

# The “New” New York: Race, Space, and Power in Gentrifying Brooklyn

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## Motivation

- Gentrification -- and the displacement it causes -- has been a major concern among urban residents and other stakeholders for many years
- The process's racial consequences are garnering increased attention as it advances more deeply into majority-minority neighborhoods
- Black communities' historic and contemporary experiences with targeted and severe forms of displacement and disinvestment have generated cumulative vulnerabilities with which they contend in the context of gentrification
- These vulnerabilities illuminate gentrification's racial dimensions and merit in-depth analysis

## Project Description

- This research project explores the racial operations of gentrification in Brooklyn, New York
- It focuses on the borough's nearly 730,000 Black residents, who make up the demographic and political center of Black life in New York City
- In a book manuscript-in-progress and related works, I analyze changes and continuities in the racial ideologies, policies, and practices driving exclusionary urban redevelopment
- This project is part of a larger research agenda that highlights the vibrancy of Brooklyn's historic and diverse Black communities and the nature of the opportunities and challenges they face

This project explores the racial operations of gentrification in Brooklyn, New York.

It foregrounds the experiences of the borough's Black residents, who comprise one of the largest contiguous Black communities in the United States.



## Context

- Valuable insights have emerged from analyzing the role of class power and inequality in shaping gentrification
- Black urban residents' disproportionate experiences with eviction, hyperpolicing, subprime lending, property theft and seizure, and other racialized forms of destabilization reveal power imbalances that cannot be explained by class alone
- This project develops a fuller understanding of gentrification's causes and consequences by engaging with the indelible imprint of race, structural racism, and racial capitalism on the organization and operation of urban space and society

## Project Deliverables

- This research will facilitate completion of the first book manuscript devoted to the gentrification of Black Brooklyn
- This funding will enable travel to Brooklyn to conduct research and build relationships with residents and community institutions
- This funding will also facilitate materials collection that will lay the groundwork for a participatory archive commemorating Brooklyn's Black histories

## Potential Impact

- This project is an important and timely contribution to scholarship on contemporary urban development and on the history of New York City and its Black communities
- It will enrich conversations in Africana studies, American studies, sociology, anthropology, urban history, and geography, all of which help us understand the power dynamics that shape urban life
- By departing from the age-old narrative of urban “pioneers” and telling a story of Black community-making in a dynamic and often hostile urban landscape, this project will complement and enrich work that centers marginalized urban dwellers and demonstrates what is at stake amidst gentrification

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