

## **GENTRIFICATION OF THE WILLY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD: AN ASSESSMENT**

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**Abstract:** *Recent modifications in the physical and social environment of the Willy Street Neighborhood parallel characteristics found in gentrification theory. Through analysis of interviews, landscape observations, and census data, we evaluate whether or not gentrification is an explanation for recent changes. While overall improvements in appearance and safety and an increase in income and property values point to the occurrence of gentrification, poverty rates, consumption habits, and political values remain the same. The ideology of Willy Street has been and continues to be environmentally and socially aware, which now coincides with global consumption trends.*

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# **GENTRIFICATION OF THE WILLY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD: AN ASSESSMENT**

## **Introduction**

### **Project Thesis**

Looking at the Willy Street Neighborhood of Madison, WI, we analyze whether or not gentrification is an explanation for recent changes in the neighborhood and to what degree those changes align with gentrification theory. We chose the Willy Street Neighborhood because of its reputation among Madison residents as being a place of slightly run-down landscapes, progressive political discourse, liberal leaning non-profits, art, and underground culture. However, recently the neighborhood has seen an influx of new businesses, and an improvement in appearance. Many Madisonians apply the word “gentrification,” when referring to changes in the neighborhood. We want to see if that is an accurate description and whether or not these new characteristics have diminished the old, and to what degree.

### **Willy Street Neighborhood**

The Willy Street Neighborhood is located on the near east side and is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Madison (City of Madison 2010). For our study, we define the boundaries of the Willy Street Neighborhood as Wilson Street to the north, Lake Monona to the south, Blair Street to the west, and the Yahara River to the east. This area is often referred to as the Willy Street, the Marquette, or the Third Lake Ridge neighborhood. Williamson Street was opened in 1850 as an isthmus thoroughfare, and it quickly grew due to proximity to the rail corridor (Third Lake Ridge 1978:10). Originally Germans, Norwegians, and Yankees settled in the neighborhood and were employed either directly or indirectly by the railroad (Third Lake Ridge 1978:5), and because of this the neighborhood largely maintained a working class composition. Into the 1960s, the neighborhood was a “sketchy” place to live because it was industrial and

cheap (Christians 2010). Due to the affordable housing, many artists, poets, and musicians moved into the neighborhood in the 1960s and 1970s and soon formed a collaborative community.

Since then, Willy Street has been known as a bohemian, hip, and environmentally conscious place to live. It has many locally owned shops as well as strong neighborhood participation and involvement. Willy Street hosts many fun Madison activities including the Waterfront Festival, La Fete de Marquette, Orton Park Festival, and the Willy Street Fair. There are many historical homes, and homes that have been converted into apartments. In addition to the high-end, modern condos and apartments that have been recently remodeled from industrial buildings, the neighborhood architecture is elaborate and aesthetically pleasing.

### **Defining Gentrification**

There are multiple definitions of gentrification that have evolved over time. These definitions reflect changing gentrification theory. In various editions of *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, we see this evolution.

*The Dictionary of Human Geography*, 3rd edition (1993) defines gentrification as:

A process of neighbourhood regeneration by relatively affluent incomers, who displace lower-income groups and invest substantially in improvements to homes, the quality of which has deteriorated. The process of gentrification is often similar to that of invasion and succession. A few gentrifiers obtain properties in a relatively run-down condition within a small area and improve them, thereby increasing the attractiveness of the area to others who would prefer such a location, so that eventually the entire area (often only a few streets) changes its socio-economic status, and property values are substantially enhanced. Real estate agents and property developers may participate in the process, as they seek to enhance the exchange value of an area and to reap substantial profits from promoting uneven development at the intra-urban scale (Lees 2010:3-4).

4th edition (2000):

The reinvestment of capital at the urban centre, which is designed to produce space for a more affluent class of people than currently occupies that space.

Gentrification is quintessentially about urban reinvestment. In addition to residential rehabilitation and redevelopment, it now embraces commercial redevelopment and loft conversions... Gentrification proper combines this economic reinvestment with social change insofar as more affluent people - the urban 'gentry' - move into previously devalued neighbourhoods (Lees 2010:4).

5th edition (2009):

Middle class settlement in renovated or redeveloped properties in older, inner-city districts formerly occupied by a lower income population. A decade later, broader recognition of gentrification followed in large cities undergoing occupational transition from an industrial to a POST-INDUSTRIAL economy. But more recently gentrification has been identified more widely, in smaller urban centres, in Southern and Eastern Europe and also in some major centres in Asia and Latin America (Lees 2010:4).

The major difference between these editions is to whom the definition attributes the gentrification process. The third edition associates gentrification with a monetary process and investment of the wealthy. The fourth edition introduces the type of landscape modification and the element of social change. At this point, the gentrifiers are still affluent, but have distinguishable tastes and values. The fifth edition attributes gentrification to the middle class. This edition's definition also introduces the concept of gentrification coinciding with the occupational transition occurring in post-industrial cities. In the past fifteen years, the definition of gentrification evolved from a capital-based process to a human-based process.

For this article, we will use our own definition of gentrification: An emerging post-industrial middle class inhabiting, renovating, and reinventing low-income, urban neighborhoods, often accompanied by increased capital flows into the area.

### **Theory**

Production and Consumption are the two main theories that explain the process of gentrification. As the study of gentrification develops, there are ongoing debates regarding

which of these theories best defines the process of gentrification, and which additional factors researchers should consider.

### **Production Theory**

The “Production Theory” argument, associated primarily with the work of geographer Neil Smith, explains gentrification through economics and the relationships between “flows of capital” (money) and the production of urban space; it supposes that gentrification occurs because capital returns to the city. Smith claims that low rents in the urban periphery and government policies, such as the GI Bill and Interstate Highway Act, during the two decades after World War II, led to a continuous movement of capital towards the development of suburban areas. This movement caused a depreciation of the inner-city tax base and capital, which resulted in the abandonment of inner-city properties in favor of those in the periphery. Thus there was a fall in the price of inner-city land relative to the rising land prices in the suburbs (Smith 1987:461). This idea forms the basis for Smith's rent-gap theory, which he defines as the disparity between "the actual capitalized ground rent (land value) of a plot of land given its present use and the potential ground rent that might be gleaned under a 'higher and better' use" (Smith 1987:462). Production Theory is based chiefly on this rent-gap theory: to compare the gap between actual rent and potential rent if the land was improved upon or buildings renovated.

Smith believes that the rent-gap theory is necessary in explaining the process of gentrification. The depreciation of inner-city capital as discussed above produces the “objective economic conditions that make capital revaluation (redevelopment) a rational market response” (Smith 1979:545). He argues that when the rent gap is wide enough, real estate developers and landlords will see the potential profit of reinvesting in and redeveloping abandoned inner-city

properties for new inhabitants. The profit attained by redevelopment effectively closes the rent gap, leading to higher rents, leases, and mortgages. These increases in profits associated with Smith's theory are associated with a 'higher and better' use of the land, a key step of gentrification.

While the rent gap persists in the literature of urban geography as a useful concept in understanding gentrification, many geographers criticize aspects of this theory. One reason the rent-gap theory is useful is because it is a simple way of explaining a complex issue, but its issue lies in that same characteristic: it oversimplifies (Bourassa 1993:1732). By only analyzing changes in rent gaps, Bourassa argues that Smith is ignoring important changes in land use; zoning modifications are often as telling as changes in the rent gap. Bourassa also asserts that the rent-gap theory is impractical because it is difficult to separate land rent from proceeds in land improvement (Bourassa 1993:1732; Hammel 1999:1284). Empirical studies attempting to apply rent-gap theory encounter measurement problems, partly arising from difficulties in separating actual rent from inputs (Bourassa 1993:1741). Smith's rent-gap theory also does not acknowledge why some neighborhoods undergo gentrification while others in similar economic situations do not (Bourassa 1993:1735). Beyond these critiques, David Ley and others have argued in their Consumption Theory that social factors, rather than economic factors, are key in the process of gentrification.

### **Consumption Theory**

Another perspective of gentrification theory is "Consumption Theory." This views gentrification as a social process, rather than an economic or capital based process. It focuses on the characteristics and values of those who gentrify. For instance, Consumption Theory looks into the link of class, location, architecture, values, occupation, and culture. Those who follow

Consumption Theory criticize Production Theory for not considering the implications of human beings as gentrifiers. Several research studies exemplify and utilize Consumption Theory.

David Ley's research looks at gentrification as it occurs in the context of post-industrial cities and the emergence of a new middle class. Ley calls this emerging class the "cultural new class." They resettle older, working class city districts and collectively share a dislike for the monotony of suburbia, mass organization, and corporate business (Ley 1994:136). His study utilizes interviews, types of employment, renovation or development, polling districts, fieldwork, and secondary sources to analyze districts in Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal.

Michael Jager sees aesthetics and consumption habits as a way for the new middle class to demarcate and define themselves from other social groups during gentrification. His study focuses on the interrelationships between class constitution and the conservation of social hierarchy in the built environment of Melbourne, Australia (Jager 1986:153). Specifically, he talks about the internal renovation of buildings typically associated with the upper class. For instance, someone who is gentrifying a neighborhood might remodel a former factory building rather than tear it down altogether. By remodeling the building, the stigma associated with the labor class is no longer present, and there is a new interpretation of the building function. In doing this, he argues, gentrifiers play into the social structure of the past while embracing a more "traditional petty bourgeois ethic of economic valorization" in beautifying the exterior (Jagar 1986:155). The characteristics of these new aesthetics are expressions of art, leisure, and moderation. These new modes of middle class consumption and investment now focus on redefining, recycling, and being a responsible consumer (Jagar 1986:157).

Jon Caulfield's research is pertinent because he addresses the types of gentrifiers in terms of phases and marginal gentrifiers. He cites many different ways to approach categorizing

gentrifiers. The most relevant to our study is the stage-typology categorization. Unconventional, non-conformist middle class groups dominate the first of three phases. Caulfield cites gays and artists as examples of these types of people (Caulfield 1989:161). In the second phase people of the middle class continue to move into the neighborhood, but are more mainstream and concerned with neighborhood fashionability and investment. The third phase consists of affluent individuals moving into the neighborhood because of the “elite” neighborhood status (Caulfield 1989:162).

### **Beyond Production and Consumption**

The above-mentioned theories in the study of gentrification suggest production and consumption, capital and culture, and supply and demand as the factors for upper- or middle-income families or individuals buying and renovating deteriorated urban neighborhoods (Hamnett 1991:173). Moving beyond Production or Consumption Theory, gentrification debates now focus on the combination of the gentrifying factors from the two theories and additional driving forces behind them (Zukin 1987:143). For example, globalization is emerging as an explanation for gentrification (Lizieri 2010).

Hamnett describes the process of gentrification not simply as a product of changes in the social and spatial division of labor, but as an emerging preference toward the inner city that spans across all classes (Hamnett 1991:185). He describes the process of gentrification as needing four requirements: the supply of suitable areas for gentrification, the supply of potential gentrifiers, the existence of attractive inner-city environments, and a cultural preference for inner-city residency by a certain segment of the service class (Hamnett 1991:186). Sharon Zukin explains these requirements as specific forces, where one force cannot act as a driving force behind another. The potential gentrifier is driven independently by both the supply of

deteriorated urban areas, and the cultural preference to live in the inner city (Zukin 1987:143); supply does not guarantee the social will to gentrify the area. Demand for urban housing can stem from both capital and a desire to live near central city jobs and social and cultural facilities (Hamnett 1991:186). The ideology of gentrification legitimizes the social replication of gentrified areas, often against the claims of displaced residential and commercial populations (Zukin 1987:143).

Recently, the debate is moving towards understanding how the phenomenon of globalization affects gentrification. The debate includes a discussion of how the phenomenon of globalization causes the emergence of “world cities” (Lizieri 2010) or “nodal cities” (Ley 1986:532), and creates the market supply and cultural preference to live in the inner city. Capital flows in globalization act as a gentrifying agent. For example, private real estate groups provide capital to purchase and develop land in a way that incorporates the values of gentrification. International real estate investments rose from \$90 billion in 1997 to \$357 billion in 2007 (Lizieri 2010). As a result of these capital flows, gentrification occurred in Prenzlauer Berg, a district of Berlin, and Montmartre, a district of Paris, as they became popular destinations for tourists and young professionals, native or foreign (Alamel 2010). Service economies of nodal cities support these huge investments in real estate. In turn, the increase in tax base requires and allows the government to invest in infrastructure as it becomes a center for private and public services (Ley 1986:532). The private real estate groups enabled the gentrification process.

One recent high profile case of this form of globalized gentrification is the Beijing Olympic Games. The influx of capital for operating expenditures made Beijing a center for public services by promoting the construction of the Olympic village, media village, and sporting complexes (Li & Blake 2009, 345). The money was also spent on beautification programs and

infrastructure updates to the city (Zhou & Ap 2009:80). Updating these traditional and poor communities in Beijing led to mass evictions (Rolnik 2009) of a reported 1.5 million people (Beck 2007). Despite these displacements, the country modernized by expanding the service industry base and creating a strong foundation for future growth. The pools of gentrifiers, in these cases, are not necessarily individuals but corporations that attract middle to high class populations. In this case, government enabled the gentrification process, rather than individuals.

Globalization, the now-inevitable process of moving capital and people beyond geographic boundaries, adds another factor in the debate over gentrification. It is this combination of regional, national, and international interaction that creates the desirable space and population for gentrification. Although the debate of gentrification is often viewed from either the Production or Consumption Theories, gentrification occurs through a combination of factors. The variables that most gentrification studies measure are often the same: the supply of suitable areas for gentrification, supply of potential gentrifiers, the existence of attractive inner-city environments, and a cultural preference for inner-city dwelling (Hamnett 1991:186). Because no single theory can explain the process of gentrification in its entirety, it is necessary to move beyond the traditional debate of Consumption versus Production.

### **Gentrification and Displacement**

For over fifty years, wealthier residents fled the city for the suburbs. Socioeconomically isolated populations of uneducated and unskilled classes were left behind in the urban core. As a result, many cities are facing serious fiscal problems due to the decrease in tax base and property values. Often times, cities benefit from the gentrification of an area because of an expanded tax base, lower crime rates, and new businesses. Despite its benefits, gentrification often displaces lower income residents due to the increase in the cost of living and rising property values.

Displacement can be thought of in both a conservative and liberal mindset. For our purposes, we will be considering displacement through the liberal definition: “a process that might include the pricing out of residents and the changing of shops and services” (Atkinson 2000:349). As there are no formal records of why individuals leave neighborhoods, and where they go after they leave, the researcher must rely on word of mouth from current residents. This is not always reliable because current residents are the gentrifiers and may not accurately know the experiences of former residences.

### **Methodologies**

Our primary data methods consist of questionnaires, interviews, historical photographs, landscape observations, and census data. The Production Theory, Consumption Theory, and the way in which they can work together with outside forces, such as globalization, are the influence behind the questions in our questionnaires, interviews and the questions we asked while analyzing the many facets of the changing cultural landscape. The consistent definition of gentrification that we created is also an important influence for framing our questions regarding the collection of all primary data.

We administered two questionnaires throughout the Willy Street Neighborhood, a business questionnaire and a resident questionnaire. We distributed the business questionnaires to businesses as we traveled around the Willy Street Neighborhood and the resident questionnaire to residents outside the Willy Street Co-op and to individual houses within the chosen Willy Street Neighborhood parameters. Both questionnaires contain simple questions with answers already listed: strongly agree, agree, neutral/don't know, disagree, strongly disagree, as well as one open ended question. Since it has been found that survey respondents, when given listed answers such as these, tend to lean towards the “agree” end of the spectrum,

we included multiple questions that were both positive and negative (Secor 2010:198). We provided an addressed and stamped envelope for those who are unable to complete the questionnaire at the time of distribution in order to help avoid the disadvantage of a low response rate regarding the use of questionnaires (Gartner, 28 September 2010).

As previously stated, the questions in our questionnaires were determined by the theories of gentrification. In order to solve our research question we need to create a relationship between the questions and answers. With this relationship the answers will be based upon the constructs created by the gentrification theories, which in turn will better help us assess to what extent gentrification has occurred in the Willy Street Neighborhood (Herod 2010:70). Business and resident questionnaires are strong because of cost effectiveness, easy analysis, and consistent presentation among respondents (Gartner, 28 September 2010). Another strength of our questionnaires is the pre-testing that occurred before distribution. This allowed us to fix any unclear questions or confusion (Secor 2010, 198). However, a large weakness is we do not have enough time to generate a stratified random sample. Therefore our distribution of questionnaires to both businesses and residents may be subjective as we might self-consciously choose to whom we distribute questionnaires.

We analyzed the business and resident questionnaires quantitatively. We constructed two data tables, one consisting of all the questions and answers from the business questionnaire and one consisting of all the questions and answers from the resident questionnaire. After reviewing these two tables we created thirteen bar graphs for the questions that we deemed most appropriate to answering our research question. We analyzed and then used supplementary information from our interviews to get more in depth results.

The next way in which we gathered primary data was through interviews. Since an important part of answering our research question deals with finding to what extent over a certain period of time gentrification has occurred, interviews are essential in our data and results (Secor 2010:199). Anna Secor recommends administering ten to thirty interviews, depending on how much of one's interview information is the center of the data (Secor 2010:199). Due to time constraints, and supplementation of other primary data sources, we completed seven interviews. Like the questionnaires, we based our interview topics in gentrification theory. Rather than asking strict questions, we conducted informal interviews with fluid, free-flowing conversation, allowing us to gather the most amount of information (Gartner, 28 September 2010).

One strength of the interviews is their ability to counteract the lack of depth from the questionnaires by providing us with any information we would not have received from the simple strongly agree to strongly disagree continuum. However, a weakness accompanying the interviews is the issue of interviewer bias. We did not use tape recorders therefore we chose what information and quotes to write down. We analyzed the interview data qualitatively by using methods such as coding. By taking similar themes, ideas and phrases from the different interviews we condensed information with the goal of uncovering the interviewee's narratives within certain social contexts. This coding allowed us to discover hidden discourse to supplement the questionnaires. We also created a privacy statement that we distributed to each questionnaire respondent and interviewee, as it is important to assure confidentiality among all of our research participants (Secor 2010:203).

Our last source of primary data can be grouped under the changing cultural landscape of the Willy Street Neighborhood. "The cultural landscape is, in effect, an epistemology that has long been central to human geographical traditions of observation, interpretation, and analysis"

(Schein 2010:223). The Willy Street Neighborhood's changing cultural landscape is essential to our research project and contains a large amount of primary data of which we will collect from landscape observation, historical photographs and census data. Through this data collection we incorporated historical data and archives and analyze them quantitatively and qualitatively by considering "what the landscape does, why it is important, how people live in and through this particular landscape" (Schein 2010:237).

The strength of the many subgroups of available data collection from the cultural landscape (landscape observation, census data, and historical photographs) allowed us to question changes throughout history and bring in gentrification theory to shape our questions and results. We also visited the Willy Street Neighborhood several times to complete our own primary account of landscape observation. Through observing and photographing buildings and people, we analyzed how the cultural landscape reflects the ideals of the neighborhood.

The census data is important in relation to Production Theory. By using the census data to see how capital investment has changed over time in the neighborhood through income, poverty rates, housing rates, and ownership and rental statistics we are able to complement changes we viewed in the cultural landscape through historical photographs and landscape observation with changes in capital investment of the Willy Street Neighborhood. The census data is also important in relation to the Consumption Theory as we view changes over time in education (number of years of schooling) and residents' occupation. The collection of historical photographs, landscape observations, and census data brought out thematic changes over time that we used to answer our research question.

Since there are multiple theories for assessing the process of gentrification we chose several methods in order to address aspects of each theory. While we do have strengths and

weaknesses in our process of data collection, we believe mixing these methods and applying already known theories will help to outweigh the weaknesses and lead us to accurate results.

## **Results**

To present our data, we categorize according to the major themes found in our data: landscape changes, consumption and values, crime and safety, demographics, and cost of living. Within each of these themes, we have sorted our data into either supporting or negating that gentrification is occurring in the neighborhood, according to gentrification theory as laid out in our literature review.

First, we wanted to gauge our residents' opinion on urban renewal and the effects it has on the community. Urban renewal is the reinvestment into and rehabilitation of dilapidated housing, roads, parks, and industrial areas. Our theory was that if residents believe urban renewal is a positive thing, they would be more willing to participate in the gentrification process and more willing to support it. According to Figure 16, residents of the Willy Street Neighborhood believe that urban renewal has a positive effect on the community. Though this does not explicitly say that urban renewal is occurring in this neighborhood, it suggests that residents think urban renewal is a good thing.

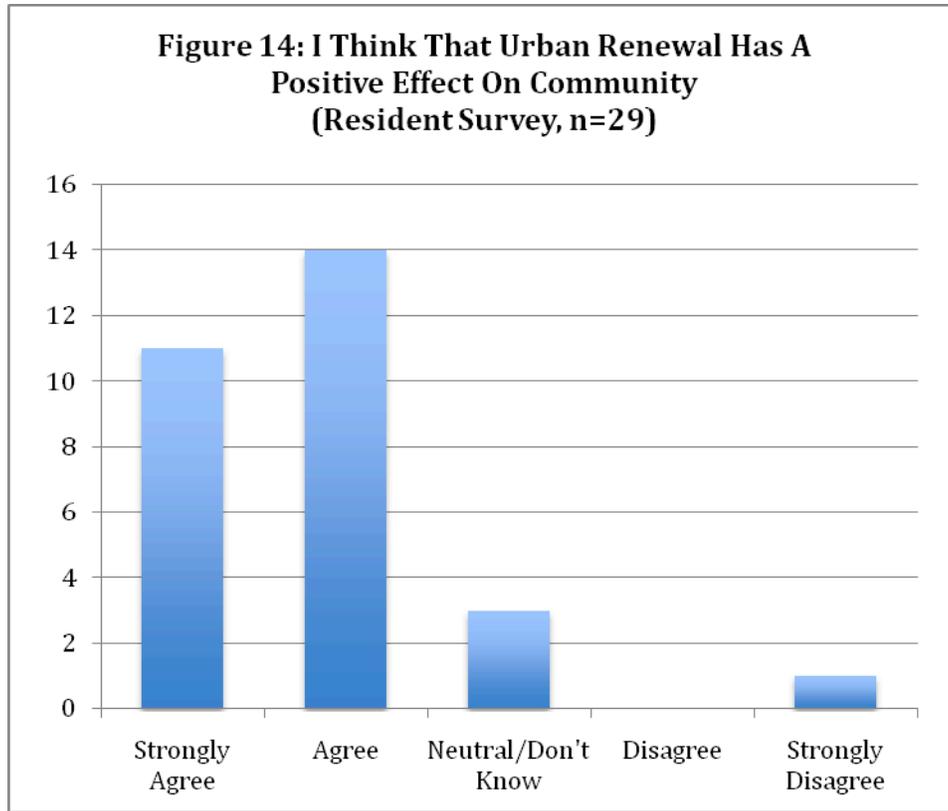


Figure 14: Resident Survey. I think that urban renewal has a positive effect on community. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

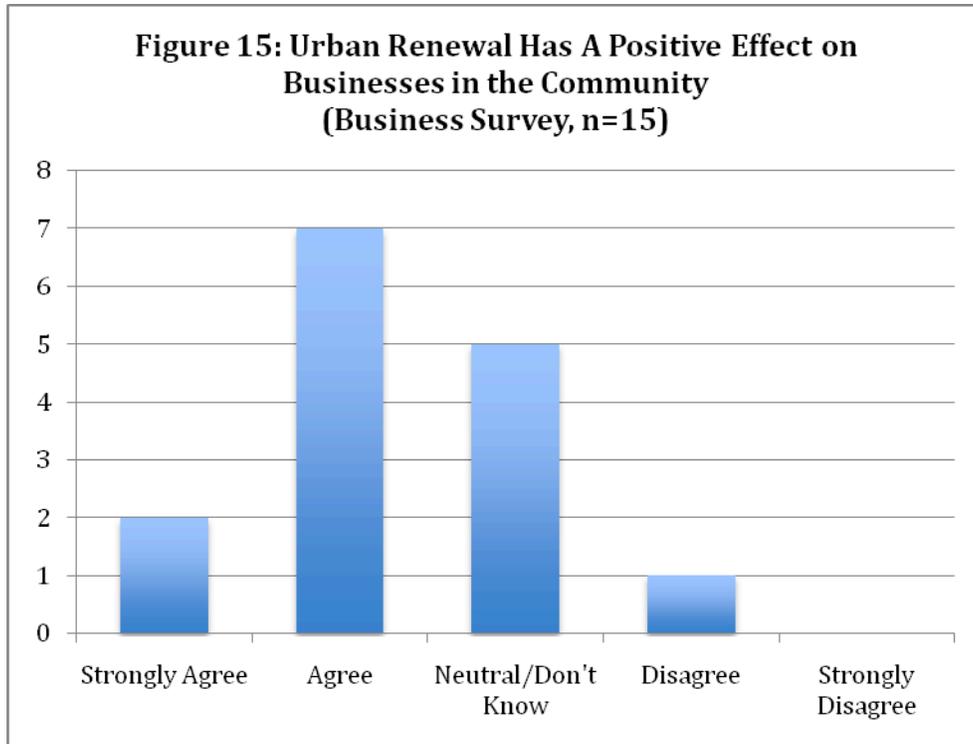


Figure 15: Business Survey. Urban Renewal has a positive effect on businesses in the community. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

In addition to residents, most businesses agreed or strongly agreed that urban renewal has a positive effect on the community. This acceptance of urban renewal is the platform for the willingness of a neighborhood to accept change. Having established that the neighborhood generally supports the process of urban renewal, we can look into whether or not there is change in the neighborhood.

Figure 14: Resident Survey. I think that urban renewal has a positive effect on community.

1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

**Landscape Changes**

**Support Gentrification Theory**

Historical photographs communicate snapshots of the landscape and context of the neighborhood from the past forty years. The major changes in the landscape include a decrease

in industrial and manufacturing buildings and an improvement in the appearance of the neighborhood. One example of a photograph exemplifying a derelict landscape was taken in 1976. In the foreground is an intersection and what appears to be a local bar, a building with stains on the siding, paint chipping off the trim, and cheap looking windows (801 Williamson with 802 Williamson in background, 1976). Compared to modern day observations, the cheap looking bar was replaced with a new building that appears to be mixed use-shops on the lower levels, and housing space on the top three floors (Landscape Observations, Feiner, 4 October 2010). Another photograph, taken in 1976, is a local shop on 805 Williamson Street (Tipler, 805 Williamson, 1976). In this photograph the facade of the shop appears to be painted brick, with the paint peeling off. The two large windows in the front have flimsy-looking signs advertising services. Now, the building houses the posh restaurant, Bon Appetit and has been repainted and remodeled (Landscape Observations, Feiner, 4 October 2010).

A 2010 mural on the social justice center depicts Willy Street as the center of a counter-culture revolution, with a history of activism in the 1960s and 1970s. This mural contains text explaining the groups of activists and artists that gave Willy Street its reputation. The themes of this mural, which are counter-culture, low-income, and working-class, reference what the neighborhood used to be. Counter-culture is evident in the text of the mural:

“We were a generation that had become disillusioned with the world as we found it. We created our own ‘counter-culture revolution’ right here on Willy Street” (Figure 1, Feiner, 24 September 2010).

Becoming dissatisfied with the monotony of suburbs and mass culture is evidence of gentrification according to Consumption Theory. There is evidence that the community used to be less high-end and wealthy as it is now:

“[We] found cheap rent here and minimal restriction on our artistic and political expression...We were united in our need to stretch a dollar as far as possible. The

importance of recycling and the hipness of vintage came later. Poverty was a common denominator” (Figure 2, Feiner, 24 September 2010 ).

This transition from a poor to a wealthy neighborhood is essential to the process of gentrification. Lastly, there is evidence of a formerly working class neighborhood:

“In the 1970’s the Williamson Street was primarily a working class industrial area...Artists joined with their working-class neighbors to celebrate at St Vinnie’s” (Figure 1, Feiner, 24 September 2010).

Finding out whether a neighborhood was previously working class, and if those individuals have been displaced is difficult to do because many of the current residents themselves are the supposed gentrifiers, and are unaware that others were displaced because they can afford the rent. However, this shows that it was a working class neighborhood and sets the stage for gentrification.

Comparing these historical instances and photographs with present day landscape observations is useful in observing change. The current landscape is home to improvement on the facade of buildings, people who fit the physical appearance of a stereotypical “yuppie,” several new condominiums and apartment complexes, reuse of industrial buildings, and high-end retail and restaurants. (Figure 4 & 5 & 6 & 7, Feiner, 24 September 2010). Overall, the facades of buildings are well-kept and beautiful. While observing, there were two different renovations in progress on historical buildings (Figure 8, Feiner, 24 September 2010). Although there is danger in stereotyping, there is also much truth to it, and there were several physical indicators of these individuals fitting the stereotype of a young urban professional. One woman was seen riding an expensive bike, which leads to the assumption that biking is her main form of transportation. Being a few thousand dollars, the quality of the bike indicates that she is choosing not to buy a car, as the mainstream does, but embracing environmental conservation and counterculture. In addition, she was wearing brands that are political and expensive. Her

backpack was Patagonia - an environmentally friendly and expensive brand, and her shirt looked like a modern day interpretation of a traditional male, working-class shirt. With our methods of primary research, it is difficult to contrast these observations with a historical account, but we can however, align her consumption habits with gentrification theory. All of her attire indicates that her consumption habits align with those of the Consumption Theory of gentrification; she aims to reinvent and embrace elements of the working class that fit her lifestyle as a globally conscience, urban citizen (Landscape Observations, Feiner 15 October 2010).

In addition, use and appearance of buildings align with gentrification theory. The new condominiums and apartments are made of high quality building materials, and elaborate architecture (Figure 5, Feiner, 24 September 2010). One building utilizes mixed-use zoning, another is an entirely new building just made of apartments, and another is a remodeled warehouse that advertises “historical renovation” as an amenity. The reuse of industrial buildings is not limited to apartments, it is also evident in retail stores and restaurants such as Ground Zero Coffee, Machinery Row Bicycles, and office buildings in a former farm equipment factory (Figure 9, Feiner, 24 September 2010). In addition to these high-end stores, there is Monkey-bar Gymnasium, Bon Appetit restaurant, Hempen Goods: Quality Eco-products, and Madison Sourdough. These new living spaces, services, and office spaces indicate that the people who live in this neighborhood have a high, expensive standard of living. Unless there was a market in the neighborhood that could afford them, these apartments and services would not be offered. The conversion of buildings into office space indicates a professionalization of jobs in the area as well (Landscape Observations, Feiner 2010).

Our surveys and interviews also indicate an improvement in the appearance of the neighborhood (Figure 14). Resident #6 said, “The Willy Street park has improved the appearance of the neighborhood” (9 November 2010). Another resident said:

“There have been some minor face lifts on buildings, street improvements, and the addition of a large business/residential building on Williamson and Baldwin. I’d say the latter is a big improvement over the empty lot that was there previously” (Resident #4, 10 November 2010).

Resident #5 brought up an interesting opinion regarding the changing appearance of the neighborhood: it corresponds with the number of low-income families that used to live in the area. With the low-income families came apartments that suited their price range; these apartments were not held to a high-standard. Since the number of low-income residents and families has decreased, there is pressure to update older buildings to be less run-down. This pressure contributes to an improved overall appearance of the neighborhood.

“These apartments tended to be very run-down, and the landlords were only spending the bare minimum, if that, to keep the houses maintained so that the city inspector’s office wouldn’t condemn the properties” (Resident #5, 10 November 2010).

According to Figure 16, most residents of the Willy Street Neighborhood believe that the appearance of the neighborhood has been improved. Of the people who moved into the neighborhood prior to 2002 (17/29), all “agree” or “strongly agree” that the appearance has improved. Because gentrification corresponds with a focus on appearance, this supports the argument that gentrification has come to the neighborhood.

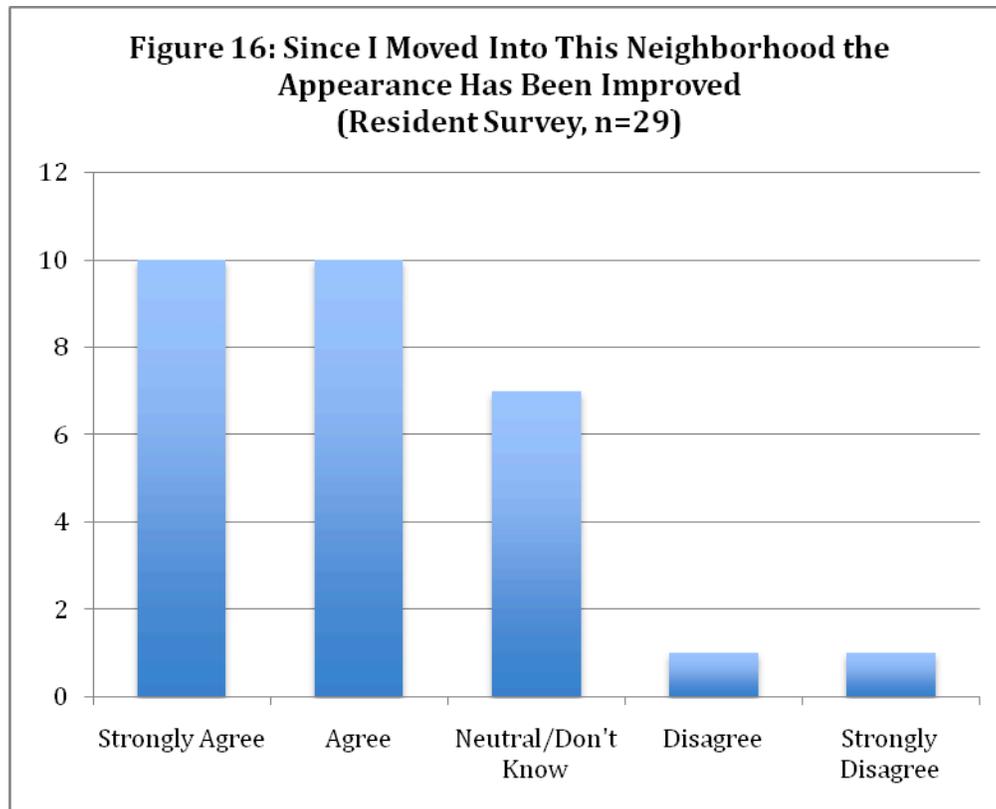


Figure 16: Resident Survey. Since I moved into this neighborhood the appearance has improved. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

### **Negate Gentrification Theory**

Despite the evidence that gentrification of the landscape occurred, landscape observations and surveys indicate the opposite. Many buildings are still derelict, and other homes, with well-maintained exteriors, show little change over history. For example, the Willy Street Pub looks worn down, with an old, cheap sign, and a poorly maintained exterior (Figure 10, Feiner, 24 September 2010). Homes near the lake are still in the remarkable shape they were in over fifty years ago. For example, the Ott house on 754 Jenifer Street (Figure 13, Feiner, 24 September 2010) remains in similar condition as it was in 1972 (Potter, Wisconsin Historical Society, 1972). Therefore, gentrification in terms of appearance may be limited to Williamson Street, rather than the homes near the lake.

Observations also indicate that the neighborhood is still politically active. Even though we made observations during an election season, the neighborhood seemed exceptionally political for the City of Madison in their use of signage. One historical photograph, at 1521 Williamson, shows there used to be a mural showing a redesign of an Air Force advertisement. It says, “They Kill, We Get the Bill. No More War Ads in Our Neighborhood” (1521 Williamson Willy St redesign of Air Force Ad). The photograph does not have a date, but shows that Willy Street was a politically active neighborhood, concerned about national policy. This tradition continues. One sign on a door said, “the human cost of the war in Iraq” (Figure 11, Feiner, 24 September 2010). On the lampposts lining the streets, a banner said, “A Place for All People,” indicating that the open-minded nature has not disappeared (Figure 12, Feiner, 24 September 2010). This is important because political activity has been a defining characteristic of the Willy Street Neighborhood, and still remains one today. When gentrification occurs, usually the defining characteristics of the neighborhood diminish. Because this characteristic has not changed, this indicates that perhaps gentrification is not occurring.

One place of continuing community activism is the Willy Street Park, located on the 1000 block of Williamson Street. Founded in 1978, community members protested an incoming chain taco restaurant: “it looked cheap and seedy, and neighbors were outraged by this ugly development” (Resident #6, 9 November 2010). They organized to purchase the lot for the community, and since then volunteers dedicate time and effort to the beautification of this one plot of land. The volunteers host annual community plant sales and ice-cream socials to raise funds to support its diverse flower gardens and upkeep of social gathering areas. The continued interest in community involvement and dedication to providing appealing public gathering

spaces by volunteers has helped improve the appearance of this landscape, yet the volunteers have always been residents of the neighborhood, not gentrifiers coming in from other places.

Our surveys also indicate that businesses have not structurally renovated their buildings. Structural renovation is significant because it indicates maintenance and investment into the appearance of the neighborhood. According to Figure 15, a little over half of these respondents indicated that their building has not been structurally renovated. For this particular question, we need to address the interpretation of structural renovation. Structural renovation implies knocking down a wall, changing the facade, etc. It is much bigger than re-painting a wall. Renovation of old industrial buildings and reinvestment to improve appearance is an indication of gentrification, and in this instance, it looks like many of the buildings remain untouched. To reveal change over time, we included the year they started working there.

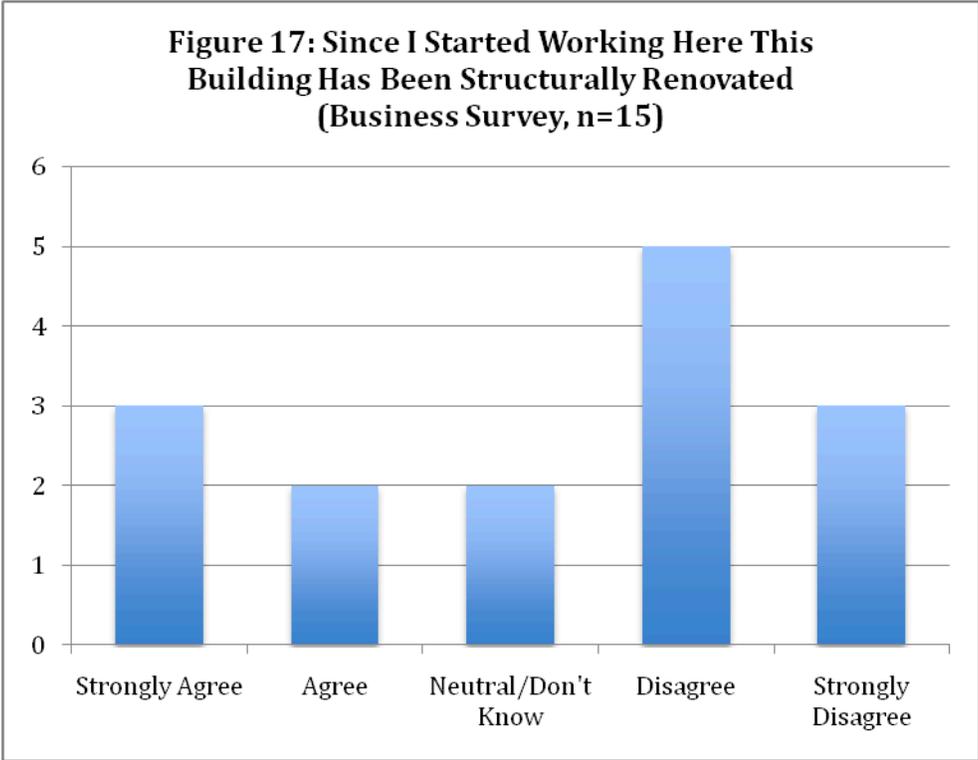


Figure 17: Business Survey. Since I started working here this building has been structurally renovated. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

## **Consumption and Values**

### **Support Gentrification Theory**

Interviews, questionnaires, and landscape observations suggest that there has been change in consumption habits and values of the Willy Street Community. An increase in stores with products and habits that are anti-mass culture, more high-end, and focused on being a responsible citizen indicates gentrification. The majority of businesses that we surveyed "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that most of their clients reside in the neighborhood (Figure 18). One way to measure gentrification is the influx of more expensive, high-end restaurants and shops opening up. Bon Appetit, which is a high-end restaurant, opened up in 1996 (Bon Appetit 2010). Madison Sourdough just opened up a Willy Street location early in 2010. Hempen Goods, a high-end retail store with sustainable products, opened in 1997 (Dane Buy Local 2010). Just Coffee, a speciality, fair-trade coffee roaster, opened in 2002 (Just Coffee 2010). If most clients reside in the neighborhood, the high-end stores and restaurants are an accurate portrayal of the tastes of residents.

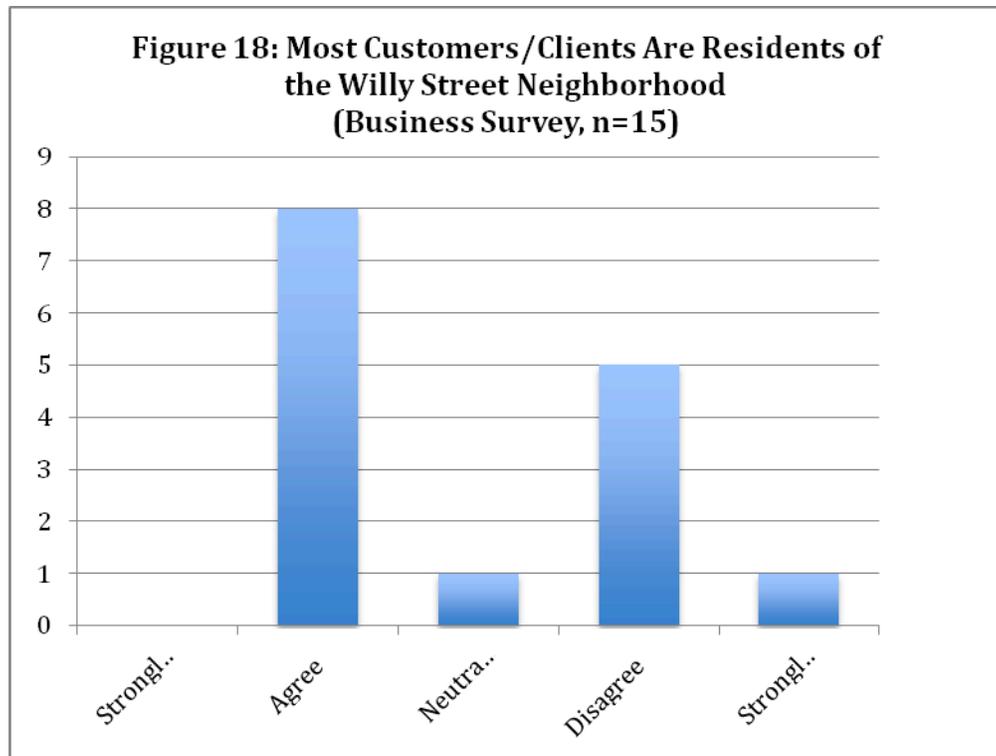


Figure 18: Business Survey. Most customers/clients are residents of the Willy St. Neighborhood. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

### **Negate Gentrification Theory**

Despite the increase in high-end products, our business surveys indicate that there has not been a change in consumption habits in the neighborhood. Most of those surveyed said they “disagree” that there has been an increase in the demand for high-end products (Figure 19). High-end products are associated with people who can afford them, and feel it is important to consume those products. Therefore, if there is an increase in demand, this would represent change. In addition, one business owner mentioned that he is actually moving his high-end business to the capitol square, because he feels that he will have more access to his target market (Resident #7, 13 November 2010). It is important to consider that many of the businesses that took are survey are new to the neighborhood, and already offer high-end products. Therefore,

they have not seen an increase in the demand for high-end products, because they already offer them.

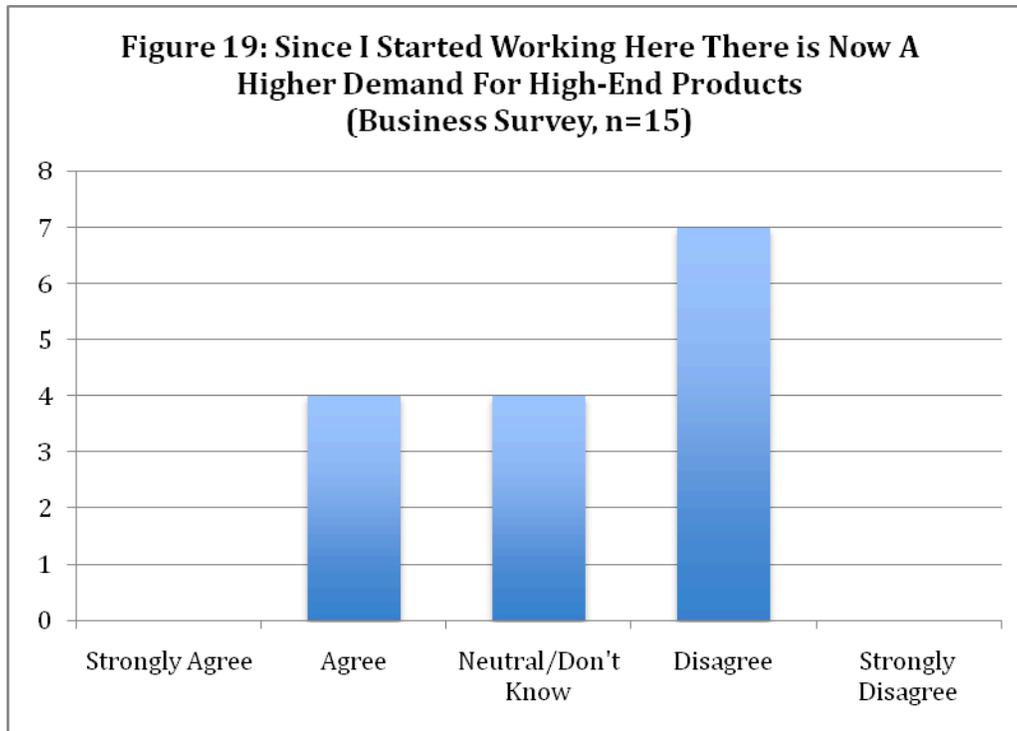


Figure 19: Business Survey. Since I started working here there is now a higher demand for high-end products. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

In addition to asking whether or not there is an increased demand for high-end products, we also asked business owners whether or not customers' values changed since they started working there. The majority of businesses say that the values of their customers have not changed since they opened. Of business owners who started working at Willy Street before 2005, 4/8 agree that their customers values have changed since they started working there. Whereas, 7/7 of the people who started working in the Willy Street Neighborhood after 2005 say that they disagree or strongly disagree that the values of their customers have changed (Figure 20). This is an important distinction because part of gentrification in Consumption Theory is the

change in consumption habits and values. As visible in the data, some feel that there has been a change since they first started working there.

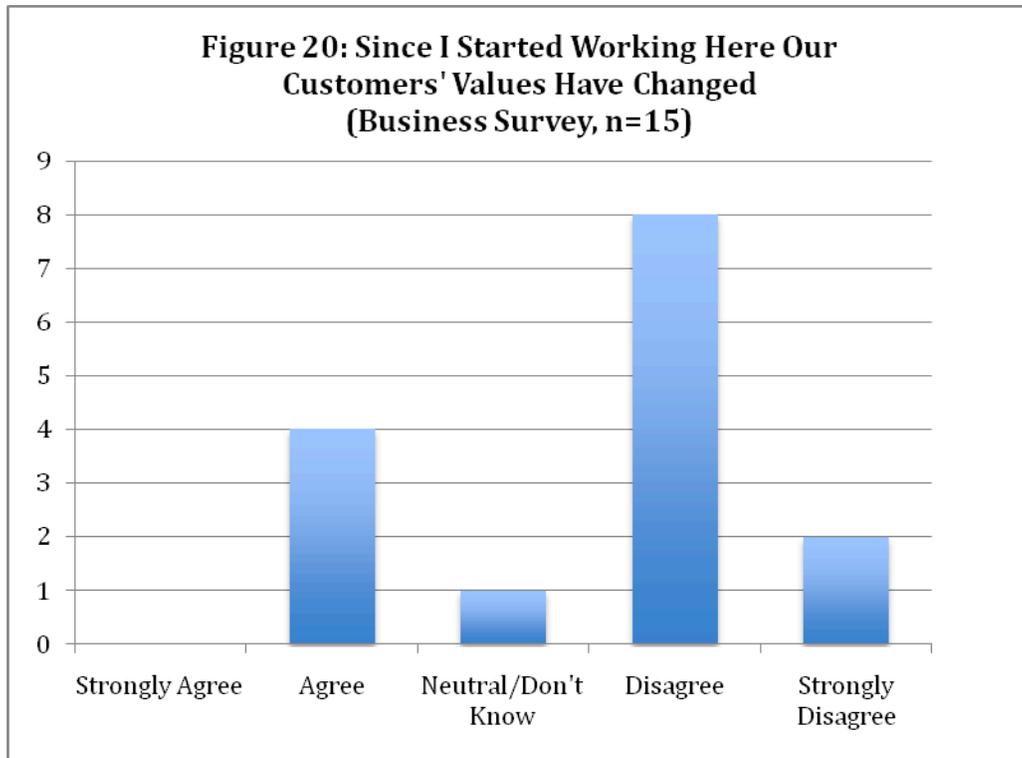


Figure 20: Business Survey. Since I started working here our customers' values have changed. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

## Safety

### Support Gentrification Theory

According to interviews, and surveys the safety of the neighborhood has increased significantly over the years. Residents said:

“When I moved here in the 1980s, there used to be syringes and drunks outside of my apartment” (Resident #3, 2 November 2010).

“On Willy Street, some of the women I knew were alcoholics, drug addicts, and/or hookers, but they were also moms so I hung out with them in their capacity as parents. Willy Street was not very safe for them or their kids. There were plenty of drunks, johns and pushers in the neighborhood. Every day, including the coldest January mornings, the Crystal Corner Bar had a line of homeless winos waiting for the door to open at 8:00 am so they could have their first beer of the day” (Resident #5, 10 Nov 2010).

In the surveys, more residents agree than disagree that safety has improved over the years, but many do not know. According to Figure 21, it is likely that safety has improved from the resident’s perspective. As the safety of the neighborhood increases, the willingness of people to invest in and move into the neighborhood also increases. We also compared this question to the number of years the participants lived in the neighborhood and we found that the participants that responded “neutral/don’t know” came from residents who had moved into the area in the last two years. Residents who have been in the neighborhood longer agree that the neighborhood’s safety has improved.

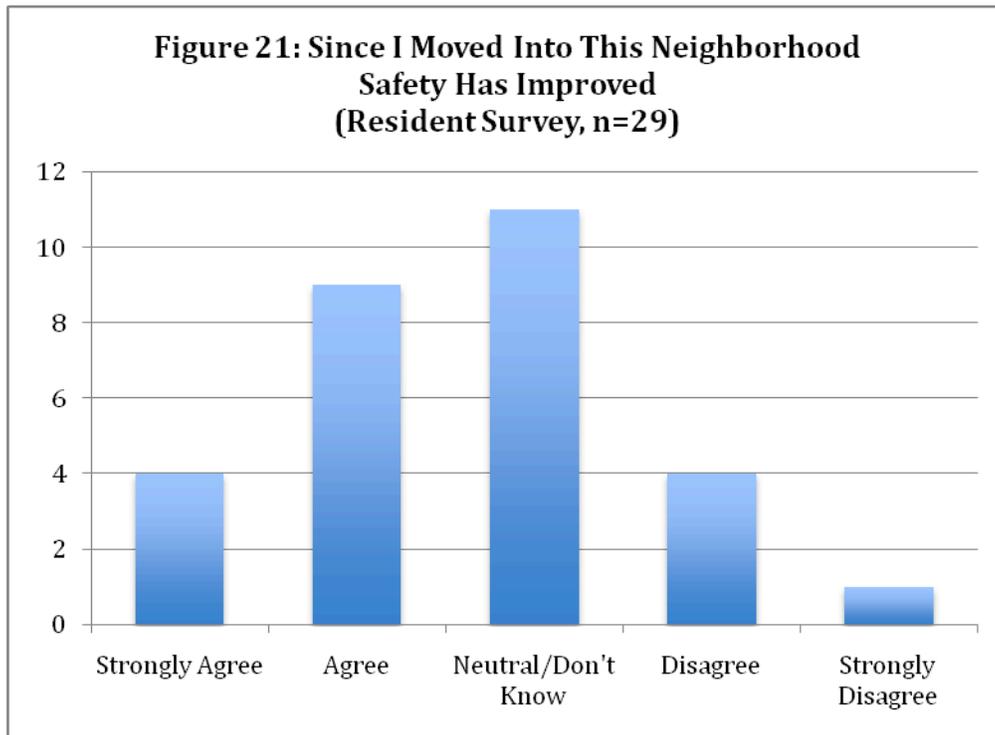


Figure 21: Resident Survey. Since I moved into this neighborhood safety has improved. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don’t know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

Most businesses say that they do not know whether or not crime has decreased in the neighborhood. However, of the individuals that worked at their business before 2005, 3/8 agree that crime has decreased, 4/8 are neutral, and 1/8 strongly disagree. Of those who recently

started working in the Willy Street Neighborhood since 2006, 3/8 disagree that crime has decreased (Figure 22). Using this data, we can see that business owners who have been there longer are more likely to think that crime has decreased. The public perception of a decrease in crime is influential in gentrification because if business owners do not view crime as a threat, they are more likely to open up a business in a neighborhood. If crime has actually decreased, it shows a change in the composition of the neighborhood.

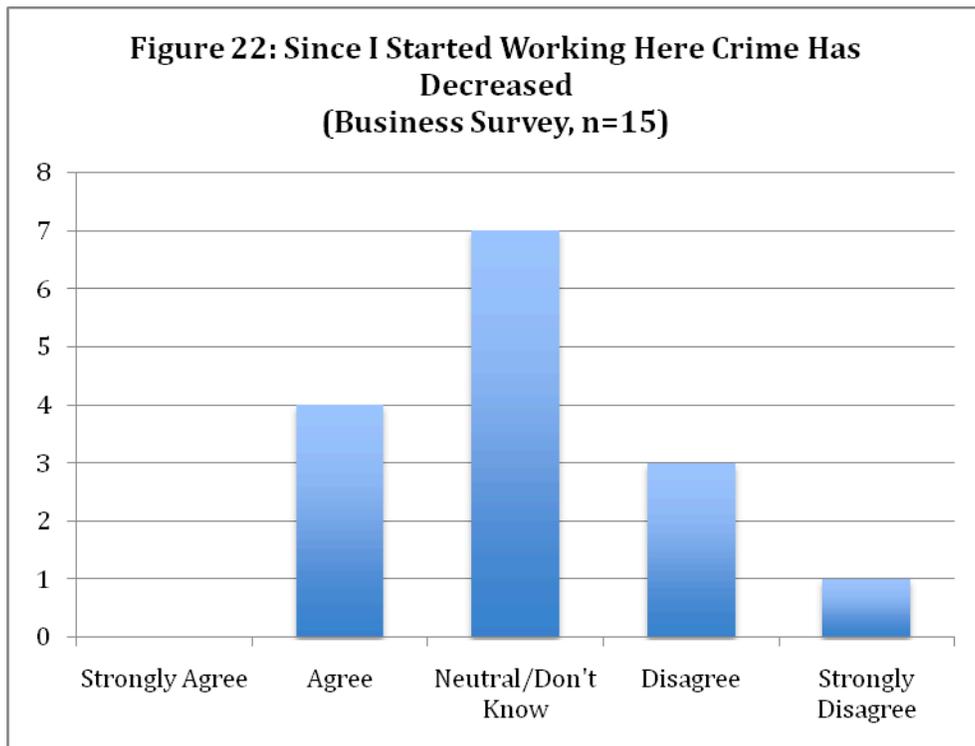


Figure 22: Business Survey. Since I started working here crime has decreased. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

### Negate Gentrification Theory

The safety of a neighborhood can sometimes correlate with poverty rates of the area. Comparing census data over the last fifty years, we can see that poverty rates have been fairly stable. In 1970, 10.9 percent of the population of census tract 19 was below the federal poverty line. In 1980, that rate dropped slightly to 8.9 percent, but then by 2000 it rose to 10.7 percent

(U.S. Census Bureau). The relative stability of poverty rates in the neighborhood, if indeed correlated with safety, would negate any changes in safety over time.

Two of the interviewees cited that they think their neighborhood safety is relatively the same and has not significantly changed.

“I think the safety of our neighborhood is a lot better than most would assume. There are soup kitchens and halfway houses, so the population of homeless people is fairly high. Crime is far lower here than downtown or closer to campus, though. We feel very safe here with our young family, considering” (Resident #4, 10 Nov 2010).

“If a woman asked me if it was safe to go out at night, I would say no. Muggings have occurred along the bike path consistently” (Resident #6, 9 November 2010).

One perspective states that the safety of the neighborhood has never been that good, and it remains that way. However, another resident says that crime is really not as bad as people think it is. Even though these two perspectives contradict each other, it goes to show that the feeling of safety and concern is individual, and seems to vary across the neighborhood.

## **Demographic Changes**

### **Support Gentrification Theory**

Interviews, surveys, and census data show that some demographic changes in the neighborhood support the gentrification process. When asked whether or not they believe economic diversity has increased in the neighborhood, interviewees responded with:

“The last African American family on this street moved out 3 years ago” (Survey Participant 15 Nov 2010).

“There is hardly any racial diversity, although the Willy Street Neighborhood used to be known as a “blacker” neighborhood” (Resident #2 12 Nov 2010).

We specifically asked about economic diversity and did not mention any racial changes. Racial demographic changes can contribute to gentrification, but this is out of the scope of our project.

Although it is true that racial minorities tend to be lower-income, it is interesting that these two residents related these two characteristics; this indeed warrants more investigation in the future.

Resident #5 lived in the Willy Street area from 1984 to 1987 when there was a large amount of economic diversity, which created a large spectrum of residents. During her time working and living in the Willy Street Neighborhood she encountered many poor, uneducated, single mothers with children. With the many low-income families came a slew of run-down apartments that were available to them.

“These apartments tended to be very run-down, and the landlords were only spending the bare minimum, if that, to keep the houses maintained so that the city inspector’s office wouldn’t condemn the properties. There are no easy solutions to the lack of affordable housing, but forcing poor families out of a neighborhood is the most cowardly option for developers and politicians, and exacts a toll of devastation, especially to children, that can be insurmountable. The economic diversity was split up within the neighborhood itself. Willy Street contained the lowest-income individuals and families while Jenifer Street housed higher income residents” (Resident #5 10 November 2010).

“The economic diversity used to include more of a working class resulting from the large manufacturing that was done in the area. Once the factories started closing down there was less of a demand for worker housing leading to a more egalitarian United States society. New people began coming to the neighborhood with different economic backgrounds” (Resident #7 13 November 2010).

Economic diversity is essential in the process of gentrification because gentrified neighborhoods show an increase in average income and a decrease in minority groups. From the interviews, we learned that some current and former residents feel that Willy Street used to be a working class, lower income neighborhood, and that as the industry moved away from the neighborhood, so did the people associated with that industry.

Another demographic change that has occurred over the last fifty years is an increase in the education level of residents. According to the 1960 U.S. Census, 30.7 percent of residents had completed only their elementary education, while twenty one percent had received post-

secondary education. By 2000, these numbers changed greatly: less than six percent of the residents had only completed elementary school, while 67.7 percent had attended college. While this points to Consumption Theory's implication of a new middle class entering the neighborhood, it also greatly reflects the national trend of increased educational attainment that is not specific to gentrified neighborhoods.

Tied with the increase in education is a shift in occupation of residents. In 1960, 37.7 percent of residents were employed in the manufacturing industry; by 2000, that dropped to 4.1 percent. In 1970, 7.7 percent of residents worked in "managerial and professional specialty" occupations. This rose to 31.3 percent by 2000. The shift away from blue collar and towards white collar work reflects national trends and again is not specific to gentrified neighborhoods, yet it contributes to a Consumption-side argument of gentrification. In our interview with Resident #7, a long-time resident and business owner, the resident connected the shift away from blue collar work with our project by claiming that once the factories left the neighborhood, the physical appearance of residents improved because the workers were no longer laboring long hours. As the residents cleaned up and the factories moved away, the neighborhood consequently appeared more welcoming for a new middle class (13 November 2010).

### **Negate Gentrification Theory**

Using the same term, "economic diversity," we asked people whether or not they feel it has increased. Looking at Figure 23, we can see that half of the respondents "agree" or "strongly agree" economic diversity increased since they moved in and half of the respondents "disagree" or "strongly disagree." By economic diversity we meant that there is a lot of variety in resident's wealth. We aimed to determine a change among residents based on how long they have lived in the neighborhood, and we were surprised to find that there is no correlation with the year the

participant moved into the neighborhood. There is no strong evidence from this question that economic diversity of the neighborhood has significantly changed.

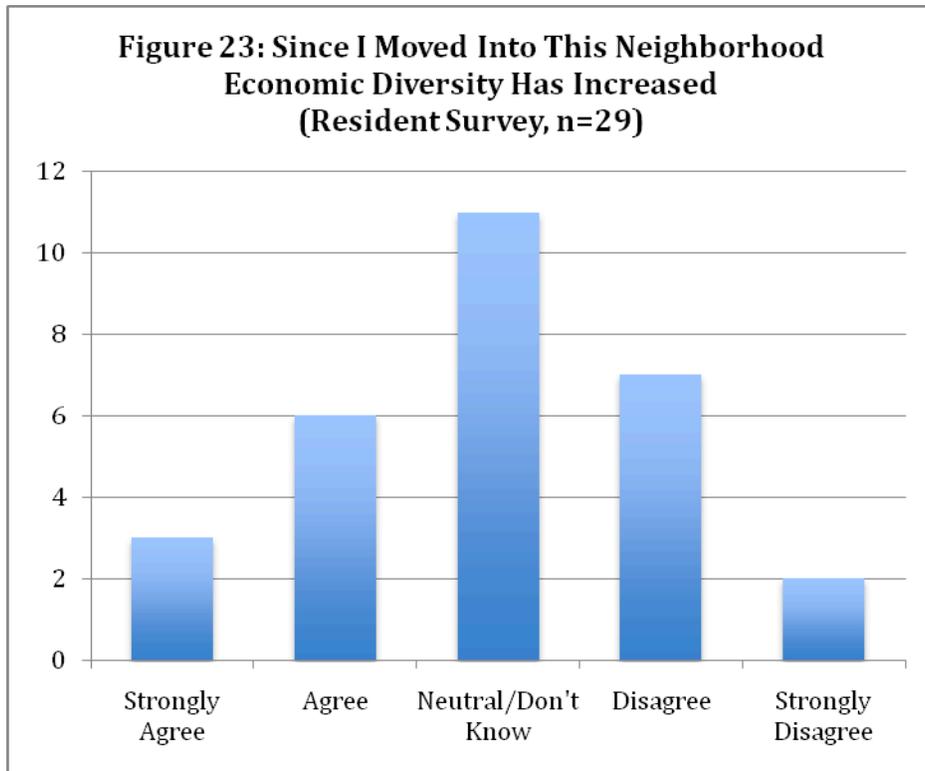


Figure 23: Resident Survey. Since I moved into this neighborhood economic diversity has increased. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

As mentioned previously, poverty rates in the neighborhood have remained stable, implying that the demographic shifts discussed above have not affected *all* residents.

## Cost of Living

### Support Gentrification Theory

The cost of living is an important factor in gentrification. The rent-gap theory concludes that one indicator of gentrification is the difference in actual rent, and the potential rent that “should” be paid - in essence, how much more someone is paying for the amenity of living in a socially popular neighborhood. We are wondering if, as the neighborhood became more popular, businesses and individuals were displaced by this difference in costs. Displacement is a difficult

thing to measure, because there are few methods of tracing former residents. Most people who have moved into the neighborhood have no way of knowing if they are displacing someone by their willingness and ability to pay more. Utilizing surveys, interviews, and census data, we found that there are testimonies of displacement.

According to Figure 24, about half of the businesses believe other businesses have been displaced due to rising property values, and half do not think businesses have been displaced. However, when the year that the employee started working in the Willy Street Neighborhood is taken into account, the results are different. Of the business employees surveyed, 8/15 started before 2005. These individuals are more familiar with the businesses in the community, and have seen more businesses come and go. Of these eight individuals, five said that they “agree” or “strongly agree” that businesses have been displaced due to gentrification since they started working there.

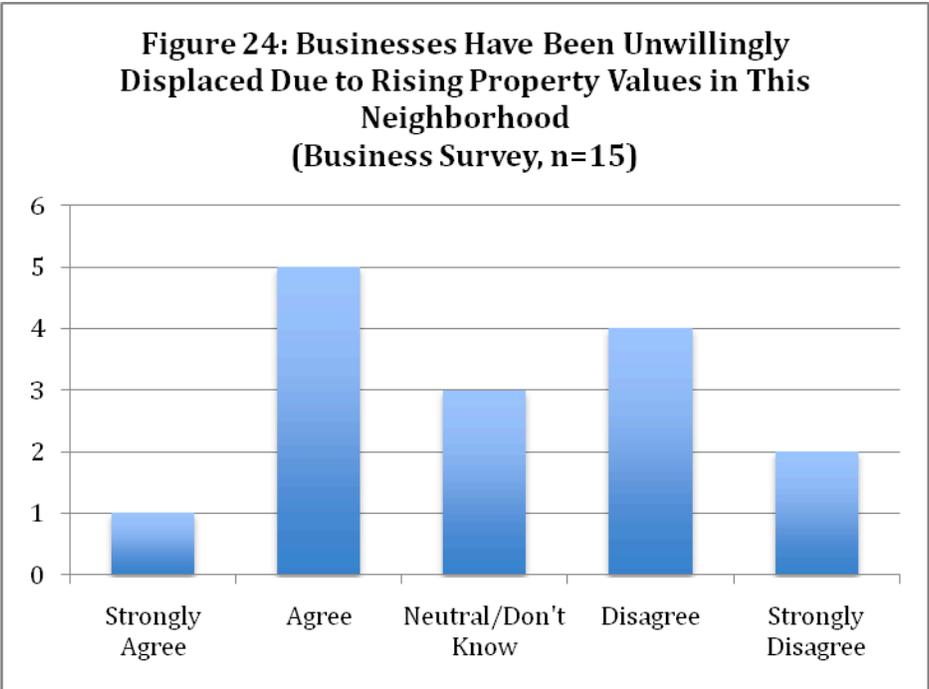


Figure 24: Business Survey. Businesses have been unwillingly displaced due to rising property values in this neighborhood. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

According to the data collected in our interviews, lower income residents are fearful of being displaced in the future, and know of some people who have already been displaced. Almost all of the interviewees admit that there is displacement occurring. Resident #1 is an example of someone who may become displaced because of the rising costs in the Willy Street Neighborhood. Originally moving to the area in 1991, he foresees himself soon having to move elsewhere.

“Pretty soon I won't be able to afford to live in this neighborhood. More affluent doesn't mean more interesting or colorful. And this goes for a lot of people. It is too expensive” (Resident #1, 8 Nov 2010)

This resident also said that he is not the only one who will be displaced. He explains that while displacement has occurred throughout the neighborhood recently, it is important to take into account that most people do own homes in the area and thus are not as swiftly displaced. This could explain why many of our survey participants disagreed that displacement has occurred; they may not be familiar with many people who rent and therefore become displaced.

“People have been unwillingly displaced due to rising property costs. I myself have moved into a lower-end apartment to save money on expenses. More rental properties are being constructed, and it is rare to find new single family houses” (Resident #6, 9 November 2010)

In addition to surveys and interviews, the census data indicates an increase in average income and house values between 1970 and 2000. While these increases point to gentrification, it is important to compare them with national trends such as inflation and the increasing income gap between rich and poor and inflation, both not correlated with gentrification. It is also important to consider neighborhood context, and the changes in income and housing values that occurred in Madison neighborhoods as a whole. Due to time constraints, we did not do either. When

analyzed by decade, changes in housing values reflect demographic changes and national economic trends. When calculated to 2010 dollars, the housing value change shows a \$14,376 (Purchasing Power Parity 2010) decrease in housing values from 1980 to 1990 (U.S. Census Bureau). For this time period, the decrease in housing values could be due to the recession and the other national market trends. Even with an influx of a “new” middle class into the area (as exhibited above), average home prices were still depressed by the end of the decade. This is in contradiction to Production Theory, and may show that gentrification was not occurring at this time. The depression of housing values from the 1980s to 1990s was a catalyst for the boon in the market from 1990-2000. Between 1990 and 2000 there was an \$82,819 (PPP 2010) (U.S. Census Bureau) rise in housing values.

From 1970 to 2000 the price of housing units in the Willy Street Neighborhood increased dramatically, hand in hand with the increase of residents’ income. In 1970 housing units were valued from \$10,000 to \$60,000, with 207 units valued from \$10,000 to \$14,900 and only three units valued from \$50,000 to \$60,000. Then in 2000, no housing units were valued from \$10,000 to \$49,999 but 239 housing units were valued from \$150,000 to \$199,999 (U.S. Census Bureau). This rise in median housing values could be correlated with a slight drop in population from 1990 to 2000, from 5906 to 5762 residents (U.S. Census Bureau).

Despite the drop in overall population, this time period had the highest influx of *new* people since the census data began being collected, showing that there was more turnover. When looking at the changes in the number of renters within the Willy Street Neighborhood from 1980 to 1989, eleven new residents rented; from 1990 to 1999, 1736 new residents rented (U.S. Census Bureau). This shift towards a stronger rental market reflects the expansion of the city center, yet can also support a Production Theory argument of gentrification.

Another important aspect to consider in the cost of living is the type of buildings that people reside in. Most of the neighborhood dwellings were built before 1939. Of the 2985 dwellings in the census tract, only 26.4 percent were built after 1939 (U.S. Census Bureau). This indicates that older buildings continue to be used, even by the “new” middle class, and fits with the idea of using the spaces for a “higher and better use” (Smith 1987:462), and with reinterpreting old building functions to reflect new consumption habits. The growth in the housing values is consistent with Smith’s “rent gap” theory: undervalued housing prices rising to fill higher potential rents. From 1990 and 2000, only thirty-seven new dwellings were constructed, yet the total population of the area decreased by 144 people (U.S. Census Bureau). Again, this decrease in population accompanied with the massive growth in home values is consistent with Production Theory.

To completely identify gentrification under Production Theory we will need to look into changes in total tax collection from Willy Street to see if the rise in housing values and income has resulted in a rise in city investment in the area. Along with this there must also be a connection made between the new population that is moving into the Willy Street and their education level, as the “new” middle class is not only wealthier but also has attained a higher level of education.

### **Negate Gentrification Theory**

As mentioned previously, poverty rates among residents have remained stable, negating that gentrification is occurring in the neighborhood. While some displacement may be occurring, people below the federal poverty line continue residing in the neighborhood.

A large portion of the neighborhood residents believes that urban renewal does not justify the displacement of residents. This shows that if gentrification is occurring in the Willy Street

Neighborhood, residents would not favor urban renewal of the community through gentrification over displacement of its residents.

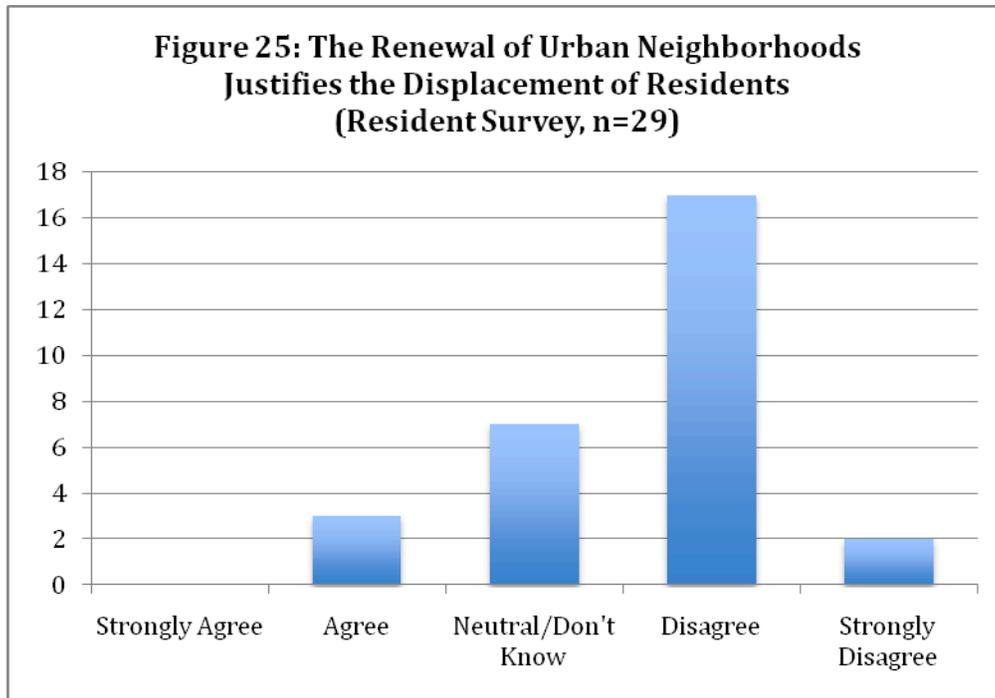


Figure 25: Resident Survey. The renewal of urban neighborhoods justifies the displacement of residents. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

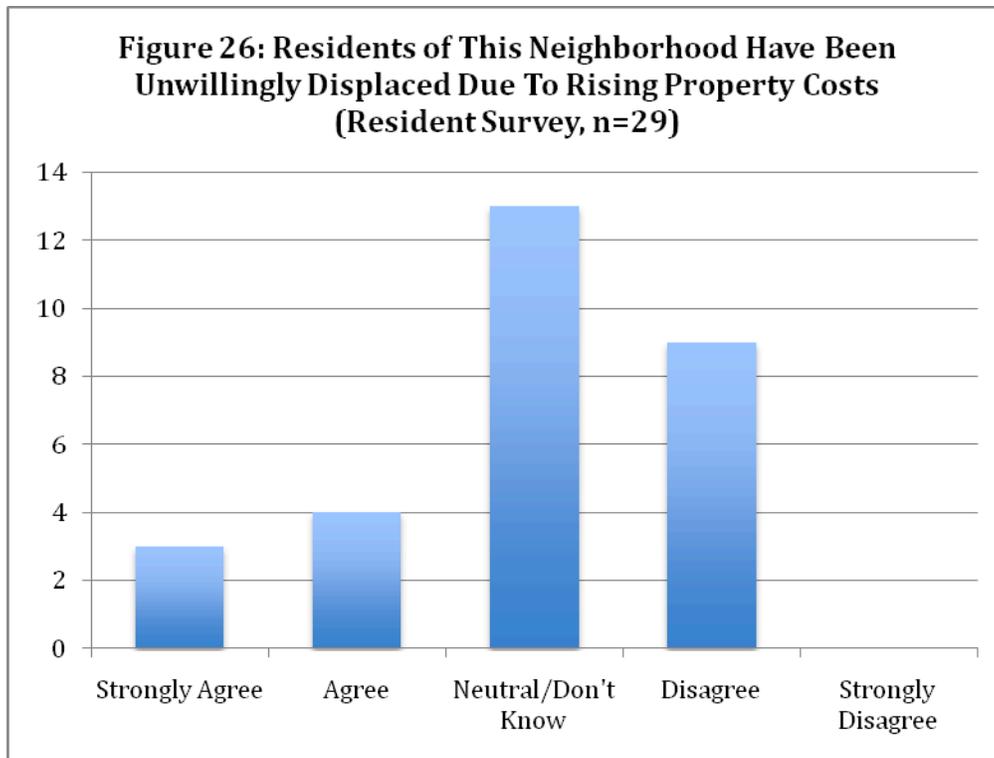


Figure 26: Resident Survey. Residents of this neighborhood have been unwillingly displaced due to rising property costs. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral/don't know, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

Most residents of the Willy Street Neighborhood did not know whether or not other residents of their community had been displaced due to rising property costs, but more residents disagreed than agreed with this statement. This shows that if gentrification is occurring, residents are not aware of changing property values and they are not necessarily happening quickly.

### **Conclusion**

After compiling our data, we found that there are some instances in which characteristics of gentrification occur, and many in which there are not. The changes in the landscape within the neighborhood show that gentrification is occurring through the decrease of industrial and manufacturing building, and improvement of appearance throughout the area. As the industry left, so did the working class, and along came new apartments, condominiums, and better-kept

houses, which in turn correspond to the fewer lower-income residents. While residents and business owners believe the appearance of the neighborhood has improved, the buildings of most businesses have not been structurally renovated. Unlike the change in appearance of buildings, the political landscape has not changed and remains strong. This shows that gentrification is not occurring because typically the influx of a different class comes with new characteristics, yet this characteristic has remained constant.

Whether or not consumption habits and values of residents and businesses changed overtime is unclear due to the lack of proof about historical consumption habits and products in the neighborhood. Our business surveys indicate that business owners do not believe there has been a change in customers' values or need of higher-end products. However, we know that high-end products and services, such as Bon Appetit, Madison Sourdough, and Hempen Goods, are currently offered in the neighborhood. Their continued success reflects the higher-end taste of the neighborhood's residents, but does not necessarily indicate gentrification or change in the neighborhood.

Overall, the surveys and interviews reveal an improvement in safety over the years, which suggests gentrification of the neighborhood. In particular, businesses and residents who have lived in the area for longer agree that safety has improved, but we do not have census data or city statistics to reinforce this feeling. Census data and interviews show that economic diversity in the Willy Street Neighborhood has not increased. Despite an increase of average income, poverty rates have remained constant in the neighborhood. Interviews and questionnaires showed that the same amount of people agreed that there was an increase in economic diversity as those who disagreed. However, the largest amount of participants was unsure if economic diversity has increased in the area. The issue of participant responses

regarding economic diversity not supporting the census data and interviews could be a result of the participants not knowing exactly what we meant by the term “economic diversity” and therefore skewing our data.

Lastly, the changes in the cost of living in the Willy Street Neighborhood also support that gentrification is occurring. The surveyed business owners who have worked in the area the longest have seen displacement of other businesses due to the rising property values in the neighborhood. The rising cost of living has forced residents to acknowledge the fact that they will most likely be displaced in the future because they simply cannot afford rent. The census data reinforces this, showing the increases in property value and rent in the last forty years. However, through our surveys most residents responded that people in the neighborhood were not displaced, which negates gentrification. This could be due to the fact that residents were simply unaware of other residents being displaced, not because this phenomenon was not happening.

An analysis of the neighborhood through these five themes shows that changes do not consistently align with any one theory of gentrification. While the Willy Street Neighborhood is not a clear-cut example of gentrification, that does not necessarily mean that gentrification is not occurring to a degree.

## **Reflection**

While we were able to collect and analyze a great amount of data, we still found that some aspects of our research may have hindered our attempt to answer our research question as best as possible. These hindering features mostly came about because of the short amount of time we had to complete this research project. First, we did not use a random stratified sample when distributing the business and resident surveys. Instead, we chose to distribute the surveys

by walking into businesses, knocking on doors and approaching residents. We may have carried a bias with us as we may have chose specific businesses, houses and residents that we subconsciously determined approachable. Second, had time permitted, we would have had a larger sample size for both surveys. We had a sample size of fifteen for the businesses and twenty-nine for the residents. With a larger sample size our data could have been more accurate. Third, the way in which we worded and asked our interview questions may have been somewhat biased or confusing, and therefore could have affected the answers given by the interviewees. For example, in our resident survey we asked, "Since you moved into the neighborhood, economic diversity has increased." The participants could then choose from a five answer spectrum of strongly agree to strongly disagree. We found this question confused participants because by choosing "disagree," they may have meant economic diversity stayed the same, or that it decreased. There was no way for them to communicate which one they intended. We found the same problem with political activity. By saying they disagree that political activity has increased, they are not saying they think it as decreased; it may be at the same level. What we can gather from these questions is that the participants may have thought political activity/economic diversity stayed the same or decreased.

If we were to continue researching, we would fix the issues mentioned above, go in more depth with the analysis of the data collected and approach other outlets of information available to us. We would like use 2010 census data and further its use by incorporating property tax and crime rate research, and comparing statistics with other census tracts in Madison. Another aspect of research that would be useful in answering our research question is analyzing how gentrification has affected streets of the neighborhood differently; the houses closer to the lake have traditionally belonged to more affluent people than the ones near the railroad tracks. Some

residents (#1, #7) mentioned the importance of analyzing *who* is making changes in a neighborhood; if the owner of a new high-end shop is a resident of the neighborhood rather than an outside developer, the shop opening is not contributing to gentrification. Further research into who is initiating changes could help answer our research question. We would also like to research historical patterns of restaurants in the neighborhood, specifically comparing price ranges and types of customers they serve. Restaurants can be a telling consequence of gentrification because they are typically more of a luxury for customers than many other businesses.

The changes in the Willy Street Neighborhood may not be the result of gentrification but rather the result of basic evolution of a neighborhood. Neighborhoods are never static and are constantly evolving. This neighborhood has seen significant changes, but they are primarily coming from within, from long-time residents. The city limits of Madison have expanded, therefore the Willy Street Neighborhood is now closer to the city center, which naturally increases property values. Taking this into account, we would want to compare changes in the Willy Street Neighborhood to other neighborhoods in Madison, as well as explore the evolution of the neighborhood as it pertains to the history of the City of Madison as a whole.

Recent changes in the Willy Street Neighborhood may also be attributable to changes that are occurring on a global level. We would like to explore this idea by researching what global happenings, such as the sustainability movement, may have influenced changes in the Willy Street Neighborhood. We hope that the conclusions we have reached along with our ideas for future research, especially surrounding global connections, will be useful to educate residents about possible explanations for neighborhood changes while bringing to light ideas and concepts they may not have encountered before.

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## Figures



Figure 1. Feiner, Theresa. *Toward Revolution*. Photograph, 24 September 2010, Madison, WI.

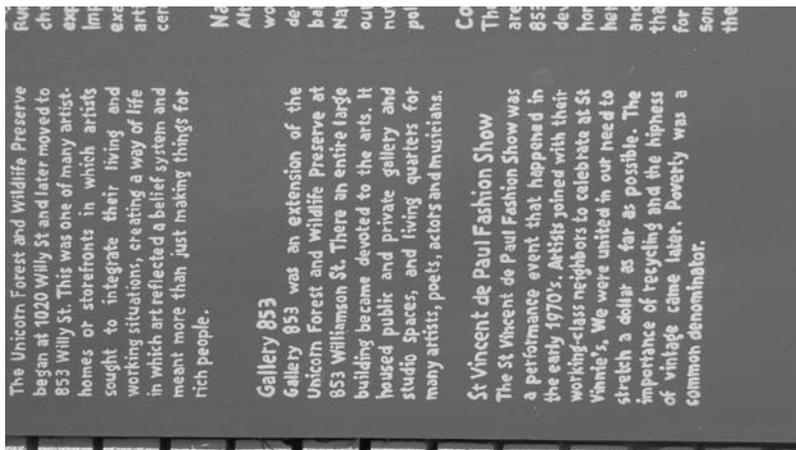


Figure 2. Feiner, Theresa. *St Vincent de Paul*. Photograph, 24 September 2010, Madison, WI.



Figure 3. Feiner, Theresa. *Retail & Office Space*. Photograph, 24 September 2010, Madison, WI.



Figure 4. Feiner, Theresa. *Industrial Farm Building*. Photograph, 24 September 2010, Madison, WI.



Figure 5. Feiner, Theresa. *New Condominiums*. Photograph, 24 September 2010, Madison, WI.



Figure 6. Feiner, Theresa. *Bon Appetit*. Photograph, 24 September 2010, Madison, WI.



Figure 7. Feiner, Theresa. *Hempden Goods*. Photograph, 24 September 2010, Madison, WI.



Figure 8. Feiner, Theresa. *Historical Renovation*. Photograph, 24 September 2010. Madison, WI.



Figure 9. Feiner, Theresa. *Machinery Row*. Photograph, 24 September 2010. Madison, WI.



Figure 10. Feiner, Theresa. *Willy St Pub*. Photograph, 24 September 2010. Madison, WI.



Figure 11. Feiner, Theresa. *Cost of the War in Iraq*. Photograph, 24 September 2010. Madison, WI.

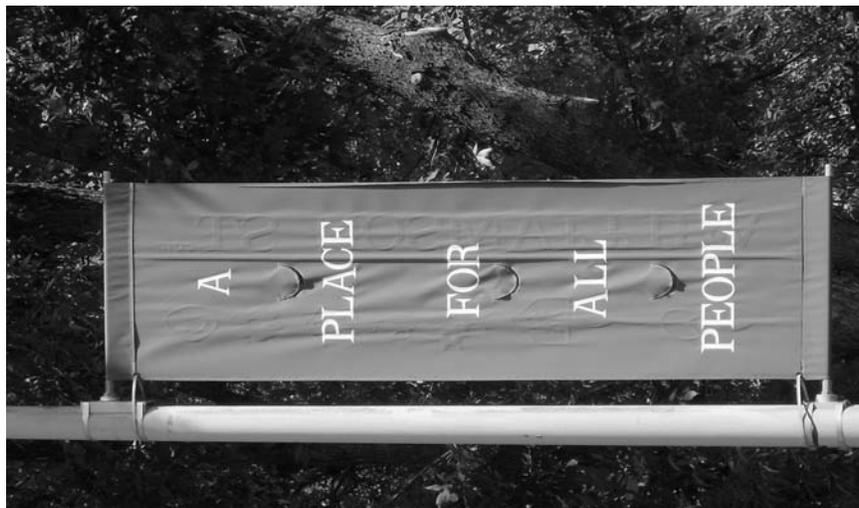


Figure 12. Feiner, Theresa. *A Place for All People*. Photograph, 24 September 2010. Madison, WI.



Figure 13. Feiner, Theresa. *Ott House*. Photograph, 24 September 2010. Madison, WI.



**Willy Street Neighborhood Gentrification Study - Residents**  
**Undergraduate Geography Research Project, UW Madison      Fall 2010**

**1. I think that urban renewal has a positive effect on community.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**2. Residents of this neighborhood have been unwillingly displaced due to rising property costs.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**3. The renewal of urban neighborhoods justifies the displacement of residents.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**Since I moved into this neighborhood in \_\_\_\_\_ (year):**

**4. ...economic diversity has increased.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**5. ...safety has improved.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**6. ...political activity in the neighborhood has increased.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**7. ...the appearance has been improved.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**Short Answer:**

1. Who benefits from recent changes in the Willy Street neighborhood?

Thank you for taking this survey! Please elaborate on any questions on the back of this sheet.

**Willy Street Neighborhood Gentrification Study - Businesses**  
Undergraduate Geography Research Project, UW Madison      Fall 2010

**1. Do you currently reside in the Willy Street neighborhood?**

yes      no

**2. Most customers/clients are residents of the Willy Street Neighborhood.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**3. Urban renewal has a positive effect on businesses in the community.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**4. Businesses have been unwillingly displaced due to rising property values in this neighborhood.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**Since I started working here in \_\_\_\_\_ (year):**

**5. ...customers are now more economically diverse.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**6. ...crime has decreased.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**7. ...this building has been structurally renovated.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**8. ...our customer base now includes more non-residents.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**9. ...there is now a higher demand for high-end products.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**10. ...our customers' values have changed.**

strongly agree      agree      neutral/don't know      disagree      strongly disagree

**Short Answer:**

1. Which year did your business open?
2. What is your position in the company?
3. Why is this neighborhood a good place for your business?

Thank you for taking this survey! Please elaborate on any questions below.

## Business Surveys

ID	Position	Year	YrOpen	Q1:Reside	Q2:Clients	Q3:PosEffect	Q4:Displaced	Q5:EconDiv	Q6:Crime	Q7:Ren	Q8:Non-Res	Q9:HighEnd	Q10:Values
12	Co-Own	1980	1923	FALSE	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	3	2
13	Co-Own	1994	1970	TRUE	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	4	3
9	Own	1995	1995	TRUE	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	3	2
1	Own	1997	1997	FALSE	5	4	2	3	5	5	2	4	2
8	Own	2000	2000	FALSE	4	2	2	3	3	4	2	2	4
3	Man.	2004	1999	TRUE	2	2	3	4	2	4	2	2	4
11	Man.	2005	2001	TRUE	2	3	1	4	3	2	2	2	2
4	Co-Own	2005	1997	TRUE	2	1	5	4	2	1	2	4	5
15	Own	2006	2006	FALSE	2	3	5	2	3	4	2	4	5
14	Worker	2007	2002	TRUE	4	3	2	3	2	3		3	4
2	Man.	2008	2002	FALSE	4	3	4	4	3	5	3	4	4
10	Pres.	2008	2008	TRUE	3	3	3	2	4	5	2	4	4
7	Own	2008	2008	TRUE	4	2	3	3	4	4	4	2	4
6	Man.	2008	1994	TRUE	2	2	4	2	3	1	3	3	4
5	Man.	2008	2000	TRUE	2	1	4	3	4	3	2	4	4

## Resident Surveys

ID	Q1:UrRen	Q2:PropertyCosts	Q3:Justifies	Q4:EconDiv	Q5:Safety	Q6:Political	Q7:Appear	Year
11	1	3	4	1	1	4	1	1976
4	1	3	4	1	1	1	1	1978
10	2	3	2	2	3	3	1	1985
2	2	3	5	4	2	2	1	1987
15	2	4	3	2	3	3	2	1988
7	1	4	4	1	1	3	1	1988
5	1	2	4	4	1	4	1	1989
20	1	4	4	4	2	2	2	1993
14	5	2	3	4	2	3	2	1995
9	2	2	4	4	2	3	1	1995
17	2	3	4	3	4	4	2	1998
6	1	4	4	2	2	2	2	2000
8	2	4	3	2	2	3	1	2000
1	2	3	4	3	2	3	1	2001
16	2	4	4	5	3	3	2	2001
3	1	1	4	3	3	2	2	2001
12	1	3	2	3	2	2	1	2002
21	2	4	4	4	4	3	3	2003
28	2	4	3	5	5	5	5	2004
29	1	1	3	4	3		4	2007
13	2	2	4	3	4	3	2	2008
18	2	3	3	2	4	4	2	2008
19	1	1	5	3	2	2	2	2008
22	2	3	4	2	3	3	3	2008
23	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	2010
24	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	2010
25	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	2010
26	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	2010
27	3	4	2	3	3	2	3	2010