated with it, it is clear that gentrification—though not uniform in its spatial, temporal, or physical manifestations—is redefining neighborhoods across the United States. Gentrification, as a type of neighborhood transition, deserves the attention of criminologists interested in community context and “neighborhood effects” (see Sampson 2012), especially given the amount of attention given to its antithesis: deterioration and decline.

The goal of the present research is to address these methodological concerns by providing a conceptual and theoretical foundation for studying gentrification and crime. Specifically, I wed scholarship from urban sociology and criminology to develop a theoretical framework that can inform empirical assessment of the potential crime implications of the gentrification process for urban communities. I also draw on grounded research in the form of interviews with community residents and local leaders to explore in detail the complex—and perhaps countervailing—interpersonal processes relevant for understanding how gentrification impacts crime within and across neighborhoods.

This research contributes to existing scholarship in several ways. First, I provide a working definition and operationalization of gentrification that takes into account the main patterns from the vast literature on reinvestment in urban sociology. In doing so, I identify and weave together common themes from the literature, paying particular attention to details concerning the spatial and temporal specifications of gentrification across various studies. A theoretically-driven operationalization of gentrification that considers these elements of
urban reinvestment is necessary for this line of research to move forward in a coherent and systematic fashion.

Second, I draw on these common themes in urban sociology to inform an empirical assessment of the consequences of gentrification as they relate to community crime changes and outcomes. As noted above, research in this area has been somewhat sparse; however, studies published within the past few years demonstrate a renewed interest in the topic among criminologists. This revival is warranted and welcomed given that reinvestment is increasingly becoming a part of inner city realities across the country (and the globe). Thus, I maintain the growing momentum in gentrification scholarship.

Third, I extend the ideas of previous research by considering the possibility of curvilinearity in the relationship between gentrification and crime. Kreager and colleagues’ (2011) work shows that crime increased in gentrifying areas of Seattle during the 1980s before declining over the subsequent decade. The authors attribute this reversal to the differences among waves of gentrification, with earlier reinvestment efforts being less concentrated and more disruptive to community stability and social controls than those occurring later. I posit that these effects of gentrification are not just temporally sensitive; they also likely depend on the degree of social and physical transformation taking place in the neighborhood. In other words, it is possible that crime fluctuations in minimally gentrifying areas differ from those in communities experiencing more extensive reinvestment.
activity. To speak to this issue, I quantify the degree of change in each neighborhood and explore whether there is a tipping point after which the effects of gentrification alter.

Fourth, I explore the possibility that reinvestment has broader implications than currently conceived in that it potentially influences crime rates in both gentrifying communities and the areas surrounding them. Some criminologists have recognized the importance of considering spatial interdependence—or the idea that “a neighborhood’s neighbors matter” (Sampson 2012: 239)—in the study of community crime, yet research exploring the effects of urban reinvestment on crime in peripheral areas is non-existent. Consideration of external crime rates has occurred only in the context of statistical controls used to isolate the relative effects of changes in gentrifying neighborhoods (see Taylor & Covington 1988; Kreager et al. 2011). I fill this gap in the literature by exploring the relationship between gentrification and crime in spatially proximate communities.

Finally, I explore the mechanisms linking gentrification to internal crime changes. Scholars have given the social disorganization model primary explanatory power in gentrification research (McDonald 1986; Taylor & Covington 1988; Kreager et al. 2011), but explicit articulations of how the structural and social transformations translate into crime changes in gentrifying areas are lacking. Further, the theory’s general usefulness has been called into question given its susceptibility to tautological reasoning (Sampson et al. 2009; Sampson 2012; see also Kubrin & Weitzer 2003a). To address this limitation, criminologists employ Sampson and colleagues’ (2009; Sampson 2012) social-mechanistic theory of
collective efficacy as central to understanding how community structures and structural changes impact crime shifts and outcomes at the neighborhood-level. Drawing on interviews with local residents and community leaders in a particular gentrifying community, I explore the extent to which gentrification shapes the social mechanistic processes specified in the collective efficacy perspective. Of particular interest for the qualitative study is how gentrification influences the prerequisites for the development of collective efficacy—repeated interactions, mutual trust, and shared goals—and the expression of this efficacy—belief that the community can reach its goals and a sense of engagement in the realization of these goals. I also examine how these elements, in turn, influence community crime outcomes through their effects on crime perpetration and crime control.

The dissertation proceeds as follows: I begin with a discussion in Chapter 2 of how gentrification has been conceptualized in urban sociology, extrapolating the threads that hold various accounts together to offer a way to operationalize reinvestment in the study of its effects on crime levels. I also highlight the most pressing methodological concerns characterizing gentrification research in this chapter. Chapter 3 reviews criminological research on gentrification and assesses the extent to which reinvestment shaped changes in community crime between 1991 and 2000, as well as crime outcomes in 2000 and 2009 in St. Louis City. Chapter 4 addresses the issue of spatial interdependence by examining the relationship between gentrification and crime in spatially proximate places. In Chapter 5, I discuss the theoretical implications of my research and use in-depth interviews with community residents and local leaders to examine the extent to which collective efficacy is
fostered and exercised in a particular gentrifying neighborhood in St. Louis. The concluding chapter synthesizes the empirical findings of this research, outlines academic and public policy implications, and offers directions for future research.
CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUALIZING GENTRIFICATION

One of the most pervasive limitations in gentrification research is the large degree of inconsistency in the way gentrification is defined and specified both theoretically and empirically. The lack of consistency in defining this core concept hinders understanding of how this type of neighborhood changes shapes various community outcomes (e.g., crime rates). One way to enrich the literature on gentrification and crime is to develop a theoretically-grounded operationalization of gentrification that includes the most common indicators and manifestations of the gentrification phenomenon. In specifying a measure of gentrification, it is important to consider the qualities that set gentrification apart from other types of neighborhood change, the potential racialized character of the gentrification process, differences among waves of gentrification, and the ecological level at which community changes characterizing gentrification take place. In the following sections, I detail these methodological considerations with an eye toward understanding what urban sociology has to offer by way of informing a comprehensive definition of gentrification for studies of urban reinvestment and crime.

Defining Gentrification

The origination of the term ‘gentrification’ can be found in the work of Ruth Glass, who noted the changes taking place in London’s urban core. Specifically, Glass (1964: xviii) offers:

“One by one, many of the working-class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle classes- upper and lower. Shabby,
modest mews and cottages - two rooms up and two down - have been taken over, when their leases have expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences. Larger Victorian houses, downgraded in an earlier or recent period - which were used as lodging houses or were otherwise in multiple occupation - have been upgraded once again...Once this process of ‘gentrification’ starts in a district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working-class occupiers are displaced and the whole social characters of the district is changed.”

Since the time of Glass’ seminal work, scholars have defined gentrification in a variety of ways. The diversity of descriptions has led some scholars to refer to gentrification as a ‘chaotic term’ (Rose 1984; Beauregard 1986) that falls into the ‘I will know it when I see it’ category of social phenomena (Formoso et al. 2010). A review of the literature, however, reveals several recurring qualities that define gentrification. One fundamental quality of gentrification is that it is a process of neighborhood rehabilitation rather than a particular event or instance. That is, it occurs in transitional stages over time and at varying paces (Williams 1986; Keating & Smith 1996a; Wyly & Hammel 1998).

The gentrification process typically is set in motion by a period of disinvestment and deterioration, during which neighborhood residents physically and economically withdraw from their community and, in turn, allow for the economic restructuring that is central for gentrification to occur (Wyly & Hammel 1999; Curran 2007). Smith’s (1979; 1986) rent gap theory illuminates why disinvestment is pertinent to the process. According to the theory, an area is ripe for gentrification when the rent gap – or discrepancy between current and potential property values and rents – is sizable enough for reinvestment to be profitable.

Deindustrialization and other economic shifts in the inner city have sparked residential and
commercial abandonment and the depreciation of land values. When these values drop so low that investors can buy property cheaply, rehabilitate the structures, and sell or rent for a profit with little risk, inner city neighborhoods become attractive targets for reinvestment initiatives. This means that areas are particularly vulnerable to gentrification if there is a large degree of physical deterioration, crime, and disorder problems in the area as these are factors that often drive down property values (Taylor 1995; O’Sullivan 2005; Formoso et al. 2010); however, these characteristics are not necessary for devalorization to take place (Beauregard 1986) nor is depreciation sufficient for gentrification to transpire, as areas with depressed land values do not always undergo reinvestment (Harvey 1982).

The second step in the process of gentrification is that individuals reinvest residential and commercial capital back into areas of depreciation. This reinvestment is primarily driven by middle-and upper-class people moving into the area and investors trying to cater to their consumption desires and demands (London et al. 1986; Smith & Williams 1986; Hammel & Wyly 1996; Sullivan 2007; see also Ley 1980; 1996). Newcomers are attracted to the area by reasonable housing prices, access to public transportation, valued amenities, and historical architecture (Galster & Peacock 1986; Caulfield 1994; Helms 2003; Hjorthol & Bjornskau 2005). The immigration of middle-income residents greatly changes the demographic composition of the neighborhood. This is the case not only in terms of income but also with regard to age, education, and occupation, as gentrifiers tend to be young, college-educated professionals with no children (DeSena 2006; Rerat et al. 2010; Bader 2011). Thus, a second key aspect of gentrification is a type of “social upgrading” (Millard-Ball 2002).
An important mark of gentrification related to the influx of more affluent residents is improvement to the built environment. Because middle-class newcomers raise property values and thereby expand the tax base, city leaders, planners, and investors are eager to commercialize these areas. The physicality of the community transforms into a more aesthetically pleasing version of itself: businesses carry more upscale products and community activities begin to represent more appreciated forms of cultural capital. Specifically, researchers have documented the presence and symbolic importance of coffee shops (Deener 2007; McKinnish et al. 2010), private schools (DeSena 2006; Formoso et al. 2010), art walks (Shaw & Sullivan 2011), and dog parks (Tissot 2011), among others. These changes to the commercial environment of the neighborhood help to reshape its identity and reputation (Kasinitz 1988; Atkinson 2004; Brown-Saracino 2004; Sullivan 2007). Though the extent and shape of these transformations are not uniform across time and space (Wyly & Hammel 1998), it appears that some degree of physical upgrading is a third fundamental quality of the gentrification process.

A final characteristic of gentrification is that its onset, progression, arrangement, and vitality depend on the actions of multiple decision-makers whose interests and politics conflict at times and coalesce at others (Deener 2007; Hagerman 2007; Davidson 2008; Reese et al. 2010). As noted above, middle-class migrants are crucial for gentrification to take root, but the decision and ability of middle-class incomers to reclaim communities as their own is influenced by and dependent upon other factors. For instance, large-scale economic shifts like deindustrialization and suburbanization have been important for driving
down property values in inner city neighborhoods, thereby laying the foundation for future growth (Smith 1996). Some of the agents who prove instrumental in fueling disinvestment in the urban core during this restructuring become important for its economic revival. For example, those in the real-estate sector affect the process from both sides by first propelling economic withdrawal through blockbusting techniques and then stimulating reinvestment through race- and class-based steering practices (Wyly & Hammel 2004; see also Smith 1996). Likewise, lending agents extract financial support from those living in the inner city only to later offer capital to more affluent prospective residents (Glick 2008).

As capital moves back into urban communities – or there is speculation that it is going to do so – landlords often clear occupied properties through eviction, negligence, and abandonment in anticipation of greater financial returns from middle-class newcomers (see Smith 1996). Federal, state, and city politicians can be useful in filling these vacancies with more affluent residents by offering incentives for reinvestment and home ownership (Keating & Smith 1996b; G. Brown et al. 2004; Larsen & Lund Hansen 2008; Wacquant 2008) and by helping rid the community of lingering crime and disorder problems through policing initiatives (Holden 2002; Deener 2007; Reese et al. 2010). City planners and developers begin to invest in the residential and retail upgrading necessary to restructure and sustain new consumption options better suited for the middle-class (O’Sullivan 2005; Curran 2007; Hagerman 2007). Scholars and journalists may also aid in the process by framing gentrification as a positive form of urban change necessary for creating social diversity and saving inner cities from further deterioration (Wilson & Mueller 2004; Slater 2004; 2010).
Incumbents often contest these messages and resist the efforts of gentrifiers to change their communities, potentially slowing the process but rarely stalling it completely (Keating & Smith 1996b; Slater 2004; Reese et al. 2010). Of course, this list is far from exhaustive, but even a brief discussion exemplifies that gentrification is a process that begins because of and is carried out by multiple participants with varying interests.

Another attribute that scholars frequently associate with gentrification is the displacement of lower-class residents. Displacement refers to the removal of long-term inhabitants through direct or indirect means to make room for the new ‘gentry’ (Marcuse 1986; Atkinson 2000b). Although some maintain that this is an inevitable consequence of gentrification (Millard-Ball 2002; Slater 2010), there are areas that have been gentrified through the construction of new residential properties that have allowed large number of middle-class people to move in without requiring their less affluent neighbors to vacate (Wyly & Hammel 1998; B. Brown et al. 2004; G. Brown et al. 2004; Davidson & Lees 2005; see also Hamnett 2009). As such, consideration of displacement as an essential feature unnecessarily limits the definition of gentrification. Furthermore, emphasis on displacement of low-income residents as core to gentrification hinders the opportunity to assess the extent to which gentrification leads to displacement without falling prey to tautological reasoning. To avoid tautology, gentrification can be defined as a process through which middle-class individuals move into lower-class neighborhoods, without necessitating the displacement of incumbent residents. In other words, the displacement of lower-income residents should not be accepted as a given but should be treated as a potential outcome of gentrification.
In sum, gentrification is best defined as a class-based process of capital reinvestment supported by multiple groups through which middle-class individuals and interests stake claims to inner city communities after a period of economic disinvestment and alter the physical and social milieus to suit their preferences. This definition distinguishes gentrification from other types of neighborhood transitions. Communities can undergo physical restoration without any residential changes through “incumbent upgrading,” or the reinvestment activity of people already living in the neighborhoods (Clay 1983; Helms 2003). These areas would not be considered gentrified because there are no major sociodemographic shifts, a criterion uniquely associated with gentrification (Wyly & Hammel 1998), though property values likely increase as a result of ‘sweat equity’ (Clay 1983). By emphasizing the relations among private and public investors, this definition also sets gentrification apart from urban renewal, revitalization, and redevelopment, as these efforts are largely promoted by the public (London et al. 1986; see also Perez 2004), without losing sight of the underlying class roots of the process.

Based on this definition, urban sociologists have offered an array of measures to identify the presence of gentrification and examine its influence on a variety of outcomes. Because gentrification is a process that develops over time, it is often quantified as the change in values among various predictors—e.g., income, education, occupation, home ownership—between temporal boundaries. These temporal boundaries are typically set at ten-year intervals due to a reliance on census tract data to gauge community change (Hammel & Wyly 1996; Knotts & Haspel 2006; McKinnish et al. 2010; Nelson et al. 2010; Eckerd
Gentrified areas are those meeting specified thresholds on specific indicators of reinvestment (e.g., McKinnish et al. 2010) or exceeding the reinvestment values for the city or metropolitan area as a whole (e.g., Glick 2008).

Common indicators of gentrification can be grouped into two categories related to changes in class-based demographics and changes in property and land use. Research highlighting sociodemographic shifts has measured gentrification in terms of changes within the community in average family income (McKinnish et al. 2010), median household income (Galster & Peacock 1986; Hammel & Wyly 1996; Knotts & Haspel 2006; Glick 2008), percentage of college graduates (Galster & Peacock 1986; Hammel & Wyly 1996; Knotts & Haspel 2006; Glick 2008; McKinnish et al. 2010), percentage of residents in managerial or professional occupations (Hammel & Wyly 1996; Hudspeth 2003; Knotts & Haspel 2006; Eckerd 2011), proportion of home owners (Hudspeth 2003; Nelson et al. 2010), poverty rates (Hammel & Wyly 1996; Hudspeth 2003; Knotts & Haspel 2006), rates of unemployment and employment (Hammel & Wyly 1996; Atkinson 2000b), GINI coefficient (Nelson et al. 2010), and proportion of middle-aged adults (Knotts & Haspel 2006; see also Hudspeth 2003). These measures are meant to capture the influx of (upper) middle-class gentrifiers who tend to be more educated professionals with higher incomes and fewer children than incumbents.

The second set of variables assesses physical transformations in the built environment and the economic consequences of such change. Examples of this type of operationalization include changes in rent values (Hammel & Wyly 1996; Knotts & Haspel 2006), house and
property values (Galster & Peacock 1986; Hammel & Wyly 1996; Knotts & Haspel 2006), number of housing units (Knotts & Haspel 2006); number of newly constructed homes (Nelson et al. 2010), number of issued demolition permits (Dye & McMillen 2007), and mortgage capital growth (Wyly & Hammel 1999). Increases in any of these indicators serve to signify the reinvestment associated with gentrification as dilapidated buildings are torn down and new structures replace them. Properties not condemned often undergo a great degree of renovation, increasing their value as well as the value of surrounding properties and providing incentive for homebuyers to invest in the community.

Analyses comparing the accuracy of various indicators in distinguishing gentrified areas from other neighborhoods suggest that the most reliable indicator of gentrification is the growth in the proportion of college-educated population (Marcuse 1985; Wyly & Hammel 1999; Hudspeth 2003). That is, educational attainment is the clearest mark of differentiation between communities that are gentrifying and those undergoing different types of change. Income levels (Wyly & Hammel 1999) and rent increases in the area (Marcuse 1985) are also particularly indicative of gentrification. Shifts in racial composition, percentage of home owners, and resident occupational status are weaker signs of the process (Hudspeth 2003).

There is reason to believe that the relative strength of these measures is temporally sensitive in that failure to capture the measures at precise moments in time can give the false impression that gentrification never took place in a community already being gentrified (see
Hammel & Wyly 1996). It is also likely that the predictive power of these measures varies across space since the gentrification process unfolds and manifests in different ways (Williams 1986; Keating & Smith 1996; Slater 2004). In other words, gentrification may have similar attributes across neighborhoods, but the degree of change that accompanies reinvestment may vary (Wyly & Hammel 1998). Such inconsistency renders the reliance on a single measure too simplistic in scope and offers only a superficial examination of gentrification (see Baldassare 1984; Slater 2010). Nonetheless, several studies have relied on sole predictors (e.g., Wyly & Hammel 1999; Dye & McMillen 2007; McKinnish et al. 2010). Others have used more nuanced measures that use a combination of indicators reflecting various forms of population change (Ley 1986; Glick 2008; Eckerd 2011). That is, some studies include indicators of neighborhood structural transformations in conjunction with demographic measures (Hammel & Wyly 1996; Knotts & Haspel 2006; Nelson et al. 2010).

Studies of the consequences of gentrification for communities and community residents often compare neighborhoods that meet the criteria of gentrification to those that do not (see Galster & Peacock 1986; Nelson et al. 2010). By dichotomizing gentrification, such studies are limited in the ability to speak to varying degrees of reinvestment. That is, dichotomizing gentrification empirically reduces the process to a single event that either has occurred or has not. The most insightful research has distinguished areas that are beginning to gentrify from those that have experienced substantial compositional and physical modification. Considering reinvestment as something occurring along a continuum allows scholars to trace gentrification from onset to realization and examine the effects of
gentrification related to variable degrees of community change (see Hudspeth 2003; Knotts & Haspel 2006).

Despite advancement in the operationalization of gentrification in urban sociology, many studies disregard an aspect of gentrification that differentiates it from other types of neighborhood change: a preceding period of disinvestment. To address this inadequacy, some researchers filter neighborhoods based on economic conditions to determine their eligibility for gentrification. Gentrified neighborhoods are considered to be those that were once economically depressed that later experience economic growth and other varieties of transformation (Galster & Peacock 1986; Sanchez-Geraci 2009). This technique is useful for setting gentrification apart from incumbent upgrading, but it continues to frame neighborhood change as a discrete event as opposed to a continuous process.

**Gentrification as a Racialized Process**

Although gentrification is inherently a class-based process of neighborhood change, there are often racial implications related to urban reinvestment efforts. One of the reasons for this is that many neighborhoods that have been plagued by periods of disinvestment and deterioration are those with large black populations, leaving these communities particularly vulnerable to middle-class invasion (see Wilson 1987). The suburbanization and white flight movements of the mid-twentieth century led to the concentration of poor minorities in the urban core as people abandoned the physical space in favor of more affordable land (Massey & Denton 1993). Years—and often decades—of decay in inner cities sparked the
devalorization of property values that has hit minority neighborhoods harder than their white counterparts partially because the value of property depreciates at a steeper rate in black communities (Oliver & Shapiro 1995). This has resulted in black neighborhoods becoming prime targets for gentrification when investors suspect that the prices of property in the area have dropped so low that directing the necessary capital toward redevelopment and restoration will be profitable (Smith 1996).

Predominately black neighborhoods are not only more likely to be gentrified, but they also often suffer from the disruptions and instability that accompany the residential turnover characteristic of gentrification (Papachristos et al. 2011). Racial polarization, concentrated disadvantage, and social isolation in inner city black neighborhoods distinguishes them from other areas to the extent that “the ‘worst’ urban neighborhoods in which whites reside are considerably better off than the average context of black communities” (Sampson 1987: 354; see also Massey & Denton 1993; Sampson & Wilson 1995; Sampson & Bean 2006; Sampson 2012). In these areas, access to quality community resources and legitimate opportunities is limited (Wilson 1987; Sampson et al. 2002; Small & McDermott 2006) and community residents often lack the political prowess necessary to garner attention from policy makers that would enable them to demand better provisions (Skogan 1986; Boyd 2005). The absence of safety nets available for long-term residents increases their chances of displacement, exacerbating the already unstable residential pattern characteristic of the neighborhood caused by gentrifier immigration. The consequences of concentrated disadvantage are even more problematic in black communities than in their white counterparts because black
communities are more likely to be surrounded by other areas of deprivation whereas white neighborhoods are often pockets of poverty located within more financially stable areas with greater resources (Massey & Denton 1993; Massey 1996; Peterson & Krivo 2010; Sampson 2012; see also Kirk & Papachristos et al. 2011).

The racialization of gentrification can also stem from the overrepresentation of whites among gentrifiers. While blacks have played a role in the gentrification process at times (Boyd 2008; Hyra 2008; McKinnish et al. 2010), a disproportionate number of newcomers are white in many communities (Marcuse 1985; LeGates & Hartman 1986). Potential minority gentrifiers are often blocked from the opportunities to capitalize on depreciated housing values and commercialized inner cities as a result of wealth deficits, steering practices, and discriminatory lending activity (Collins & Margo 2003; Cervero & Duncan 2004; Flippen 2004; Shapiro 2004; Boyd 2008). Additionally, long-term black residents are among the most likely to face displacement when it occurs (Marcuse 1985; Beauregard 1986; Glick 2008). Some neighborhoods, as a result of these factors, become whitewashed during the gentrification process.

In sum, the racial composition of neighborhoods and contiguous areas should be considered in gentrification and crime research to contextualize the phenomenon and to better understand the experiences of and interactions among gentrifiers and incumbent residents. Inclusion of racial and ethnic compositional change as a necessary component of gentrification, however, poses problems in the study of urban reinvestment. Although
empirical research often supports the picture of white people moving into gentrifying neighborhoods as minorities are moving out of them (Atkinson 2000b; Murdie & Teixiera 2010), predominately white, lower-class neighborhoods are not impervious to middle-class invasion (McKinnish et al. 2010; see also Hammel & Wyly 1996; Hudspeth 2003). Likewise, black gentrifiers have been credited with neighborhood improvements in some areas, though their role may be quite narrow nationally (Boyd 2008; Hyra 2008; see also Newman & Ashton 2004; Sampson 2012). This is not to say that the process of gentrification is not racialized in many communities, particularly in those characterized by a large degree of racial segregation and minority disenfranchisement. However, the degree of displacement among minorities should be examined empirically as a potential—perhaps likely—result of gentrification, rather than as an inherent component. Some may consider this to be a “huge omission” (Rivlin 2002: 178) from the definition, but the racial and ethnic significance of gentrification can be appreciated without elevating it to inevitability.

The gentrification process may also be racialized to the extent that reinvestment is differentially consequential for white and black communities as they “occupy markedly different positions in the social and spatial order of the city” (Papachristos et al. 2011: 218; see also Sampson & Wilson 1995; Sampson & Bean 2006; Peterson & Krivo 2010). Because predominately black neighborhoods are more likely to be embedded in larger areas of deprivation than are white neighborhoods (Patillo-McCoy 1999; Sampson & Bean 2006; Peterson & Krivo 2010; Sampson 2012), historically white neighborhoods that undergo
gentrification may be insulated from any negative side effects associated with reinvestment. This possibility, like that of displacement, is an empirical question.

**Timing of Gentrification**

Urban sociological accounts of gentrification suggest that it is a process of reinvestment that has taken distinctive forms over time. As Lees (2000: 397) asserts, “Gentrification today is quite different from gentrification in the early 1970s, late 1980s, even the early 1990s.” During the 1960s and early 1970s, gentrification was a relatively erratic, small-scale form of neighborhood change. The economic structure of inner cities meant that investment was too risky for private investors because it was unclear if their financial ventures would attract enough newcomers to be profitable. As such, gentrification during this first wave was driven primarily by government initiatives at the federal and city levels (Zukin 1982; Hackworth & Smith 2001). The roots of gentrification spread into more communities during the second wave characterizing the 1980s, evoking a more tempestuous response from city residents and resulting in the politicization of the urban reinvestment process (Hackworth & Smith 2001). Individual gentrifiers interested in the esthetics offered by the urban core, especially artists, became increasingly important in transforming inner city communities (Zukin 1982; Lloyd 2002; Ley 2003).

After waning during the late 1980s, the gentrification movement caught wind again following the brief recession in the early 1990s, resurfacing in a more complete and pervasive manner (Hackworth & Smith 2001). Changing demands among ‘yuppies’—or
young, urban professionals—and the willingness to accommodate their residential and consumption preferences set in motion wide-spread urban reinvestment (Hackworth & Smith 2001; Hackworth 2002; Birch 2005). With the help of city planners, developers, and increased government support, gentrification, as a systemic response to urban decay, became more pervasive across the country and more concentrated within communities. Together, these groups fueled the third wave of gentrification by marketing inner cities as “up and coming,” attractive, and affordable places to live; offering tax incentives to those willing to move into areas of decline; and implementing initiatives like the Hope VI program—a program launched by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to redesign the physical and social landscape of the inner city in a manner that would de-concentrate poverty (Ley 1980; Wyly & Hammel 1999; Hackworth & Smith 2001; Hackworth 2002; Smith 2008). This program was influential because it relaxed restrictions requiring that the government replace any public housing units demolished or relocated as a result of urban reinvestment; no longer was it necessary for city officials to guarantee affordable housing in these communities or provide any protection from displacement for incumbent residents (Hackworth & Smith 2001). Consequently, the political climate surrounding gentrification seemed to intensify at times despite efforts to disguise the process as beneficial for the city and its inhabitants (Slater 2006; Hamnett 2008) and to abandon the term “gentrification” altogether in favor of less controversial monikers such as “historical preservation,” “revitalization,” and “back to the city movements” (Cybriwksy et al. 1986; Williams 1986). In sum, gentrification has manifested in different ways over time, depending on its
extensiveness, degree of concentration, and the agents involved in the process of reinvestment.

**Level of Analysis**

Another important consideration in gentrification research is the level of analysis at which to focus the empirical spotlight. Descriptions of gentrification indicate that it takes place *within* cities (see Wyly & Hammel 1999) and that gentrification is a “shuffling process” among city dwellers with gentrifiers simply moving from one part of the city to another (Gale 1976; Helms 2003; see also Covington & Taylor 1989), rendering the city an inappropriate spatial unit for gentrification research. This conclusion is corroborated by the frequent use of the term “neighborhood” in the urban sociology literature (Keating & Smith 1996; Atkinson 2002; Boyd 2005; Freeman 2006; Kolko 2009; Tissot 2011). Such wordage underscores the importance of shared identity and sense of community involved in the course of urban development (see Schwirian 1983). The spatial distribution of gentrification is the result of the interplay among economic structuring, housing policies, investment patterns, local support, and organized resistance. Economic reinvestment is often concentrated in areas with historical landmarks, parks, and public transportation that can attract middle-class residents and commercial establishments (Galster & Peacock 1986; Caulfield 1994; Ley 1996; Karsten 2003). These amenities have helped to shape neighborhood boundaries and have offered a type of symbolism that serves as a part of a neighborhood’s identity (DeSena 2006). The desire to preserve this identity from usurpation and the fear of displacement can couple to bring local residents together to resist middle-class invasion (Kasinitz 1988;
While it is clear that gentrification is a neighborhood-based process of change, it is less obvious as to what constitutes the appropriate geographical unit of analysis for studying gentrification because there is a lack of consensus with respect to what constitutes a neighborhood. Although some have noted that “[n]o one definition [of neighborhood] has come into widespread acceptance among neighborhood residents themselves, neighborhood organizations, or academic analysts” (Downs 1981: 13), others have suggested that several patterns emerge among the array of conceptualizations for neighborhoods. For example, Bursik and Grasmick’s (1993) mining of sociological scholarship reveals that neighborhoods are geographic and social entities embedded within a larger spatial area that have some historical significance and are occupied by people with some familiarity and common identity (see also Schwirian 1983). One of the objectives of gentrification research, then, should be to identify, measure, and assess the ramifications of reinvestment at a level of analysis that takes into consideration that neighborhoods have a historical significance, an identity, and are occupied by residents familiar with one another.

**Summary**

The literature reviewed in this section reveals several ways to advance research on gentrification and crime. First, establishing a clear, comprehensive definition of gentrification that emphasizes a process of physical and social change—particularly change...
brought about by middle-class in-migration—helps to set the parameters for the operationalization of the gentrification trend. Second, treating changes in racial composition as a potential outcome rather than as a necessary component of reinvestment allows for the study of gentrification in predominately white communities and of gentrification brought about by non-white gentrifiers. Third, differentiating among waves of reinvestment highlights the likelihood that the effects of gentrification are conditioned by the timing of the process. Finally, specifying an ideal level of analysis encourages academics to remain cognizant of the possibility that studies conducted outside a theoretically-derived spatial unity may result in the misidentification of gentrification, the exaggeration or underestimation of its pervasiveness, and incorrect depictions of the intra-community mechanisms linking reinvestment to community outcomes, such as changes in levels of crime.
CHAPTER 3: GENTRIFICATION AND INTERNAL CRIME

Social scientists long have recognized links between community structure and crime rates. Research on communities and crime has informed understanding of how changes within neighborhoods affect criminal activity and the exercise of informal and formal social controls, particularly as communities transition during times of disinvestment, deterioration, and disorganization (Shaw & McKay 1942; Bursik & Grasmick 1993; Sampson 2012). However, little is known about what happens to local crime rates as areas undergo the process of gentrification, or the influx of middle-class gentrifiers and marked upgrades to neighborhood physical and social milieus. Some predict that “upgrading” results in crime declines (Duany 2001; B. Brown et al. 2004; Berrey 2005; McKinnish et al. 2010; see also Sullivan 2007), but empirical support for this claim is sparse (see McDonald 1986) and sometimes contradictory (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989). Others posit a more complex link between gentrification and crime, suggesting that the relationship is conditioned by temporal and demographic factors (Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011), as well as the form of gentrification taking root (Smith 2012). The one thing that is clear is that there is a need for a broad theoretical and empirical foundation to inform research on gentrification and crime.

In this paper, I contribute to the understanding of gentrification and crime by developing and testing an empirical framework that addresses key limitations of the research. Drawing on urban sociology, I develop an operationalization of gentrification that addresses
significant issues related to the treatment of race, degree of reinvestment, and the appropriate unit of analysis for studying the gentrification process. I then employ this operationalization to assess several hypotheses regarding the relationship between urban reinvestment derived from the social disorganization and ecological dissimilarity literatures. Specifically, this study examines crime changes occurring during the third wave of gentrification (Smith 2008: 196; see also Hackworth & Smith 2001) in St. Louis City, a metropolis with a history of decline rendering it ripe for reinvestment (see Baybeck & Jones 2004).

The paper proceeds as follows: I begin with a review of the criminological literature on gentrification, highlighting key findings and the strengths and weaknesses in studies of gentrification and crime. Next, I outline a general framework for criminological research on gentrification that emphasizes several key components of the reinvestment process. In the following sections, I derive hypotheses from prior research and theorizing regarding the possible links between gentrification and community crime. I then detail the data and analytical methods used in the present study to assess the hypotheses and summarize key empirical relationships. Finally, I draw conclusions about the crime-based consequences related to reinvestment in the urban core and offer avenues for future research.

**Gentrification and Crime**

Although criminological attention to gentrification has been somewhat sparse, there have been two rather informative lines of research dealing with gentrification and crime. One line of inquiry focuses on the role of local crime rates in stimulating the gentrification
process by affecting the deterioration of inner city neighborhoods, as well as the reinvestment activity of gentrifiers, city planners, developers, and businesses (O’Sullivan 2005). The logic in this line of work is that high crime rates and the fear of crime catalyze gentrification in certain areas by fueling community disinvestment, particularly in the absence of attractive amenities to overshadow crime problems (Skogan 1986, 1990; Sampson & Raudenbush 2004; Sampson 2006), which ultimately provides the space for gentrification. The primary argument is that crime discourages residents, landlords, and business owners from maintaining properties because property maintenance does not seem to be worthy of their time and money in the context of neighborhood decline. The resulting devalorization of property in the area helps create a rent gap – or a disparity in the current and potential property values – that makes future restorations profitable, thus emboldening gentrification (see Smith 1996). Research advances this argument, citing the largest degree of reinvestment in communities with high crime rates (Covington & Taylor 1989; O’Sullivan 2005; Kreager et al. 2011).

However, urban reinvestment may be most likely to occur once elevated crime rates begin to drop in neighborhoods. While some gentrifiers are willing to consider crime as “background noise” in light of all the amenities associated with the urban core (McDonald 1986; see also Anderson 1985), others may not be willing to move into areas where they feel unsafe physically or economically. Research indicating that property values tend to increase after crime declines lends support to this argument (Taylor 1995; Schwartz et al. 2003; Tita et al. 2006; Hipp et al. 2009), though some find no relationship between property values and
crime (Manning 1986). Further evidence comes from a study suggesting that crime dissuades commercial investment as business owners try to avoid the high costs and risk of not being able to attract their optimal consumer base (Bowes 2007). Overall, declines in community crime rates may help explain why gentrification takes root in some areas and not in others.

Another line of research, and the focus of this study, highlights the potential effects of gentrification processes on community crime rates. Although crime reductions have been touted as one of the benefits of, and thus a justification for, large-scale reinvestment (Duany 2001; B. Brown et al. 2004; Berrey 2005; McKinnish et al. 2010; see also Sullivan 2007), some scholars warn of crime increases, especially during the early stages of class turnover and transformation (Atkinson 2002; Kirk & Laub 2010). Notably, criminological theories offer divergent predictions as to how gentrification might shape local crime problems. Some theoretical frameworks suggest that crime may worsen as a result of reinvestment-related issues, such as expanding economic polarization (Merton 1938; Taylor & Covington 1988; Kennedy et al. 1998), social control breakdowns (Shaw & McKay 1942/1969; Bursik 1986), conflicting values and interests between neighborhood incumbents and gentrifiers (Sellin 1938; Dahrendorf 1959; Turk 1969), or changes in the relative attractiveness of victimization targets (Cohen & Felson 1979). It is also possible that crime may wane in gentrified areas due to the economic, social, and political privilege of newcomers strengthening community social controls (Shaw & McKay 1942/1969; Bursik 1986), the fixing of “broken windows” (Wilson & Kelling 1982), or the exodus of the criminal populace as gentrifiers take over the community (Cohen & Felson 1979).
Despite the attention gentrification has received in academia and popular culture, there has been relatively little empirical scrutiny of its effect on local and neighboring crime rates. This is especially surprising, given the general consensus in criminology that place matters (see Shaw & McKay 1942/1969; Cohen & Felson 1979; Blau & Blau 1982; Stark 1987; Sampson & Wilson 1995; Brantingham & Brantingham 1999; Sampson 2011). McDonald’s (1986) study of gentrified neighborhoods marks the first attempt to investigate the effects of residential “upgrading” on neighborhood crime rates. Tracking crime fluctuations in fourteen communities in five cities with previously documented changes to their social and physical environments, the study notes that both property and violent crime rates in gentrifying areas remained higher than the city average between 1970 and 1984; however, there was a general reduction in violent crime during that time. Property crimes, in contrast, remained relatively stable (McDonald 1986). The heightened level of both property and violent crime in gentrifying communities during the early phase of gentrification could be interpreted through a variety of lenses. For instance, crime increases may be associated with weakened social controls during periods of flux in communities (Shaw & McKay 1942; Bursik & Grasmick 1993). Other explanations might emphasize the conflict of interests and goals between gentrifiers and incumbent residents as crime producing (Sellin 1938; Vold 1958; Turk 1969). Opportunity theorists likely would characterize gentrifiers as easy targets for crime, given that they may be unfamiliar with the area and possess more expensive items for stealing than their incumbent neighbors (Cohen & Felson 1979). Alternatively, it may be
that gentrifying areas had higher rates of crime prior to their entrée into gentrification (O’Sullivan 2005).

Generally, McDonald’s (1986) investigation of the relationship between gentrification and crime suggests that reinvestment can be used as a way to address violent crime problems in areas of deprivation. However, his findings have been challenged by additional research efforts using different operationalizations of gentrification and more sophisticated methodologies. McDonald’s (1986) operationalization of gentrification relied on seemingly arbitrary criteria (reports of the phenomenon and personal experience) and the methodology employed in his study did not allow for the comparison of neighborhoods that were identified as gentrified with those that did not undergo the process. Despite limitations, the study initiated dialogue concerning the implications of gentrification on community crime rates.

Taylor and Covington’s (1988; Covington & Taylor 1989) studies of gentrification in Baltimore during the 1970s conclude that gentrification produces increases in crime—both property and violent—presumably because it undermines community stability and local social controls, which is consistent with research demonstrating a heightened risk of victimization in gentrifying communities of the Netherlands (Van Wilsem et al. 2006). However, their studies relied heavily (1988) or exclusively (1989) on increases in home values as a marker of gentrification, which likely confuses gentrification with other types of neighborhood improvement (Lee 2010). It could be, for instance, that property values
increase as a result of incumbent upgrading, or reinvestment activity among people already residing in the area, without the major demographic shifts associated with gentrification (see Clay 1983; Wyly & Hammel 1998). Further, increases in home values are not necessarily associated with gentrifying areas insofar as property values can also appreciate in already affluent neighborhoods (Lee 2010).

More recent criminological research advances a more nuanced understanding of the reinvestment process and its relationship with crime. Because gentrification has taken different forms over time, varying across decades in its pervasiveness, strength, and degree of spatial concentration (Hackworth & Smith 2001), it is possible that the impact of gentrification on community crime is specific to the timing of reinvestment. Kreager, Lyons, and Hays (2011) incorporate and substantiate this insight with their exploration of crime changes in Seattle communities over time. Specifically, they report that property crime rates increased during the initial phases of gentrification in the 1980s before dropping—along with rates of violence—over the following decade, though the effect of reinvestment on crime is modest during all phases. They posit that the sporadic gentrification efforts characteristic of the 1980s led to weaker social controls and increases in crime; whereas the more complete reinvestment activities of the 1990s were accompanied by a tightening of formal social controls effective for curbing crime (Kreager et al. 2011; see also McDonald 1986). Notably, these researchers, like others (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989), employ an operationalization of gentrification—annual home mortgage lending—that highlights residential property appreciation in previously disadvantaged areas.
Research by Papachristos and colleagues (2011) in Chicago neighborhoods indicates that the impact of gentrification—measured by the number of coffee shops in the neighborhood—on crime may be further complicated by the possibility that the initial composition of a neighborhood may influence any positive or negative consequences of gentrification on crime. These scholars scrutinize how gentrification manifests in white neighborhoods as compared to black and Hispanic communities, paying particular attention to how reinvestment shaped changes in violence between 1991 and 2005. Although they find that gentrification translates into a decline in homicide across communities of varying racial and ethnic composition, robbery rates appear to be sensitive to the baselines racial composition of gentrifying areas. That is, predominately white and Hispanic areas witnessed reductions in robbery rates during gentrification while black communities undergoing reinvestment showed marked increases in robbery rates. Such disparate trajectories may result from ecological dissimilarity—or from the qualitatively different social and spatial locations of black and white communities (Sampson & Wilson 1995; Sampson & Bean 2006). Whereas black communities often are embedded in areas characterized by deprivation and high crime rates, which may dampen any crime reduction benefits of gentrification, gentrifying white communities are more likely to be surrounded by economically and socially stable neighborhood that potentially serve to amplify the advantages accompanying the urban reinvestment process (Papachristos et al. 2011; see also Massey & Denton 1993; Patillo-McCoy 1999).
Smith (2012) further contributes to the literature by exploring the ways in which the brand of gentrification taking root in a given area affects crime outcomes. Specifically, he compares shifts in gang-related homicides in Chicago areas between 1994 and 2005 in neighborhoods undergoing private investment—measured by the number of coffee shops in the neighborhood—to those in neighborhoods experiencing state involvement in the form of public housing demolition. His findings indicate that the way in which gentrification manifests is another important consideration in the study of gentrification and community crime insofar as gang homicides declined in areas with an influx of coffee shops but increased in neighborhoods where community transition was fueled by state intervention.

**Gentrification as a Concept**

The studies reviewed here demonstrate that understanding the relationship between gentrification and crime is not a simple task and offer several lessons for future empirical endeavors. These lessons suggest that gentrification may impact violent and property crime differentially, the timing of reinvestment may matter for understanding its impact on crime, and the compositional and social context in which gentrification occurs should be considered. Generally speaking, the relationship between gentrification and crime may not be universal, but rather specific to types of communities, types of crimes, the period in which reinvestment cultivates, and the stage of the gentrification process. I propose that teasing out these complex relationships requires the development of a theoretically-derived definition of gentrification that can be used to inform a meaningful operationalization of the process. That is, the most fruitful way to move forward the study of gentrification and crime is to step back
and build a measure of gentrification, guided by accounts of urban reinvestment in urban sociology and by key findings in the sparse literature on gentrification and crime. After developing such an operationalization, a reliance upon the general literature on communities and crime, as well as insights from the studies of gentrification and crime discussed herein, can provide a meaningful theoretical framework for understanding the links between urban reinvestment and neighborhood crime and how these links are shaped by the racial composition of an area and the timing of the gentrification process.

**Operationalizing Gentrification**

**Eligibility for Reinvestment**

Developing a consistent and theoretically-meaningful measure of gentrification is paramount in attempts to understand how gentrification influences crime in ways that may or may not be distinct from the effects of other types of community change. Prior research in criminology provides some guidance in this endeavor but is inadequate for completing the task. McDonald’s (1986) early study of gentrification identified neighborhoods as being gentrified based on his familiarity with their transitioning dynamics or on previous literature that had considered areas as gentrified. While this strategy is beneficial for capturing the intangible essence of gentrification that is not easily quantified, it is rather arbitrary and makes empirical replication difficult. Other studies have utilized census data to measure key dimensions of gentrification: sociodemographic changes (Van Wilsem et al. 2006), appreciation of property values (Covington & Taylor 1989), or a combination of these factors (Taylor & Covington 1988; Kreager et al. 2011). Census indicators, however, may result in
an overestimation of the amount of gentrification occurring because the measures captured by this type of data—e.g., decreases in poverty in an area, increases in median property values, etc.—can reflect facets of neighborhood change (e.g., displacement, replacement, and incumbent upgrading) that may or may not be associated with gentrification without offering a way to distinguish among them. Taylor and Covington’s (1989) study that uses property value changes as the sole indicator of gentrification, for instance, has been deemed problematic because increases in relative home values may occur for a variety of reasons unrelated to gentrification (Lee 2010; see also Wyly & Hammel 1999).

One way researchers have overcome the inadequacies in gentrification studies for discerning the process from other forms of neighborhood transition has been the inclusion of measures that underscore the combination of social and physical changes that are characteristic of the gentrification process. By accounting for sociodemographic changes (e.g., a growing college-educated and professional populace, reductions in poverty rates, etc.) and structural appreciation (e.g., increase in rent and home values), scholars avoid conflating gentrification with incumbent upgrading or general appreciation in already economically advantaged areas (see O’Sullivan 2005; Kreager et al. 2011). Relatedly, researchers have supplemented traditional indicators of gentrification with measures that reflect changes in consumptions preferences among local residents in order to discern gentrification from other community processes while simultaneously addressing the limitations of census data. Papachristos and colleagues (2011) and Smith (2012) consider increases in the number of coffee shops in an area as a proxy for reinvestment because the presence of coffee
establishments, particularly Starbucks, has become a hallmark of urban gentrification (see O’Sullivan 2005; Deener 2007). Others use census indicators simply to verify and classify neighborhoods they already delineated as gentrified based on field surveys and previous research (Wyly & Hammel 1996; Kreager et al. 2011). These studies effectively combine the methods used in McDonald’s (1986) work with studies relying on census measures.

While supplemental data can be useful in providing insight into aspects of gentrification not easily measured by census measures (e.g., changes in consumption patterns, observations of physical upgrades, etc.), they have not been useful in documenting what often is considered a necessary condition of gentrification: a period of deprivation that precedes reinvestment. Some researchers in urban studies have addressed this limitation by filtering neighborhoods according to baseline economic conditions to determine their eligibility for gentrification. Gentrifying neighborhoods are those that, based on census data, were once economically depressed and later experienced economic growth and social transformation (Galster & Peacock 1986; Sanchez-Geraci 2009). Although this technique provides a means of differentiating gentrification from other types of neighborhood change and is more objective than researcher familiarity with neighborhood progression, it is largely absent in criminological research. The first lesson to be gleaned from urban sociology in attempts to operationalize gentrification, then, is that gentrification processes can be differentiated objectively from other forms of neighborhood change by considering the eligibility of areas for reinvestment as indicated by their baseline economic conditions. To address this, I use measures of community deprivation (e.g., education levels, median
household income, median home value) established by empirical precedent (see Galster & Peacock 1986) to determine which neighborhoods were potential targets for gentrification activity and then assess community-level sociodemographic shifts and economic growth.

**Race and Gentrification**

Another lesson in the operationalization process derives both from urban sociology and criminology and comes in the form of understanding indicators that should not be included as a measure of gentrification. Some criminologists have included change in racial composition as an indicator of gentrification (Taylor & Covington 1988; Van Wilsem et al 2006). Indeed, some urban sociologists have observed that gentrifiers are disproportionately white and have encouraged the inclusion of shifts in racial structure as an essential aspect in operationalizing gentrification (Massey 2002; Rivlin 2002; Kirkland 2008). This conceptualization has prompted criticism, however, by those who note reinvestment activity among black gentrifiers, or “buppies” (Kennedy & Leonard 2001; Freeman 2006; Pattillo 2007; Hyra 2008; McKinnish et al. 2010; Bader 2011). In other words, treating gentrification as an inherently racialized process precludes the study of communities that are gentrifying at the hands of middle-class black incomers.

Importantly, a recent study of gentrification in Chicago demonstrated that the racial configuration of a community prior to reinvestment proves relevant for understanding the impact of gentrification on crime. Specifically, crime reductions appear somewhat pronounced in gentrifying white areas; whereas, gentrifying black neighborhoods witness
small crime increases (Papachristos et al. 2011). These divergent trajectories suggest that racial structure may not be a defining feature of gentrification but rather an important contextual factor that shapes the relationship between reinvestment and neighborhood crime. As such, criminologists should consider the possible racial undercurrents associated with reinvestment in the urban core. Inclusion of racial compositional change as one of the defining characteristics of gentrification restricts analyses of how the process can unfold unevenly across neighborhoods of varying racial configurations in ways that are consequential for community crime rates. My research, like that of Papachristos and colleagues (2011), brings race to the forefront of empirical exploration without treating racial shifts as a measure of gentrification (Taylor & Covington 1988; Van Wilsem et al. 2006), as a control variable (Kreager et al. 2011), or as completely unimportant (McDonald 1986; Covington & Taylor 1989) by assessing the degree of racial change in gentrifying communities and then investigating the relative impact of gentrification in white and black neighborhoods.

**Gentrification as a Process**

A third lesson to be heeded when operationalizing gentrification comes from an overview of criminological research on gentrification. Many studies in criminology utilize measures that dichotomize the process of reinvestment, thus ignoring its developmental nature. When identifying neighborhoods that have undergone some level of gentrification, there is a tendency to treat neighborhood change as something that has happened or not. McDonald’s (1986) analysis includes neighborhood that he determined to be gentrified
without distinguishing between degrees of gentrification or internal change. Subsequent analyses have examined how gentrified neighborhoods compare to non-gentrified areas without considering the possibility that various areas are in different phases in the gentrification process (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989).

More recent research offers insight about the evolution of gentrification and the implications of its development over time. This trend began with the differentiation between moderate and strong improvements in gentrifying communities (Van Wilsem et al. 2006) and advanced into the use of continuous measures of gentrification, which include counts of neighborhood coffee shops (Papachristos et al. 2011; Smith 2012) and the value of home loans received by local residents (Kreager et al. 2011). Unlike the categorical clustering of similar neighborhoods as gentrified or not gentrified, the quantification of gentrification allows researchers to track the degree of social and physical change over time and to assess how each gradation of structural change affects community crime rates. Although not perfect, the use of continuous measures takes important steps toward recognizing that gentrification is a process that unfolds in a progressive manner. Underscoring the need to consider the timing of gentrification, Kreager and colleagues (2011) report that the early stages of gentrification are accompanied by property crime increases that, after a tipping point, begin to decline. This finding suggests that it is imperative to operationalize gentrification in a manner that accounts for the dynamic character of this form of community transformation. To address this concern, I combine various indicators of gentrification into a quantitative index of
neighborhood change that allows for differentiation among gentrifying communities based on the extent of reinvestment activity taking place.

**Level of Analysis**

A fourth lesson to consider in the operationalization of gentrification comes from the broader literature on communities and crime, which has grappled with defining the appropriate unit of analysis for assessing the impact of neighborhood structure on community crime rates. A paucity of data has led many criminologists to use data convenience as the main criterion for defining “community”. Relying on this condition, a common approach has been to use data aggregated at the census tract level (McDonald 1986; Kreager et al. 2011) and other arbitrary physical delineations like zip code areas (Van Wilsem et al. 2006) or researcher discretion (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2011), census tracts are “small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county that are delineated by a local committee of census data users for the purpose of presenting data” comprised of approximately 4,000 individuals. The census tract, therefore, lacks the substantive meaning needed to capture the critical socio-ecological, economic, and political processes that shape gentrification. Instead, it reflects what Gieryn (2000:465-466) contends that place is not: a collection of variables for the sake of data analysis.

Attempts to overcome this shortcoming in the broader literature on communities and crime have resulted in more ecologically meaningful aggregations of data that are better able
to speak to community dynamics. Perhaps the most ambitious research is offered by Sampson and colleagues (1997) with their Project on Human Development in Chicago neighborhoods. This project focuses on areas defined empirically as neighborhood clusters that are “respectful of geographic boundaries and knowledge of Chicago’s neighborhoods” and average approximately 8,000 residents (Sampson 2012). While gentrification scholars have capitalized on the theoretical and methodological benefits that such data has to offer (Papachristos et al. 2011; Smith 2012), the clusters in this research remain relatively large, which may have resulted in trading size for substance. This concern cannot be ignored in light of evidence that individual neighborhoods likely have patches of gentrification alongside areas of abandonment, potentially making smaller areas of analysis ideal (Marcuse 1985; 1986).

It is particularly relevant to study gentrification as a level that appropriately captures neighborhoods because the theoretical underpinnings presumed to link gentrification to community crime (e.g., social disorganization theory) rely on processes taking place among residents who interact within a common space and share a neighborhood identity. These processes emphasize the relevance of informal ties between community residents who share a common goal of residing in a safe, crime-free space (Kasarda & Janowitz 1974; Bursik & Grasmick 1993). What this suggests is that the level of analysis employed in the study of gentrification matters. Yet, many studies focus on changes taking place in census tracts rather than subjective neighborhoods because census data are easily accessible. Urban sociological accounts of gentrification demonstrate the need to transcend this approach and call for more
research in substantively meaningful neighborhoods. To start such an undertaking, I use data aggregated at the level of recognized neighborhoods in the city of St. Louis to examine the relationship between gentrification and crime.

**Timing of Research**

The research studies discussed throughout focus on gentrification during the 1970s and 1980s (McDonald 1986; Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989). While such inquiry is undoubtedly valuable to a general understanding of reinvestment, concentrating on these decades offers only a partial view of the gentrification timeline, as well as how it affects crime rates over time. Urban sociology reveals that gentrification has occurred in distinct waves with differences substantial enough to suspect that its effects are temporally sensitive. Specifically, the early waves of reinvestment—those occurring in the 1970s and 1980s—were far more sporadic and incomplete than later surges (Hackworth & Smith 2001), potentially resulting in weakened community ties, damaged informal social controls, and crime increases (see Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989).

Conversely, later—more complete—reinvestment efforts may contribute to crime declines as more efforts are made to control crime, including the formation of alliances between residents and local law enforcement (see Holden 2002). Focusing on crime changes between 1982 and 2000, Kreager, Lyons, and Hays (2011) report that crime in Seattle increased in the 1980s before declining rather modestly during the subsequent decade when reinvestment activity was presumably more comprehensive. This finding helps validate the warning of urban sociologists that gentrification is an unfolding process with social implications that
vary across waves of gentrification (Wyly & Hammel 1998; Hackworth & Smith 2001). By focusing the research lens on the third wave of gentrification in St. Louis—a city with many communities ripe for gentrification—I can speak to whether the crime declines documented by Kreager and coauthors (2011) during this wave of gentrification are unique to Seattle or if they are replicated in other metropolitan areas.

**Summary**

Drawing in the aforementioned bodies of research, I operationalize gentrification as reinvestment occurring after a period of community decline, marked by both compositional and economic change and quantified by the extent of reinvestment activity taking place during the third wave of gentrification between 1990 and 2000. This operationalization heeds the lessons learned concerning the needs to differentiate gentrification from other forms of community growth, to take into account the degree of gentrification, to consider racial composition as a factor that may shape the relationship between gentrification and crime rates, and to use a theoretically-relevant unit of analysis. While developing an operationalization of a social phenomenon—such as gentrification—is a worthy endeavor, the need for operationalization arises out of curiosity regarding its prevalence or its impact. My interest in operationalizing gentrification stems from the latter curiosity. Specifically, this research is concerned with documenting the relationship between gentrification and crime rates in St. Louis, Missouri, during the 1990s, when reinvestment efforts were more widespread and complete both within and across neighborhoods.
Understanding the Link between Gentrification and Crime

The empirical literature linking gentrification to crime provides mixed results, with some studies reporting that gentrification increases local crime rates and others reporting decreases. An overview of these studies suggests that the impact of gentrification on crime is shaped by the baseline racial composition of the gentrifying community and the timing of reinvestment activity, which might be considered a proxy for the pervasiveness of gentrification. Whereas early waves of gentrification more likely resulted in crime increases (McDonald 1986; Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; Kreager et al. 2011), studies of gentrification during the third wave rather consistently report decreases in crime (Kreager et al. 2011), though these decreases appear to be limited to predominately white or Hispanic communities (Papachristos et al. 2011) and communities where gentrification was driven by private investors (Smith 2012). It is during the third wave that gentrification emerged as a systemic response to urban decay and received the support and attention of city planners, private investors, developers, and government entities that helped define neighborhoods as attractive and “up and coming” (Hackworth & Smith 2001; Hackworth 2002; Birch 2005).

Researchers most often have interpreted these findings through a social disorganization or collective efficacy lens, emphasizing that gentrification influences community trust and institutions in ways that are relevant for crime (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; see also McDonald 1986; Kreager et al. 2011; Sampson 2012). Depending on the assumptions made about how gentrification impacts community
relationships and institutions—weakens them, strengthens them, or begins by weakening the relationships and institutions and subsequently rebuilds them to be stronger—social disorganization and collective efficacy perspectives can be invoked to explain increases in crime rates, crime declines, or even a curvilinear relationship between gentrification and crime in areas of reinvestment.

Given that the third wave of gentrification is considered to be one in which a variety of collaborative institutions became involved and invested time and efforts into gentrifying communities, it would not be surprising to find that gentrification decreases various types of criminal activities, especially if the arrival of middle-class residents is accompanied by a strengthening of internal social organization and a strong sense of collective efficacy (Shaw & McKay 1942/1969; Bursik 1986; Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson 2012). Gentrifiers are generally an organized and efficacious demographic, as evidenced by participation in community events and activities (Shaw & Sullivan 2011; Tissot 2011) and their communal demand for higher quality resources (Schoon 2001; DeSena 2006; Formoso et al. 2010; McKinnish et al. 2010). Gentrifiers may be joined by the incumbent neighbors who welcome them and the change they represent in the hopes that the financial, social, and cultural capital brought in by middle-class migrants will be diffused throughout the neighborhood to reverse the downward spiral of deprivation (McKinnish et al. 2010; Vigdor 2010). Even if long-term residents dislike the arrival of gentrifiers, the power imbalance between residents—combined with the neighborhood’s history of social disorganization and low collective efficacy—can keep them from openly displaying their discontent and undermining the efforts for
community change. In the absence of conflict, gentrifiers will be able to address community problems, like crime, through their ties with one another. Based on the assumption that third-wave gentrification is the most complete—with the emphasis placed on community-building—I derive the following generic hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1**: Third-wave gentrification will result in decreases in property and violent crimes in gentrifying communities.

Empirical support for the first hypothesis certainly may suggest that community institutions and relationships have been enhanced by the influx of capital and investment in the neighborhood. However, there is a good possibility that investments in gentrifying communities do not impact all community residents equally and that a crime drop is a consequence of driving some community incumbents—particularly the crime-prone—out of the gentrifying area. This argument is at the heart of displacement hypotheses (see Atkinson 2002; Reese et al. 2010) and is supportive of a scenario suggesting that gentrification may lead to conflict between incumbent residents and incoming gentrifiers, especially if there are stark contrasts between these groups.

This possibility is supported by the sparse literature on third-wave gentrification, which suggests there may be some contingencies that shape whether or not gentrification controls community crime. Papachristos and colleagues’ (2011) study, for instance, finds that robbery rates increased in gentrifying communities that were predominately black at the onset of reinvestment. Conversely, robbery rates declined in predominately white and
Hispanic communities that underwent the reinvestment process. Given that black communities are often characterized by multiple markers of disadvantage—poverty, high percentage of female-headed households, and high unemployment rates—and are more likely than white communities to be surrounded by areas of low collective efficacy, disentangling whether these findings are a product of race or disadvantage more generally remains a question to be considered (see Land et al 1990; Massey & Denton 1993; Sampson & Wilson 1995; Patillo-McCoy 1999; Sampson & Bean 2006; Peterson & Krivo 2010; Sampson 2012).

To understand the proposition that the effect of gentrification in predominately black or marginalized communities may differ remarkably from its effects in non-black or less marginalized neighborhoods, it is important to consider that gentrification may create conflict among residents, thereby serving as a breeding ground for crime. That is, “social mix”, touted as a benefit of the gentrification movement (see Wyly & Hammel 1999; Slater 2006), may ignite hostilities between affluent gentrifiers and their less privileged neighbors. The influx of middle-class (usually white) people to the area often translates into the physical, social, political, and symbolic displacement of poor (often minority) residents (Marcuse 1985; 1986; Atkinson 2004; DeSena 2006; Deener 2007; Davidson 2008; Tissot 2011). Specifically, methods of social closure can keep incumbent residents from enjoying any benefits associated with reinvestment (e.g., educational resources, commercial development, etc.) (DeSena 2006; Hellerstein et al. 2008; Freeman 2009; Formoso et al. 2010). Such exclusion can heighten the marginalization of already disenfranchised groups, highlight the
social distance that exists between them and gentrifiers, and foster a sense of injustice among residents, resulting in more crime as poorer residents respond to the power imbalance brought about by urban reinvestment (Sellin 1938; Vold 1958; Dahrendorf 1959; Turk 1969; Blau & Blau 1982), especially if the community is characterized by high levels of collective efficacy (Hagan & Rymond-Richmond 2013).

Similarly, gentrification may encourage community crime escalations if the inequality among residents galvanizes organized defensive strategies through which incumbent residents attempt to protect their neighborhoods from outsiders. Residents may resort to criminal behavior to stake claims to their territory, preserve the community identity, and protect their own interests (Suttles 1972; Hagan & Rymond-Richmond 2013). Although scholars often use “defended communities” to describe the environments in which economically (and often racially) privileged groups attempt to keep others out (see Green et al. 198; Lees 2008; Lyons 2008; Grattet 2009), this concept can also be applied to economically depressed and racially segregated areas where residents perceive threats of invasion (Hawley 1950; Bursik 1988). Specifically, residents in gentrifying areas can fight over a range of issues, including symbolic control, threats of displacement, increased taxes and other costs associated with remaining in the neighborhood, and mutual resentment (Barry & Derevlany 1988; Redfern 2003; Davidson 2008). These conflicts can be expressed in criminal ways in the form of gang intimidation and violence, general aggravated assault, arson, and vandalism (Heitgerd & Bursik 1988) aimed toward landlords and gentrifiers (Cybriwsky 1978; LeGates & Murphy 1981). The “mug-a-yuppie” campaigns taking place in
the United States and abroad exemplify the organized efforts used to dissuade middle-class reinvestment (Atkinson 2002). The likelihood of incumbents responding criminally to perceived threats, the method of retaliation, and the extent to which criminal means are tolerated may be influenced by the informal rules guiding inner-city behavior (Anderson 1990). From this, I derive the following hypotheses rooted in arguments about race and marginalization:

**Hypothesis 2**: Third-wave gentrification will result in decreases in property and violent crimes in gentrifying non-black communities but will increase property and violent crimes in gentrifying black communities.

**Hypothesis 3**: Third-wave gentrification will result in decreases in property and violent crimes in gentrifying communities not characterized by concentrated disadvantage at the onset but will increase property and violent crimes in disadvantaged gentrifying communities.

Although previous studies have not considered gentrification as an unfolding process (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989), a strength of emphasizing that gentrification is not a static event is that researchers can assess the effect of gentrification on crime as the process unfolds. Drawing on social disorganization and collective efficacy perspectives, some scholars suggest that gentrifying communities will experience increase in

---

2 Of course, incumbent residents have also protested gentrification through legal means, including the formation of social organizations, protests, and lawsuits (Keating & Smith 1996; Reese et al. 2010), though their economic disadvantage vis-à-vis their gentrifying neighbors often restricts their access to such outlets.
crime followed by decreases over time (Kreager et al. 2011). According to this perspective, the beginning stages of gentrification—when reinvestment is new and incomplete—will result in crime escalations as the residential mobility and heterogeneity created by reinvestment activity hinders the formation of social ties and the development of collective efficacy (see Shaw & McKay 1942/1969; Kornhauser 1978; Bursik 1986; Sampson et al. 1997). In the context of such instability, locals will not have the opportunity or desire to interact with one another and build strong relationships. Some scholars note that, despite sharing space, there is often little to no interaction between incumbents and newcomers in gentrifying communities (Zukin 1987; Butler & Robson 2001; see also Lees 2008). Long-term residents, likewise, often find it difficult to connect with neighbors as they witness cycles of in-migration and out-migration around them. Incumbent confidence in gentrifiers may be further complicated by the contradictory interests between these groups, which undermines a unified a vision for the neighborhood’s future and renders the form of collective efficacy—mobilized for crime control or crime perpetration—uncertain (see Hagan & Rymond-Richmond 2013). Eventually, however, the community will likely stabilize as reinvestment becomes more complete and a socially, economically, and racially homogeneous group of gentrifiers replace incumbents through direct and indirect displacement techniques (Marcuse 1985; 1986; Walks & Maaranen 2008; Freeman 2009; Slater 2009). Even if incumbent residents stay, community conflicts likely calm as gentrifiers come to dominate the residential, commercial, political, and symbolic milieux of the community with values promoting crime control.
There is always a risk that changes in crime levels documented by official data speak more to shifts in reporting habits and police activity than crime incidents themselves (Bursik 1988). That is, more active crime reporting and intensified police presence can give the impression that crime rates are increasing in a community independent of criminal activity. This is a particularly important concern in gentrifying neighborhoods as these areas are often targets of increased formal controls in the form of police initiatives. Although police may have ignored these neighborhoods in the past (Klinger 1997), they can help to prime areas for large-scale reinvestment by cracking down on crime and disorder issues and driving problem populations out of the community (Smith 1996; Holden 2002; Larsen & Hansen 2008), making the areas more attractive to residential and commercial investors. Once they have relocated to the area, gentrifiers may rely on the police to enforce moral and legal codes as a supplement to limited informal social controls (see Bursik & Grasmick 1993). Their economic and political clout allows them to demand increased patrols and quicker responses from the police department (see Butler & Robson 2003; Davidson 2008; Formoso et al. 2010; Kreager et al. 2011). Further, middle-class newcomers may be more willing to rely on the police for protection than their incumbent neighbors as they are more trusting of law officials and the criminal justice system (Sampson & Bartusch 1998; Kirk & Papachristos 2011). Over time, these neighborhoods will stabilize and require less police intervention as the gentrification process stalls indefinitely or develops more completely and informal social controls are strengthened (see McDonald 1986; Kreager et al. 2011). Thus, I derive the following hypothesis:
Hypothesis 4: Gentrification will result in initial property and violent crime increases followed by eventual property and violent crime declines.

Summary

The criminological literature provides several divergent expectations regarding the ways in which third-wave gentrification may shape community crime levels. Reinvestment in the urban core may translate into crime declines as areas of decline and deprivation experience economic growth and an influx of individuals interested in helping to transform the community into a safe place to live through community cooperation and involvement. Given the disparities across neighborhoods, these crime declines may be evident only in non-black communities or, more precisely, areas with stronger economic, social, and political resources at the onset of gentrification. Although gentrification creates an opportunity for economic revival in the inner city, the social and physical transformations characteristic of the reinvestment process are inherently disruptive to community processes and, thus, may encourage an increase in crime during the initial stages of turnover. Once gentrification unfolds and settles, community relationships can be restored and potentially strengthened, resulting in crime declines.

To assess these hypotheses, I examine how the presence and degree of gentrification occurring during the third wave of gentrification influenced decadal crime changes between 1991 and 2000 and crime outcomes in 2000. I also consider the possible racial and economic undercurrents associated with reinvestment in the urban core. Specifically, I treat racial
composition of the neighborhood and the degree of concentrated disadvantage as factors that potentially condition the relationship between gentrification and community crime.

**Present Research**

The chosen site for the present research is St. Louis City, Missouri. Although conducting research in a single city limits the generalizability of empirical findings and conclusions, it allows for the control of political, economic, and social processes occurring city-wide (Sun et al. 2004). Further, there are some unique features of St. Louis that make it an appealing site for community research. St. Louis City, like many old industrial towns, has been ripe for gentrification. Decades of decline resulting from deindustrialization and the suburbanization of (white) people and capital have provided the foundation for large-scale reinvestment (Gordon 2008; see also Curran 2007). Though some residents have voiced their concerns with gentrification, the process has largely received positive marketing and media attention in the area, being touted as the best way to save or renew the city (Wilson & Mueller 2004). Local organizations and non-profit groups have partnered to promote and galvanize urban reinvestment (Hurley 2010). In some ways, their efforts seem to be successful. While St. Louis County experienced a slight population decline between 2000 and 2009, the population of St. Louis City—unlike most U.S. cities—subsequently increased after a decade of population loss (Swanstrom 2011). However, this growth was concentrated in certain parts of the urban core. Such uneven development is often a marker of gentrification (Smith 1996).
Perhaps more importantly, St. Louis is remarkable when compared to other metropolitan areas in its emphasis on neighborhoods and neighborhood identity. The city of St. Louis is comprised of seventy-nine neighborhoods that have been defined by history, culture, and – often – ethnic background. Neighborhood identities and landmarks have been firmly established and are easily recognized by those in the city. Most people can identify the neighborhood in which they reside and can distinguish among others, and it is not uncommon for St. Louisans to refer to places by neighborhood, demonstrating a strong attachment to symbolic place. The “divorce” of the city from St. Louis County in 1876 makes such identification somewhat easy, as both city and neighborhood boundaries have been relatively stable over time (Sandweiss 2001; Gordon 2008). The city cannot expand in any direction because it is bordered by St. Louis County and other independent entities to the north, south, and west. It is bounded on the east by the Mississippi River, which separates it from the state of Illinois.

Neighborhood identities are legitimated by community organizations and institutions like The Metropolitan Police Department of St. Louis City: Official crime statistics are compiled and reported at this level. Further, each neighborhood has a designated representative on the city’s Neighborhood Stabilization Team known as a “neighborhood improvement specialist” whose job is to “empower constituents to sustain a quality environment within their neighborhood through assistance, education, intervention and organization” (City of St. Louis: NST). They emphasize and foster the development of relationships among key community actors including residents, police representatives,
neighborhood organizations, and government officials to assuage problems, build partnerships, and encourage community investment. Such characteristics make these neighborhoods more substantively meaningful and authentic than census tracts.

The average population sizes for St. Louis neighborhoods were 5085 in 1990 and 4460 in 2000, making them slightly bigger than the average census tract and smaller than the PHDC neighborhood clusters. Some have expressed concern over the use of neighborhood- or tract-level data in gentrification research, as these ecological units may be too large to capture the often consolidated character of gentrification in the United States (see Marcuse 1985; 1986). Others have countered this claim by asserting that the units of analysis need not be small in size to reflect what is happening in a community. Sampson (2012: 362) maintains that the very notion that smaller areas are preferable in the study of neighborhood effects “is not commensurate with the way people react to and sort themselves on a wide variety of dimensions or outcomes.” It is my contention that the strength of neighborhood identity in St. Louis so profoundly shapes understandings of, interactions within, and strategic planning for space that dissecting them into smaller units could mean losing insight into important community-based processes.

Data and Measures

Dependent Variables. The outcomes of interest in this study are total, violent, and property crimes, which are captured by official data of crimes known to the police and are reported by the St. Louis City Metropolitan Police Department. Although using official crime data may
reveal as much about levels of social controls and crime reporting as they do about criminal activity (Bursik 1988), doing so makes the findings from the present study comparable to prior research using official data (McDonald 1986; Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011.)

I utilize the total crime counts for each neighborhood to measure crime between 1991 and 2000, as well as in 2000 and 2009. The number of crimes in each neighborhood is averaged over three-year intervals (1990-1992, 1999-2001, and 2008-2010) to minimize measurement error and account for crime fluctuations (see Mears & Bhati 2006; Morenoff et al. 2001; Papachristos et al. 2011). To consider the possibility that gentrification influences property and violent crimes differentially as has been documented in prior studies (McDonald 1986; Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011), I analyze violent and property crimes independently. Violent crimes include murder, rape, robbery (with or without a weapon), and aggravated assault (with or without a weapon) counts. Property crimes encompass incidents of burglary, larceny, auto theft, and arson. These counts, too, are averaged over three years to reflect crime outcomes in 2000 and 2009 and changes in crime between 1991 and 2000. To normalize skewed distributions, I use the natural log of violent crime changes between 1991 and 2000, as well as property and total crime counts in 2000 and 2009.\(^3\) This normalization procedure required data manipulation for any neighborhood that experienced a decline in crime, resulting in a negative gentrification score. The negative

---

\(^3\) Any dependent variable distribution with a skewness score > 1.5 was standardized. Sensitivity analyses reveal that most of the substantive findings do not change as a result of standardization. The only exception is the finding for the property crime outcomes in 2000.
gentrification scores were converted into fractions and then logged. The natural log of the fraction is negative, indicating crime decline, and it provides the value that corresponds with its positive (crime increase) counterpart.

**Eligibility for Reinvestment.** Before gentrifiers can reinvest in a given area, the neighborhood must undergo a period of disinvestment and deterioration. I use the threshold employed by Galster and Peacock (1986) to determine which St. Louis communities were ripe for gentrification during the 1990s, a time during which gentrification was more pervasive and complete that in previous decades (Kreager et al. 2011). Neighborhoods are *eligible for reinvestment* if, in 1990, the percentage of residents with a college education was less than the city median, the median household income was less than 80% of the city median, and the median home value was less than the city median. Though filtering the data in this way does not include measures of the pace or extent of decline before 1990, it identifies neighborhoods that were socioeconomically depressed compared to their counterparts and, in doing so, helps to ensure that gentrification is not conflated with incumbent upgrading or other types of urban revitalization initiatives. Neighborhoods are dichotomously categorized as eligible or not eligible for gentrification in 1990.

**Neighborhood Change Index Score.** Once eligibility for gentrification is determined, it is necessary to identify the neighborhoods that experienced growth between 1990 and 2000 in ways often associated with gentrification. To capture the multidimensional character of the gentrification process, I include indicators of both compositional and physical transformation.
reported by the Census Bureau. *Compositional change* is measured in terms of decadal differences in: population size, the percentage of the college-educated population, employment rates, the proportion of employed residents who work in managerial or professional positions, the proportion of owner-occupied dwellings, poverty rates (reverse coded), and median household income. *Physical change* is measured by considering the differences in median property value and median rent value between 1990 and 2000. All monetary values measured in 1990 are adjusted to make them comparable to the currency value in 2000. Using GIS software, the census measures are aggregated from the block level to the communities recognized by the city of St. Louis. Thus, the level of analysis is the neighborhood rather than a census block, tract, or equally arbitrary spatial delineation. Although seventy-nine neighborhoods compose St. Louis City, only seventy-seven are used in the analyses. Two neighborhoods—Kosciusko and Downtown4—are excluded on the grounds that they are largely non-residential. Because the processes that likely link reinvestment to changes in crime are based on community relationships, non-residential areas fall outside the scope of the study (see Crutchfield 1989; Warner & Pierce 1993; Clear et al. 2003).

Previous index construction in the study of gentrification has consisted of summing simple change scores between two temporal points for each variable and dividing by the number of indicators included in the formula (Ley 1986; 1996; see also Eckerd 2011). This

4 There are not enough residents in Kosciusko to draw any conclusions about gentrification. Downtown, according to the measures employed in this study, would be considered a depreciating neighborhood.
method proves to be problematic when trying to use change scores with different scales of measure (e.g., change in percentage of home owners and change in median household income) because they require standardization and the process of standardization alters the meaning of positive and negative values. Whereas a change score reflects degree and direction of neighborhood change, its standardized value, or z-score, represents the degree of change relative to the average degree of change occurring for all neighborhoods in the city. Consider, for example, the disparate meanings for the change score and the standardized change score for median income differences between 1990 and 2000. A negative change score would suggest a decrease in median income for the neighborhood over the decade; a negative z-score would suggest that the change in median income for the neighborhood was below the change for the city as a whole. It could be that a neighborhood improved on indicators of neighborhood change (positive change score) but continued to lag behind the city mean during that time (negative z-score). Standardized change scores, then, could confuse growth with decline, rendering them inaccurate measures of gentrification. This is a particularly important consideration as it would not be surprising for neighborhoods to undergo revitalization and remain below the city average on key indicators of wellbeing, especially during the earliest stages of transition.

To compute standardized scores and preserve the substantive meaning of positive and negative values, z-scores for each variable were calculated for both 1990 and 2000. The z-score for each indicator in 1990 was then subtracted from its z-score in 2000 to represent a change in z-scores over time, or the degree of change measured in standard deviations from
the decadal means for the city as a whole. Positive scores indicate general growth on that indicator for the neighborhood but do not necessarily reflect change larger than the city’s mean. Negative scores, conversely, indicate general decline. These scores are combined into an index by summing them and dividing by the number of indicators used as a measure of overall neighborhood change, referred to as the *neighborhood change index score*.

**Neighborhood Types.** The neighborhood change index score is used to compute four neighborhood types, each of which is a dichotomous variable. *Gentrifying* neighborhoods are those that were eligible for gentrification in 1990 and experienced growth according to the neighborhood change index score. Areas that were eligible for gentrification but did not experience growth, including those that were stable, are considered *impoverished* neighborhoods. *Appreciating* neighborhoods are those that were not eligible for gentrification and experienced growth over the decade. Finally, neighborhoods that were not eligible for gentrification but declined or experienced no improvement between 1990 and 2000 are considered *depreciating* neighborhoods.

---

5 Consider a neighborhood with a median income value three standard deviations below the city mean in 1990 and one standard deviation below the city mean in 2000. Although the neighborhood experienced growth over the decade, it continued to lag behind the city’s mean.

6 Most neighborhood change index scores included all nine indicators. However, there were three neighborhoods missing median rent data and five neighborhoods sans median property value information. All of these areas were non-gentrifying communities according to their scores on other indicators.

7 Only three neighborhoods were stable between 1990 and 2000 based on the measure of community change employed in this study. Due to sample size limitations, these neighborhoods were framed as experiencing no growth and were grouped with areas that declined. The result was two stable neighborhoods were coded as impoverished and one was coded as depreciating.
**Gentrification Score.** In some analyses, gentrification is quantified to examine how the degree of gentrification shapes changes in crime over time (1991-2000) as well as crime outcomes (2000). Specifically, the neighborhood change index score described above is used for all neighborhoods considered gentrifying as a continuous measure of improvement, or a *gentrification score*. The higher the value on this score, the greater the degree of reinvestment that took place between 1990 and 2000. The non-gentrifying neighborhoods are grouped together in analyses using the quantified measure of gentrification and receive a gentrification score of zero.\(^8\) To explore the possibility of curvilinearity in the relationship between gentrification and crime based on degree of change, I include a quadratic term for the gentrification score, referred to as *gentrification score squared*.

**Racial Composition.** The racialized implications of gentrification are assessed using four variables. First, the percentage of residents in 1990 identifying as African American is used as an indicator of the neighborhood’s *racial composition* at the beginning of the study’s gentrification window. This variable is utilized in analyses focused on detailing the consequences related to reinvestment across communities based on racial structure (see Papachristos et al. 2011). I also take note of *racial composition changes*, measured by the differences in the percentage of black residents between 1990 and 2000, to provide insight

---

\(^8\) Using the formula \( z = (b_1 - b_2)/\sqrt{(SE_1^2 + SE_2^2)} \) (see Clogg et al. 1995; Paternoster et al. 1998), comparison of the effects of impoverished versus appreciating neighborhoods, appreciating versus depreciating neighborhoods, and impoverished versus depreciating neighborhoods revealed no statistically significant differences in crime changes across these community types, thus reaffirming the decision to aggregate these neighborhoods together into a single category.
into whether racial turnover is necessarily intertwined with class-based demographic transitions in gentrifying neighborhoods. Two race-based interaction terms are also employed in some models: the *gentrification-race interaction* is computed by multiplying the gentrification dummy by the racial composition of the neighborhood in 1990 and the *gentrification score-race interaction* is the product of the area’s gentrification score and racial composition.

**Concentrated Disadvantage.** The relationship between racial composition and marginalization is captured in terms of *concentrated disadvantage*, which is a composite measure consisting of three indicators of community deprivation in 1990: the percentage of residents who are black, the percentage of residents aged twenty-five years or older who are unemployed, and the percentage of residents who live in poverty. These percentages are converted to z-scores and then summed and averaged per adjacent neighborhood. To test for conditional effects, interaction terms are created between concentrated disadvantage and the gentrification dummy, as well as between concentrated disadvantage and the gentrification score.

**Controls.** Three control variables are included in each set of analyses. The first is *population size*, measured as the number of residents living in each neighborhood in 2000 (for the 2000 crime outcome model) and in 2010 (for the 2009 crime outcome model). The population counts for 1990 and 2000 were averaged and used for the 1991-2000 crime change model. Because the dependent variables of interest are all crime counts (or changes in crime counts
over time) rather than crime rates, it is necessary to control for the number of people living in each neighborhood. This method allows for a meaningful comparison of crime outcomes and crime changes across neighborhoods with varying population sizes without introducing a correlation between predictors (e.g., percent of college-educated residents) and the dependent variables (e.g., crime rates) that would result in biased estimates (Bollen & Ward 1979).

I also include a measure of previous crime levels in each model to account for regression toward the mean. That is, I control for the tendency of areas with higher crime rates in the past to experience greater declines over time (McDonald 1986; Morenoff & Sampson 1997; see also Kreager et al. 2011). While some have used residualized change scores to incorporate the influence of prior crime (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; see also Bohrnstedt 1969), this methodological technique compounds the standard error by introducing two sources of error in one variable (Bollen & Ward 1979). The control employed in this study avoids this issue and provides a more precise estimate of the relationship between gentrification and crime by isolating the effects of reinvestment during the period of interest. The crime outcome model and the 1991-2000 crime change models include the total crime rate in 1990 as a measure of prior crime. ⁹ Relatedly, the total crime rate in 1999 is used in the 2009 crime outcome model to account for previous levels of crime.

⁹ Unlike the dependent variables of interest, the prior crime control variable is not averaged over three years. There are two reasons for this. First, crime data for the 1980s were not available. Further, averaging 1990 crime rates using data from 1989, 1990, and 1991 would have introduced a correlation with any dependent variable also containing 1991 crime data.
The last control variable is meant to isolate the effects of reinvestment within each community by adjusting for spatial interdependence, or the likelihood that crime—or crime changes—in one place are associated with those outcomes in spatially proximate areas (see Anselin 1988; Anselin et al. 2013). *External crime* is calculated by summing the total crime rates for all neighborhoods with shared boundaries and dividing by the number of contiguous neighborhoods included. Although this technique grants equal weight to each neighborhood regardless of its degree of adjacency (see Heitgerd & Bursik 1987), it provides a more accurate measure of external crime than statistical approximation (see Taylor & Covington 1989; Kreager et al. 2011). External crime rates for 2000 and 2009 are used as controls in the 2000 and 2009 crime outcome models, respectively. For the crime change model, I control for changes in adjacent crime during the same time period (1991-2000).

**Analytic Strategy**

Using Ordinary Least Squares regression, I evaluate the relationship between gentrification and neighborhood crime in terms of decadal changes in total, violent, and property crime counts between 1991 and 2000, as well as levels of each crime type in 2000 and 2009. The first set of analyses, consisting of two models, focuses on the crime differences between and among neighborhood types. Specifically, the first model examines crime changes and outcomes among gentrifying, appreciating, depreciating, and impoverished neighborhoods to speak to how gentrification shapes community crime compared to the other types of neighborhood transformation (e.g., decline), independent of population size, prior crime rates, and adjacent crime rates. The neighborhoods not
undergoing the reinvestment process are condensed into a single category\(^{10}\) in the second model in order to assess the differences between gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas.

Although these analyses are important for highlighting the association between the presence of gentrification and crime, they fail to provide insight as to how the degree of reinvestment influences neighborhood crime. To address this query, the second set of analyses employs a quantitative measure of gentrification—the gentrification score—to highlight how the extent of gentrification shapes neighborhood crime and uncover any differences among gentrifying areas. The first model estimates a linear relationship between the gentrification score and crime outcomes, while the second model explores the possibility of curvilinearity in this relationship with the introduction of a squared term for the gentrification score.

Once the general relationship between gentrification and community crime has been assessed, I explore the potential racialization of the reinvestment process. I do so first by noting any differences in the racial composition between gentrifying and non-gentrifying neighborhoods in 1990. Next, I use the decadal change in racial composition to indicate whether or not economic “upgrading” is accompanied by a decline in minority population in areas undergoing gentrification. Finally, I run regression analyses similar to the ones detailed above but include interaction terms in each model to capture the possibility that the relationship between gentrification and crime and between the degree of gentrification and

\(^{10}\) The lack of statistically significant differences in the coefficients for appreciating, depreciating, and impoverished neighborhoods supports the grouping of these neighborhoods together.
crime are conditioned by the neighborhood’s racial composition at the beginning of the decade. I also examine the possibility that the effects of gentrification are less dependent upon race, *per se*, and shaped more by the ecological context in which it occurs by using the concentrated disadvantage interaction terms.

**Results**

**Descriptive Statistics**

The descriptive statistics for the predictor and dependent variables for all neighborhoods, presented in Appendix I, show that St. Louis experienced population decline during the 1990s, especially among employed professionals. At the same time, the college-educated population grew, the percentage of residents living in poverty dropped, and there was an increase in the median property value. The city also averaged declines in both property and violent crime counts over the decade. Appendix II illustrates the differences between gentrifying (n=20) and non-gentrifying (n=57) areas in 1990 and 2000. In 1990, there were significant differences between gentrifying and non-gentrifying communities in terms of common indicators of community wellbeing. Specifically, non-gentrifying communities had a higher percentage of college-educated, employed, professional residents and fewer black residents, per capita. Non-gentrifying areas also enjoyed higher median property values, lower levels of disadvantage, and fewer violent crime incidents than areas undergoing the gentrification process over the subsequent decade. There are fewer significant differences between neighborhood types in 2000; disparities in the representation of employed, professional, and black residents are statistically indistinguishable between
gentrifying and non-gentrifying neighborhoods at the end of the decade. Further, violent crime counts are no longer significantly higher in gentrifying areas compared to their non-gentrifying counterparts, but property crimes were. Although these changes may seem to be evidence of community improvement as a result of urban reinvestment, a comparison of the means for the non-gentrifying neighborhoods for 1990 and 2000 suggests that it is the loss of residents in those areas that makes them more comparable to areas of reinvestment. Interestingly, gentrifying neighborhoods have levels of violence in 2000 that are comparable to the frequency of violence in non-gentrifying areas a decade earlier.

During the 1990s, both gentrifying and non-gentrifying neighborhoods experienced changes in demographic and economic indicators of community wellbeing, as well as in crime counts. Gentrifying and non-gentrifying communities alike suffered a general population loss, though resident exodus was more evident in areas of reinvestment. Likewise, the percentage of people living in poverty fell in both types of communities with the greatest decline occurring in gentrifying areas. The differences in crime shifts are also significant across neighborhood types: Both property and violent crime decreased in both gentrifying and non-gentrifying communities, but the declines were more pronounced in areas undergoing reinvestment activity.

**Crime Changes, 1991-2000**

Table 1 presents the results linking gentrification to decadal crime changes. In general, urban reinvestment leads to average crime declines during the 1990s, which are
statistically larger than the crime reductions that took place in appreciating and depreciating areas (Model 1). The condensed model (Model 2) reveals that gentrifying neighborhoods are predicted to experience 132 fewer crime incidents over the decade than their non-gentrifying counterparts, net of the effects of population size, prior crime levels, and external crime activity. Models 1b and 2b show that this pattern holds for changes in violent crime but not for property crime, suggesting that total crime declines are driven largely by reductions in violence within gentrifying communities. These findings lend some support for the hypothesis (Hypothesis 1) that gentrification results in crime declines.

Like total crime, violent and property crime reductions were less pronounced in appreciating neighborhoods during the 1990s compared to other areas, indicating that it is not gentrification, per se, that results in less crime. The lack of differentiation between gentrifying and appreciating areas suggests that crime declines were likely a consequence of general community growth rather than a result of concerted urban reinvestment efforts. Given that the difference in crime changes between appreciating and gentrifying neighborhoods approaches statistical significance for violent, but not property, crime suggests that gentrification—as a distinct type of reinvestment—is at least somewhat influential in the control of violence for some communities undergoing the process. This

---

11 The dummy variable representing impoverished areas failed to reach statistical significance in any model. This is presumably the result of such a small sample size.
conclusion is corroborated by the finding that gentrifying areas did not have statistically larger drops in property crime compared to non-gentrifying communities.\(^{12}\)

The controls used in these models, while not the focus of the study, contribute to crime changes in ways worth noting. The statistical significance of prior crime levels provides evidence of the tendency of crime to regress toward the mean over time. In other words, neighborhoods with higher crime rates in 1990 experienced the largest declines in violent and property crime between 1991 and 2000. Further, the models for total and property crime lend support to the idea that crime is a spatially interdependent phenomenon. Specifically, increases in neighborhood property crime levels are associated with increases in crime rates in adjacent communities. Decadal shifts in violence, however, are not related to crime rate changes in surrounding communities, suggesting that crimes of a violent nature in the 1990s were shaped by the internal dynamics of a neighborhood largely independent of what is happening in peripheral areas.

The next set of analyses, shown in Table 2, relies on a continuous measure of gentrification—the gentrification score—to assess how the degree of reinvestment shapes crime changes between 1991 and 2000. Contrary to Hypothesis 3, there is no evidence of curvilinearity in the relationship between gentrification and crime. Specifically, Model 1 and Model 2 for each crime type indicate that the average rate of decadal crime decline

\(^{12}\) A case influence analysis shows that the inclusion of the Downtown neighborhood significantly alters the results. Specifically, gentrification has a negative relationship with changes in both violent and property crime levels. This relationship is curvilinear when the degree of gentrification is considered, with crime decreasing at the lowest levels of reinvestment and increasing for neighborhood undergoing more extensive turnover.
associated with gentrification was not contingent upon the extent of reinvestment activity that occurred in the community. This conclusion is not to say, however, that the degree of gentrification did not influence crime levels at any point during the 1990s. Instead, it suggests that the average difference in 1991 crime levels and 2000 crime levels were not related to the degree of social and physical transformation.

Crime Outcomes, 2000 and 2009

The results of the regression analyses examining the relationship between gentrification and crime outcomes in 2000 are presented in Table 3. In terms of total and property crime counts, gentrifying neighborhoods are indistinguishable from their non-gentrifying counterparts at the end of the decade. The only remarkable difference is between gentrifying and depreciating communities; areas undergoing reinvestment have higher index crime levels than those experiencing depreciation. In contrast, the differences in violence across community types are remarkable. Areas of reinvestment, though generally experiencing the largest declines in violent offenses over time, had higher rates of violence than other areas in 2000 (Model 2). The drop of violence between 1991 and 2000, then, was not substantial enough to bring violent crime to levels comparable to or below those in other parts of the city. Violent crime counts in gentrifying communities are statistically higher than those in both appreciating and depreciating areas (Model 1), suggesting that the community growth itself is not enough to control violent crime.
Turning attention to the extent of gentrification and its effects on crime outcomes in 2000 (Table 4) reveals that the gentrification score fails to reach statistical significance for total crime counts (Model 1), giving the impression that the breadth of gentrification does not influence decadal crime outcomes. Introducing the squared term for the gentrification in Model 2, however, suggests that the crime implications associated with the degree of gentrification—and perhaps the relationship between the mere occurrence of gentrification and crime itself—are masked when the linearity in the relationship between gentrification score and crime is assumed. Specifically, the statistical significance of the gentrification score and its quadratic term indicates that the relationship between the degree of gentrification and crime is curvilinear. Each gradation of reinvestment resulted in lower total crime counts in 2000 in communities with gentrification scores under .196 (n=8). It is at this tipping point that the pattern reverses, with gentrifying areas having higher crime levels than other types of communities.

The disaggregation of incidents by crime type exposes a more nuanced link between gentrification activity and crime outcomes. At first glance (Model 1), the extent of gentrification is not a statistically significant predictor of property crime levels in 2000. The addition of the quadratic gentrification score tells a different story: property crime levels are influenced by gentrification, but the direction and magnitude of this relationship depends on the extensiveness of the reinvestment. Property crimes increase as gentrification progresses at the lower levels of reinvestment. Specifically, the eight communities with gentrification scores lower than .183 experienced higher property crime levels. When gentrification
surpasses this level, the reinvestment efforts mean fewer property crimes in those communities. The effect of gentrification on property crime, then, is dependent on the degree of change taking place. These countervailing effects could explain why gentrification efforts do not appear to be related to property crime changes (Table 1) or outcomes (Table 2). Conversely, the relationship between gentrification and violence is linear, as is evidenced by the statistically significant linear term in Model 1 and Model 2. Simply stated, the more extensive the gentrification, the higher the levels of violence at decade’s end.

To offer a glimpse at the crime trajectories of St. Louis neighborhoods based on their conditions during the 1990s, regression analyses were used to predict their crime levels in 2009. The results of these analyses are shown in Table 5. Independent of all controls, areas undergoing some degree of reinvestment between 1991 and 2000 are projected to have more crime incidents than communities that did not, especially those that were appreciating or depreciating during that time. Further, gentrification translates into higher predicted levels of violence and property offenses than is expected in other neighborhoods—even two decades after the reinvestment efforts began.

**Race Analyses**

The first question to answer regarding the possible role of race in the gentrification process is whether urban reinvestment is more likely to occur in places where racial and ethnic minorities are concentrated. This is the case in St. Louis City, as gentrifying areas averaged populations that were over 72% black in 1990, compared to 43% in non-gentrifying
neighborhoods. The next question is whether changes in racial structure are linked to reinvestment in the urban core. Interestingly, both gentrifying and non-gentrifying communities saw increases in the representation of black residents by the year 2000. Even more surprising is that population growth for black residents was most pronounced in areas undergoing reinvestment than those not, increasing by 6.8% and 5.3%, respectively. This finding not only counters claims that gentrification necessitates racial turnover, but it suggests that the reinvestment of St. Louis neighborhoods during the 1990s may have been, in part, driven by middle-class blacks.

The third race analysis of this study addresses the extent to which the community crime outcomes associated with urban reinvestment depend on the neighborhood’s racial composition. Specifically, the 1990 racial composition of each neighborhood is introduced as a potential moderating factor between gentrification and crime. The gentrification-racial composition interaction term fails to reach statistical significance in the models, regardless of the dependent variable (Table 6). Both black and white communities undergoing reinvestment experience crime declines during the 1990s and have higher crime levels vis-à-vis non-gentrifying areas in 2000. Likewise, the interaction between the gentrification score and the racial composition of the neighborhood is never statistically significant, indicating that the degree of gentrification has similar effects on both community crime changes and outcomes across neighborhood types (Table 7). Thus, there is no support for the ecological dissimilarity hypothesis (Hypothesis 2).
Table 8 shows the results when the analytical emphasis shifts from racial composition to degree of concentrated disadvantage. Inconsistent with Hypothesis 3, the degree of concentrated disadvantage did not have moderating effects for either the relationship between the presence of reinvestment and crime changes (Model 1) or between the extent of gentrification and crime changes (Model 2), regardless of crime type.

**Discussion**

The current state of gentrification research in criminology has not provided an adequate operationalization for the gentrification phenomenon. Drawing on this literature, I identify challenges and partial solutions for how to define and measure gentrification in order to assess its effects on community crime. Combining the criminology literature with urban sociology, I offer a comprehensive operationalization of gentrification that: considers the conditions necessary for the process to occur; emphasizes both the physical and compositional changes often accompanying it; recognizes its uneven development; measures the phenomenon at the neighborhood level; and treats the racialization of gentrification as an empirical inquiry rather than a defining characteristic of the phenomenon. I then examine differences between and among gentrifying communities in St. Louis City, in terms of crime changes between 1991 and 2000, as well as outcomes in 2000 and 2009. In general, the results of this study suggest that violent crime declined, on average, more in areas undergoing third-wave gentrification during the 1990s than in their non-gentrifying counterparts regardless of the degree of reinvestment, lending support to the conclusions of some scholars (McDonald 1986; Kreager et al. 2011), while countering others (Taylor &
Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; Van Wilsem et al. 2006). Such declines were reserved for violent crime, however, as property crime changes in gentrifying areas were indistinguishable from those occurring in other types of neighborhoods.

These initial results provide some validation for claims that restructuring the urban core can repair the damage created by deindustrialization and negligence, and can help mitigate the crime problems characteristic of these areas (see Atkinson 2002; McKinnish et al. 2010). Subsequent analyses, however, indicate that this view of gentrification may be too optimistic. First, gentrified does not necessarily mean stable. Although gentrifying areas—by definition—improved to some extent throughout the 1990s, they continued to fare worse than other neighborhoods on most indicators of community wellbeing used in this study (e.g., poverty rate, median income, percentage of college-educated residents, etc.) in 2000.

Further, gentrifying areas, despite their more pronounced average violent crime declines between 1991 and 2000, had higher levels of violence at the end of the decade vis-à-vis non-gentrifying neighborhoods. This mirrors McDonald’s (1986) finding regarding the role of gentrification in shaping community crime levels nearly three decades ago. Moreover, after external crime levels and prior crime rates were taken into account, levels of violence were particularly elevated in communities undergoing the largest degree of reinvestment. This finding highlights the potential danger of assuming homogeneity among gentrifying areas. When gentrifying neighborhoods are aggregated, the differences that exist among them are left unexamined and the conclusions drawn about the effects of reinvestment may be
incomplete. When these differences are acknowledged, gentrification looks less effective in aiding with community regulation, especially in the neighborhood experiencing the most reinvestment activity.

Intuitively, it seems that there was so much more violence in gentrifying neighborhoods prior to reinvestment that the crime declines, though larger in magnitude than those in other areas, were not enough to bring violent crime counts to levels comparable to or below those in other neighborhoods. The fact that all of the analyses included a control for crime rates at the start of the decade means that alternative explanations require serious consideration. It could be, for example, that the changes characteristic of the gentrification process render those neighborhoods unfit for the regulation of violent crime. Specifically, the influx of middle-class (sometimes white) residents into historically poor and predominately minority neighborhoods may be detrimental to the exercise of informal social controls if these groups do not work together toward guarding the community against crime and disorder issues. In this sense, gentrification fits into the traditional social disorganization model: Change—whether improvement or decline—results in escalations in violence as residential and physical turnover undermines the community-level mechanisms necessary for crime control (Shaw & McKay 1942; Bursik & Grasmick 1993; Sampson et al. 1997). The finding that violent crime levels in gentrifying communities were higher than those in both appreciating and depreciating areas calls this theoretical explanation into question.
Another explanation is that reinvestment actually promotes violence. Gentrification can indirectly trigger a rise in violent crime if the reinvestment efforts include certain types of commercial developments. Specifically, establishments that serve alcohol can act as catalysts for violence, given the well-documented relationship between alcohol outlet densities and interpersonal crime levels (Roncek & Maier 1991; Alaniz et al. 1998; Speer et al. 1998; Scribner et al. 1999). Thus, a growth in the number of restaurants and bars located in the neighborhood could result in an escalation in violent crime in the absence of effective social controls.

Gentrification can influence violent crime in a more direct manner by igniting hostilities among residents. Community conflicts may arise with the influx of newcomers as affordable housing concerns become secondary to middle-class reinvestment and threats of displacement loom as a potential reality for lower income residents (see Millard-Ball 2002; Becantur 2011). Without community services strong enough to shield incumbent residents from being ousted by their new neighbors, residents may find themselves fighting over the future of the neighborhood. For example, gentrifiers may want to work toward increasing property values as a way of maximizing their investment and bringing in up-scale, specialty stores to cater to their consumption preferences (Davidson 2008). Their vision will likely be countered by those who desire to keep the neighborhood’s residential and commercial stock suitable for those who already live there. These differences can result in hostility that may intensify to the point of criminal behavior in the form of gang intimidation and violence, aggravated assault, arson, and vandalism (McDonald 1986; Heitgerd & Bursik 1988) aimed
toward landlords and gentrifiers (Cybriwsky 1978; LeGates & Murphy 1981; see also Sumka 1980). These forms of resistant may even be highly organized, much like the “mug-a-yuppie” campaign (Atkinson 2002). If this is the case, the traditional social disorganization model is insufficient for explaining the link between urban reinvestment and community crime outcomes because it fails to account for the possibility of antagonistic relationships among community members and crime-based expressions of social control.

A third interpretation is that gentrification triggers an increased reliance on formal social controls to address crime and disorder issues, at least among gentrifiers. Whereas residents who lived in the neighborhood prior to reinvestment may favor street justice over police intervention (Anderson 1999), middle-class incomers are more likely to contact local law enforcement to report criminal activity, especially the most dangerous offense (Sampson & Bartusch 1998; Kirk & Papachristos 2011). Because official crime data reflect crimes reported to the police, a greater willingness among residents to bring crime to the attention of local authorities inflates crime counts. Consequently, the higher rates of violence in the most gentrified communities may say more about a shift in crime reporting habits than actual criminal activity. It could also be that a combination of these scenarios that is playing out in gentrifying areas and shaping levels of community violence. None are incongruous with the finding that gentrification results in average decadal crime declines. Annual spikes in violence will not be captured by change score data. Crime changes are measured as the difference in crime counts between two temporal points. As such, they cannot speak to crime fluctuations that occurred in between those “snapshots” in time. It is plausible, then, that
gentrification results in a general drop in violent crime over a ten-year period despite an association with crime increases.

The analyses focused on the relationship between gentrification and property crime reveal a different story and underscore the importance of exploring crime types independently in the study of urban reinvestment. Gentrification did not bring about significant changes in property crime between 1991 and 2000 in St. Louis communities, independent of the degree of change taking place. The aggregation of gentrifying communities into a single category gives the impression that property crime outcomes are also immune to the community-level changes brought about by gentrification, a finding that has been noted elsewhere (see McDonald 1986). When variation among gentrifying neighborhoods is considered, however, it becomes clear that there are countervailing influences associated with urban reinvestment that balance each other out. In 2000, communities experiencing low or moderate reinvestment activity had less property crime, whereas areas in the later stages of gentrification had higher property crime levels than non-gentrifying areas.

These property crime results align with the predictions laid out by social disorganization theorists, as well as findings indicating that community relationships are more influential in the control of property crime (Bursik & Grasmick 1993). It is likely that gentrification resulted in an increase in property crime during the early waves when reinvestment activity was more incomplete and spotty and people were too naïve to project
and safeguard against any negative consequences brought about by reinvestment. As
gentrification became more common both in the reality of urban communities and as a topic
within public discourse, gentrifiers may have become well-versed about the risks of moving
into inner cities, especially in large numbers, and began to take more precautions to defend
their property. Further, the influx of middle-class residents may have translated into more
visible, pro-active policing and, ultimately, greater protection against property-based
victimization (see Kreager et al. 2011).

The findings for future community outcomes also challenge the idea that
gentrification saves inner cities. Crime data from 2009 police reports indicate that all types of
crime remains higher in gentrifying communities a decade later. Because this study did not
include indicators of community change between 2000 and 2010, it is unclear if
gentrification continued, stalled, or reversed during that time. Though admittedly limited in
their ability to speak to any direct link between investment efforts and crime outcomes, these
results offer a glimpse at the potential trajectories of gentrifying communities. Based on the
findings of this study, the futures of areas undergoing the gentrification process during the
1990s are not particularly inspiring. If gentrification does result in crime declines, they may
be temporary. If city leaders are concerned about long-term solutions to crime issues, they
may want to consider alternatives to urban reinvestment as it is traditionally implemented.

Unlike the findings of other scholars (Papachristos et al. 2011), there is no evidence
that the crime reduction benefits of urban reinvestment were reserved for predominately
white neighborhoods. Both black and white communities undergoing gentrification during the 1990s generally experienced larger crime declines over the decade than non-gentrifying neighborhoods, regardless of their economic conditions in 1990. Reinvestment in St. Louis was racialized in other ways in that its roots can be primarily traced to areas with large black populations, a finding not surprising given evidence that reinvestment efforts are generally aimed at the most economically disadvantaged areas (Marcuse 1985; Smith 1996; Curran 2007; Formoso et al. 2010; Sampson 2012), which are also more likely to be home to racial and ethnic minorities (Massey & Denton 1993; see also Johnson & Shapiro 2003). Contrary to traditional narratives, however, it does not appear that these reinvestment efforts were fueled primarily by white gentrifiers. In fact, the size of the black populace grew in gentrifying communities during the 1990s and did so at a higher rate than in other neighborhoods, suggesting that black gentrifiers played an integral role in transforming St. Louis’ urban core over the decade. This finding supports research showing that neighborhoods with large minority populations tend to attract black gentry (Hyra 2008; Kennedy & Leonard 2001; McKinnish et al 2010; Bader 2011) and that this demographic has been important in the rebirth of some communities across the country (Newman & Ashton 2004; Boyd 2005; Freeman 2006). While this can be considered a victory by those who fear that gentrification necessitates the usurpation of minority neighborhoods by middle-class whites, the reproduction of the racial structure in these neighborhoods means that the promise of social mixing (see Atkinson 2002) has not been realized in St. Louis, at least in racial terms.
Urban reinvestment, then, may not be the panacea for community ills like deep-seated racial segregation. Instead, it could contribute to problems like displacement if gentrifiers replaced long-term residents rather than becoming their neighbors. The population loss in gentrifying communities hints at this possibility, but the lack of individual mobility data makes it impossible to document who left and distinguish those who moved on their own accord from those who were forced out by rising costs, absentee landlords, or social exclusion. It should be noted that that the presumed absence of white gentrifiers in St. Louis does not mean that white folks have not been active agents in the reinvestment activity taking place there; rather, they are likely in positions of less visibility than the gentrifiers themselves (e.g., commercial investors, city planners, etc.) (see Kennedy & Leonard 2001).

Although this research demonstrates a relationship between gentrification and community crime, it is unable to speak to the processes that link reinvestment to crime. Social disorganization theory has offered a common frame through which scholars have understood the crime implications of gentrification (see McDonald 1986; Taylor & Covington 1988; Kreager et al. 2011), positing that crime rates will increase alongside the social disruption characteristic of gentrification—at least until the neighborhood stabilizes itself and social controls are strengthened. The curvilinearity of the relationship between the degree of reinvestment and property crime in St. Louis City lends support to this interpretation, as crime declines have been most pronounced in areas with minimal transformation. This finding underscores the possibility that too much reinvestment can be toxic for a community either because it breaks down community relationships and controls
(Shaw & McKay 1942; Bursik & Grasmick 1993; Sampson et al. 1997) or it fosters conflict over physical and symbolic space (Cybriwsky 1978; Barry & Derevlany 1988; Keating & Smith 1996; Formoso et al. 2010) that can be expressed in criminal ways. Crime increases can also be an artifact of police presence or crime reporting. Proactive policing may be directed at certain areas to promote extensive reinvestment (Smith 2002; Wyly & Hammel 2005; Reese et al. 2010). Likewise, the influx of middle-class gentrifiers could mean a greater willingness to use formal social controls (Sampson & Bartusch 1998; Kirk & Papachristos 2011) even if the frequency of criminal activity has remained constant or has declined (see Bursik 1988). Without proper data, the suggested connections between gentrification and crime are merely speculative.

Future studies—particularly those focused on interpersonal relationships, police activity, crime reporting and the availability and accessibility of community resources—will be useful in helping to identify what is happening “on the ground” in gentrifying communities and to flesh out the processes that connect reinvestment with crime changes and crime outcomes. Interviews with residents will be particularly helpful in elucidating how they are making sense of the changes occurring around them. Census data, while valuable for quantifying the extensiveness of reinvestment, cannot speak to the subjective understandings of and experiences with the gentrification process among residents and how those perceptions, in turn, shape the exercise of social controls. The quantitative measures of gentrification and the substantive consequences associated with it may even be incongruous. If, for example, there are pockets of heavy reinvestment in a “sea of decay” (see Berry 1985),
the gentrification process may be less significant in shaping crime rates than in communities where the social and physical turnover is perhaps less obvious in the data but more widespread and prominent. Researchers need to remain cognizant of and explore more thoroughly the possible disconnect between the empirical definition of gentrification and the way in which it is interpreted and experienced at the community level.

Future research should also examine explicitly the relationship between gentrification and adjacent crime rates. The findings presented in this paper demonstrate that decadal changes in crime are correlated across St. Louis neighborhoods. After controlling for reinvestment activity and prior crime levels, crime declines in spatially proximate areas are associated with decreases in intracommunity property crime. Spatial interdependence scholars posit that this is likely due to the diffusion of crime control benefits. That is, the strengthening of informal social controls or more formal crime control policies have likely reverberated into other areas as well, creating a “halo effect” (Scherdin 1986) that helps to reduce crime in surrounding areas (Sherman 1990; Miethe 1991; Clarke & Weisburd 1994; Braga 2001). Unfortunately, this study is unable to address the issue as to whether urban reinvestment contributed to such diffusion or if reinvestment itself is associated with crime declines in spatially proximate places. It could be, for example, that the crime declines that have accompanied the gentrification of St. Louis neighborhoods has simply moved crime “around the corner” to become another area’s concern (Repetto 1976; Barr & Pease 1990; Weisburd et al. 2006). Such exploration has been missing in the gentrification and crime research, despite having important academic, social, and political implications.
The methodological specifications of the study mean that the conclusions should be interpreted within a specific context. A city with a strong neighborhood identity makes an ideal research site, and focusing on the wave of gentrification occurring during the 1990s emphasizes the most complete period of reinvestment to date. But these strictures limit generalizability. Focusing the empirical spotlight on neighborhoods also confines the analysis to the extent that there is no way to identify pockets of gentrification or consequential fluctuations of crime within communities. The effect of reinvestment on crime changes and crime outcomes may be over- or under-estimated in communities where it is heavily concentrated on certain blocks or block groups (see Covington & Taylor 1989).

Despite these shortcomings, this study takes a step in unifying gentrification and crime scholarship by integrating the empirical and theoretical contributions of urban sociology and criminology and underscoring the importance of methodological precision in this line of research. The identification of urban reinvestment is sensitive to the measures employed, so they should be chosen with care. As such, researchers should be mindful when using changes in racial composition as a defining characteristic of gentrification. I propose treating racial composition changes as a potential consequence of urban reinvestment rather than an inherent feature of the phenomenon in light of evidence that non-whites have been instrumental in reshaping the social and physical scene of some urban cores across the country. This study also advances gentrification research by differentiating among gentrifying communities by quantifying the degree of reinvestment taking place, allowing for the exploration of an intradecadal tipping point at which the relationship between
reinvestment and changes in crime reverses. Ultimately, this study paints a picture that falls somewhere between the two polarizing characterizations of gentrification: it is neither completely toxic nor is it a saving grace.
CHAPTER 4: GENTRIFICATION AND EXTERNAL CRIME

Recognition that communities are not impermeable to outside influence, or the notion that a “neighborhood’s neighbors matter” (Sampson 2012: 239), has prompted both theoretical and empirical attention to the spatial interdependence of crime rates. Scholarship indeed has documented a strong link between the neighborhood conditions in local areas and crime levels in surrounding neighborhoods, demonstrating that a comprehensive understanding of crime necessitates an examination of extracommunity factors (Cohen & Tita 1999; Morenoff et al. 2011). Yet, the interconnected nature of neighborhoods is treated as a methodological concern to be controlled in gentrification research. Thus, questions about the broad ecological ramifications associated with the urban reinvestment trend are left under-examined.

Gentrification, as a redevelopment strategy, is a unique process of neighborhood transformation. Rather than manifesting as a natural reversal of community deterioration, urban reinvestment represents an intentional social and physical restructuring of inner-city neighborhoods that is often marketed as a panacea for the crime and disorder issues plaguing the urban core (Smith & LeFaivre 1984; McDonald 1986; Kolko 2009). Perhaps to the chagrin of gentrification advocates, empirical findings regarding the relationship between gentrification and crime suggest that reinvestment does not always deliver on this promise. Gentrification does not reduce crime in all neighborhoods under all circumstances. Instead, the impact of urban reinvestment on local crime rates is shaped by the form of gentrification (Smith 2012), the concentration of reinvestment activity (Kreager et al. 2011), the degree of
turnover taking place (Williams Chapter 3), and the initial racial composition of the neighborhood undergoing the gentrification process (Papachristos et al. 2011). Indeed, gentrification results in crime increases in some communities (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011; Smith 2012) and declines in others (McDonald 1986; Kreager et al 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011; Smith 2012; Williams Chapter 3).

How internal crime changes affect crime rates in adjacent communities remains speculative in the absence of empirical investigation. It could be that the benefit of crime declines in some gentrifying communities permeates into surrounding communities through the diffusion of crime control mechanisms (Clarke & Weisburd 1994). Alternatively, crime control efforts in gentrifying areas may simply displace crime by pushing it to nearby locales (Barr & Pease 1990). In the event that gentrification translates into crime increases, spatially proximate areas may also experience an increase if the problems brought about by reinvestment spill over neighborhood boundaries (Morenoff et al. 2001). Conversely, gentrifying neighborhoods may serve as community hotspots that attract crime away from surrounding areas, thus reducing crime around the periphery (Brantingham & Brantingham 1982).

Given that local neighborhood conditions shape community outcomes, the effects of gentrification on adjacent crime levels may depend upon the ability of communities adjacent to reinvestment activity to defend themselves from crime displacement or to effectively draw upon any social control benefits associated with the urban reinvestment of their neighboring
community. The present study is an exploratory pursuit that considers these possibilities by examining the relationship between gentrification and external crime shifts in St. Louis communities during the 1990s. Specifically, this study assesses how reinvestment activity in one neighborhood influences crime levels in surrounding areas and considers how the economic configuration of neighboring communities conditions the relationship between gentrification and crime.

The paper begins with a discussion of the concept of spatial interdependence and its place in the criminological literature. In the following section, I offer a brief overview of the empirical literature on gentrification and neighborhood crime, taking note of attention afforded to the extracommunity impact of reinvestment activity. Next, I explore how reinvestment in one neighborhood can affect crime in adjoining areas and how these consequences may be conditioned by the ecological context in which gentrification occurs. I then outline the data and research methods employed to examine the dynamic between gentrification and external crime rates. I conclude with a discussion of the findings from my research, emphasizing the practical and scholarly implications of these findings for neighborhoods in close proximity to gentrification efforts and for future research on urban reinvestment.

**Spatial Interdependence of Community Crime**

A relatively new approach in criminology is the application of Tobler’s (1970: 236) first law of geography—that “everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things”—to the study of crime. It has long been established that
community characteristics—including concentrated disadvantage and social isolation—shape crime outcomes through their impact on community processes associated with collective efficacy, as well as informal and formal social control mechanisms (Shaw & McKay 1942; Bursik & Grasmick 1993; Sampson & Wilson 1995; Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson 2012). Because neighborhoods are embedded within larger ecological contexts and are linked together by social, economic, and political processes that transcend neighborhood boundaries (Sampson 2013), the conditions and outcomes of a given neighborhood also influence what takes place in proximate communities (Heitgerd & Bursik 1987; Cohen & Tita 1999; Smith et al. 2000; Morenoff et al. 2001).

Research shows, for instance, that the effects of neighborhood resource deprivation spill over, resulting in elevated homicide levels in peripheral areas (Mears & Bhati 2006; see also Baller et al. 2001; Browning et al. 2004). Similarly, research links homicide with spatial proximity to neighborhoods with high violent crime rates in Chicago (Morenoff et al. 2001; Griffiths & Chavez 2004), Pittsburgh (Cohen & Tita 1999), and St. Louis (Rosenfeld et al. 1999; Kubrin & Weitzer 2003b). These studies consistently demonstrate that neighboring homicide rates impact violence even after accounting for intracommunity predictors of violence. Property crimes also appear to be vulnerable to diffusion processes as residents living in communities adjacent to areas with resident burglars experience a heightened burglary risk (Bernasco & Luykx 2003).

Just as community crime can be consequential for surrounding neighborhoods, efforts to control crime in a particular area may influence the spatial distribution of criminal activity.
Research exploring the effectiveness of policing initiatives in high crime areas—or hotspots (Brantingham & Brantingham 1982; Sherman et al. 1989)—has examined how efforts to curb criminal activity in certain areas can affect crime levels in surrounding places. Some suggest that police interventions in hotspots helps alleviate crime problems in the targeted sites (Sherman et al. 1997; Ratcliff et al. 2011) as well as in proximate places, presumably through the diffusion of crime control benefits from one community to another (Clarke & Weisburd 1994; Braga 2001).

An alternative argument, however, warns that crime reductions in one place can lead to the worsening of crime problems in nearby neighborhoods. Crime displacement refers to the redistribution of crime across space based on changes in crime in a given geographic unit. Crime control projects aimed at one area may move crime “around the corner” to spatially proximate places (Barr & Pease 1990; Cohen & Tita 1999; Mears & Bhati 2006). This idea is reflected in Reppetto’s (1976: 167) query: “Given the differential or no reductions in the offender population, will not the foreclosure of one type of criminal opportunity simply shift the incidence of crime to different forms, types, and locales?” The crime displacement hypothesis suggests that criminal activity spills over into neighboring communities, which provides a viable alternative to the diffusion hypothesis’ emphasis on crime control benefits spilling over to neighboring communities.

In this paper, I show how the diffusion and displacement hypotheses can be used to explore the interdependence of community crime within the context of gentrification in St.
Louis City during the 1990s. Both of these hypotheses are predicated on gentrification first translating into a crime drop for communities undergoing the reinvestment process.

Although gentrification can lead to internal crime rate increases in some situations, research rather consistently reports that gentrification efforts in the 1990s—which were more comprehensive than previous waves of gentrification—resulted in crime reductions for many communities (Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011; Smith 2012). Moreover, previous research relying on the data used in this study reveals a general drop in crime, particularly violence, in gentrifying communities (Williams Chapter 3). As such, focus of the present study is on the potential impact of local crime declines on peripheral communities.

**Gentrification and Community Crime**

Research consistently has shown that gentrification affects neighborhood crime levels, with urban reinvestment translating into crime reductions in some gentrifying neighborhoods, particularly during the third wave of reinvestment in the 1990s (Kreager et al. 2011) in non-black communities (Papachristos et al. 2011) undergoing a moderate degree of reinvestment (Williams Chapter 3). While the literature on gentrification and intracommunity crime has advanced to the point of understanding that the relationship between neighborhood reinvestment and crime is conditioned by structural and temporal factors, very little is known about the effects of gentrification on neighboring crime rates. McDonald (1986: 196) recognized the possibility that gentrification can have consequences for surrounding communities, asserting that “[a] truly comprehensive study of the effects of gentrification upon crime rates and criminal behavior would need to examine the entire...”
ecological balance of larger parts of the urban landscape.” This challenge remains largely unmet, with the exception of studies that consider circuitously spatial interdependence by controlling for autocorrelation in regression models. Kreager and colleagues (2011) include a spatial error term, which accounts for the influence of spatially-correlated, unmeasured predictors. In doing so, they treat spatial interdependence as a form of statistical “disturbance” that can result in biased parameter estimates if omitted. In this sense, autocorrelation is assumed to be a purely methodological concern (Anselin et al. 2000; Baller et al. 2001; see also Kubrin & Weitzer 2003a).

Other scholars have introduced more theoretically-driven controls for spatial interdependence. Anticipating that the correlation of community crime rates is explained—at least in part—by diffusion processes across neighborhood boundaries, researchers have included a spatial term that accounts for the effects of external crime on crime in a particular area. The statistical significance of this term—expressed as the average crime levels of all adjacent communities—suggests that crime levels in one neighborhood are somewhat dependent on the criminal activity occurring in spatially proximate places (Taylor & Covington 1988; Williams Chapter 3). While this analytic technique is useful for isolating the impact of gentrification within a single community by controlling for external influences on local crime, it does not address explicitly how the changes concomitant with gentrification in one neighborhood affect crime rates around its periphery. Thus, gentrification scholarship is limited in its ability to speak to the ecological reach of the consequences associated with urban reinvestment, especially as it pertains to contiguous crime rates.
The present study addresses this shortcoming by articulating and assessing hypotheses regarding the relationship between gentrification in one place and crime in spatially proximate communities. Prior studies have shown that urban reinvestment affects community crime levels (McDonald 1986; Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011; Williams Chapter 3), but the extent to which these shifts in crime are consequential for adjoining areas is an empirical question left unanswered. Using reinvestment activity as a predictor of external crime counts, I account for the spatial interdependence of neighborhood crime within the context of gentrification. The following section explores the theoretical underpinnings that help elucidate links between urban reinvestment and adjacent crime.

**Gentrification, Spatial Interdependence, and Community Crime**

The most common approach to the criminological study of gentrification is based on the conceptualization of urban reinvestment as part of a cycle of community transformation, whereby gentrification represents a rebirth of the urban core (Taylor & Covington 1988; Kreager et al. 2011; see also McDonald 1986). Although not typically understood as a crime control initiative among academics, gentrification is often promoted and justified politically on the grounds that it helps mitigate crime problems in the urban core. Specifically, proponents of urban reinvestment use the promise of decreased crime to defend the process of gentrification against criticisms that it causes the displacement of low-income (and often minority) residents and exacerbates residential segregation (Hampson 2005; Vigdor 2010; see Goldberg 1998; Wyly & Hammel 2004; Slater 2006; Atkinson 2008 for criticisms). The
possibility that the crime control benefits are consequential for adjacent communities has not yet been considered in gentrification research.

Social control research exploring the spatial interdependence of crime primarily highlights how crime control and prevention strategies (e.g., increased surveillance, police raids, and crackdowns) affect the distribution of criminal activity within neighborhoods. Given that crime rates are correlated across large geographic areas (Morenoff et al. 2001; Sampson 2013), the reach of crime control strategies can be broadened and applied to the study of crime across contiguous neighborhoods, even if the influence of reinvestment on nearby areas is a byproduct of the process, rather than its intention. If gentrification results in internal crime declines, it—like the policies directly aimed at repairing crime issues—can affect the spatial concentration of crime across neighborhoods either by diffusing potential benefits offered by reinvestment or by displacing crime problems to other communities.

It may be that gentrification leads to crime reductions in surrounding areas through the diffusion of its social controls. In the event that gentrifiers rely heavily on police to control crime and disorder, police presence will increase in the general vicinity of reinvestment. Police patrols and responses to calls for service amplify the visibility of formal control efforts within and around gentrifying communities, deterring offenders who perceive a heightened risk of getting caught for illegal behavior. Further, contiguous neighborhoods may benefit from a gentrifying community within their district if police come to view the general area in a more favorable light and act accordingly with heightened attentiveness and
a sense of urgency (see Klinger 1997). If there are diffusion effects of crime control, neighborhoods adjacent to gentrifying areas will experience drops in crime rates due to increased police surveillance and responses to crime, perhaps independent of the internal conditions of these areas. The presence of enhanced community controls associated with gentrification may be particularly advantageous for proximate communities lacking effective social controls within their own neighborhood boundaries because these are the areas in most need of change (Anderson 1990; Sampson & Wilson 1995; Kubrin & Weitzer 2003b). That is, the diffusion of control benefits may be more pronounced in adjacent neighborhoods characterized by the types of structural disadvantage typically associated with weak social controls.

1a. Control Diffusion Hypothesis: Crime decreases in gentrifying communities will be associated with crime decreases in surrounding areas.

1b. Unequal Control Diffusion Hypothesis: Crime decreases in areas peripheral to gentrification will be particularly pronounced in areas of concentrated disadvantage.

Alternatively, potential crime displacement outcomes related to gentrification may be linked to the removal—forced or otherwise—of marginalized incumbents. If residents are being pushed out of the neighborhood, and the displaced individuals are those responsible for some—if not most—of the reported crime in the area prior to reinvestment, spatial shifts in crime distribution are possible. As McDonald (1986: 195) observed, “Just as even the
displaced poor must live somewhere, the displaced criminals must also move on to find new
targets” (see Felson & Boba 2010 for a critique of this perspective). Offenders are likely to
reestablish their patterns elsewhere if they continue to experience limited access to legitimate
opportunity structures (Merton 1938; Cloward & Ohlin 1960), act in accordance with the
street code (Anderson 1999), or relocate to areas of disadvantage that lack adequate informal
and formal social controls (Bursik & Grasmick 1993). The available evidence indicates that
many displacers settle in neighboring communities that are even more economically
vulnerable than their previous neighborhoods, further concentrating poverty and other forms
of disadvantage (Curtis 2003; Freeman 2009). This not only reinforces the contention that
some crime displacement is probable, but it also signals to researchers and proponents of
gentrification as a crime control policy that they should anticipate crime increases in areas
bordering gentrifying neighborhoods. This is particularly true if the neighboring community
is disadvantaged, thereby lacking internal resources to control incoming crime and criminals.
The possibility of displacement effects is also contingent upon the interplay between police
resources and idea of victim deservedness. If the police come to see gentrifiers as deserving
of their attention and, consequently, allocate disproportionate resources to gentrifying
neighborhoods, surrounding communities could suffer from the impending reduction in
responsiveness, especially if these adjacent communities are already seen as helpless
(Klinger 1997).

2a. Crime Displacement Hypothesis: Crime decreases in gentrifying
   communities will be associated with crime increases in surrounding areas.
2b. **Unequal Crime Displacement Hypothesis**: Crime increases in areas peripheral to gentrification will be particularly pronounced in areas of concentrated disadvantage.

**Present Research**

This study assesses these competing hypotheses by examining the extent to which the reinvestment that took place in St. Louis neighborhoods during the 1990s influenced crime fluctuations in adjacent communities. St. Louis offers a context especially suited for ecological research in general and the study of gentrification, more specifically. First, this site allows for the analysis of neighborhood-level social phenomena. St. Louis City has seventy-nine neighborhoods that have been defined primarily by history, culture, and immigration patterns. These factors are more substantive determinants of geographical bounds than those used to delineate census tracts (e.g., physical markers), making neighborhood data more meaningful in the study of community social interactions, processes, and social controls. Further, neighborhood boundaries and identities have been relatively consistent over time given the “divorce” of the city from St. Louis County in 1876, which greatly restricted the expansion prospects of the city (Sandweiss 2001; Gordon 2008). These neighborhood boundaries are reinforced by community organizations and institutions like The Metropolitan Police Department of St. Louis City, which generates crime reports, in part, at the neighborhood level.
Scholars have criticized the use of large units of analysis, like neighborhoods, in the study of spatial interdependence as they pose a threat to the identification of external effects. If the repercussions associated with reinvestment are reserved only for a few block radius, the use of neighborhoods as the buffer zone (Bowers & Johnson 2003)—or “catchment area” (Weisburd et al. 2006)—any influence gentrification has on adjoining areas may be obscured by what is happening in the sections of the community untouched by reinvestment’s reverberations (see Weisburd & Green 1995; Brantingham & Brantingham 2000). Research demonstrating the spatial dependence of crime across census tracts in St. Louis hints that this may not be the case in this particular site (Kubrin & Weitzer 2003b).13

Gentrification researchers have cautioned against the use of neighborhood data on the grounds that these geographic divisions are too large to detect the gentrification process, especially if reinvestment is occurring in subsets of the neighborhood (Marcuse 1985; 1986). However, data obtained at smaller units of analysis (e.g., street blocks) may not accurately reflect the reality of community life. As Sampson (2012: 362) asserts, “Social processes like community reputations, politics, organizational networks, and service allocation...do not fit the push by some to analyze ever-smaller slices of neighborhoods or places.” These larger ecological factors shape the ways in which residents understand and respond to gentrification and, thus, affect crime rates through their influence on neighborhood interactions and social controls. Further, gentrification—though often concentrated in particular places (see Kreager

13 Rosenfeld et al. (1999) also find evidence of spatial diffusion in their study of youth homicide in St. Louis, though their analyses were focused on block groups, which are substantially smaller than neighborhoods.
et al. 2011)—is generally promoted in entire communities in an attempt to reclaim and rebrand them even if problem areas persist (see Deener 2007). Though reinvestment activity is not necessarily visible on every block of a neighborhood, interviews with residents in a gentrifying neighborhood in St. Louis suggests that its presence is recognized and the threats associated with it are felt throughout the community (Williams Chapter 5).

Data and Measures

Dependent Variables. The primary outcomes of interest in this study are external total, violent, and property crime counts as captured by official data supplied by the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. Although these reflect crimes known to the police rather than actual criminal activity, the use of official data is the methodological precedent set by gentrification scholars (McDonald 1986; Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011).

External total crime counts for each neighborhood are calculated by summing the number of reported crime incidents (violent and property) between 1991 and 2000 in all neighborhoods with shared boundaries and dividing by the number of contiguous neighborhoods included in the study. The number of crimes in each neighborhood is averaged over three-year intervals (1990-1992 and 1999-2001) to adjust for crime fluctuations and minimize measurement error (see Mears & Bhati 2006; Morenoff et al. 2001; Papachristos et al. 2011). To explore the possibility that the effects of gentrification on neighboring crime counts vary by crime type in St. Louis, as they have in other cities.
(McDonald 1986; Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011), I analyze violent and property crime independently. Violent crime counts encompass murder, rape, robbery (with or without a weapon), and aggravated assault (with or without a weapon). Property crime counts include burglary, larceny, auto theft, and arson. These counts are also averaged over three years to reflect crime changes between 1991 and 2000.

**Eligibility for Reinvestment.** Before gentrifiers can reinvest in a given area, the neighborhood must undergo a period of disinvestment and deterioration. I use the threshold employed by Galster and Peacock (1986) to determine which St. Louis communities were ripe for gentrification during the 1990s, a time during which gentrification was more pervasive and complete than in previous decades (Kreager et al. 2011). Neighborhoods are eligible for reinvestment if, in 1990, the percentage of residents with a college education was less than the city median, the median household income was less than 80% of the city median, and the median home value was less than the city median. Though filtering the data in this way does not include measures of the pace or extent of decline before 1990, it identifies neighborhoods that were socioeconomically depressed compared to their counterparts and, in doing so, helps to ensure that gentrification is not confused with incumbent upgrading or other types of urban revitalization initiatives. Neighborhoods are dichotomously categorized as eligible or not eligible for gentrification in 1990.

**Neighborhood Change Index Score.** Once eligibility for gentrification is determined, it is necessary to identify the neighborhoods that experienced growth between 1990 and 2000 in
ways often associated with gentrification. To capture the multidimensional character of the gentrification process, I include indicators of both compositional and physical transformation reported by the Census Bureau. *Compositional change* is measured in terms of decadal differences in: population size, the percentage of the population who is college-educated, the percentage of residents employed, the proportion of employed residents who work in managerial or professional positions, the proportion of dwellings the are occupied by their owners, the percentage of people living in poverty, and median household income. *Physical change* is measured by considering the differences in median property value and median rent value between 1990 and 2000. Using GIS software, I aggregate all of these census measures from the block level to the communities recognized by the city of St. Louis. Thus, the level of analysis for this study is a neighborhood rather than a census block, tract, or equally arbitrary spatial delineation. Although seventy-nine neighborhoods compose St. Louis City, only seventy-seven are used in the analyses. Two neighborhoods—Kosciusko and Downtown—

— are excluded on the grounds that they are largely non-residential. Because the mechanisms that likely link reinvestment to changes in crime are based on community relationships, non-residential areas fall outside the scope of the study (see Crutchfield 1989; Warner & Pierce 1993; Clear et al. 2003). These neighborhoods were also excluded from the study that serves as a reference for the current research (Williams Chapter 3).

---

14 There are not enough residents in Kosciusko to draw any conclusions about gentrification. Downtown, according to the measures employed in this study, would be considered a depreciating neighborhood.
Previous index construction in the study of gentrification has consisted of summing simple change scores between two temporal points for each variable and dividing by the number of indicators included in the formula (Ley 1986; 1996; see also Eckerd 2011). This method proves problematic when using change scores with different scales of measure (e.g., changes in percentage of home owners and change in median household income) that require standardization because the meaning of positive and negative values is altered when the values are standardized.\footnote{15} As such, I calculate z-scores for each variable for both 1990 and 2000 and then subtract the z-score for each indicator in 1990 from its z-score in 2000. This value represents the change in z-scores, or degree of change in standard deviations from the decadal means. Positive scores indicate general growth on that indicator but are not necessarily over the city mean. Negative scores, conversely, indicate general decline. These scores are combined into an index by summing them and dividing by the number of

\footnote{Whereas a change score reflects degree and direction of neighborhood change, its standardized value, or z-score, represents the degree of change relative to the population mean. Consider, for example, the disparate meanings in change scores and z-values for income differences between 1990 and 2000. A negative change score would suggest a decrease in median income for the neighborhood; a negative beta value would suggest that the change in median income for the neighborhood was below the change for the city as a whole. It could be that a neighborhood improved on indicators of neighborhood change (positive change score) but continued to lag behind the city mean during that time (negative z-score). As such, standardized change scores could confuse growth with decline, rendering them inaccurate measures of gentrification. This is an important consideration because it would not be surprising for neighborhoods to undergo revitalization and remain below the city average on key indicators of wellbeing, especially during the earliest stages of transition.}
indicators and used as a measure of overall neighborhood change, referred to as the 

*neighborhood change index score*.  

**Gentrification.** *Gentrifying* neighborhoods are those that were eligible for gentrification in 1990 and experienced growth according to the neighborhood change index score. All other neighborhoods are deemed non-gentrifying.

**Gentrification Score.** Some analyses include a quantified measure of gentrification to explore how the degree of gentrification shapes changes in external crime over time (1991-2000) as well as external crime outcomes (2000). Specifically, the neighborhood change index score described above is used for all neighborhoods considered gentrifying as a continuous measure of improvement, or a *gentrification score*. The higher the value on this score, the greater the degree of reinvestment that took place between 1990 and 2000. The non-gentrifying neighborhoods receive a gentrification score of zero.

---

16 Most neighborhood change index scores included all nine indicators. However, there were three neighborhoods missing median rent data and five neighborhoods sans median property value information. All of these areas were non-gentrifying communities according to their scores on other indicators.

17 The gentrification score is also used to differentiate among non-gentrifying neighborhoods. Areas that were eligible for gentrification but did not experience growth, including those that were stable (*n*=2), are considered *impoveryed neighborhoods*. *Appreciating neighborhoods* are those that were not eligible for gentrification and experienced growth over the decade. Finally, neighborhoods that were not eligible for gentrification but declined or experienced no improvement between 1990 and 2000 are considered *depreciating* neighborhoods. Using the formula $z=(b_1-b_2)/\sqrt{(SE_1^2+SE_2^2)}$ (see Clogg et al. 1995; Paternoster et al. 1998), comparison of the effects of impoverished versus appreciating neighborhoods, appreciating versus depreciating neighborhoods, and impoverished versus depreciating neighborhoods revealed no statistically significant differences in adjacent crime changes across these community types, thus reaffirming the decision to aggregate these neighborhoods into a single category.
Concentrated Disadvantage. The initial ecological condition of neighborhoods that proceeded any changes occurring during the 1990s is measured in terms of the degree of concentrated disadvantage, which is a composite measure consisting of three indicators of community deprivation in 1990: the percentage of residents who are black, the percentage of residents aged twenty-five years or older who are unemployed, and the percentage of residents who live in poverty. These percentages are converted to z-scores and then summed and averaged per adjacent neighborhood. Interaction terms between concentrated disadvantage and the gentrification dummy, as well as the gentrification score, are included in some models to explore the potential conditional effects of reinvestment on adjacent crime fluctuations articulated in hypotheses 1b and 2b.

Controls. Four control variables are included in each set of analyses. The first is population size, measured as the average number of residents living in all adjacent neighborhoods between 1990 and 2000. Because the dependent variables of interest are all crime counts (or changes in crime counts over time) rather than crime rates, it is necessary to control for the number of people living in each neighborhood. This method allows for a meaningful comparison of crime outcomes and crime changes across neighborhoods with varying population sizes without introducing a correlation between predictors (e.g., percent of college-educated residents) and the dependent variables (e.g., crime rates) that would result in biased estimates (Bollen & Ward 1979). In order to account for disparities in the number of adjacent neighborhoods, adjacent population counts are summed for all adjoining areas and then divided by the number of neighborhoods.
I also include a measure of previous crime levels in each model to account for regression toward the mean. That is, I control for the tendency of areas with higher crime rates in the past to experience greater declines over time (McDonald 1986; Morenoff & Sampson 1997; see also Kreager et al. 2011). While some have used residualized change scores to incorporate the influence of prior crime (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; see also Bohrnstedt 1969), this methodological technique compounds the standard error by introducing two sources of error in one variable (Bollen & Ward 1979). The control employed in this study avoids this issue and provides a more precise estimate of the relationship between gentrification and crime by isolating the effects of reinvestment during the period of interest. The models include the average total crime rate in 1990 for all adjacent neighborhoods as a measure of prior crime. ¹⁸

The third control variable is meant to isolate the effects of reinvestment in a particular community on adjacent neighborhoods by accounting for the structural changes occurring in peripheral areas. External neighborhood change is calculated by averaging the sum of the neighborhood change scores (see above) for all adjoining neighborhoods. Although this technique grants equal weight to each neighborhood regardless of its degree of adjacency (see Heitgerd & Bursik 1987), it allows for an assessment of how reinvestment in one area

¹⁸ Unlike the dependent variables of interest, the prior crime control variable is not averaged over three years. There are two reasons for this. First, crime data for the 1980s were not available. Further, averaging 1990 crime rates using data from 1989, 1990, and 1991 would have introduced a correlation with any dependent variable also containing 1991 crime data.
affects crime levels in peripheral places independent of the community-level changes—whether growth, decline, or both—occurring outside its bounds.

To account for the strong correlation between the age composition and community crime outcomes, a control for age configuration is included in all models. Age composition is represented by the percentage of residents aged twenty-five years or older in 1990, averaged over the number of neighborhoods that share a boundary with gentrifying communities.

**Analytic Strategy**

Using Ordinary Least Squares regression, I assess the extent to which gentrification shapes adjacent crime in terms of decadal changes in total, violent, and property crime counts between 1991 and 2000. The first analysis examines adjacent crime changes and outcomes for gentrifying and non-gentrifying communities to speak to how gentrification shapes external crime counts, independent of population size, prior crime rates, adjacent neighborhood change, age composition, and degree of concentrated disadvantage. The second set of analyses explores how the degree of reinvestment occurring in one neighborhood influences crime around its periphery with the inclusion of a quantitative measure of gentrification, or the gentrification score. The third set of analyses includes interaction terms to examine whether the effects of gentrification on external crime are dependent upon the ecological context in which reinvestment occurs. Model 1 introduces an interaction between the gentrification dummy and the extent of adjacent disadvantage to assess whether the presence of gentrification influences crime levels differently based on the
levels of concentrated disadvantage in peripheral areas. The interaction term in Model 2—the product of a community’s gentrification score and adjacent disadvantage—allows for the relationship between the degree of reinvestment and adjacent crime shifts to be conditioned by the relative concentration of disadvantage in bordering areas.

To make sense of the ways in which gentrification affects external crime levels, the results from the adjacent crime analyses are then compared to the findings of analyses assessing the link between urban reinvestment and internal crime. Prior research shows that gentrifying areas in St. Louis experienced violent crime declines larger than those in non-gentrifying communities during the 1990s (Williams Chapter 3). Thus, any changes in adjacent crime are likely attributable to diffusion or displacement processes.

**Results**

**Descriptive Statistics**

The descriptive statistics for the independent and dependent variables are displayed in Appendix IV. St. Louis neighborhoods were surrounded, on average, by decadal community decline according to common indicators of community wellbeing employed in this study. At the same time, these neighborhoods experienced a drop in crime around their peripheries. Specifically, total crime dipped in adjacent communities by an average of 148 incidents, equating to 70 property offenses and 78 violent offenses. The disaggregation of neighborhoods reveals some key differences between gentrifying (n=20) and non-gentrifying
(n=57) communities. Although the differences in the means of adjacent sociodemographic change between these neighborhood types is not statistically significant, areas of reinvestment were more likely to be spatially situated near communities also experiencing some type of growth. However, gentrifying neighborhoods were more proximate to higher levels of concentrated disadvantage than non-gentrifying areas. Both gentrifying and non-gentrifying communities witnessed crime declines in surrounding areas, but the crime decreases were significantly larger near gentrifying neighborhoods.

**Regression Analyses**

The results of the regression analyses assessing the relationship between neighborhood type and external crime changes are presented in Table 9. Model 1 shows that exposure to gentrification did not result in crime changes between 1991 and 2000 that were significantly different than those in non-gentrifying communities, independent of adjacent disadvantage, population size, prior crime levels, age composition, the degree of external demographic and economic shifts taking place in adjacent areas, and degree of external concentrated disadvantage. Thus, neither the control diffusion nor crime displacement hypotheses articulated in hypotheses 1a and 2a is supported in the first analysis. Instead, it appears that characteristics internal to the adjacent communities—particularly disadvantage and the age composition of the population—are most relevant for understanding changes in crime over time, with areas of disadvantage and those with older populations witnessing

---

19 The mean level of gentrification taking place in St. Louis communities during the 1990s was .23, with the extent of reinvestment ranged from .03 to .52 (not shown).
larger changes in crime than their more advantaged and younger counterparts (compare standardized coefficients for Model 1).

Consistent with these findings, internal dynamics in adjacent communities—disadvantage and age composition—appear to be driving property and violent crime changes documented in Model 2 (Table 9). This model takes into consideration the degree of gentrification, which has a negligible impact on violent and property crime changes. Again, the control diffusion and crime displacement hypotheses (1a and 1b) are unsupported.

The models presented in Table 10 consider the possibility that control diffusion and crime displacement are particularly likely to occur in neighborhoods characterized by disadvantage, as articulated in hypotheses 1b and 2b. These models offer a more nuanced picture of the circumstances in which reinvestment activity is consequential for adjoining areas. The statistically significant interaction between the gentrification dummy and adjacent disadvantage (Table 10, Model 1) for total crime suggests that the effects of urban reinvestment in a particular area on crime levels in adjacent communities are conditioned by the extent of disadvantage in these adjacent areas. That is, gentrification leads to larger changes in crime in peripheral communities where disadvantage is concentrated most. Exposure to gentrification resulted in an average of 58 fewer adjacent crimes for each one unit increase in adjacent concentrated disadvantage with all other covariates being equal. This general pattern holds when crime is disaggregated by type: both property and violent crimes dropped more steeply in disadvantaged neighborhoods near gentrifying areas than in
non-disadvantaged communities that were proximate to gentrification. Specifically, each gradation increase in disadvantage lead to an average of 25 fewer property and 33 violent crimes in areas located near reinvestment activity. Thus, the evidence supports the unequal control diffusion hypothesis (hypothesis 1a), demonstrating that the crime control benefits witnessed in gentrifying areas diffuse primarily to disadvantaged contiguous communities.

The findings for the model introducing degree of gentrification—or the gentrification score—are mostly consistent with those just discussed in supporting the unequal control diffusion hypothesis (Table 10, Model 2). That is, these models show that the degree of gentrification in an area disproportionately influences violent crime drops in disadvantaged neighboring areas, but this unequal control diffusion is not at play in the case of property crimes. When considered in conjunction with the results of the first interaction analyses (Table 10, Model 1) and the findings for the property crime model that did not include the gentrification score-disadvantage interaction term (Table 9, Model 2), these results suggest that gentrification is influential for the control of adjacent property crime in especially disadvantaged communities regardless of the extent of reinvestment taking place nearby.

Discussion

Criminologists have begun to acknowledge both theoretically and empirically that no community is an island untouched by the conditions that surround them. Scholarship exploring the spatial relationships among community crime outcomes suggests that crime levels in one area affect crime rates in adjacent communities (Morenoff et al. 2001;
Rosenfeld et al. 1999; Kubrin & Weitzer 2003b) and that efforts to control crime in a given locale can fuel crime increases (Barr & Pease 1990; Cohen & Tita 1999; Mears & Bhati 2006) or declines (Clarke & Weisburd 1994; Braga 2001) for peripheral places. Even with this insight, researchers have been somewhat silent as to how gentrification, as a type of community transition and a potential crime control initiative, shapes crime outcomes in adjoining neighborhoods. The attention afforded to spatial interdependence issues in the gentrification literature has been limited to the use of statistical controls aimed at isolating the influence of reinvestment activity on internal crime levels (Taylor & Covington 1988; Kreager et al. 2011). The present research serves as the first attempt—to date—to examine explicitly how gentrification affects the distribution of crime across neighborhoods.

The results of this study indicate that the decadal declines in violent crime associated with gentrification in St. Louis communities during the 1990s (see Williams Chapter 3) influenced adjacent communities differentially, based on the level of disadvantage of the nearby neighborhoods. Specifically, the internal crime control seemingly associated with gentrification efforts during the 1990s permeated into some bordering areas, with crime declines being reserved largely for the most economically and socially vulnerable communities situated near areas of reinvestment. That is, crime control benefits appeared to impact the communities in most need of such help.

Viewed through a social control lens, these findings can be interpreted as indicative of the diffusion of crime control benefits emanating from areas of urban reinvestment across
neighborhood boundaries. The amplified social controls that help to alleviate crime problems in gentrifying neighborhoods spill over into some adjacent communities through diffusion processes. These controls may be in the form of formal social controls, which may be strengthened in peripheral areas if they are situated in the same district as gentrifying communities and, thus, are advantaged by the more proactive policing strategies that often coincide with urban reinvestment (Klinger 1997; Kreager et al. 2011). Likewise, proximity to gentrifying neighborhoods can assist in the control of crime for areas not undergoing reinvestment under the conditions of increased police visibility and improved response times to calls for service (Klinger 1997). Informal social control mechanisms—supervision, collective efficacy, and crime reporting behavior—may also be enhanced in adjacent communities if residents work together to build a safer community as a response to nearby reinvestment (Shaw & McKay 1942; Bursik & Grasmick 1993; Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson 2013).

Because the analyses did not include measures of displacement, crime reporting activity, policing practices, or collective efficacy, the warning of other spatial interdependence scholars is applicable to this study as well: “[T]he empirical findings offer little in the way of supporting definitive statements on the exact nature of the processes that influence crime patterns across space” (Tita & Greenbaum 2009: 146). Thus, the interpretations offered here should be considered as a preliminary assessment of the ways in which gentrification can have broader ramifications than currently conceived. It is possible that external crime changes can be attributed to unmeasured community characteristics
unrelated to the urban reinvestment trend. Future inquiries should explore more thoroughly the mechanisms through which urban reinvestment in a particular neighborhood translates into crime changes in adjoining neighborhoods.

The findings of this study also underscore the importance of examining the disparate ecological contexts in which reinvestment activity occurs; ignoring community-level stratification or other important environmental factors can mask the effects of reinvestment on adjacent communities. Although previous research has shown that baseline levels of concentrated disadvantage within gentrifying neighborhoods does not influence the effect of reinvestment on community crime outcomes (Williams Chapter 3), the community conditions shape how those areas respond to gentrification taking place around its periphery. Because areas of concentrated disadvantage often lack the economic, social, and political defenses to safeguard against intrusion—physical or symbolic—these communities are particularly vulnerable to outside influence, whether it is to their advantage or their detriment. In St. Louis, places where disadvantage is concentrated not only benefitted from the crime control functions of nearby gentrification during the 1990s, they did so to a greater degree than less disadvantaged neighborhoods. Communities in other cities may not benefit in this way and, instead, could experience escalated crime levels as a result of exposure to urban reinvestment initiatives.

Future studies should also assess more specifically the breadth of gentrification’s reach across neighborhood boundaries. Because the present study focuses solely on St. Louis
City, it is impossible to assess the degree to which gentrification taking place within the city limits affects the greater metropolitan area as a whole. This may be a particularly restrictive feature of the study in light of evidence from interview data indicating that many residents leaving gentrifying areas in St. Louis are more likely to relocate to economically disadvantaged suburban areas (or “the county”). Further, the reliance on data collected at the neighborhood levels means that the present study is also limited in its ability to speak to crime shifts occurring within adjacent communities. It is unclear how big the area to which crime is displaced—known at the “buffer zone” (Brantingham & Brantingham 1984) or the “catchment area” (Weisburd et al. 2006)—or to which social controls are diffused actually is. It could be, for example, that these effects are most concentrated in the city blocks that border gentrifying neighborhoods. It is also possible that there are countervailing mechanisms within the same neighborhood, with crime displacement occurring in some parts of the neighborhoods and the diffusion of social control benefits taking place in others. If gentrification does lead to crime displacement or control diffusion and these effects are evident in smaller units within a single neighborhood, their effects are even more pronounced than the results of the present study suggest. In such a scenario, the influence of gentrification on external crime would be diluted by the use of neighborhood-level data (see Weisburd & Green 1995; Bowers & Johnson 2003). The fact that there is evidence suggestive of diffusion processes either indicates that the reverberations of gentrification are pervasive throughout individual neighborhoods or are particularly intense in areas within communities. In either case, the findings of this study counter previous claims that
displacement and diffusion effects are generally inconsequential for local crime levels (see Barr & Pease 1990; Braga 2001; Guerette & Bowers 2009; da Matta & Andrade 2011).

Given that this research focused only on gentrification and external crime changes occurring during the 1990s in St. Louis, Missouri, the generalizability of the findings and conclusions discussed in this paper is limited. Future research should consider the link between urban reinvestment patterns and shifts in adjacent crime levels in different contexts, given that gentrification has manifested in a variety of ways that are spatially and temporally specific. Prior criminological studies have found that crime worsened in some areas undergoing gentrification in Baltimore during the 1980s (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989) and in Chicago in the 1990s and early 2000s (Papachristos et al. 2011). Future research should explore the extent to which such internal crime escalations shape crime levels in adjacent communities and the social processes that could explain those relationships. If the upturn in illegal behavior in gentrifying communities is large in magnitude and scope, criminal activity may spread into surrounding areas that are too weak to defend themselves from intrusion (see Mears & Bhati 2006). Conversely, it may be that the internal crime increases reflect a movement in the spatial distribution of crime. That is, some gentrifying communities may become crime hotspots in the urban core, attracting crime away from nearby areas (see Sherman et al. 1989; Brantingham & Brantingham 1999). Even if the effects of gentrification on internal crime changes in other cities are similar to those found in St. Louis, the crime declines following reinvestment activity could lead to different outcomes of neighboring areas. Rather than contributing to the regulation of criminal
behavior in adjacent communities, reinvestment can promote criminal activity in surrounding areas by pushing criminal residents outside their bounds.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned limitations, this study contributes to the criminological literature by marking the first documented effort to bring the issue of spatial interdependence to the forefront of gentrification research. The findings presented here suggest that urban reinvestment does not occur in a vacuum and that consequences of gentrification not only transcend neighborhood boundaries but are shaped by the sociodemographic conditions that encircle it. This is an important consideration for scholars as they attempt to understand the link between gentrification and community crime outcomes and for city planners as they strategize ways to address the crime problems of the urban core.
CHAPTER 5: GENTRIFICATION AND THE SOCIAL-MECHANISTIC THEORY OF COLLECTIVE EFFICACY

Recent years have witnessed a rebirth of gentrification research in the field of criminology. Although researchers are beginning to ask nuanced questions about the consequences brought about by gentrification, empirical inquiry has been limited largely to quantitative analyses examining crime rate shifts in gentrifying neighborhoods. However, little is known about the social processes linking gentrification to community crime changes. Discussions of the link between urban reinvestment and community crime generally rest on processes articulated in social disorganization theory, with an emphasis on the social mechanisms specified in Sampson’s (2009) social-mechanistic theory of collective efficacy.

Briefly stated, social disorganization theory holds that structural features of neighborhoods—including concentrated poverty and ethnic heterogeneity—and natural community evolution—including urban sprawl—can influence the strength of community relationships, local institutions, and informal controls in ways that influence crime rates (Shaw & McKay 1942/1969; Kasarda & Janowitz 1974; Bursik & Grasmick 1993; Sampson 2012). Communities undergoing processes of changes, for instance, may experience residential disinvestment, resulting in elevated crime rates as community residents interact less with one another and with local institutions. However, McDonald (1986) cautioned decades ago that the processes of disinvestment and decreased informal controls at the heart

---

20 This research was supported by a dissertation improvement grant from the National Science Foundation (Award 1334165).
of social disorganization theory may not be particularly suitable for understanding the link between gentrification and crime because gentrification does not reflect natural community transition. Instead, gentrification is an intentional restructuring of neighborhoods brought about by the manipulation of housing markets and commercial developments that result in the influx of middle-class residents into economically vulnerable areas. Further, community relationships may be strained during the process of gentrification as the efforts among gentrifiers to build a livable community counter the attempts made by incumbent residents to preserve aspects of their community while benefiting from reinvestment efforts. Given the distinct character of the gentrification and the unique social conditions it creates (Wyly & Hammel 1998), exploration of community relations and their impact on crime rates from a different criminological perspective is worthy of detailed attention.

The social-mechanistic theory of collective efficacy, because it relaxes the assumption that extensive and intimate social ties are necessary for effective community social control, can be particularly useful for understanding crime shifts within the context of gentrification. This theory proposes that a key requirement for community crime control is the development and expression of collective efficacy, or the shared belief in a neighborhood’s ability to achieve a desired outcome coupled with an active sense of engagement on the part of local residents. Fostered through and embedded within repeated interactions, mutual trust, and shared goals, collective efficacy reflects the activation of social ties—both weak and strong—to promote social order at the community level.
(Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson et al. 1999; Morenoff et al. 2001) and produce positive community outcomes, including low crime rates (Sampson 2009; 2012).

In this chapter, I assess what community residents in a gentrifying neighborhood have to say about community relationships, emphasizing the core requirements for collective efficacy—repeated interactions between community residents, mutual trust between residents, and shared goals for community among residents—as well as what residents in the community have to say about the community’s ability to reinvigorate itself and their sense of engagement in the process. In this way, I explore the extent to which the processes articulated in the discussion of collective efficacy by Sampson and colleagues (Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson et al. 1999; Morenoff et al. 2001) may require modification for understanding how gentrification impacts communities and their crime changes over time.

Methods

Site

The chosen site for the present research is a gentrifying neighborhood—referred to as Northcity—in St. Louis, Missouri. Although residents do not always define the neighborhood as one undergoing gentrification, Northcity meets the criteria specified by academics in the study of urban reinvestment (see Glass 1964; Smith & Williams 1986; Ley 1996; Wyly & Hammel 1999; Millard-Ball 2002). Like many communities in old industrial cities, this area has experienced decades of decline resulting from deindustrialization, suburbanization, and white flight and the subsequent devaluation of property values. These conditions primed the
neighborhood for the reinvestment activity that has occurred in Northcity over the past
decade. Such activity—driven by grassroots organizations, outside investors, and government
funding—has resulted in both residential and commercial development that has been
translated into noticeable changes to the social and physical landscapes of the neighborhood.

Data

The data come from semi-structured interviews with thirty-three (33) people who live
in or work within the neighborhood bounds of Northcity. Twenty-eight (29) of the
participants are community residents, three (3) are community leaders, and two (2) are
employed in the neighborhood. Participants differed on a number of characteristics including
age, race, socioeconomic status, length of residence and residential status (e.g., renter, home
owner, or squatter), as shown in Table 11. Gentrifiers are middle-class residents who moved
into the neighborhood as it began to undergo reinvestment, incumbents are residents who
lived in the community prior to gentrification efforts, and newcomers are lower-income
residents who migrated to the neighborhood in search of subsidized housing.

Initial respondents were selected through personal contact with the author during
visits to the neighborhood, and subsequent participants were recruited through a snowball
sampling technique. As a white female, the author encountered few issues when enlisting
white and/or middle-class residents for participation. Minority, working-class and
impoverished residents were hesitant to take part in the study, often because of suspicions
that the author was a social worker or an affiliate of the police department. After a participant
noted that he was more trusting of the researcher after seeing her tattoos, she used these tattoos as a point of entry with subsequent interviewees. Their fears were further assuaged by the $20 cash incentive each participant received as compensation for their time. Some participants were initially too nervous to speak candidly at the beginning of the interviews but seemed to be more forthcoming with their perspectives after they were reminded of the confidentiality and anonymity clauses of the participation agreement.

The interviews—ranging from twenty minutes to two hours—took place over the course of four weeks in the spring and fall months of 2013 at respondent homes, local businesses, or community center rooms. Some of the main topics that were covered included perceptions of how the neighborhood has changed; to what degree the changes are viewed as beneficial or harmful for the community and themselves; the frequency, content, and quality of interactions among community residents, community leaders, and local police; feeling of personal safety; and hopes for the neighborhood’s future. The conversations between the interviewer and study participants were digitally recorded with permission from the respondents, though four respondents (one resident, one community leader, and both employees) asked to speak privately without the recording device. In this case, the author took extensive notes as documentation. Transcriptions of recorded interviews and notes from the off-record interviews served as the material for coding, which was done solely and manually by the author. Employing an inductive coding technique (Charmaz 2006), the author analyzed each line of transcription (or notes) to extract common themes that emerged from the interviews as they related to the study’s foci.
Northcity as a Gentrifying Community

During the 1990s, Northcity was just another forgotten neighborhood left to self-destruct in the core of St. Louis. The streets were lined with vacant houses and piles of brick and debris served as reminders that businesses once thrived in the community. These shops, though, have long been abandoned and boarded up in the hopes of deterring vandalism, drug dealing, and squatting. The mere mention of the neighborhood to people from other parts of the city—or, worse, the county—elicits negative responses and warnings to never go there alone during the day and to never, under any circumstances, venture into the area at night. Crime rate data from the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department corroborate the expressed concerns in that crime rates were much higher in Northcity than they were in other St. Louis neighborhoods. Urban sociologists consider physical dilapidation and elevated crime rates as key for making areas ripe for gentrification because crime and deterioration drive down property values, creating the potential to profit from gentrification if investors can use the proximity to downtown, the appeal of historic houses, and cheap property values to lure buyers (Galster & Peacock 1986; Helms 2003; Curran 2007; Formoso et al. 2010).

Large-scale reinvestment began in Northcity during the early 2000s with the rehabbing of the neighborhood’s central business area to market the area for commercial development. Unlike many gentrification projects, which are driven by outside speculators and investors, the Northcity initiative was the result of a grassroots effort on the part of the neighborhood’s primary neighborhood organization. This group also was responsible for a successful campaign to save historic houses from demolition, restoring them to livable
conditions, and working to bring new residents to the area to inhabit them. A well-known outside investor also took an interest in the neighborhood during this time, buying up houses throughout the neighborhood with the expectation that he could profit once the neighborhood developed more completely.

**Structural Changes**

**Residential Turnover**

The traditional gentrification narrative offered by urban sociologists and criminologists describes a scene in which middle-class and upper-middle class, (usually) white residents move into a run-down neighborhood and eventually replace the poor and working-class—often minority—residents who settled in the area following its economic and structural decline. Gentrification, by definition, necessitates the in-migration of middle-class individuals, but the extent to which their presence leads to the physical displacement of incumbent residents is largely debated (Millard-Ball 2002; B. Brown et al. 2004; G. Brown et al. 2004; Hamnett 2009). Further, because displacement can take different forms (Marcuse 1985; Millard-Ball 2002; Martin 2007; Davidson 2008), defining, identifying and differentiating it from organic in-migration and out-migration patterns is an arduous task (Hamnett 2003; Slater 2006). Indeed, displacement has proven so difficult to capture that scholars have compared displacement research to “measuring the invisible” (Atkinson 2000b: 163). This study suffers the same difficulties in attempting to pinpoint the extent of physical displacement, or the removal of residents through direct or indirect means, in Northcity. The available evidence suggests, however, that there has been minimal displacement of
impoverished and working-class residents, even after nearly a decade of reinvestment activity. Additionally, the size of the black population—particularly the underclass black population—has grown alongside reinvestment.

There appear to have been three principal factors that have worked to protect incumbent residents from being pushed out of the neighborhood. First, high vacancy rates in the area prior to reinvestment meant that middle-class gentrifiers could move into the area without usurping the homes of incumbents. Second, local property values—and, thus, taxes—remained low enough in the area that most economically vulnerable residents have not been priced out of the community and forced to find housing in other neighborhoods. Finally—and perhaps serving as the strongest safeguard against displacement—initiatives for incumbents to stay put were offered by the primary community organization responsible for driving most of the development in the neighborhood. Representatives of this organization repeatedly expressed the desire to attract newcomers without threatening the livelihood of current residents. To achieve this goal, they allotted some renovated spaces for low-income residents, encouraged the renovation of vacant structures for middle-class migrants, and worked with another organization to build additional infill units to house impoverished and working-class people. As such, the resident mobility occurring in Northcity is characterized largely by the movement of middle-class couples and lower-income renters into the neighborhood, rather than by incumbents moving out.
Population Heterogeneity

Northcity differs from the stereotypical gentrification site in that it was racially diverse prior to the commencement of reinvestment activity. Census data reveal that whites and blacks had equal representation in 1990 and, though the size of the black population increased over the next decade, many white residents continued to call the neighborhood home. Most of the white people who remained through decades of decline had either grown up in the neighborhood or had migrated years prior because of their ties to local church organizations concerned with the condition of the neighborhood and the desire to address community problems. Despite a shared socioeconomic situation among residents, the neighborhood is segregated along invisible lines demarcating “white areas” and “black areas.” Gentrification has helped to break down these spatial racial barriers as white newcomers have bought, renovated, and moved into houses next to black incumbents. Likewise, income-based housing units occupied by newer black renters stand in the center of the community, not just along the neighborhood’s boundary as has been historically the case.

Reinvestment efforts have contributed to the socioeconomic heterogeneity of the neighborhood. Before reinvestment, the neighborhood was considered economically downtrodden for white and black residents alike. In 2000, for example, the median income for Northcity was about half of the city average at just over $13,000, and the poverty rate for the neighborhood was nearly double that of St. Louis City. The median income grew to over $16,000 in 2010 (adjusted for inflation). While this may not seem like a steep increase over the course of a decade, it marks the first time that there has been economic improvement in
the area since mass exodus following the deindustrialization and suburbanization movements beginning in the 1970s. It is noteworthy that this increase has occurred even as lower-income residents have moved into the area to the new subsidized housing units available through restoration and new building activities. It also has occurred without taking into consideration a group of new, economically privileged residents, who are not represented in census data.

The official census data do not capture the economic privilege of anarchist squatters in Northcity who have settled in a number of vacant houses owned by an outsider investor. These “new-day hippies” (Resident 3) are predominately white, educated folks from middle- and upper-middle class backgrounds. They migrated to the neighborhood primarily because of their ties to an urban farming community, the gardening opportunities that the vacant lots in the area afford, or their desire for “an experience and a thrill” (Resident 2) living in a “wild west”-esque environment (Resident 7). The squatters express a great disdain for county-living and view Northcity as a place where they can escape the chains of suburbanization. In other words, they see Northcity as an “emancipatory” environment created by gentrification (see Byrne 2003; Florida 2003; 2005). Paradoxically, these squatters are philosophically opposed to the process of urban reinvestment and openly criticize efforts to redevelop the area.

Although the squatters live in abandoned houses without electricity and running water, they remain economically and socially privileged by their access to money when it is needed and their ability to leave the neighborhood when they wish, unlike the prototypical
homeless squatter. Resident 5 offers a summary of the socioeconomic condition of the anarchist squatters: “Yeah, they would be like, ‘I am living in a place—I’m pooping in a bucket ‘cause, you know, I don’t want to pay for it’, but then they will roll up on a thousand-dollar bike.” An employee at a local establishment (Employee 1) corroborates this insight, noting that she has witnessed these squatters pull “daddy’s debit card” from their socks to pay for their goods. Their economic standing, then, makes them most comparable to the middle-class gentrifiers moving into the neighborhood, even if they do not consider themselves part of the gentrification movement.

Collective Efficacy

**Prerequisite: Social Interactions**

*Inter-Group Interactions:* The diversity promoted by supporters of gentrification in Northcity does not appear to have translated into more frequent or more substantive interactions across racial or economic lines. Several white respondents were quick to describe the neighborhood as “close-knit,” describing their exchanges with their neighbors as plentiful and friendly. However, these residents primarily recount their interactions with people economically and racially comparable to themselves. Resident 1 (white, middle-class, gentrifier), for example, likened the neighborhood to “Sesame Street,” discussing Northcity as a community in which residents know and socialize with one another. Later in the conversation, however, she asserted, “I would say I’m pretty familiar with the neighborhood, but I don’t know a lot of the African American families.”
Resident 5 (white, middle-class, gentrifier) normalized the racial divide, opining, “I think a lot of times no matter where you are in St. Louis, typically in north St. Louis, people kinda keep to themselves. You know, like black people hang out with black people and white people hang out with white people.” Likewise, Resident 12 (white, lower-class, newcomer) says, “If the blacks are having their own business going on—whether it is legal or illegal—uh, you know, we stay away from them. The whites do. The blacks don’t—it’s—it’s—we don’t interfere all that much. The blacks just tend to their own and the whites will tend to their own.”

When inter-race interactions occurred, they were described as particularly shallow and instrumental, commonly taking the form of “hellos” when passing on the street or common niceties during business transactions. As Resident 17 (black, lower-class, incumbent) describes, “When I see them, the white people, and you speak to them, they’ll speak back.” While these interactions may be pleasant, they do not resonate with residents in a meaningful manner. An older, white, working-class resident with memories of strong community bonds, commented that interactions across both racial and economic lines are short and “cold,” remarking that many folks are just people living next door, not actual neighbors (Resident 8). When residents described more extensive encounters with others in the neighborhood, they were more tempestuous. Resident 23, a black incumbent resident, recounts a time when one of her neighbors, an elderly white woman, confronted her about the behavior of some neighborhood children—all of whom were black—and used racial epithets to belittle her. Another resident, a white gentrifier, recalls several instances when his black
neighbors complained to him about the noise and debris created as he rehabbed his house (Resident 6).

In addition to acknowledging limited interactions across racial lines, this resident grouped “African American families” into a homogeneous category of unknown. This theme is echoed by others who grouped black resident merely by race, while recognizing differences among white residents that went beyond considerations of race. When asked how he would describe different groups living in the neighborhood, Resident 7 (white, middle-class, gentrifier) classified white residents into three categories: “do-gooder white people, artistic white people, and activist white people” while lumping black residents together.21

Black residents, when they were aware of the presence of white residents in the neighborhood, acknowledged socioeconomic differences between the gentrifier newcomers and older incumbents. When describing the black populace of Northcity, black residents distinguished among people based on age, presumably because they perceived all minority residents as being in an economically disadvantaged position. Resident 13 (black, lower-income, incumbent), for example, differentiated between the “youngsters” and the “old heads.” Likewise, Resident 26 (black, lower-income, incumbent) described the demographic composition in Northcity in terms of age, noting, “You have the senior citizens. You have young adults. you have the older adults and stuff like that. So you have a—a mixture of everybody.”

21 Resident 7 quickly recognized that he could not offer much insight about the diversity within the black community.
**Intra-group Interactions**: Despite limited interactions among different groups in the neighborhood, there are strong ties between people within racial and economic groups. Older white residents, who have been in the neighborhood for several decades (some over sixty years), often meet at a local diner. It is not uncommon to overhear them reminiscing about the liveliness of the neighborhood when they were children playing ball in the street or getting ice cream cones at the corner pharmacy. On the other side of the neighborhood, some of the black residents—mostly middle-aged and elderly—gather behind an abandoned building to drink beer hidden in a paper bags and joke. The white anarchist squatters, too, bond with one another through meditation, gardening, and house parties. This kind of intragroup solidarity is largely missing among young, minority residents residing in the subsidized housing complexes, who repeatedly underscored the pertinence of keeping to oneself and “minding your own business” (Residents 11, 13, 17).

Social ties were exceptionally strong among gentrifiers and between gentrifiers and the primary neighborhood organization. Like the squatters and long-term incumbents, middle-class gentrifiers bonded over shared personal interests and common experiences, which are shaped by their economic (and often racial) positions. But, unlike the other groups, their social ties were also encouraged by the social structures and amenities afforded by reinvestment. The local co-op, the coffee shop, the community gardens, and the strip of new businesses (including an art gallery, a dress boutique, and a dog grooming salon) represented their interests and provided opportunities for them to interact and build ties to one another and to the neighborhood. Community events sponsored by the primary neighborhood
organization, though open to the public, were most frequented and appreciated by middle-class, white gentrifiers.

The sources of social cohesion for this select group of residents also served as bases for the exclusion of other locals, exacerbating the already strained interactions between social collectives. This marginalization of non-gentrifiers manifested itself in several ways. The first is the extent to which residents were aware of the community transformation underway as a result of gentrification. Despite community outreach efforts on the part of the community organization, many low-income, minority residents had no knowledge of the group’s existence or its influence in the neighborhood. Likewise, many of the low-income, minority residents asserted that there had not been any real structural changes in the neighborhood over several decades, suggesting they were oblivious to the commercial development in the neighborhood’s core or the residential revitalization speckled throughout the area. The location of their housing complex, situated near the southern tip of the neighborhood’s boundaries, has kept them isolated from most of the community development. Even just a few blocks can make a large difference in the experiences of residents who often keep to themselves and are accustomed to shopping at businesses outside the neighborhood that are accessible by bus and that are more affordable than some of the more proximate stores catering to gentrifiers.

Even when lower-class black incumbents recognized changes taking place in the neighborhood, they were far less likely than middle-class residents to have patronized new
businesses or to have attended community events, often questioning the utility of these amenities for people like themselves. Resident 18—an impoverished black man—argued, “Them stores there, them ain’t the stores that type of people like my class would go to.” When asked who would go there, he guessed “the rich, or somebody that got the money.”

Perhaps the most vocal critics regarding the usefulness of available resources for the community as a whole are middle-class residents, who acknowledge that they are the primary beneficiaries of such amenities. Resident 4 (white, middle-class, gentrifier), referring to the primary community organization, said that “they try to only invite businesses that only appeal to a very upper-crust set...Nothing’s just your average person, your average consumer. It’s all for the, um, Whole Foods set.” The products and services offered in the neighborhood are often too expensive for impoverished residents to enjoy and, even when they are relatively affordable, they are more expensive than the products at big chain stores. For example, the local co-op sold bananas for $1.29 a pound, which is nearly three times the cost at the closest grocery store. Other residents saw the exclusionary effects of new amenities in both economic and racial terms, noting the exclusion disproportionately affected black residents. Resident 5 (white, middle-class gentrifier) offered this account:

“...if you really want to provide for the community, you can’t build things for the ten percent. The white people are the ten percent. So if you are going to build a grocery store that sells health foods, you know, you are only going to get the ten percent of people going there, you know? The other ninety percent don’t want health food. They want regular food. They want a beauty supply shop...That’s what they want. But [the community organization] is too “hoity toity for that.”
The community organization, though restrictive on the businesses it allows to lease space in the business center, offers various subsidies and services in an attempt to attract incumbents to local events and activities. For example, they loan out gardening tools at their main office for residents interested in working in the neighborhood gardens. When the upcoming chess park debuts next year, they will lend chess pieces to those who do not have their own. Further, the organization went to great lengths to ensure that the grocery co-op was accessible to residents on government assistance by accepting EBT cards as a form of payment. These strategies have not proven successful, as evidenced by the underrepresentation of low-income residents as participants and patrons.

Despite the recognition and reality that the redevelopment occurring in Northcity is not universally beneficial, gentrifiers often framed upgrading efforts, including commercial growth and addition of various amenities, as forms of benevolence. That is, several middle-class white residents conceptualized the gentrification movement as a way to help their impoverished neighbors. Resident 5 said, “[The gentrifiers] often times give those [economic privileges] up to move here and take on low-paying jobs to purposely try to integrate and be more, I guess, self-aware of [socioeconomic differences].” Echoing this sentiment, Resident 2 equated gentrification with philanthropy, stating, “The whole idea of a co-op is a gentrified idea conceptually...It’s a philanthropic endeavor”). 22 He further offered a glorification of gentrification and those who promote it by emphasizing that gentrification efforts aid

22 Although Resident 2 (a white male) grew up in the neighborhood, he aligns himself with the gentrification movement.
impoverished residents at their own inconvenience, noting that, “[The primary community organization] is bending over backwards [by] accepting EBT at the co-op.” By making sense of gentrification in this way, gentrifiers draw a distinction between themselves and their impoverished neighbors, simultaneously reinforcing the “us and them” groupings already evident in social interactions and evoking a sense of superiority that places them in the position to be saviors. Some lower-class residents validate these superiority claims. Resident 11 (black, lower-class, newcomer), for example, suggests that most of the positive changes in the neighborhood can be attributed to a shift in “...the quality of people that you have in the neighborhood now, from then, from being the poor black and the poor whites being here [to more middle-class residents].” In sum, interviews with residents of Northcity suggest that, despite limited interactions across racial and economic groups, there are pockets of interactions within the groups that compose the community.

**Prerequisite: Mutual Trust**

Another theme that emerged in interviews indicates that the development of community-level efficacy is undermined by limited trust among and even within various groups in the neighborhood. Although most respondents did not discuss trust explicitly, some made comments indicating that they are suspicious of others. For example, the description of the author’s conversation with a young black male in the neighborhood as “brave” (Resident 1) hints at a sense of distrust of other residents among gentrifiers. That she was referring to a conversation that occurred in public and in broad daylight suggest that this mistrust—and perhaps even fear—was not influenced by the context in which interactions occur but was,
instead, more generalized and likely grounded in the association of those characteristics with criminality. Of course, when asked outright if they feared their impoverished neighbors, gentrifiers were quick to dismiss the idea of hostility or distrust on their part and project those feelings onto incumbents. Resident 6 (white, middle-class, gentrifier) suggested that gentrifiers were the targets of distrust by incumbents due to “...a huge cultural difference. Um, and I think there’s an inherent suspicion like, why are these people who could afford to live [in a better neighborhood] living [here]?...There’s this inherent feeling...Why would they be living here. They don’t want to live next to people like us.”

Contrary to Resident 6’s account, incumbent residents expressed a more indiscriminate brand of distrust, which translated into limited interactions with most other community members, regardless of socioeconomic status and racial identity. Many of the impoverished respondents reported keeping to themselves and limiting their social interactions because, as Resident 17 (black, lower-class, incumbent) noted, “It’s best that you do that...because they [others] think you in they business...trying to see what they doing or something.” Likewise, Resident 24 (black, lower-class, incumbent) commented on how “people close their doors” so they are not bothered with issues that do not concern them. Most incumbents, likely because many did not recognize the existence of white residents in Northcity, did not openly express distrust of their white neighbors. Instead, they were leery of white people in general. Several respondents mentioned fears of racism in the form of police harassment, job discrimination, and interpersonal discrimination.
There were, however, pockets of trust among residents in Northcity. Among gentrifiers, a collective sense of trust was rooted in their commitment to rebuilding the community and was reinforced by the overrepresentation of middle-class newcomers as organizers of and participants in community events. Similarly, the anarchist squatter group was also characterized by communal confidence as many members of this group had established ties to one another prior to their migration to Northcity. Their shared economic and racial characteristics served as a source of trust of anarchists among gentrifiers, despite their absence in community affairs and illegal squatting behavior. Specifically, gentrifiers often assumed that the anarchist squatters were also interested in improving community conditions by preserving abandoned houses and, thus, saw them as allies. Resident 6 (white, middle-class, gentrifier) offers, “I think most people cheerlead [the squatters] as underground heroes...They’re keeping these buildings from being destroyed and they’re seen in a very positive light. And they have a lot of tacit community approval.” However, this trust was not reciprocated by anarchist squatters, who are philosophically opposed to the process of gentrification and those who promote it.

**Prerequisite: Shared Goals**

Another prerequisite for collective efficacy in a community is that residents of the local area have shared goals or a share vision for their community and its well-being. Interviews with the residents of Northcity indicate that community-level efficacy is undermined by incongruity between the community goals and priorities held by gentrifiers, on the one hand, and by incumbents, on the other. When asked about their hopes for the
future, most residents said that they would like to see more commercial development. However, there are clear economic (and, thus, racial) differences in the types of establishments residents hope to see in the neighborhood. A large proportion of low-income residents want a discount shop and a chain grocery store to move into the neighborhood, which would relieve many of them from the thirty-minute bus ride (one-way, with a transfer) they currently take to access these resources. Some gentrifiers express their awareness of these wishes, but do not see accommodating them as advantageous for the community as a whole. As Resident 7, one of the gentrifiers most concerned about the negative consequences gentrification can create for impoverished (and minority) incumbents, acknowledged, “Even if [the primary community organization] listened to the black residents, it could mean box stores like Dollar General, which I don’t want either.” Instead, gentrifiers desire more locally-owned businesses to fill the vacancies in the neighborhood’s shopping strip to reflect a more refined community atmosphere. This demonstrates a clear disconnect between what gentrifiers say they want to do to help their less affluent neighbors and what they are willing to tolerate in their community. Resident 14—who distanced herself from other working-class, black residents—aligned her interests for the community with those of the middle-class gentrifiers, remarking, “I don’t think [bringing in a dollar store] would be a good idea if you’re planning on bringing the area up.” The very notion of “improvement,” then, relied on the presence of middle-class residents and businesses that cater to middle-class preferences.

For many impoverished residents, the desire for commercial development was intertwined with hopes of job opportunities. This group, possessing few marketable skills,
has faced decades of structural barriers that have restricted access to employment and, more importantly, prospects for earning a living wage. Economic deterioration has left residents thirsty for work for the betterment of themselves and the community. Resident 18 (black, lower-income, incumbent) commented about the link between chronic joblessness and crime: “I’ve felt that a lot of black guys, a lot of black men felt trapped. They—they feel—it’s a way they feel that they can’t get nowhere so they do [criminal] things to make it.” The requests for jobs, however, have not been realized in the wake of reinvestment in Northcity, given that the new businesses in the community are operated by their owners and, in some cases, one or two employees.

An overwhelming majority of impoverished residents contend that the greatest need in the area is a community center or other source of entertainment for local youth. Because many attribute the persistent crime and drug problems in the neighborhood to the idle hands of teenagers, they view this type of resource as necessary to make the community safer. The art galleries and community gardens offer the opportunity for recreation, but these amenities are either not well-known among impoverished residents or are not particularly attractive options for the lower classes and youth. Future plans for the neighborhood include the construction of a chess park and a dog park in the neighborhood’s center—i.e., additional amenities that likely will not draw crowds of teenagers or impoverished residents. Resident 18 (black, lower-income, incumbent) exemplified this point when he remarked that the white folks (likely members of the anarchist squatting group) meditating in a local garden were
“weird,” as did Resident 26 (black, lower-income, incumbent), who noted, “You know, a lot of kids had never seen a garden.”

Incumbent parents were also displeased by the lack of educational opportunities afforded their children. Although there are two schools—one charter and one magnet—located within Northcity’s boundaries, the schools primarily serve people who live outside the neighborhood. Community Leaders 1 and 2 expressed recognition of the need for neighborhood schools, but schools were not for gentrifiers, many of whom did not have children or had children too young for school. There have been talks of another charter school moving into the neighborhood, but there would be no slots reserved for local children and, thus, no guarantee that it will actually serve the community. Further, the school would emphasize sustainability, an agenda most aligned with the interests of gentrifiers that may potentially and unintentionally, exclude incumbent residents. The differences in the visions and needs of middle-class gentrifiers and lower-class incumbent residents suggest that, even if they were willing to work together for the common good, there is little consensus about what constitutes “the common good.” Instead, there are pockets of consensus, and the consensus reached by gentrifiers appears to be driving the direction of the community with respect to commercial development and recreation.

**Collective Efficacy: Shared Belief in the Community’s Ability to Reach Goals**

A key feature of collective efficacy is that community residents have a belief in the community’s ability to reach its goals. Some residents of Northcity offered a particularly
optimistic outlook for their community. Respondent 1 (white, middle-class, gentrifier) stated, “I would say [the neighborhood is going to] good places. The change that’s been happening, I see it coming...there continues to be growth, building stabilization, community building. So on some level, there is definitely good in change and good change is happening.” More often, though, residents expressed uncertainty about the future of Northcity, noting that there are no guarantees for a neighborhood in the early stages of transition. As Resident 4 (middle-class, white gentrifier) noted, “People are trying to change the neighborhood...but I’m still wondering whether it’s going to continue to improve or kind of backslide.” Although ambivalent about the trajectory of the neighborhood over the next decade, Resident 4 suggests that residents and investors have the capacity to be efficacious and reshape the neighborhood. This efficacy, however, was attributed primarily to wealthier residents, the main community organization, and outside investors. Incumbent residents were largely missing in discussions of community change among gentrifiers and community leaders, except in the context of their remaining in the neighborhood as a result of affordable housing efforts and benevolence on the part of gentrifiers and local organizations.

Neighborhood incumbents, having witnessed decades of decline, were far more skeptical about the possibility of change in Northcity. As one resident offhandedly commented after her informal interview, “It doesn’t matter who moves here. It ain’t ever gonna change” (Resident 29: black, lower-income, incumbent). When impoverished, minority residents talked about the potential for change, they—like the gentrifiers—typically placed the neighborhood’s future in the actions of middle- and upper-middle class white
people, either those moving into the neighborhood or those investing their capital in local businesses and other development projects. Resident 26 (black, lower-income, incumbent) anticipated, “It’s like, you know, you think about if the area’s going to be enhanced then there, you know, we may—we—we’re, you know, we may not—those of us that stay here, they may want to buy out this area...they may want us—to push us out further.” Elaborating on the people potentially responsible for this investment, Resident 18 suspected, “…I always thought that the white people wanted this north side on account of it would be down—closer to downtown for they ballgames, and the—and the football games...They got so much community going on down there for theyself, so they figure, ‘Well, we’ll stay close as we can get.’” Resident 21 (black, lower-income, incumbent) shares this view, suggesting, “They’re going to eventually restore this whole—within this whole area...Now the low- and middle class, they’ll push us out of the way, you know...so I know it’s not going to be long when they say, ‘Hey, y’all gotta move.’” These sentiments illustrate a discounting of their collective agency in shaping the neighborhood and their place in it. Some residents recognized the limited power that they possessed to bring about change. Resident 18 (black, lower-class, incumbent) said, “I can’t read or write real good, but if I did I would write the Mayor.” Others, like Resident 28 (black, lower-income, incumbent) invoked theological determinism to make sense of community transformation over time: “I’ll be here until God tells me to leave.”
In sum, there are pockets of efficacy in Northcity, wherein the most advantaged residents are more optimistic about the community’s ability to reach its goals, or at least the goals that they have defined as the most important for improving the community.

**Collective Efficacy: Active Sense of Engagement in the Community**

Another element of collective efficacy is a sense of communal engagement that can be measured by the degree of place attachment, or “the positive affective, cognitive, and behavioral bonding with places” (B. Brown et al. 2004: 305; see also Brown & Perkins 1992), among residents. The level of place attachment, unlike the other indicators of collective efficacy, did not serve as a marker of distinction between gentrifiers and incumbents. Several incumbents described Northcity as “just a place to keep a roof over your head” (Resident 19) and “what we can afford [right now]” and expressed a strong desire to move to “better” areas. However, this sentiment was not shared by incumbents who grew up in the neighborhood, like Resident 8, who began to tear up when offering the following account of what it has been like to watch the neighborhood deteriorate over time:

“When you see just devastation and you see the—the roofs fall in on the businesses, places boarded up...you know, it’s just—it hurts. It really, really depresses you. It hurts like there’s no more tomorrow. Because the neighborhood is not where I live; it’s more than that.”

Much of the attachment to the neighborhood for the older generation was rooted in fond memories of what the neighborhood once was rather than what it is now. Gentrifiers, conversely, were more invested in Northcity for what it can be in the future. Specifically, their attachment was both facilitated and reinforced by their investments in the
neighborhood’s physical structures, like historic buildings and the numerous community gardens (see Comstock et al. 2010). As Resident 6 offered, “I met a bunch of people up there at the [primary neighborhood organization] and, um, started, um, like seeing this network of people. Every person touched a building, touched several buildings, touched other people, and, um, there’s sort of a social fabric.” Despite sharing a sense of attachment with the neighborhood, gentrifiers and older incumbents, did not find solidarity in these bonds, likely because of their different sources.

Summary

Reinvestment in Northcity, though diverging from the traditional gentrification model, has produced a small degree of residential mobility (though not noticeable displacement), as well as economic and racial heterogeneity. Just as scholars have cautioned, navigating the same physical space did not necessitate interaction and the formation of strong social ties between incumbents and incomers (Williams 1986; Zukin 1987; Butler & Robson 2001; see also Lees 2008). Instead, interactions rarely occur across groups residing in the community and—when they do—they are generally short in duration and instrumental in content. These limited interactions translate into pockets of trust, conflicting goals, and a lack of efficacy among residents to realize such goals.

Rather than being a foundation for community unification, the process of reinvestment has been both driven by and has catalyzed divisive attitudes and ostracizing practices to the detriment of impoverished residents that have been thinly veiled by
inclusivity rhetoric. The result has been the bifurcation of consciousness, with residents who are working to rebuild a decaying neighborhood living alongside residents who do not know a neighborhood is being built. As such, Northcity lacks community-level collective efficacy and, potentially, the ability to effectively enact community social controls.

**Crime Changes Accompanying Gentrification**

According to the social-mechanistic theory, the social conditions under which collective efficacy is fostered—repeated interactions, mutual trust, and common goals—and collective efficacy itself—expressed in the communal belief that the neighborhood can achieve desired objectives and engagement among residents working toward the realization of those goals are important for community crime control (Sampson et al. 2009). This contention has held up to empirical scrutiny, with the most efficacious neighborhoods enjoying relatively low levels of violence compared to other types of neighborhoods (Sampson et al. 1997; Morenoff et al. 2001; Sampson et al. 2009; Sampson 2012; see also Pratt & Cullen 2005). As the case of Northcity demonstrates, however, communities undergoing the gentrification process can be characterized by pockets of efficacy—of varying degrees—within different groups that have competing interests (e.g., gentrifiers, incumbents, newcomers, squatters). The question remains as to whether and which pockets of efficacy are sufficient for meeting the goal of community safety.

An examination of the change in Northcity’s crime rates between 2000 and 2010, the decade during which reinvestment activity was particularly pronounced, reveals a general
decline in crime. Specifically, there was an average drop of 45 index crimes per 1,000 residents. This decline, however, was evident only for property crimes, as violent offenses escalated slightly by 1.5 incidents per 1,000 residents. Crime rates for St. Louis city, on average, also declined between 2000 and 2010, though the decrease was lower than that in Northcity at 37 crimes per 1,000 population. These declines occurred for both violent and property crimes by 2 and 35 incidents per 1,000 residents, respectively. The differences in these crime changes between Northcity and St. Louis City are not statistically significant.

An analysis of crime shifts each year within the decade exposes a more nuanced picture of how crime changed over time as Northcity underwent residential and commercial reinvestment. There is no discernible pattern as to how crime wavered annually, with both property and violent crimes increasing some years and decreasing others. Averaging the annual crime fluctuations for each year between 2000 and 2010 shows that property crimes declined by an average of 8.54 incidents per 1,000 residents per year. As was the case with decadal crime changes, the average property crime declines in Northcity were larger than those for St. Louis City, which averaged a yearly drop in 3.5 property offenses per 1,000 residents. Violent crimes, conversely, netted an increase in Northcity of .49 incidents per 1,000 residents per year, compared to a decrease of .31 incidents per 1,000 residents per year for the city as a whole. Regardless of any crime declines that occurred over the decade, Northcity continued to have statistically significantly higher crime rates than the city’s average for each year between 2000 and 2010. The average crime rate in Northcity was 37
violent crimes and 150 property crime per 1,000 population per year, compared to 21.5 violent offenses and 109 property offenses.

Explaining Crime Changes

Table 12 shows that violent crime rates increased—albeit modestly—in Northcity over the decade. One could view these increases as indicative of a lack of collective efficacy in the area; however, the discussion of community relationships among residents highlights the potential limitations of this interpretation and suggests a more nuanced link between gentrification and community violence. Rather than simply hindering the development of collective efficacy necessary for crime deterrence, urban reinvestment initiatives actually may produce conflict between gentrifiers and incumbents. Urban sociologists have warned that gentrification can fuel hostility as residents battle over physical, financial, and symbolic control of the neighborhood (Barry & Derevlany 1988; Redfern 2003; Davidson 2008). These hostilities may be expressed in criminal ways, taking the form of gang intimidation and violence and general assault (Heitgerd & Bursik 1988). Although no one directly linked clashes between gentrifiers and incumbents to criminal activity, an encounter described by Resident 6 (white, middle-class, gentrifier) demonstrates how conflict can arise in gentrifying areas: “There had been a major incident, where, um, pit bulls had gotten out of the yard [of an impoverished family]. And, um, had attacked a [new] resident in the neighborhood. And [the news] had gotten to the [other] neighbors...and they actually got animal control to come take the pit bulls away. And they got put down because they tried to kill a human and another dog...That led to major conflict and when I moved in, there were fake tombstones in the
backyard of the house...that read, ‘Murdered by Neighborhood.’” This scene illustrates how the actions of a few gentrifiers can be viewed as representative of the community as a whole, creating a clear division between them and long-term residents and the potential for conflict that can serve as the basis for violent crime.

Hostilities ignited by gentrification can also manifest in the form of property crime, particularly arson and vandalism (Heitgerd & Bursik 1988), as was evidenced in Northcity. Several residents noted the frequency of arson in abandoned buildings, but the true motives of these fires is merely speculative. More clearly linked to gentrification are the incidents in which vandals decried the presence of gentrifiers and, more specifically, an outside investor with a great amount of influence over the neighborhood’s trajectory. For example, graffiti was used as a means through which to communicate with this investor, suggesting that what he owns in Northcity is “a lot of land for one man.” These incidents, however, appear to be extremely isolated and have not contributed to any major escalations in property offenses. Rather, property crime rates—unlike violent crime rates—have been generally declining alongside reinvestment activity in Northcity.

Although there are clear sociodemographic factions within the neighborhood, there exist pockets of informal social controls produced by strong ties among newcomers and the few incumbent residents, particularly those who have been engaged in community events and restoration efforts. These individuals expressed a strong desire to look out for their neighbors and emphasized the importance of community watch programs to keep the neighborhood
safe. They communicated with one another via e-mail about potential problems and met monthly at the primary community organization’s headquarters, along with a police representative, to discuss current crime numbers and strategize ways to promote community safety and improve the milieu of the community. Resident 5 (white, middle-class, gentrifier) describes a proposal put forth by the local community organization meant to encourage neighborhood self-regulation by rewarding residents for reporting their neighbors for various city code violations: “It was like you would call in and get an award or something if you called in on your neighbors ‘cause their gutter was done or something.” Although this initiative failed to pass, it reflects a general concern among some residents for Northcity’s reinvestment goals and the willingness to act as social control agents. This efficacy is also evident in the readiness among these residents—and, consequently, local police—to overlook the behavior of the anarchist squatters. Their occupancy may be illegal and their electricity may be stolen, but their presence in the neighborhood means fewer vacant buildings and more eyes and ears in the community to help monitor what happens there and contact the police when necessary. To many, it was a welcomed change to see those abandoned houses show signs of life in the form of small gardens and functioning doors and windows. The only time the police have intervened and forced the anarchist squatters to relocate was when there was pressure from the outside investor who wanted them out of his property. These informal and parochial social controls, however, appear to be predominately concentrated near the neighborhood’s center—where gentrifiers and local businesses are most likely to be located—potentially restricting their geographical reach.
Gentrifiers may supplement any gaps in the informal social control mechanisms with more formal means to enforce moral and legal codes in the neighborhood. This group of residents generally has lower levels of legal cynicism and, thus, is more willing to call the police to report crime than their incumbent neighbors, as they are more trusting of law officials and the criminal justice system (Sampson & Bartusch 1998; Kirk & Papachristos 2011). Police may have ignored Northcity in the past (see Klinger 1997), but the economic and political clout of gentrifiers has allowed them to demand public services in the form of increased visibility and quicker responses by the police department. Gentrifiers, incumbents, and newcomers alike reported a more noticeable police presence in the neighborhood over the past few years, drawing attention to proactive patrol activity and the opening of a police substation along the neighborhood’s commercial strip. Further, they credited the police with helping to bring about change to the community. Resident 22 (black, lower-income, newcomer) suggested, “[The police] show their face a lot and they—you know, they circle the neighborhood a lot and they arrest and get these people that, you know, got the crime going on and doing all this negative stuff around here...I think they contribute a lot to the fact that it has gotten better.” Others, like Resident 24 (black, lower-income, incumbent), were more skeptical about the effectiveness of police in creating a safer environment but acknowledged the possibility for crime deterrence with intensified formal controls: “You know, so I won’t say that it’s too much safer, but...with the police patrolling the way they do, you know..[criminals] may think twice.” This is more likely to be the case for property crimes as they are less spontaneous and emotionally-charged than violent offenses and, thus,
are easier to prevent through proactive policing. Of course, greater police presence is not always a safeguard against victimization. One of the residents living in a subsidized housing unit highlighted this point: “My house has been broken into. And it’s so funny because it’s like, “Oh God. I see these police all the time. Where were they when this happened? “ Because it happened in broad daylight” (Resident 14: black, lower-income, newcomer).

While both gentrifiers and incumbents generally reported feeling safer as a result of intensified police attention, the primary beneficiaries of these changes were a matter of contention among residents. Gentrifiers were more likely to make generalized statements that painted a portrait of a trustworthy police force that is there to protect and serve all residents, regardless of socioeconomic status or racial identity. They conceptualized proactive policing as universally beneficial because a safer neighborhood for them must also make for a safer environment for others. Conversely, impoverished residents—black and white alike—experienced a reality in which the police represented an oppressive entity that had a vested interest in serving only a certain sector of the populace. Resident 8, an older white incumbent, said, “The local police look at us as a shit-box [because we are poor].” Expressing a more racialized interpretation of law enforcement behavior, Resident 20 (black, lower-class, incumbent) argued, “[The police] don’t care if I get robbed...because I’m a black man. They are there to protect the whites.” A few gentrifiers, too, recognized a potential bias in police activity, suggesting that the police are more visible “probably because of [a developer] bringing all the money in...People have money and power. You make a phone call...and the next thing you know, of course, cops pop up. They start patrolling more”
(Resident 3). Resident 5 (white, middle-class, gentrifier) echoed this sentiment, claiming that there are more patrol cars driving through the neighborhood “cause there is more white people.”

For many incumbent residents, this lack of concern for minorities served as the basis for discriminatory practices in the form of police profiling, harassment, and brutality. Those affected most by police intervention are primarily young, black men who look suspicious for one reason or another. Resident 9 (black, lower-income, incumbent) described how her son’s physical appearance shaped his interactions with the police: “Because my son has long dreads and he had his shirt off and we were riding in the car and I guess they thought we were—thought I was a young girl, driving in the car with two guys and when they pulled us over, it was like, they wanted to see IDs.” Likewise, Resident 16 (black, lower-income, incumbent) described what often happened when her son came home from college to visit: “I think there have been times where they target people because my son, I know he’s been targeted three times...[because] he is a young, black male driving a Lexus...[and they think] he’s a drug dealer. When he drives my car, he never gets pulled over. Never.” The stories told by Resident 22 (black, lower-income, incumbent) regarding the experiences of her son suggest that those on foot are also not impervious to police harassment. Her son has been profiled so many times while walking the streets of Northcity—usually heading to work or to the convenience store—that she has termed the phenomenon “walking while black.” Just a few months prior to our interview, Resident 22 had to hire a lawyer because her son was detained in the local jail for four days without being charged with a crime simply for not
having an identification card on his person when the police stopped him and demanded to see it.

The young black men of Northcity long have had targets on their backs, leaving many with extensive arrest records and stints in local prison. Rather than just trying to locate and detain wanted fugitives or crime suspects, however, beat officers are now more preemptive in their approach to policing Northcity. By stopping those they deem suspicious, the police are attempting to stop crime before it happens and make the neighborhood a safer place to live, work, and visit. The result has been a heightened sense of persecution among incumbents that reinforces their general distrust of the criminal justice system. Interestingly, some long-term residents interpreted such police treatment as a necessary evil to keep their streets safe and were hopeful for more policing in the neighborhood, even if it meant the victimization of their sons.

Minorities were not the only residents in Northcity to talk about perceived injuries inflicted by law enforcement officials. A few gentrifiers, too, claimed to be the targets of police intervention after being pulled over late at night while driving through the neighborhood. Resident 4 recounted this encounter with the police: “I think it was from stopping at the gas station...one time and I was being followed [by the police] most of the way. It was like, “What are you even doing up in this neighborhood.” “I live here.” “No, you don’t. What are you doing up here?” “No, I live here.” “Oh.”” Resident 5 described a similar scene, saying “The first three or four months of living there, I got pulled over about three
times after dark. I owned an older Ford Ranger, so I felt like I was being profiled because I was pulled over for no reason. Didn’t run a light, didn’t fail to stop, didn’t do anything...And the police came to the window and said, “What are you doing up here?” And I said, “I live up here...and that didn’t make me very happy.”

The contexts in which these residents were stopped by the police differ substantively from those experienced by their black neighbors. White men were deemed suspicious only when they were driving older cars and driving around Northcity after dark, giving the police the impression that they are outsiders and, thus, must be seeking drugs. Once they proved that they belonged there, however, the gentrifiers were dismissed and sent on their way. Minority residents, however, were not shielded by their residential status in the neighborhood. Instead, it—in conjunction with their race—was used as an indicator of their criminality and the likelihood that, at any given moment, they were engaging in illegal behavior. The police, like many gentrifiers, treat minority residents—the very residents who have lived in the neighborhood for decades—as outsiders and threats to the community. Such treatment can exacerbate the racial and economic divide among residents, foster hostility, and potentially help to explain the violent crime increases that have occurred in Northcity over the past decade.

**Conclusion**

As gentrifying communities transition, impoverished incumbents and middle-class gentrifiers find themselves living in close proximity to one another. Criminologists have
recognized the potential regulatory problem associated with population turnover and heterogeneity, suggesting that these factors act as barriers to the development of collective efficacy, which is necessary for community crime control (Sampson et al. 2009). In Northcity, the influx of middle-class residents did not produce a comprehensive sense of collective efficacy among residents. Instead, pockets of efficacy developed among the middle-class residents responsible for the gentrification efforts. While this efficacy was sufficient for the control of property crime—which generally declined over the course of a decade—it was not effective for reducing rates of violence in the neighborhood. These findings beg a question not clearly answered by the social-mechanistic theory of collective efficacy (Sampson et al. 2009): just how “collective” does collective efficacy have to be in order to have regulatory power at the community level?

The answer, at least in this particular St. Louis community, appears to lie in the power dynamics at play. Specifically, efficacy concentrated among the most advantaged residents in a neighborhood may be sufficient for the control of community crime. Although criminological research has demonstrated a link between income inequality and crime increases (Sellin 1938; Vold 1958; Dahrendorf 1959; Turk 1969; Blau & Blau 1982), Northcity provides an example of a neighborhood where such inequality can create a context in which residents draw upon their relative privilege to reshape the neighborhood in ways that suit their desires and to demand greater social services that aid in their community improvement efforts. The social, economic, and political privilege of the gentrifying class makes up for the fact that reinvestment initiatives have severed or weakened social ties,
created financially- and geographically-bounded social networks, and undermined the
development of collective efficacy that transcends racial and economic divides. Social
networks need not be extensive and collective efficacy need not be comprehensive in order to
control crime so long as the ties that exist among the most powerful residents are particularly
strong and they present a united front in terms of community goals and the means through
which to accomplish those objectives. In Northcity, this is particularly evident in the ability
of its middle-class residents and outside investors to successfully demand greater police
resources and more stringent policing practices. Such demands have meant a new zero-
tolerance policy for public disorder issues, the opening of a police substation in the
neighborhood’s core, more frequent police patrols, and improved responsiveness to calls for
service.

While these enhanced formal social controls—supplemented by pockets of informal
social controls—have been instrumental for bringing property crime levels down in
Northcity, they have been less effective in the deterrence of interpersonal violence. This
finding aligns with the expectations of social disorganization theory (see Bursik & Grasmick
1993), but it diverges from the empirical precedent showing a negative relationship between
collective efficacy and violence (Sampson et al. 1997; Morenoff et al. 2001; Sampson et al.
2009; Sampson 2012), as well as the finding noted in Chapter 3 that gentrification in St.
Louis generally led to violent crime declines and property crime stability during the 1990s.
The regulation of community violence, then, may require more comprehensive collective
efficacy, whereas only pockets of efficacy are required for the control of property offenses.
The disparate findings for property and violent crimes also highlight the importance of examining individual neighborhoods to tease out the intricate differences that exist across gentrifying communities. The process may be so individualized that general patterns will be extremely difficult for criminologists to ascertain. As the criminology and urban sociology literatures demonstrate, the form and timing of gentrification and the conditions in which it occurs are important factors that shape community crime outcomes (Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011; Smith 2012; Williams Chapter 3). The violent crime increases and property crime decreases in Northcity, then, represent one possible consequence of urban reinvestment.

Less clear from this research is what happens to crime in adjacent communities as crime rates fluctuate in gentrifying neighborhoods. Chapter 4 suggests that crime reductions in gentrifying communities can lead to crime declines in peripheral areas, especially those characterized by a high degree of concentrated disadvantage. The pockets of collective efficacy and formal social controls important for controlling property crime in Northcity may have enriched the collective efficacy and social controls in surrounding neighborhoods and, consequently, may have aided in external crime declines (Clarke & Weisburd 1995; Sampson et al. 1999; Morenoff et al. 2001; Sampson 2009). Conversely, these declines could result in higher crime levels elsewhere if crackdowns have shifted the spatial distribution of crime rather than deterring it altogether (Barr & Pease 1990). That is, the crime that once occurred in Northcity may have been displaced to other neighborhoods that are susceptible to criminal intrusion. This is a likely scenario in light of evidence that there have been few, if any,
changes to the opportunity structure afforded to the most disadvantaged residents. Future research should explore more thoroughly these possibilities and attempt to elucidate the processes that link gentrification to adjacent crime, as well as the broader ecological ramifications of the violent crime upturn experienced by Northcity. This increase could encourage crime increases in adjacent communities through the process of crime spillover (Morenoff et al. 2001), or Northcity could serve as a hotspot for violence by attracting it away from other communities (Brantingham & Brantingham 1999).

Although the narratives offered by urban sociologists have provided invaluable insight highlighting the gentrification process and its effects on individuals, families, and communities, criminologists have been slow to follow suit. The present research, despite its limitations, encourages the use of qualitative data in the study of gentrification and crime, which has been largely missing since McDonald’s (1986) study of urban reinvestment across the United States. Such data are critical for uncovering a deeper understanding of how individuals understand, experience, and respond to gentrification and, thus, how it influences criminal behavior and attempts to control it (or lack thereof). Criminologists have offered explanations for their empirical findings, but they remain speculative in the absence of corroborative qualitative work.

Sole reliance on quantitative data also hinders gentrification research by giving the impression that any crime changes taking place are influential on the lives of locals in the same ways and in equal magnitude. Gentrification scholarship has clearly demonstrated that
the residential, commercial, and cultural shifts that occur during gentrification favor
gentrifiers (Smith & Williams 1986; Kasinitz 1988; Davidson 2008; Reese et al. 2010;
Betancur 2011). Likewise, recent research shows that crime reductions are reserved for white
communities undergoing the reinvestment process (Papachristos et al. 2011). Yet, the crime
control effects associated with gentrification are assumed to be universally advantageous for
those located within the same neighborhood. This is not the case for those in Northcity; the
price of community safety is paid disproportionately by those who remain the most
vulnerable to crime victimization. Further exploration of the disparate trajectories for
gentrifiers and incumbents can greatly inform conversations about gentrification as a viable
redevelopment strategy by bringing inequality to the forefront of gentrification and crime
studies.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

General Conclusions

This doctoral project aimed to expand our understanding of the gentrification process and its effects on communities from a criminological perspective. Specifically, it was designed to meet five primary research objectives. The first was to offer an operationalization of gentrification, derived from urban sociology accounts, that is specific enough to detect the phenomenon and differentiate it from other types of urban renewal, yet broad enough to allow gentrification to manifest in diverse ways across both time and space. To this end, I defined and operationalized gentrification as a process of structural and compositional transformations, after a period of disinvestment and decline, brought about by the influx of middle- and upper-middle class residents and the privileges with which they come equipped. Heeding research that shows that impoverished white neighborhoods also serve as targets for middle-class migration and that the representation of non-whites among the gentry is growing (Freeman 2006; Bader 2011; see also Kennedy & Leonard 2001), I purposely stray from definitions of gentrification that include racial composition shifts as an indicator of urban reinvestment (Taylor & Covington 1988; Van Wilsem et al. 2006).

The second goal was to employ this operationalization in an assessment of how gentrification affected crime changes and outcomes in St. Louis during the 1990s. The results indicate that gentrifying neighborhoods averaged larger violent crime declines than non-gentrifying areas. Conversely, decadal property crime changes were statistically similar for gentrifying and non-gentrifying communities. Any crime drops occurring in gentrifying
neighborhoods, however, were not large enough to bring their crime to levels comparable to other parts of the city. The analyses for crime outcomes in 2000 suggest that areas of reinvestment remain less safe than non-gentrifying areas and those for 2009 provide a pessimistic picture for the future of these neighborhoods decades after the commencement of reinvestment. These results hold regardless of the initial racial composition of the neighborhood, suggesting that gentrification may not always have differential effects on crime levels for black and white communities (see Papachristos et al. 2011).

The third research objective, closely related to the second, was to examine whether the extent of reinvestment activity influences the relationship between gentrification and crime. Far too often in gentrification scholarship, the phenomenon is treated as a static occurrence rather than a process that unfolds at varying paces and to different degrees over time (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; see Kreager et al. 2011 and Papachristos et al. 2011 for exceptions.). While it is informative to compare the community outcomes of gentrifying neighborhoods to non-gentrifying ones, such analyses do not appreciate the dynamic nature of gentrification and, thus, cannot speak to the differences among gentrifying neighborhoods. I addressed this limitation by using the amount of social and structural change taking place within neighborhoods over time as a quantitative measure of gentrification and examining how the degree of change shaped crime changes and outcomes. Further, I explore the possibility that the effects of reinvestment in minimally gentrifying areas differ from those in communities experiencing more extensive reinvestment activity. The empirical results indicate that the decadal crime declines associated with
gentrification were not contingent upon the extent of reinvestment activity. This conclusion is not to say, though, that the degree of gentrification was influential. Instead, it suggests that the average difference in crime levels over the decade were not related to the degree of change. In fact, the 2000 crime outcome model capture a curvilinear relationship between the extent of gentrification and property crime levels; less gentrifying areas had higher property crime levels at the end of the decade than those undergoing more extensive transformations.

The fourth goal of this dissertation was to initiate the study of extracommunity effects related to gentrification. Scholars have recognized that crime is a spatially interdependent phenomenon (Heitgerd & Bursik 1987; Cohen & Tita 1999; Smith et al. 2000; Morenoff et al. 2001), but empirical considerations as to how any crime changes galvanized by gentrification stimulate crime fluctuations in adjacent areas have been missing in the criminological literature. The exploratory analyses offered here indicate that, under certain circumstances, the impact or reinvestment reverberates through peripheral communities. Specifically, disadvantaged neighborhoods situated near reinvestment activity experienced crime declines, a finding suggestive of the diffusion of crime control benefits across communities (see Sherman 1990; Miethe 1991; Clarke & Weisburd 1994; Braga 2001). Gentrification was less consequential for proximate communities that were wealthier, likely because these areas are protected from outside influence by greater social organization and effective social controls.
The final objective of this dissertation was to elucidate potential processes linking reinvestment activity to community crime changes in a gentrifying neighborhood located in St. Louis, Missouri. Although criminologists have generally use the social disorganization framework to make sense of their empirical findings (Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; Kreager et al. 2011; see also McDonald 1986), the theory may be limited in its ability to fully account for crime fluctuations occurring as a result of the gentrification process. Instead, it is merely anticipated that the social processes predictive of crime rates in disadvantaged areas operate in the same ways in areas of reinvestment. Such logic is faulty given that gentrification, by definition, is an intentional restructuring of the physical and social characteristics of a community, rather than a phase in a cycle of community change. Because the process of urban reinvestment involves the manipulation of the housing and commercial markets (Williams 1986; Bowler & McBurney 1991; Kolko 2009), gentrification is not merely a natural reversal of urban disinvestment and degeneration and the redistribution of the population is not merely the result of a “backward filtering” effect (Smith & LeFaivre 1984; McDonald 1986; Kolko 2009; see also Smith 1996; Millard-Ball 2002). As such, urban reinvestment does not coincide with the image of organic ecological evolution presumed by social disorganization theory (McDonald 1986; Covington & Taylor 1989).

Because it relaxes some of the assumptions providing the foundation for social disorganization theory—including that of natural community progression—and it specifies mediating factors that can explain why social disorganization results in higher crime rates,
the social-mechanistic theory of collective efficacy may be particularly useful for understanding the effect of gentrification on community outcomes, including crime rate shifts over time (see Sampson et al. 1999). The case of Northcity underscores how a strict interpretation of collective efficacy theory in the context of gentrification can shadow the complexity of urban reinvestment and its community-level consequences. Gentrification encouraged both economic and racial heterogeneity and, in doing so, disrupted relationships across the groups that call the neighborhood “home.” During this time, Northcity experienced escalations in violence—but not property crimes—as gentrifiers and businesses catering to their consumption preferences moved into the area.

From a collective efficacy perspective, the increases in violent crime indicate the lack of regulatory power—rooted in incongruent community goals and lack of community engagement to achieve community objectives—necessary for the control of violent crime. While this is the case to some extent in Northcity, there are three factors that render this explanation incomplete. First, pockets of efficacy exist within particular collectives in the neighborhood. Specifically, gentrifiers express a strong sense of trust among themselves, interact with one another both interpersonally and through local community institutions, share common visions for the neighborhood’s future, and engage in activities promoting those objectives. Collective efficacy, then, may need to be comprehensive—insofar as it bridges any sociodemographic divides in the community—in order for social controls to be effective in the deterrence of violent crime.
The finding that gentrification can create a hostile environment as gentrifiers and incumbents battle over physical and symbolic control over the neighborhood suggests that reinvestment may actually encourage violence in some situations (see Millard-Ball 2002; Davidson 2008; Becantur 2011), presenting a challenge to those interested in making the community safer. That is, the presence of gentrifiers simultaneously encourages the very behavior the collective efficacy they express is attempting to deter. Interestingly, a source of their ties with one another—their social distance from incumbents—is also the root of hostility among residents.

Unlike violent crime, property crime rates averaged declines over the decade. The qualitative analyses indicate that such declines may be primarily attributable to the pockets of collective efficacy among gentrifiers and the primary community organization, which often translates into increased reliance on and effective of formal social controls. Gentrifiers express more commitment than their predecessors to working toward building a safer community and are more willing to work with the police to realize this goal. Although the neighborhood battles the reputations scars of its past, the privilege held by gentrifiers means that their demands for increased police attention are more likely to be met (see Butler & Robson 2003; Davidson 2008; Formoso et al. 2010; Kreager et al. 2011), which deters property crime offenses. There is, then, an important interplay of conditions and effects created by urban reinvestment that counter one another and create divergent trajectories for violent and property crime rates.
Academic Implications

Operationalizing Gentrification

This doctoral project has several implications for gentrification scholarship in both urban sociology and criminology. The first is that gentrification is a difficult phenomenon to pinpoint quantitatively (Formoso et al. 2010; see Wyly & Hammel 1999). A large part of this project was devoted to developing a better measure of gentrification. Future research should continue to refine measures of gentrification to ensure empirical consistency and allow for differentiation among gentrifying areas based on degree of reinvestment. Based on the findings from this study, I would warn against the use of single indicators of gentrification, as they may conflate urban reinvestment with other types of neighborhood change (Hammel & Wyly 1996) and, thus, fail to differentiate various component of gentrification.

Although multiple measures are necessary for capturing gentrification, not all potential identifiers of gentrification are universal and, thus, are not always useful. This includes any measure that emphasizes a specific type of community-level cultural shift. Although these changes are inevitable as commercial development begins to reflect the consumption preferences of gentrifiers, the ways in which they manifest are likely to differ depending on demands at the region, state, city, and neighborhood levels, as well as the structural capacities of local buildings. For example, an increase in the number of coffee shops in an area may be a hallmark of gentrification in Chicago (see Papachristos et al. 2011), but not elsewhere. The reinvestment in Northcity demonstrates that the cultural component of gentrification can take many forms, including pet shops, professional offices,
art galleries, and printing presses. The redevelopment of Northcity is reflected in the combination of these businesses; reliance on a single cultural indicator would mean that the gentrification taking place in the area would be overlooked.

Another indicator that should be excluded from a composite measure of gentrification is the displacement, or removal, or lower-class residents (see Marcuse 1986; Atkinson 200b). Although there is evidence that incumbents have been directly and indirectly displaced during the process of urban reinvestment (Marcuse 1986; Newman & Wyly 2006), there are some neighborhoods that have been able to accommodate the migration of the “gentry” without requiring residents to relocate due to high vacancy rates or new-build construction (Wyly & Hammel 1998; B. Brown et al. 2004; G. Brown et al. 2004; Davidson & Lees 2005; see also Hamnett 2009). Displacement, then, should not be framed as an inevitable aspect of the gentrification process (Millard-Ball 2002; Slater 2010). Instead, it should be considered as a potential outcome of gentrification, not a defining characteristic. Changes in a neighborhood’s racial composition, particularly in the form of increased representation among white residents, should receive the same treatment. Of course, gentrification has manifested in this way in many communities across the country as white gentrifiers move into predominately black neighborhoods (Marcuse 1985; LeGates & Hartman 1986), which are more likely to be economically depressed areas ripe for reinvestment efforts (Oliver & Shapiro 1995; Massey 2002). However, it is important to note that white communities are also susceptible to gentrification (see Papachristos et al. 2011) and that black gentrifiers, or “buppies”, have been influential in reshaping some urban communities (Kennedy & Leonard...
As such, scholars should emphasize class-based compositional change and explore, independently, to what degree the influx of gentrifiers reshapes the racial configuration of the area.

**Spatial Interdependence**

The present study also highlights the importance of bringing the concept of spatial interdependence to the forefront of gentrification and crime research. This is, in part, because exploratory analyses support the idea that there are broader ecological ramifications related to urban reinvestment than are recognized in the gentrification literature and, in part, because this research poses more questions than it answers. For the most economically deprived communities in St. Louis, exposure to gentrification meant property and violent crime reductions over the course of a decade. When coupled with the finding that gentrifying neighborhoods also generally experienced decadal crime declines, these results hint at the possibility of diffusion processes (Clarke & Weisburd 1994). That is, any social control enhancements important for the crime control in gentrifying areas may have permeated into surrounding areas, especially those most vulnerable to outside influence. Without measures of community-level social controls (e.g., informal supervision, collective efficacy, changes in crime reporting habits, patrol activity, police response times, etc.), this interpretation is speculative. Future research should examine more thoroughly the mechanisms linking gentrification to changes in the spatial distribution of crime.
The general finding of adjacent crime declines may be a statistical artifact. Although this research answered the call for examining the effects of gentrification on external communities (see McDonald 1986), it did so in a rudimentary way. Gentrification research would benefit greatly from more sophisticated spatial regression analyses that are better equipped to detect and account for the relationships among crime rates across neighborhoods (or other geographical units). Further, these spatial lag models are ideal for determining whether and to what extent gentrification in a particular community influences crime levels in peripheral neighborhoods as they move beyond the assumption of spatial error models that spatial interdependence is simply a form of statistical “disturbance” or “nuisance” (Ward & Gleditsch 2008: 65; see also Baller et al. 2001; Anselin et al. 2013).

The findings for this study, regardless of their simplicity, offer a glimpse of the possible relationship between gentrification and external crime in St. Louis, Missouri; the story may be different in other areas, especially those where urban reinvestment resulted in crime escalations (see Taylor & Covington 1988; Covington & Taylor 1989; Kreager et al. 2011; Papachristos et al. 2011). Under this condition, hotspot (Brantingham & Brantingham 1982) and spillover effects (Morenoff et al. 2001) are possible. For cities like St. Louis, any crime drops in gentrifying neighborhoods may be associated with crime escalations elsewhere. If offenders are deterred or forced to relocate because of community redevelopment, they may start committing crime elsewhere (Reppetto 1976; McDonald 1986). The displacement of crime is especially likely if educational and opportunity structures go unchanged (Merton 1938; Cloward & Ohlin 1960), they abide by the street
code (Anderson 1999), or move to areas characterized by disadvantage and social disorganization (Bursik & Grasmick 1993).

Researchers should remain cognizant that the failure of statistical analyses to detect extracommunity effects of gentrification does not mean that they do not exist. The results of spatial analyses are especially sensitive to the selected geographical parameters. These parameters, often referred to as “buffer zones” (Brantingham & Brantingham 2000) or “catchment areas” (Weisburd et al. 2006), reflect the expected ecological reach of a given phenomenon (e.g., gentrification). Because gentrification manifests differently across time and space and its effects are contextual, the appropriate geographical scope will vary across studies. In some communities, gentrification may affect crime levels only in the parts of a neighborhood immediately adjacent to the area of reinvestment, meaning that the catchment area should be large enough to detect the influence but small enough not to mask it. In other communities, like those in St. Louis, the buffer zone may be quite large. Extracommunity effects related to gentrification were identified at the neighborhood-level, but the qualitative analyses in Northcity suggest that the empirical net should be cast wider to include non-adjacent areas of the city as well as parts of the surrounding suburbs.

**Theoretical Foundation**

The qualitative component of this project highlights the limitations of the social disorganization model to comprehensively elucidate the mechanisms linking gentrification to community crime. Upon close inspection, it is not surprising that gentrification does not fit
well within the social disorganization framework given the assumptions that provide its roots. One such assumption is that changes within communities occur as a result of natural processes of residential turnover based on supply and demand in the housing market (see Bursik 1988). As was noted above, gentrification is not necessarily a “natural” step in the progression of neighborhoods. Instead, it is a process influenced by larger economic and political forces that encourage reinvestment through the manipulation of the housing market (Williams 1986; Bowler & McBurney 1991; Kolko 2009). Investors, city planners, developers, gentrifiers, and local officials make concerted efforts to transform urban environments to attract a new set of residents (Smith 1996; Holden 2002; Curran 2007; Larsen & Hansen 2008; Reese et al. 2010). In Northcity, such efforts are particularly evident in the work of the primary community organization to secure funds from government grants and recruit small businesses that cater to middle-class needs and preferences.

Second, social disorganization theory takes it for granted that residents within a given community have common values and goals (Kornhauser 1978), one of which is to live in an area relatively free from the threat of victimization (Bursik & Grasmick 1993). Such a scenario may not always be the case in areas of reinvestment. Gentrifiers and incumbent residents generally have competing interests: the former group is generally interested in reclaiming and rebranding the area for its own benefit and the latter is often trying defend themselves from any potential backlash of those efforts. Specifically, gentrifiers stake claims to the physical and symbolic ownership of the community, often infringing on the claims historically made by long-term residents (Levy & Cybriwsky 1980; Deener 2007; Davidson
Staking such claims can involve efforts to address community problems perceived to be created and perpetuated by the presence of incumbent residents (Reese et al. 2010) or to work against the desires of lower-class residents. Long-term residents, on the other hand, attempt to preserve the community’s identity or encourage development that differs from the vision of gentrifiers by—often unsuccessfully—staking counterclaims to the area (Kasinitz 1988). In Northcity, for example, prospective commercial ventures served as the principal point of contention among residents. Although gentrifiers recognized that their lower-income neighbors would greatly benefit from the presence of chain grocery and dollar stores, they did not support such development in the neighborhood. The very nature of gentrification, then, may ignite intracommunity conflict as gentrifiers inhabit and compete for control over common space with poor—often minority—residents. The likelihood of conflict in areas undergoing reinvestment has long been recognized (Cybriwsky 1978; Barry & Derevlany 1988; Keating & Smith 1996a; Keating & Smith 1996b; Formoso et al. 2010; Betancur 2011). Some scholars have even suggested that gentrification is “an inherently conflict-ridden process” (Clark et al. 2007: 506) and that it is this conflict that sets gentrification apart from other types of neighborhood transformation (Redfern 2003).

A related assumption to that of consensus is that interactions among residents are positive to the extent that they foster social ties and collective efficacy and make the exercise of social controls possible to achieve community objectives (see Shaw & McKay 1942; Kasarda & Janowitz 1974; Sampson & Groves 1989; Sampson et al. 1997). That is, social networks are supposed to translate into crime regulation regardless of their composition and
content. Gentrification research, however, has demonstrated that the oft competing interests of locals can result in tempestuous encounters between gentrifiers and incumbents (Kasinitz 1988; Keating & Smith 1996; Davidson 2008; Betancur 2011) and, even assaultive behavior in some cases (Cybriwsky 1978; LeGates & Murphy 1981; Atkinson 2002). Gentrification may also serve as a catalyst for racial clashes in areas, like Northcity, where reinvestment activity is largely driven by white folks. Thus, the goals of residents may not always be compatible, nor are their interactions necessarily positive.

Finally, many scholars in the social disorganization tradition have afforded disproportionate attention to informal social control mechanisms, or the ability of local residents to address problems without help from formal agents of control. Much of the community crime literature emphasizes the strength and extensiveness of ties among residents and their willingness to partake in collective action to deter criminal behavior and intervene when crime and disorder issues become threats to the neighborhood (see Kubrin & Weitzer 2003). Levels of social disorganization, however, also shape the exercise of more formal means of social control, either by rendering them necessary in light of effective informal controls (Bursik & Grasmick 1993) or by making them less prevalent in the community, as residents are less confident that law enforcement officials can offer them justice (Sampson & Bartusch 1998). The political climate associated with gentrification underscores the importance of bringing these formal social controls to the forefront alongside informal methods. The police can become influential agents of gentrification if they help to prime areas for large-scale reinvestment and promote its development by cracking down on
infractions and implementing proactive policing strategies to deter crime (Smith 1996; Holden 2002; Freeman 2006; Larsen & Hansen 2008).

Although the aforementioned assumptions and the realities of gentrification are often incongruous with social disorganization theory, there is no need to completely reinvent the theoretical wheel. The social-mechanistic theory of collective efficacy provides a sound foundation upon which scholars can build a theoretical framework to explore how urban reinvestment affects community crime outcomes. Because collective efficacy is a key explanatory concept in the social disorganization model, shifting the emphasis only refocuses the theoretical lens; it does not necessitate a split from the social disorganization tradition. As this research shows, collective efficacy is an important factor shaping crime trajectories in gentrifying neighborhoods. However, emphasizing the presence of collective efficacy in gentrifying communities is not sufficient for explicating the social processes operating in the context of urban reinvestment. The comprehensiveness of collective efficacy, the various forms of privilege among gentrifiers (e.g., social, economic, political), and the potential conflict that arises between gentrifiers and incumbents are worthy of consideration. Integrating these factors into the collective efficacy model requires a more critical approach to the study of gentrification and crime.

The broader gentrification literature has demonstrated that gentrifiers usurp physical, financial, and symbolic control over the neighborhoods they inhabit and, by doing so, exacerbate issues of economic and racial segregation (Goldberg 1998; Wyly & Hammel
2004; Atkinson 2008), but academic discussions about the phenomenon have lost most of their critical edge (Slater 2006; Allen 2008; Smith 2008; Wacquant 2008). This project supports the calls of these scholars for a return to a conflict-based perspective and the incorporation of this interpretation in criminological studies of gentrification, which have largely remained neutral about the matter. Without this paradigm shift, researchers will likely overlook the power differentials created and maintained through the process of urban reinvestment and reinforce romanticized images of gentrification as the city’s savior.

Drawing on political ecology, or “empirical, research-based explorations to explain linkages in the condition and change of social/environmental systems, with explicit consideration to relations of power” (Robbins 2004: 12; see also Quastel 2009; Slater 2009) is a good starting point for future gentrification and crime research.

**Public Policy Implications**

Given that gentrification is a highly politicized urban renewal strategy, the findings of this project cannot be fully divorced from their potential political ramifications. The politicization of gentrification involves the contestation of different narratives, each framing gentrification and those responsible for reinvestment in a particular way in an effort to sway public opinion (Kennedy & Leonard 2001; Wilson & Mueller 2004; see also Schwalbe et al. 2000). On one side of the debate are those who glorify—and overestimate—the possible benefits of social mixing and pose gentrification as a means through which middle-class people can escape the chains that bind them to a life of suburbanization (Caulfield 1989; 1994; Byrne 2003; Florida 2003; Slater 2004). In line with this account is the
characterization of gentrifiers as “urban cowboys” (Smith 1986) or “urban pioneers” (Beauregard 1986) who make personal sacrifices to save the urban core from further deterioration. On the other side are those who package gentrification as a type of vengeful usurpation of the inner-city by economically privileged groups attempting to reclaim the city (Slater 2004) for their own selfish gains. These dichotomous images are too simplistic and individually incomplete because, as the case of Northcity demonstrates, both accounts exist as realities to the residents living there. Gentrifiers often mentioned their disdain for life in the suburbs and their desire to live in a community nestled away from strip malls and cookie-cutter houses. Interestingly, two residents compared the atmosphere of the neighborhood to that of the “Wild West,” hinting at their status as pioneers. Middle-class residents also understood their willingness to move into the neighborhood as a form of benevolence through which they could revive the area and help those already living there. At the same time, though, gentrifiers seized control over the physical and symbolic space, often working against the interests of their lower-income neighbors for their own benefit.

It is also faulty for policy makers (and the general public) to conceptualize gentrifying neighborhoods as having been completely abandoned in the past and in need of outside intervention. Inner-city communities across the country undoubtedly were damaged by the mass exodus of residents seeking refuge from city life in the suburbs and the commercial disinvestment that followed (Wilson 1996), but it is important to remember that there have always been people investing in these areas. These are the people who refused to sell their homes even when confronted with depreciating property values, who raised their
children the best they could in the face of failing schools, who opened the businesses locals relied on for basic necessities, and who founded the charitable organizations that give aid to lower-income residents. Of course, many of the people who have remained in areas of deprivation have done so because they lack the opportunity to leave; nonetheless, they have invested in and have kept these communities afloat. Yet, they receive no credit for doing so. Instead, they become scapegoats, shouldering blame for the bleak conditions of the urban core from those who conveniently ignore that the people credited with saving the city are cut from the same cloth as those who fled for supposedly greener pastures decades ago. They also become the victims of the collateral damage caused by reinvestment activity.

The fate of gentrifying neighborhoods depends primarily on the actions and interests of the middle-class residents and businesses that relocate there. Gentrification, then, is—intentionally or not—a mechanism through which economic (and often racial) inequality is perpetuated. The ability of gentrifiers to reclaim and transform these neighborhoods—something their predecessors were unable to do despite their best efforts—both reflects and reinforces their social, economic, and political privileges (Butler & Robinson 2003; Davidson 2008). This is particularly evident when you consider that the middle-class twenty-somethings in Northcity were not only free to squat in vacant buildings without police intervention, they were generally seen as a positive influence. Yet, young black men were demonized, heavily supervised, and harassed by local authorities. One resident inadvertently noted the privileged position of gentrifiers vis-à-vis their incumbent neighbors when he described Northcity as “a singular and special prize, you know, if you’re smart enough to
choose it.” It is certainly a gem for those who can enjoy the close proximity to downtown, the affordable housing, the cultural development, and—for the squatters—the opportunity for a cheap thrill without paying the price or facing the risk of becoming trapped. Gentrifiers will be able to pack up and leave the neighborhood when it no longer suits their needs, further devastating the inner city. Their incumbent neighbors, if they are not physically displaced by then, will not be so fortunate.

Gentrification is not the only plausible urban renewal strategy. If policy makers are truly concerned with reviving the urban core, they should focus their energies on creating communities that address the lack of educational and occupational opportunities afforded to incumbent residents and promote commercial investment that caters to their needs. Opening a chain grocery store in the area, for example, would provide access to affordable food and create jobs, benefits not offered by local co-ops or small businesses. If gentrifiers continue to move into the neighborhood under these conditions, there should be safeguards in place to protect incumbent residents from the threat of physical, symbolic, or political displacement. Northcity provides a blueprint for the effective preservation of low-income housing in gentrifying areas and, as such, is a beacon of hope amidst tales of incumbent removal. Such efforts, however, simply reserve the physical structures for occupancy; they offer no guarantee that the neighborhood will actually provide the resources that would benefit these residents. It should become a priority among city planners to ensure that there are stable communities for impoverished residents that are not subject to and dependent upon the migration patterns of the middle-class, but this requires a genuine concern and respect for the
disenfranchised. Marcuse (1986) summarized it best: “The large question is not *whether* abandonment can be avoided, gentrification controlled, displacement eliminated, or even *how* these things can be done, but rather whether there is the desire to do them. That is a question that can only be answered in the political arena” (175; emphases in original).
REFERENCES


Comstock, Nicole, L. Miriam Dickinson, Julie A. Marshall, Mah-J. Soobader, Mark S. Turbin, Michael Buchenau, Jill S. Litt. 2010. “Neighborhood Attachment and


DeSena, Judith N. 2006. “‘What’s a Mother to Do?’: Gentrification, School Selection, and the Consequences for Community Cohesion.” American Behavioral Scientist 50: 241-257.


Western Criminology Review 5: 1-16.


### Table 1: Changes in Crime Counts by Neighborhood Type, 1991-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total Index Crime</th>
<th></th>
<th>Property Crime</th>
<th></th>
<th>Violent Crime (LN)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-69.24 (69.30)</td>
<td>63.55 (55.98)</td>
<td>-26.96 (41.08)</td>
<td>25.07 (33.30)</td>
<td>-3.16** (.933)</td>
<td>-1.81* (.744)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrifying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-131.99** (44.35)</td>
<td>-.307 (26.38)</td>
<td>-50.68† (.933)</td>
<td>-1.45* (.589)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impoverished</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Total Crime</td>
<td>-636.69** (.2031)</td>
<td>-655.29** (215.94)</td>
<td>-307.99* (131.20)</td>
<td>-322.88* (128.45)</td>
<td>-7.29* (2.98)</td>
<td>-6.93* (2.87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Adj. Crime</td>
<td>1766.53† (1007.26)</td>
<td>2006.61* (990.77)</td>
<td>1181.99† (597.12)</td>
<td>1333.46* (589.32)</td>
<td>19.27 (13.56)</td>
<td>19.56 (13.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.253</td>
<td>.251</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>.201</td>
<td>.220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 77 neighborhoods. *p < .05 **p < .01 †p<.10
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>58.78 (58.41)</td>
<td>57.22 (57.38)</td>
<td>22.11 (34.08)</td>
<td>21.31 (33.68)</td>
<td>-1.83* (.759)</td>
<td>-1.84* (.751)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gent Score</td>
<td>-270.69 (165.52)</td>
<td>-.177 (525.31)</td>
<td>-.799 (96.57)</td>
<td>-.091 (308.32)</td>
<td>-.651 (2.15)</td>
<td>-.196 (6.88)</td>
<td>-1.439* (.723)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gent Score²</td>
<td>2504.53† (1315.06)</td>
<td>.651 (96.57)</td>
<td>1277.21 (771.84)</td>
<td>.587 (2.15)</td>
<td>27.61 (17.22)</td>
<td>.551 (6.88)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Population</td>
<td>-.011† (.006)</td>
<td>-.214 (.006)</td>
<td>-.194 (.006)</td>
<td>-.126 (.003)</td>
<td>-.003 (.000)</td>
<td>-.108 (.000)</td>
<td>.000 (.000)</td>
<td>.144 (.000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Total Crime</td>
<td>-695.34** (224.22)</td>
<td>-.348 (220.89)</td>
<td>-.332 (130.81)</td>
<td>-.302 (129.65)</td>
<td>-.288 (2.92)</td>
<td>-.279 (2.89)</td>
<td>-6.89* (.265)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Adj. Crime</td>
<td>2281.30* (1033.60)</td>
<td>.235 (1015.66)</td>
<td>2225.82* (603.02)</td>
<td>.269 (596.12)</td>
<td>1477.54* (1915.66)</td>
<td>.264 (13.44)</td>
<td>21.19 (13.30)</td>
<td>.168 (13.30)</td>
<td>.163 (13.30)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.189</td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 77 neighborhoods. *p < .05 **p < .01 †p<.10
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>4.64** (.217)</td>
<td>4.43** (.187)</td>
<td>4.50** (.211)</td>
<td>4.38** (.180)</td>
<td>-26.03 (21.52)</td>
<td>-77.02** (19.42)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrifying</td>
<td>.239† (.131)</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.155 (.126)</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>51.99** (13.56)</td>
<td>.283</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impoverished</td>
<td>-.009 (.218)</td>
<td>-.003 (.131)</td>
<td>-.016 (.212)</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>.373 (21.59)</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciating</td>
<td>-.226 (.155)</td>
<td>-.129 (.150)</td>
<td>-.134 (.150)</td>
<td>-.079</td>
<td>-57.19** (15.31)</td>
<td>-.324</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciating</td>
<td>-.326* (.153)</td>
<td>-.194 (.149)</td>
<td>-.220 (.149)</td>
<td>-.135</td>
<td>-64.19** (15.13)</td>
<td>-.380</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>.000** (.000)</td>
<td>.000** (.000)</td>
<td>.000** (.000)</td>
<td>.000** (.000)</td>
<td>.000** (.000)</td>
<td>.019** (.002)</td>
<td>.019** (.002)</td>
<td>.019** (.002)</td>
<td>.019** (.002)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Total Crime</td>
<td>3.37** (.708)</td>
<td>.398 (.698)</td>
<td>.411 (.688)</td>
<td>.393 (.673)</td>
<td>.400 (.673)</td>
<td>327.53** (70.07)</td>
<td>.384 (72.44)</td>
<td>359.13** (72.44)</td>
<td>.421</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjacent Crime</td>
<td>1.12† (.648)</td>
<td>.142 (.624)</td>
<td>.928 (.630)</td>
<td>.118 (.602)</td>
<td>.852 (.630)</td>
<td>.111 (.602)</td>
<td>.711 (.602)</td>
<td>.093 (.602)</td>
<td>.117.40† (64.13)</td>
<td>.148 (64.78)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 77 neighborhoods. *p < .05 **p < .01 †p<.10
Table 4: Crime Outcomes by Degree of Gentrification, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total Index Crimes (LN)</th>
<th>Property Crimes (LN)</th>
<th>Violent Crimes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>Model 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>4.48**</td>
<td>4.48**</td>
<td>4.42**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.191)</td>
<td>(.184)</td>
<td>(.182)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gent Score</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>3.92*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.479)</td>
<td>(.3.80)</td>
<td>(.456)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gent Score²</td>
<td>-9.98*</td>
<td>-611</td>
<td>-9.42*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.80)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(3.63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>.863</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.000)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Total Crime</td>
<td>3.62**</td>
<td>.428</td>
<td>3.51**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.712)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(.686)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjacent Crime</td>
<td>.853</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>.844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.638)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(.613)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.605</td>
<td>.635</td>
<td>.619</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 77 neighborhoods. *p < .05 **p <.01 †p<.10
Table 5: Crime Outcomes by Neighborhood Type, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total Index Crime (LN)</th>
<th>Property Crime (LN)</th>
<th>Violent Crime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>Model 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>4.43** (.225)</td>
<td>4.15** (.193)</td>
<td>4.29** (.211)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrifying</td>
<td></td>
<td>.326** (.118)</td>
<td>.186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impoverished</td>
<td>-.067 (.192)</td>
<td>-.025 (.118)</td>
<td>-.054 (.180)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciating</td>
<td>-.295* (.139)</td>
<td>-.176 (.130)</td>
<td>-.175 (.130)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciating</td>
<td>-.439** (.134)</td>
<td>-.273 (.126)</td>
<td>-.327* (.126)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>.000** (.000)</td>
<td>.916 (.000)</td>
<td>.880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjacent Crime</td>
<td>1.98** (.703)</td>
<td>.203 (.711)</td>
<td>.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.31** (.139)</td>
<td>.241 (.34)</td>
<td>.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.682</td>
<td>.673</td>
<td>.703</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 77 neighborhoods. *p < .05  **p < .01 †p<.10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total Index Crime</th>
<th>Property Crime</th>
<th>Violent Crime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94.14†</td>
<td>4.39**</td>
<td>32.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(53.40)</td>
<td>(.189)</td>
<td>(34.91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrifying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-2.02</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>.567*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(79.50)</td>
<td>(.272)</td>
<td>(51.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Racial Comp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-198.77**</td>
<td>-.416</td>
<td>.723**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(54.04)</td>
<td>(.202)</td>
<td>(35.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gent*Racial Comp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-119.40</td>
<td>-.231</td>
<td>-.554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(106.79)</td>
<td>(.362)</td>
<td>(69.82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.010†</td>
<td>-.190</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.005)</td>
<td>(.000)</td>
<td>(.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Total Crime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-313.05</td>
<td>-.157</td>
<td>2.76**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(201.30)</td>
<td>(.697)</td>
<td>(131.60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Crime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1625.33†</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>-.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(878.02)</td>
<td>(.664)</td>
<td>(574.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.428</td>
<td>.631</td>
<td>.236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 77 neighborhoods. *p < .05 **p < .01 †p<.10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total Index Crime</th>
<th>Property Crime</th>
<th>Violent Crime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>109.07* (53.47)</td>
<td>4.51** (.192)</td>
<td>39.86 (34.45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.47** (.186)</td>
<td>-.837 (.645)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>73.11** (19.91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gent Score</td>
<td>13.34 (351.45)</td>
<td>.009 (.120)</td>
<td>.054 (226.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.052 (1.17)</td>
<td>-.008 (2.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.95 (4.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>246.91† (124.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Racial Comp</td>
<td>-238.50** (51.80)</td>
<td>-.499 (.191)</td>
<td>.345 (33.37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.324 (1.16)</td>
<td>.548** (.186)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.93** (1.625)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>99.18** (19.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gent Score*Racial Comp</td>
<td>-163.39 (439.95)</td>
<td>-.089 (1.51)</td>
<td>-.889 (283.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.909 (1.47)</td>
<td>-.347 (5.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.89 (5.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>234.47 (156.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>-.012* (.005)</td>
<td>-.218 (.000)</td>
<td>.004 (.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000** (.000)</td>
<td>-.127 (.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.851 (.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.105 (.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.020** (.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Total Crime</td>
<td>-324.43 (207.30)</td>
<td>-.162 (.718)</td>
<td>.325 (133.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.180 (.698)</td>
<td>2.68** (.698)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.70 (2.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>264.93** (74.55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Crime</td>
<td>1977.37* (207.30)</td>
<td>.204 (.677)</td>
<td>-.034 (577.89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.248 (.658)</td>
<td>-.036 (10.82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16.97 (10.82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-64.44 (70.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.392</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td>.212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.583</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 77 neighborhoods. *p < .05 **p < .01 †p<.10
Table 8: Crime Changes by Degree of Gentrification and Concentrated Disadvantage, 1991-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total Index Crime</th>
<th>Property Crime</th>
<th>Violent Crime (LN)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>Model 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
<td>Stzd(β)</td>
<td>Coef. (SE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-12.63 (50.75)</td>
<td>-27.65 (51.42)</td>
<td>-5.05 (33.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrifying</td>
<td>-12.60 (49.10)</td>
<td>-.029 (32.08)</td>
<td>.370 (.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gent*Disadvantage</td>
<td>-21.39 (19.21)</td>
<td>-.145 (12.55)</td>
<td>-12.27 -.147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gent Score</td>
<td></td>
<td>220.72 (.235)</td>
<td>136.50 (157.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score*Disadvantage</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.58.82 (.8276)</td>
<td>-.118 (.53.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>-.013* (.005)</td>
<td>-.014* (.005)</td>
<td>-.004 (.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Total Crime</td>
<td>-229.43 (205.21)</td>
<td>-.115 (207.19)</td>
<td>-.105 (134.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Crime</td>
<td>2281.44* (897.87)</td>
<td>.235 (880.40)</td>
<td>1388.78* (586.61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Disadvantage</td>
<td>-35.28** (8.75)</td>
<td>-.488 (8.24)</td>
<td>-12.80* (5.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.438</td>
<td>-.145 (.251)</td>
<td>.245 (.456)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 77 neighborhoods. *p < .05 **p <.01 †p<.10
Table 9: Changes in Adjacent Crime Counts by Neighborhood Type and Degree of Gentrification, 1991-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total Index Crime</th>
<th>Property Crime</th>
<th>Violent Crime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>Model 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-72.51† (43.56)</td>
<td>-73.14† (43.73)</td>
<td>-45.71† (23.55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrifying</td>
<td>-35.62 (23.43)</td>
<td>-116</td>
<td>-17.79 (12.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrification Score</td>
<td></td>
<td>-104.99 (79.89)</td>
<td>-.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Adj. Population</td>
<td>-.001 (0.05)</td>
<td>-.002 (0.05)</td>
<td>.002 (0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. 1990 Total Crime</td>
<td>95.54 (70.10)</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td>97.52 (70.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Change</td>
<td>-1.42 (67.47)</td>
<td>-.013</td>
<td>-24.14 (66.94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Age Composition</td>
<td>-202.66* (88.18)</td>
<td>-.206</td>
<td>-200.85* (88.59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Disadvantage</td>
<td>-33.62** (4.69)</td>
<td>-.685</td>
<td>-34.68** (4.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td>.614</td>
<td>.537</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 77 neighborhoods. *p < .05 **p < .01 †p<.10
Table 10: Changes in Adjacent Crime Counts by Neighborhood Type, Degree of Gentrification, and Adjacent Disadvantage, 1991-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-65.64</td>
<td>(41.22)</td>
<td>-76.50†</td>
<td>(42.62)</td>
<td>-42.56†</td>
<td>(27.11)</td>
<td>-48.04*</td>
<td>(23.21)</td>
<td>-23.82</td>
<td>(20.94)</td>
<td>-29.19</td>
<td>(21.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrifying</td>
<td>-8.30</td>
<td>(23.87)</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>(13.15)</td>
<td>-5.26</td>
<td>(-0.03)</td>
<td>-2.78</td>
<td>(12.13)</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gent*Adj. Disadvantage</td>
<td>-29.41*</td>
<td>(29.41)</td>
<td>-.256</td>
<td>(5.29)</td>
<td>-13.49*</td>
<td>(3.64)</td>
<td>-16.07**</td>
<td>(4.88)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrification Score</td>
<td>-45.48</td>
<td>(82.84)</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>(45.12)</td>
<td>-34.24</td>
<td>(2.84)</td>
<td>-10.38</td>
<td>(42.27)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score*Adj. Disadvantage</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>(36.00)</td>
<td>-.033</td>
<td>(19.60)</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>(1.05)</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Adj. Population</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>(.002)</td>
<td>-.004†</td>
<td>(.004)</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. 1990 Total Crime</td>
<td>78.71</td>
<td>(.100)</td>
<td>89.17</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>63.87†</td>
<td>(.14)</td>
<td>68.44†</td>
<td>(.17)</td>
<td>15.25</td>
<td>(.037)</td>
<td>21.17</td>
<td>(.051)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Change</td>
<td>12.20</td>
<td>(66.48)</td>
<td>68.75</td>
<td>(36.62)</td>
<td>63.62†</td>
<td>(1.14)</td>
<td>37.44</td>
<td>(1.78)</td>
<td>15.25</td>
<td>(.037)</td>
<td>21.17</td>
<td>(.051)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Age Composition</td>
<td>-195.22*</td>
<td>(64.23)</td>
<td>-8.32</td>
<td>(65.75)</td>
<td>26.76</td>
<td>(.09)</td>
<td>16.72</td>
<td>(.062)</td>
<td>-14.79</td>
<td>(-0.032)</td>
<td>-25.24</td>
<td>(-0.054)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Disadvantage</td>
<td>-28.70**</td>
<td>(83.38)</td>
<td>-35.88**</td>
<td>(86.47)</td>
<td>-.201</td>
<td>(45.93)</td>
<td>-.240</td>
<td>(47.09)</td>
<td>-.242</td>
<td>(42.35)</td>
<td>-.153</td>
<td>(41.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>.633</td>
<td>.571</td>
<td>.549</td>
<td>.688</td>
<td>.662</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N= 77 neighborhoods. *p < .05 **p < .01 †p <.10
Table 11: Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Housing Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident 1</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>Gentrifier</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 2</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>Incumbent*</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 3</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>Gentrifier</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 4</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>Gentrifier</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 5</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>Gentrifier</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 6</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>Gentrifier</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 7</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gentrifier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 8</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>65-70</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 9</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 10</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>Newcomer</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 11</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Newcomer</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 12</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>Newcomer</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 13</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>55-60</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Squatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 14</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>Newcomer</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 15</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>Newcomer</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 16</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60-65</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 17</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 18</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60-65</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 19</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 20</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60-65</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 21</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 22</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>Newcomer</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 23</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 24</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 25</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>65-70</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 26</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 27</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 28</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Renter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 29</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader 1</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader 2</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader 3</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee 1</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>55-60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee 2</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50-55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Although Resident 2 has lived in the neighborhood his entire life, he considers himself as part of the gentrification movement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Northcity Property Rate (Annual Change)</th>
<th>Northcity Violent Rate (Annual Change)</th>
<th>St. Louis City Property Rate (Annual Change)</th>
<th>St. Louis City Violent Rate (Annual Change)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>0.202 (---)</td>
<td>0.040 (---)</td>
<td>0.125 (---)</td>
<td>0.023 (---)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>0.167 (-.035)</td>
<td>0.043 (.003)</td>
<td>0.131 (.006)</td>
<td>0.022 (.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>0.156 (-.011)</td>
<td>0.033 (.006)</td>
<td>0.125 (-.006)</td>
<td>0.022 (.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>0.141 (-.015)</td>
<td>0.024 (-.009)</td>
<td>0.117 (-.008)</td>
<td>0.018 (-.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0.151 (.010)</td>
<td>0.037 (.013)</td>
<td>0.113 (-.004)</td>
<td>0.020 (.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>0.163 (.012)</td>
<td>0.036 (-.001)</td>
<td>0.111 (-.002)</td>
<td>0.024 (.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>0.156 (.007)</td>
<td>0.036 (.000)</td>
<td>0.118 (.007)</td>
<td>0.025 (.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>0.141 (-.015)</td>
<td>0.047 (.011)</td>
<td>0.099 (.019)</td>
<td>0.022 (.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>0.123 (-.018)</td>
<td>0.030 (-.017)</td>
<td>0.088 (-.019)</td>
<td>0.021 (.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>0.139 (-.016)</td>
<td>0.041 (.011)</td>
<td>0.086 (-.011)</td>
<td>0.021 (.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0.108 (-.031)</td>
<td>0.045 (.004)</td>
<td>0.086 (.000)</td>
<td>0.019 (-.002)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics for Independent and Dependent Variables for All Neighborhoods (n=77)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% College Educated</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.183</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Employed</td>
<td>.874</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.854</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Professionals</td>
<td>.204</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>-.119</td>
<td>.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Owner-Occupied</td>
<td>.433</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>.450</td>
<td>.198</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Poverty</td>
<td>.425</td>
<td>.309</td>
<td>.268</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>-.158</td>
<td>.231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Income</td>
<td>26495.63</td>
<td>10392.53</td>
<td>26463.44</td>
<td>8789.37</td>
<td>-32.19</td>
<td>7677.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Rent</td>
<td>485.72</td>
<td>252.39</td>
<td>312.55</td>
<td>107.42</td>
<td>-173.35</td>
<td>274.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Value</td>
<td>66699.45</td>
<td>37091.59</td>
<td>67668.60</td>
<td>42619.31</td>
<td>1284.77</td>
<td>26222.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td>.398</td>
<td>.568</td>
<td>.365</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Size</td>
<td>5136.53</td>
<td>3705.55</td>
<td>4508.38</td>
<td>3469.07</td>
<td>-628.16</td>
<td>931.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Crime Rate</td>
<td>.164</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Crime Rate</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>-.007</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Index Crimes</td>
<td>747.95</td>
<td>542.66</td>
<td>606.89</td>
<td>475.98</td>
<td>-141.06</td>
<td>190.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Crimes</td>
<td>578.63</td>
<td>425.22</td>
<td>512.10</td>
<td>408.20</td>
<td>-66.53</td>
<td>107.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Crimes</td>
<td>170.10</td>
<td>151.89</td>
<td>95.09</td>
<td>81.20</td>
<td>-75.01</td>
<td>94.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Descriptive Statistics for Independent and Dependent Variables by Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Non-Gentrifying Areas (n=57)</th>
<th>Gentrifying Areas (n=20)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990/1991 Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% College Educated</td>
<td>.182</td>
<td>.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Employed</td>
<td>.890</td>
<td>.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Professionals</td>
<td>.230</td>
<td>.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Owner-Occupied</td>
<td>.443</td>
<td>.226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Poverty</td>
<td>.347</td>
<td>.282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Income</td>
<td>29230.63</td>
<td>10740.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Rent</td>
<td>511.93</td>
<td>288.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Value</td>
<td>75654.57</td>
<td>39545.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrification Score</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>.434</td>
<td>.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrated Disadvantage</td>
<td>-.660</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Size</td>
<td>5137.54</td>
<td>3942.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Total Crime Rate</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjacent Crime Rate</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Index Crimes</td>
<td>690.49</td>
<td>548.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Crimes</td>
<td>558.66</td>
<td>455.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Crimes</td>
<td>132.88</td>
<td>119.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * indicates significant difference in the mean across neighborhood types at p<.05; ** indicates significant difference in the mean across neighborhood types at p<.01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Non-Gentrifying Areas (n=57)</th>
<th>Gentrifying Areas (n=20)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % College Educated</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % Employed</td>
<td>-.029</td>
<td>.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % Professionals</td>
<td>-.144</td>
<td>.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % Owner-Occupied</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % Poverty</td>
<td>-.100</td>
<td>.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Median Income</td>
<td>-988.83</td>
<td>8611.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Median Rent</td>
<td>-206.02</td>
<td>313.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Median Value</td>
<td>609.93</td>
<td>30546.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % Black</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Population Size</td>
<td>-439.12</td>
<td>785.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Adjacent Crime Rate</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Total Index Crimes</td>
<td>-97.38</td>
<td>154.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Property Crimes</td>
<td>-47.64</td>
<td>95.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Violent Crimes</td>
<td>-50.39</td>
<td>70.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * indicates significant difference in the mean across neighborhood types at p<.05; ** indicates significant difference in the mean across neighborhood types at p<.01
## Appendix D: Descriptive Statistics for Independent and Dependent Variables for St. Louis Neighborhoods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>All (n=77)</th>
<th>Non-Gentrifying (n=57)</th>
<th>Gentrifying (n=20)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % College Educated</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % Employed</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>-.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % Professionals</td>
<td>-.119</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>-.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % Owner-Occupied</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ % Poverty</td>
<td>-.158</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>-.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Median Income</td>
<td>-32.19</td>
<td>7677.89</td>
<td>-988.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Median Rent</td>
<td>-173.35</td>
<td>274.12</td>
<td>-206.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Median Value</td>
<td>1284.77</td>
<td>26222.04</td>
<td>609.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrification Score</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Population Size</td>
<td>27424.77</td>
<td>14818.58</td>
<td>27344.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. 1990 Crime Rate</td>
<td>.164</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Neighborhood Δ</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>-.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. Disadvantage</td>
<td>.969</td>
<td>.528</td>
<td>.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Composition</td>
<td>.390</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>.379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Adj. Total Crimes</td>
<td>-147.61</td>
<td>135.41</td>
<td>-120.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Adj. Property Crimes</td>
<td>-70.01</td>
<td>66.55</td>
<td>-57.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Adj. Violent Crimes</td>
<td>-77.90</td>
<td>71.97</td>
<td>-63.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * indicates significant difference in the mean across neighborhood types at p<.05; 
** indicates significant difference in the mean across neighborhood types at p<.01
Appendix E. Map of St. Louis City Neighborhoods