A Thesis

Entitled

Geographies of Gentrification: Residential Preferences in Rust Belt Cities: A Case Study of the Old West End Historic Neighborhood in Toledo, Ohio

By

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Submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for

The Master of Arts in Geography

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An Abstract of

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This research is concerned with how the geographic context of a city influences the factors that cause gentrification to occur. It centers on this central premise: The factors that shape gentrification in cities like Toledo, Ohio are vastly different than Portland, Oregon, or London, England and this reasoning is centered on the issue of geographical context; the interplay of locational forces which are unique to one specific area (i.e. economic conditions, housing stock, urban amenities, or population growth/decline). If attempts at theorization are to have any effect, they must identify a group of cities that share a particular context. One potential area for study would involve a comparison of gentrification's forces among declining medium-sized cities in the Rust Belt. It is believed that architecture, among all available factors, plays the largest significant role in why middle-class residents chose to relocate to central city neighborhoods in Rust Belt cities.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Gentrification has been the subject of academic literature for nearly forty years. It seeks to understand why a growing number of middle class residents have chosen to forgo the suburban trend opting instead to reside and invest in older urban neighborhoods. During this time scholars' theories on gentrification have grown with the process itself. What was first identified in the early 1970s as an isolated phenomenon within a handful of global cities has now worked its way down the hierarchy of cities and can be seen in more remote areas including those beyond the expected urban center (Hackworth & Smith, 2000). Early discussions on this topic were concerned primarily with factors that caused gentrification. Scholars cited a variety of conditions that seemed to produce gentrification. It was argued that these areas have an economically competitive urban housing market, access to post-industrial service jobs, attractive urban amenities, historic housing, accessible mortgages, knowledgeable real estate agents, and a concentrated pool of potential middle-class gentrifiers (Smith, 1979, Ley 1980, Laska & Spain 1979, Berry 1979). These factors were eventually distilled into more comprehensive categories which competed amongst each other as 'the' theory behind the cause of gentrification. This exchange lasted up until the late 1980s, but eventually ran its course as the process of gentrification expanded into areas that made theorizing on gentrification's causality a difficult endeavor.

Declining economic conditions of the early 1990s caused a freeze in the housing market which led some in academia to herald the end of gentrification (Bagli 1991, Bourne 1993a). Yet this discussion was short lived as economic activity and the process of gentrification once again gained steam in the late 1990s. The discourse on gentrification, however, would not return to what it once was. Gentrification continued to expand into previously unseen areas. A growing number of these cities fell outside the reach of academic theories on why gentrification occurred. In 1994, a pivotal article was published by Jan Van Weesep which suggested that perhaps the discussion on gentrification would be better served if it focused on effects rather than causes. He argued that more attention needed to be paid to the negative effects associated with gentrification (Van Weesep, 1994). This article was indicative of an emerging change in the academic discourse: a transition from cause to effect. It also signaled the growing presence of gentrification in cities of varying shapes and sizes. Gentrification was no longer limited to large global cities.

The effects of this growth shifted the focus of gentrification research away from broad reaching theories towards comparisons that were more geographically sensitive because gentrification was experienced differently depending on what city one was looking at. Studies were oriented towards the examination of conditions that were experienced in a particular group of cities or neighborhoods. Factors like population size, economic condition, particular demographics and location formed the basis for this geographical context. For example, attention has been paid to international comparisons of large global cities such as Paris, New York, or London which have argued for a type of super-gentrification (Sassen, 1991; Carpenter and Lees, 1995) and case studies have

recognized that forces which shape gentrification within a single city can vary according to neighborhood context (Butler and Robson, 2001; Butler, 2003). Work has also illustrated how patterns of consumption for gentrifiers diverge based on particular locational contexts (Bridge and Dowling, 2001).

Emphasis on the increasing importance of location has begun to permeate a portion of the gentrification discourse and it serves as the framework for this research. One area that presents an interesting point of comparison is gentrification of medium sized cities in the Rust Belt. A portion of the geographical context for these once thriving cities is that they have been unable to compete nationally for the concentration of select office and technology oriented businesses in their downtown areas. As a result, these cities have suffered demographically as well as economically. Flat housing markets, lack of urban amenities, and starved white collar employment challenge some of the common assumptions about the causes of gentrification on a broader level. The relative absence of these key factors, in places like Gary, Indiana, Erie, Pennsylvania or Toledo, Ohio has limited the ability of gentrification to exist on a scale similar to a larger Detroit, Michigan or global New York City, New York. Yet, despite the less than ideal conditions of these Rust Belt cities, reinvestment by the middle class into older city neighborhoods is still occurring; albeit to a smaller degree. The marginalized role of employment opportunities, amenities, and residential property values in these cities illustrate the idea that gentrification in medium sized Rust Belt cities like Toledo, Ohio is drastically different than gentrification that occurs in Chicago, Illinois or New York City, New York.

If the above mentioned conditions are relatively non-existent in certain types of cities, like those in the Rust Belt, what could be the primary driving force? It is believed

by this researcher that architecture will serve as the dominant factor influencing middle class residents' preferences to reside in older urban neighborhoods in medium sized Rust Belt cities. Older homes are a commodity that is present in many of these Rust Belt cities, which makes this an ideal area for comparison. Architecture has the possibility to influence potential homebuyers from a number of angles. These factors could include a connection with the architectural style, preference for construction standards and materials used, or inclusion of certain design elements within the homes. Individuals could also be responding to modern suburban development by seeking a location that distances or differentiates them from it or the people who chose to live there.

Central to this research is the hypothesis that the factors which contribute to gentrification in a city depend upon its geographical context. Gentrification in Toledo, Ohio is not the same as gentrification in New York City, New York. The research area for this study is the historic Old West End neighborhood in Toledo, Ohio. This will serve as a pilot study to explore whether or not gentrification's causes in medium sized Rust Belt cities diverge from the accepted literature and warrants additional study. If the above hypothesis is supported, then understanding why people would choose to reside in the central city of Toledo, Ohio would add an additional nuance to the complexities surrounding the causes of gentrification. It may also provide support to the emerging gentrification arguments that articulate the importance of acknowledging the geographical context when looking for patterns in a city or series of cities.

In order to build the foundation for this argument, two key issues must be addressed. First, how has the geographical context of gentrification been theorized within

the history of the debate? Second, what role has architecture played and how could it serve as a basis for further examination?

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The Geography of Gentrification:

Initial work done during the late 70s and early 80s looked at gentrification from a number of angles, but was often concerned about the causes behind gentrification. During this time there were essentially four prominent, contrasting and sometimes overlapping views that 'outlined a range of possible explanations to account for middle-class resettlement in the inner city' (Ley 1986, p. 521). These four arguments behind the causes of gentrification could be described as demographic change, housing market dynamics, urban amenity, and economic base. Demographically, it was argued that the post-war baby boom cohort was just beginning to enter the housing market and this strain in demand forced many into less-desirable inner-city locations (Grebler and Mittelbach, 1979). There was also a decrease in the average family size, the delay in childbearing, or having children all-together. Commuting times and increased transportation costs have also been cited (Black, 1975, Berry; 1979; Laska and Spain, 1980). Residentially, the argument centered on the premise that as housing prices increased substantially in the suburbs many households turned toward more affordable housing choices in secondary markets (Smith, 1979). The 'Urban Amenities' argument stated that households relocated to the city because of the number of amenities not found in the suburbs. This would include cultural opportunities (i.e. art museum, jazz clubs), social aspects involving interaction with diverse population, and aesthetic benefits related to the diverse quality of

the physical environment and the historical nature of the architecture (Ley, 1980 Beauregard, 1986). The 'Economic Base' argument focused on the transitional nature of many cities towards a post-industrial economy. These economies are oriented around the production of services rather than goods and due to the nature of the work, tended to concentrate in specific locations, frequently within a cities central business district (Ley, 1986).

Of these four explanations and the interplay between them, there were two central theories that shaped the nature and direction of the debate. These two theories are the Post-Industrial City theory put forth by David Ley in 1980 and the Rent-Gap theory articulated by Neil Smith in 1979 (Hamnett, 1991). The tension created by the juxtaposition of these two arguments would have significant impact upon the academic debate centered on causality. This was especially true throughout the 1980s as authors attempted to prove which theory was 'the' theory on gentrification.

The 80s:

In 1980 an article was published by David Ley that outlined a number of urban changes that were occurring within the city of Vancouver. He drew upon the work of Daniel Bell and Jurgen Habermas to formulate his post-industrial city thesis. The idea was based on three different aspects of society: economic, political and cultural. Each aspect highlighted a significant departure from previous industrial type cities. In economics this change was signaled by the 'the declining role of unskilled labor in the production process and the growing importance of technology, not only in the factory but also in service industries and administration' (Ley, 1980, p. 240) and the shift from the manufacturing, goods producing industry to service producing office work. In politics the

transition to a post-industrial society can best be seen by the number of varied interest groups who have entered the political process and legitimized their claims on the issues. 'The single-minded commitment to efficiency, technical rationality, and economic development is tempered and in some instances overturned amid the competing claims of different "public interests"' (p. 241). In culture the transition is noted by a shift from a rationalism based on efficiency and economics to a more aristocratic sensibility of aesthetics. It was a shift from cold, calculated productivity towards a focus on individual experiences, expressions of emotion, and the appeal to beauty; defined by sensuous and sensual qualities. This mentality was best noted by post-industrial society's patterns of consumption.

According to Ley, the emergence of this post-industrial society found its expression through a particular group of 'actors.' He hypothesized that this change was heralded by the shift away from manufacturing jobs towards office oriented and administrative position and concurrent with this change was the emergence of a class of white collar workers drawn from a number of fields. In his view, this group was highly educated, discovered self-worth through self-fulfillment, displayed the importance of good taste, and defined themselves through unique patterns of consumption. From a demographic standpoint this class also tended to be younger, financially stable, and encompassed a variety of family patterns. Members of this class often chose to live closer to places of employment, which in a post-industrial city would often be concentrated in centralized business districts (Ley, 1980). These findings would become increasingly important as scholars began to understand the relationship between this thesis and trends

that showed renewed interest in central city living and the gentrification of these older neighborhoods.

The other major contribution to the field of gentrification literature came in the way of Neil Smith and his rent-gap thesis. Building upon Ley's ideas he turned to describe a more holistic approach to understanding gentrification. He saw the role of these new cultural consumers as merely one actor in the larger play. While demand was important it also was dependant upon other players like builders, developers, landlords, mortgage lenders, government agencies, real estate agents, and tenants. Smith says it this way,

> 'A broader theory of gentrification must take the role of producers as well as consumers into account, and when this is done, it appears that the needs of production- in particular the need to earn a profit- are a more decisive initiative behind gentrification than consumer preference. Consumer sovereignty explanations took for granted the availability of areas ripe for gentrification when this was precisely what had to be explained (Smith, 1979, 540).'

Smith's view becomes even more refined as he begins to set up this tension between economic (production) and cultural (demand) forces. He recognizes the potential for profit as the more decisive factor in motivators for gentrification, because in his view, few people would rehabilitate older housing stocks if it would cause financial loss. Smith then sets to work to explain why some neighborhoods are profitable to redevelop while others are not and develops his rent-gap thesis. This gap is the disparity between the potential and actual value of the land given its current use. It is created by the movement of capital to the most profitable areas. Traditionally this has been the disinvestment of the central city and the investment of suburban areas where cheap land was more readily available. But as Smith notes, eventually the potential of reinvestment in older areas becomes more profitable than the continued outward flow of capital. Under the conditions of capitalism gentrification becomes an expected pattern of development as

Smith notes, 'If the rent gap theory of gentrification is correct, it would be expected that rehabilitation began where the gap was greatest and the highest returns available' (Smith, 1979, 546).

Late 80s:

By the end of the 1980s the process of gentrification, which was originally believed to be an isolated phenomenon among select global cities, had expanded to include a number of cities further down the urban hierarchy (Hackworth & Smith, 2000). As gentrification grew so did the two primary theories on gentrification. They continued to evolve and become more refined as scholars attempted to understand why certain theories worked in some areas and not in others. A key aspect of literature at this time was the attempt to incorporate existing theories together in an attempt to provide comprehensive theories which addressed the causes of gentrification for a broader collection of cities. In 1986 Ley published his analysis of the competing theories on gentrification in an attempt to describe the 'relative importance of or the interrelations among the various explanations (Ley, 1986, p. 521).' The results of this study showed that two strong relationships existed. These would be the Urban Amenity and Economic Base theories. Ley attributed gentrification to changes in a city's economic and employment structures, as well as the addition of cleaner natural environments and the location of amenities such as 'character districts, heritage dwellings, view and waterfront sites, and existing high-status areas (Ley, 1986, 532).' Smith also tried his hand at uniting existing theories together. His work began to acknowledge the role that demographic and cultural preferences play in shaping gentrification, but argued that these are merely surface forms of the larger urban transformation. Citing work done by Sharon Zukin on

gentrification in SoHo, he argues that even amidst the most vivid expression of culture lies basic economic forces (Zukin, 1982; Smith, 1986). Despite these concessions Smith still downplays the role of the individual consumer against other forces such as real estate companies or bank agencies. The willingness of both scholars to recognize other factors involved in gentrification signaled a change in the nature of the debate. The difficulty with finding 'the' answer for gentrification was highlighted by the numerous complexities of looking at cities which are dynamic rather than static. The nature of the production versus consumption or capital versus culture debate seemed to have run its course.

The 90s:

The 1990s were a period of transition for the discourse on gentrification. Some attempt was made at better understanding the causes behind gentrification but the conversation appeared to shift away from causality and centered more on effects. Gentrification began to occur in a larger number of cities and its effects were not always as positive as early literature had described. A pivotal article by Jan Van Weesep suggested that perhaps scholars needed to stop thinking about the causes of gentrification and worry more about what gentrification was doing to cities (Van Weesep, 1994). This problem was also compounded as a more diverse collection of cities began to experience the process of gentrification. The inadequacies of any one theory to describe the specific factors that caused gentrification to occur further shift people away from the debate on causality.

One attempt was made at unifying opposing theories on the causes of gentrification and it was put forth by Chris Hamnett (Hamnett, 1991). From his perspective the rent gap thesis and the post-industrial society thesis were two sides of the

same issue. Both were necessary but neither was sufficient. The rent gap theory helps explain why some areas are more suitable for gentrification than others, but it fails to account for the existence and dependence of gentrifiers in the process. Without gentrifiers there would be no gentrification and while the rent gap thesis may account for gentrification in SoHo, it fails to account for why it doesn't exist in Gary, Indiana (Beauregard, 1986). Not only must supply be there, but so must demand. The post-industrial city thesis argues that the desire to locate downtown (the demand) depends on the availability of jobs, prevalence of social and cultural facilities as well as, demographic changes; which is highlighted by the dissolution of the traditional family model. The rise of households with dual careers, childless couples, and single mothers entering the workforce highlights a growing sector of the population that may prefer a different set of residential opportunities which are only available in the central city.

As helpful as such a synthesis may have been the difficulties with applying broad theories to specific locational contexts were becoming more evident among scholars. This was especially true as the literature tried to keep pace with the increasing number of cities experiencing gentrification. New distinctions were being made in the gentrification debate. Work done by Bourne (1993b) highlighted the temporal nature of gentrification and argued that many of the factors that influenced earlier gentrifiers of the post war urban development era are not experienced in the second wave of post-recession gentrifiers. He cites the entry of baby boomers into the housing market and the initial growth of service sector employment during the 1970s as examples which one will not find in 1990s gentrification. Difficulties with understanding the myriad of factors caused Bourne to question the ability of any single theoretical framework to adequately explain

the changing nature of social and economic equity within our cities (Bourne, 1993a). Distinctions were also drawn between types of gentrification. A notable distinction, otherwise not addressed, was between large-scale redevelopment by property developers and individual household renovations. The difference between the demolition of a number of houses for high rise condominiums poses quite a contrast to the reinvestment of economic and sweat equity into one existing structure (Warde, 1991). The recognition of gentrification at a number of scales was also surfacing in the literature. Comparisons of global cities such as New York City, Paris, or Tokyo exhibited differing redevelopment forces than less connected cities like Detroit or Liverpool (Sassen, 1991). Along similar lines, Carpenter and Lees (1995) argued that while generalizable features of gentrification were important, one must not exclude the unique place-based differences which also play a role in shaping factors of redevelopment. The value of scale was also highlighted in case studies such as Butler's (1995) work in the boroughs of Hackney, where the key situational factors that shaped its middle class differ from a larger national understanding. These differences were believed to be due in large part to the importance of human agency and the role that residential choices play in creating and reinforcing identity.

The 00's:

During this time the complexities surrounding the gentrification debate were becoming more nuanced. Scholars were becoming aware of the increasingly divergent nature and shape that it took within specific cities and on varying scales. Gentrification in this decade has grown to encompass cities previously unheard of and scholars were becoming more cautious about the translatability of findings in one city to another.

Research was developing a greater sensitivity to the geographical context. In the spatial setting every actor plays a different role. Real estate agents or developers may trump individual gentrifiers or mortgage lenders. Growing regional metropolis may have an inflated housing market, which may make even the most modest one bedroom bungalow the ideal location for gentrification negating the effects architecture or a historic neighborhood plays. The individual composition of middle-class gentrifiers varies on the neighborhood level demanding study on micro levels, where patterns of consumption have been found to vary according geographical location (Bridge and Dowling, 2001) and where perceptions and interactions of different classes has resulted in either inclusion or exclusion (Butler, 2003).

A crucial development in the discourse on gentrification was oriented around the need to understand the geographical context of a city or group of cities. This point was illustrated by a paper published by Loretta Lees (2001). She critiques government policy initiatives in Britain and the U.S. as being a 'one size fits all' approach which is devoid of geographic scale or location context. Gentrification, it was argued, was not the same everywhere. There is still some relevance to generalizable features but more attention needed to be focused on place-based differences. Unfortunately, her understanding of geography is limited to super-gentrifiers, third-world immigration, black-ethnic minorities, and urban policy.

Faces of Gentrification:

This idea about the geography of gentrification is especially illuminating from a policy perspective. Development is often approached with the 'one size fits all' mindset. If it worked for them it can work for us. However, factors which encouraged redevelopment

in San Antonio, Texas do not necessarily translate well to Toledo, Ohio. Understanding successful policies requires a place-based awareness and recognition of differences between places including factors like: population, economic opportunities, historical context, governmental policies, middle-class mindsets and real-estate markets.

Gentrification in New York City is not necessarily the same as Toledo, Ohio. One of the biggest differences between such juxtaposition is the dwindling population base and weak housing market found in Toledo. Demand is not there. However, gentrification is still occurring and herein lays the importance of context. The mass gentrification experienced by a New York City is a distinct phenomenon. In Toledo, gentrification occurred at the individual household level or in one particular neighborhood. The absence of these two factors hints at the idea that perhaps other factors are marginalized for gentrification in Toledo.

This leads to the first research question that this project intends to investigate.

RQ1: Do the causes of gentrification in medium sized Rust Belt cities, like Toledo, Ohio, diverge in any way from the findings of traditional literature?

-Architecture and Identity-

If this hypothesis is correct, there are cities that experience various degrees of gentrification in the absence or downplay of generally accepted forces such as, a marginal rent-gap, lack of central city white-collar employment opportunities, a weak housing market, and inadequate cultural amenities. The reasons for their absence may vary but the fact remains that these traditionally accepted forces are absent, or at best marginal, when considering why gentrifiers relocate to inner city neighborhoods in places like Toledo, Ohio. What then is the most plausible motivating factor? One possible factor for why

people choose to relocate in a city such as Toledo could involve architecture. Three potential motivators may involve; an appreciation of a certain aesthetic (Jager, 1986), a conscious choice against suburban living (Bridge and Dowling, 2001; Ley, 1996), or the desire to reinforce a particular class-identity through the consumption of a certain housing style (Bordeau, 1984; Smith, 1996). The potential for architecture to influence residential preferences for gentrifiers has been identified in older literature, most noticeably in Jager's "Class Definition and the Esthetics of Gentrification: Victoriana in Melbourne," but overall attention to architecture's role has been marginal. However, given the current trend in gentrification literature towards more spatially oriented studies the time seems right to re-examine the role architecture may play as a primary factor in gentrification, especially in cities where more traditional factors have marginal roles. What follows in this section is an examination of how architecture could influence gentrifiers' residential choices.

The first possibility for architecture centers on its ability to play a symbolic role in the reinforcement of class identity. One of the primary recognitions of the importance of architecture in residential choices was articulated by Pierre Bourdieu. His 1984 work 'Distinction' provided a social commentary on class that had broad-reaching possibilities. One of the principle aspects of this work was that it illustrated how different classes or groups of a class desire to differentiate themselves from other groups based on social necessity. At the heart of the issue for Bordieu is that social identity is defined and asserted through difference. This is done based upon their access to varying types of capital. The expenditure of available capital can either be economically or culturally

based, or some combination of the two, but regardless it has one purpose: the formation of 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1984).

Habitus could be described as the social ordering of ones environment in a way that creates meaning specific to a social group. It is the structure through which human beings organize the external world and the place they stand within it. Habitus is defined by the relationship between "the capacity to produce classifiable practices and works, and the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products (Bordieu 1984, p. 170)." The end goal of habitus is the production of a life-style; the identification with a specific system of classified practices and values. This expression of ones life-style ultimately hinges upon the availability of economic and cultural capital at ones disposal.

Bourdieu's ideas correlate well with many of the predominant theories of gentrification, because what the emerging middle class lacked in economic capital they made up for in social capital and the use of sweat equity. This group recognized the value of an under-appreciated, older, and more historical housing market within the central city that the upper class had abandoned and left to disarray (Fusch, 1980; Datel and Dingemans, 1980). Through sweat equity they sought to restore neglected Victorian-style mansions to their former glory and in a way reclaim a lost social icon for themselves. The restoration of these abandoned upper class households thus served as a way to differentiate themselves from the traditional suburban middle-class group, and at the same time usurp the upper classes for their abandonment of such a rare social commodity (Bordieu, 1984; Smith, 1996). From this perspective gentrification can be understood as the product of humankind's desire to be different and architecture is the pivotal point around which this occurs. Distinction for these gentrifiers did not come as a result of a

display of economic capital but by their "ability to define and possess rare goods such as taste and discernment" (Bridge 2001, p. 207). Aesthetic appreciation and value was of particular importance to this emerging group. It was through the act of recognizing these abandoned cultural treasures and restoring them that this group was able to distinguish itself from other classes, including the upper class and the burgeoning suburban middle class. They invested in a social capital that few others would have considered and in turn created the ideal habitus for self-expression: historical housing full of architectural significance. The qualities inherent in the design and type of materials used are nearly impossible to duplicate in the 21st century. This made ownership of this urban commodity all the more valuable and served as an ideal marker for distinction: the exclusivity of this historic housing stock juxtaposed against modern suburban development.

The second possibility for architecture is that the residential choices are a reaction to traditional suburban development and modern design. As previously mentioned, this is seen in the reorientation towards older urban areas rather than an outward move to newer suburban development. Critiques of suburban sprawl often cite a number of reasons in support of this shift; walk-able neighborhoods, aesthetic-oriented design, diverse social interactions, and reduced commute times to name a few (Duany, et. al., 2000). All of this contributes to the underlying desire of these individuals to find a sense of place. Additionally, the suburbs were once seen as the answer to the woes of the industrial city, a place away from crime, pollution, overcrowding and traffic congestion, but as research has shown the same problems that plagued industrial cities are now encroaching into the first ring of suburban neighborhoods and towns (Dutton, 2000, Smith, Caris, & Wyly,

2001). Given the transition away from the industrial economy that inhabited the central city for a number of years, those same areas are now poised to reinvent themselves as viable residential alternatives. This is especially true when you consider that many of the desired elements that disgruntled suburbanites express for residential living have already been present in the city for decades.

This reaction is also recognizable in gentrifiers' patterns of consumption. International studies have highlighted the unique blend of commercial venues that occur around gentrified areas (Bridge & Dowling 2001; Ley, 1996). Often these venues are devoid of larger retail chains and instead are replaced with a more diverse selection of shops. This includes a number of ethnic restaurants, small-scale clothing boutiques, and niche furniture shops. The value of the designer or the expression of individuality become more important than the purchasing of mass-produced brands at lower prices and also because the assertion of individual identity becomes difficult when the same set of mass-produced goods or households is available to anyone who can afford them. The possession of this type of rare commodity serves as an ideal point for differentiation since it blocks advances by the middle-upper class while simultaneously defending itself from lower socio-economic groups. Ley puts it this way,

> "Stores exuded the idiosyncrasy of individual retailers rather than the predictable uniformity of the chains; in a series of constant reversals the old and the recycled were valued as well as the new and the fashionable; the hand-produced and organic were presented in place of the standardized and machine-produced; a personalized transaction between buyer and seller sought to rehabilitate retailing from the impersonality of corporate marketing (Ley 1996, p. 185)."

A third possibility for architecture is that it invokes a connection to the past, to history, not only for its appreciation, but also for its value (Datel and Dingemans, 1980). It is through the ownership of a particular housing stock and similar antiquated goods, which are rich in history and powerful in its displays of symbolism, which gentrifiers

choose to create their habitus. Restorations of external facades allow these buildings to retain their former prominence, which announces its power and distinction through its architectural intricacies (Jager, 1986). In older Victorian neighborhoods no house is the same. The recognition and preservation of this uniqueness becomes vital. Painstaking effort is made through renovations and improvements to remain true to the original styles and materials. This often requires an immense amount of hand labor. Walls and trim may need to be stripped and repainted, dilapidated fixtures may need to be refinished, or unoriginal partitioned rooms will need to be taken down. In many instances these projects are tackled by the gentrifiers themselves (Zukin, 1990). There are two reasons for this. First, gentrifiers' appreciation of and identification with history serves as the ideal catalyst to tackle these projects themselves and to dive into the rich records of their homes historical past. Second, many gentrifiers are unable to afford the cost of paying for hired labor.

This connection with the past is important especially from a social perspective, but the realization of the Victorian ideal and ethic has its limits: it cannot be allowed to compromise the economic investment. External renovations may retain a link to the past, but internal improvements are a necessary departure from a by-gone era, especially the improvement of an older home's energy efficiency. Modern interior amenities and upgrades allow these older buildings to retain a degree of economic feasibility as well as match some of the creature comforts expected with newer homes (Jager, 1986). This could be illustrated by the replacement of an old boiler with a new furnace, expansion of the modest kitchen quarters for a 21st century lifestyle, or the addition of bathrooms on the first floor or their modification. Historical authenticity has its limits and needs to exist

with a necessary level of creature comforts (Rybcynski, 1986). Restoration of these homes and the connection with history often comes with compromise: a tension then between old and new, between the ideal and the practical. The cost and dependence on energy utilities has changed drastically just within one hundred years. As a result many of these older homes are unable to meet the demands of their modern day owners without major renovations and even then their efficiency is less than desired. The connection with history comes with a price: gentrifiers must make connections to the past while being grounded in reality of the 21st century.

It is these three potential scenarios that form the second basis for this research. It offers that a key reason why gentrification has occurred at any level in Toledo is related to the architectural style and preservation of the neighborhood. Houses here are imposed with strict external design standards intent on replicating the traditional looks and styles. If any potential option remains constant for gentrification it would be an expression of the Victorian and Arts & Crafts style architecture in the neighborhood. This could be influenced by any of the above explanations, which leads to the second research question:

RQ2: Does preference for certain architectural features play a significant role in choosing to locate within older inner-city neighborhoods in a city like Toledo?

Chapter Three

Methodology

The Old West End neighborhood (OWE) in Toledo, Ohio was selected as the study area for this research. It is an ideal location to study the relationship between gentrification and architecture because it contains one of largest collections of historical Victorian, Arts & Crafts, and Edwardian housing in the nation. This is a nationally recognized historic district that contains over fifteen-hundred homes. The homes in this neighborhood were built by wealthy industrialists who profited greatly from the vital role Toledo played in the nation as a trading and transportation hub. The result is an enormous collection of architecturally significant homes, built with attention to the finest detail. Many of these homes have been preserved over the years. This is due in part because of the neighborhoods historic designation as well as the number of increasingly new OWE residents. Renewed interest in the neighborhood started in the late 60s and late 70s. Its population continues to grow at a steady pace, but it pales in comparison to other areas nationally that have undergone a more intensive process of gentrification. This is why the researcher has attempted to argue for a spatially-oriented understanding of gentrification, one that could possibly make sense of the varying intensity of gentrification found in Toledo.

Subjects were selected using maximum variation sampling. This is a purposeful sampling strategy with the goal of capturing and describing central themes that may arise

across a population group or program with high degrees of variation (Patton, 1990). It is an ideal technique for situations in which the sample is small and contains substantial levels of diversity. The argument for this method is that any patterns which emerge from such a sample are worth paying attention to because the individual circumstances of the participants varied so much from one another. Information about the demographic composition of the historic Old West End was ascertained from preliminary discussions with members active in that area. This is considered a viable method for structuring research and understanding the desired elements which should be included in a final sample (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These conversations indicated that diversity in the neighborhood was strongest along lifestyle and family preferences and weakest along racial composition. Targeted groups for this study included: empty nesters, singles, heterosexual couples with children, childless heterosexual couples, homosexual couples, and minorities. The range of unique individuals and viewpoints contained within this one neighborhood adds support to the selective sampling approach because a diverse population is required in order for maximum variation sampling to be truly effective (Patton, 1990)

Participants were selected in one of two ways: either based upon a subject's initial response to an email, which was filtered by additional demographic information provided through correspondence, or through word of mouth. The former comprised the majority of the interviews. A discussion with an active member of the historic Old West End led to the discovery of an email list which existed for residents of the neighborhood who were interested in staying informed about events in the area. At the time of this research, the list contained nearly two hundred residents. An email, which is included in the appendix,

was drafted. It indicated that a graduate student was doing research in their area and was interested in understanding why they had chose to live in an older urban neighborhood as opposed to a suburban location. Individuals were encouraged to participate and contact the researcher either through email or telephone. The later was a smaller portion of the interviews, which usually transpired out of a discussion involving the diversity in the Old West End. A common outgrowth of the interviews was the networking which transpired. For example, someone would say "You must speak to so and so. They would be a great subject to interview because of x." If that person seemed like a viable subject contact information was exchanged.

Data for this research was gathered using a semi-structured interview. Qualitative methods were necessary because of the complex nature of the questions being asked as well as the desired level of detail in participants' answers. It is considered a semi-structure approach because every interviewee was asked the same set of questions, but some responses or reactions warranted additional follow up questions outside the standard framework. This allowed for a more comprehensive analysis and is part of the strength behind a qualitative approach, but at the same time, the use of these methods limits the type of inferences which can be made from the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative methods are usually challenged on their ability to make broad sweeping generalizations. The inherent difficulty lies in the fact some factors will always be specific to a particular locale and will resist attempts at universalizing. The implications for qualitative research means that results are, at best, considered to be working hypotheses, contingent on context, and transferable only under conditions of congruence (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Ironically, findings from the research done in the historic Old

West End must be cautious with what can be inferred to other medium sized Rust Belt cities without first examining the contexts.

Interview questions were structured into three segments. The actual questionnaire has been included in the appendix. The first segment covered general demographic questions; some of which were asked while others were observed. Inquiries were made about the number of individuals in the household, the number of children, the sector of employment and the highest level of completed education. Additional information was observed in regards to age, race, lifestyle, and family type. This data was included because it was important to understand the backgrounds of who was being interviewed in order to develop the appropriate varied population for the maximum variation sampling technique to be truly effective. The second segment included two sets of open-ended questions related to the subjects residential history, including their housing search, and potential factors that may have influenced their decision to move into the OWE. These questions were structured around the motivators discussed and debated in gentrification literature which formed the basis for the first research question: to assess causal similarities of gentrification in Toledo with the accepted literature. The third segment included three sets of open ended questions specifically centered on a potential relationship between architecture and residency. They dealt with the actual architectural style, which may have included the external design or internal layout, the connection with the history of the home and neighborhood, and the role that both the style and history may have influenced residents' perceptions of themselves. These questions were designed to examine the second research question of this study: understanding the role architecture may have played in the gentrifying process within Toledo.

Twenty in-depth interviews were conducted with historic Old West End homeowners. These conversations occurred in the winter of 2006 and took place over a period of two months. Interviews typically took place at the subject's home, however, some did prefer, neutral off-site locations. The time frame for these meetings typically lasted anywhere from thirty minutes to an hour and mainly took place at the subjects home, however, some did prefer neutral off-site locations. Members present during the interview included myself and at least one homeowner. Couples were encouraged to jointly participate; and many did. In one instance, two couples participated in the same interview. Subjects were briefed on the nature of this research and informed of the researcher's standing as a graduate student. All interviews were recorded, with participants consent, and transcribed for later analysis. Transcriptions were examined by the researcher who looked for and identified reoccurring themes. These themes were tallied and grouped according to their presence within the interviews.

Chapter Four

Results

The Old West End Historic District was divided up in five geographical areas by the researcher to observe if any particular spatial characteristics of subjects could be observed (see appendix). This division was felt to be necessary to account for variation among the housing stock within the district because housing sized tended to decrease as one progressed northward. It was also devised based on the expectation that people would be apprehensive about being interviewed in their home and if so, about being asked for their home address, instead homeowners could point to the general area in which they lived. Neither of these concerns held true with only four of the twenty interviews being held at an off-site location. The results of the spatial analysis revealed that participants were relatively dispersed among all five of the subdivided areas, indicating that this research incorporated a broad sampling of individuals from all areas within the neighborhood.

Demographic data polled at the outset of an interview parried with personal observations indicated that participants tended to be traditional white couples without children (see appendix). The ages for these couples was spread across the gamut with most respondents being in their forties, fifties, and sixties. Many of these couples moved into the neighborhood only after their children had grown. The younger cohorts were a mix of small families, typically with one child, and childless couples. Public school was

rarely a consideration as most children attended private institutions. There were a few non-traditional participants, but not as many as would have been expected. This would include singles and same-sex couples. Occupations were varied, although nearly all of those interviewed had some level of collegiate education or trade school training. The number of years that homeowners had lived in the OWE ranged from four to thirty-six, with thirteen years being the average. This information is presented not for its quantitative value, but to help illustrate the type of people that participated in this research and to bring additional nuance to question responses.

Results from the qualitative questions indicated three dominant themes were present among those interviewed. Those themes included architecture, economics, and community. Architecture responses included appreciation of older construction standards, preference for certain household layouts or features, connectivity with a home's overall aesthetic or historical appeal, and inclinations towards an alternative to suburban living. Economic responses centered primarily on the issue of cost per square foot for older homes in comparison to those associated with newer construction in the suburbs but it also covered preferences to undergo rehabilitation projects associated with homes in the OWE. Community responses focused on comments related to participation in a thriving social network, a reconnection to small town social lifestyle, and a preference for interaction among diverse groups of people.

Architectural Intricacies:

One of the most prominent motivators for living in the OWE was related to an appreciation of the home's architectural style. Responses signifying the role architecture played in the decision making process varied depending on the conversation. Dialogue

about architectural styles tended to be generalized rather than focusing on technical design elements. It highlighted concrete elements like an appreciation for the construction standards, the materials used in construction, or references to particular features in the floor plans.

> "We've always had old homes, except for the new one we built in Sylvania for fifteen years. There is nothing like an old home when it comes to hanging a picture up. Drywall? You just go right through it. After you've had plaster walls it's just a different thing." (Bonnie, G)

> "Before we bought this house we talked a lot about what we wanted in a house, the style, the size, the layout... We wanted a house with a go around, where the rooms interconnect, so when you entertain, the people can wander from room to room. You don't wander into a room and get stuck." (Tom, C)

> "We looked at Westmoreland out by the university. We looked south. We even looked in Rossford and Perrysburg. They just couldn't compare to this house. This house has a very open, very high cathedral feeling. When we go someplace and stay for a while it is always very nice to come home and get that feeling again. It is just comfortable." (Ellen, O)

Outside of references to open floor plans, the use of natural wood floors and paneling, or the height of ceilings in these homes, very little mention was made to specific features intrinsic to the architectural styles found within the neighborhood. This was interesting especially considering that the facade is one of the first elements seen when examining a home, yet it was one of the least described elements of the architecture. The closest that references came to describing external elements were hinted at in the overall aesthetic feeling that one had when approaching or visiting a home.

> "I'm very much about whether or not I can feel it. Here, this was the first time that both of us could really say that we could see ourselves living here. We both could see it...

> Plus, when we were here it was a beautiful spring day, the trees were green, the sun was out, [and] there was a nice cool breeze. And honestly that was it. I'm usually a pretty methodological person, but everything seemed right and there was just good karma when we walked in." (Rick and Erin, Q)

> "In any type of property I buy, I need to be inspired when I walk in. I just don't want four walls with bare bones. There has to be something there that I like. Mostly it's the woodwork or the details on the outside of the house that stand out." (Mike, S)

Connectivity with a home's overall aesthetic appeal was also inspired by the history of the neighborhood or by the age of the housing stock. This connection with

history could have been real or perceived and often this information varied depending on whether or not a homeowner was a local resident with a working knowledge of the area or someone who was new to the area but recognized the historical connection that exists in homes built at this time. Regardless of the perspective the outcome was similar; homes in the OWE had souls. Every house had a story to tell. This was something that a number of people seemed to be able to identify with. It was also something that motivated them to purchase here.

> "My work is centered around the same period when this house was built, so I naturally have an appreciation for the history. This was where the big wigs of Toledo lived. The owner of this house opened the first department store in Toledo in 1866. The heart of Toledo is here." (Perry, I)

> "I've always liked this neighborhood and the houses. The difference between the Old West End and Sylvania say, is that this is a HOME. It's not just a house. It has history. It has people who have lived here. It's got vibes. I love it." (Bonnie, G)

> "At the time I was dating someone who said, I could not live down there. It was not safe. So I gave in to the pressure for a little while, but after a year, we both ended up moving down together and the dominant force was definitely the old houses and the souls that they have. I actually fought my original desire to live in the Old West End. I looked at the houses over by Willys Parkway and I actually got a day away from closing on one there. Right before we closed, I took my dog and we walked the neighborhood. I told myself, "This sucks! I can't live here." So then I immediately went with my heart and the house I first looked at [in the OWE] was the house I ended up buying." (Rachel, J)

Homeowners who identified with the historical nature of these houses were also motivated to purchases homes in the OWE in order to preserve a piece of history. The homes in the OWE are viewed by many as cultural treasures. Many of these houses have fallen into disrepair over the years and were in need of serious renovations. For some buying a home in the OWE was an opportunity to save the past.

> "We saw it [the OWE] as a beautiful neighborhood. We knew this [gentrification] was happening to a number of older areas. We thought it would be a great thing to work on and preserve. We had no idea where that was going to take us." (Claire, R)

> "I like to bring back what was old and transform it into what it used to be. That was my overall objective in a way... I do have a historical appreciation. I would say it developed over time, even though I didn't [necessarily] appreciate the craftsmanship. I think that all occurred because I worked in construction and I realized how easy it was to put up a new home, but how difficult it is to tear down an old, well crafted structure. When you are working on things [in these homes] you

> notice the craftsmen's attention to detail and wonder how long it took them to carve some of those elements out." (Mike, S)

There is a particularly strong love for the homes of the OWE by their owners. In fact, a passionate strand of those interviewed had a rather unique outlook on the purchase of their home in the OWE. They viewed themselves as guardians rather than mere homeowners. Since these houses had been in existence before any of the current owners, the odds were good that many of the structures would outlast them. As such they saw their role fitting within the history of these homes and propelling it forward.

> ”It takes some work and a huge amount of commitment; these houses are high maintenance, even after you get the heavy work done. The best way to make one of these houses fall down is to stop working on it. It is also like, well I'm not sure how to describe the relationship, but everyone here knows that unless the house burns down it is going to outlive them. In a lot of ways we are just sort of borrowing them and in some instances passing it on to someone else, only to leave it in better condition than when we found it." (Phillip, L)

> "I very much think that we are guardians of these homes. We are taking care of them, but they are not really ours. It is kind of our responsibility or our duty to do what can be done to these homes so that they are able to last another hundred years and would be able to be appreciated by other people. And I only know that I am only one in a long line of caretakers. I keep in mind some of the repairs I have done and hope that it will make future repairs that much easier. I know it's not going to be mine forever." (Rachel, J)

The unique relationship some owners had with their homes could also be seen more widely from a class perspective. Borrowing from Bordieu, many of these homeowners are following the fundamental desire of humankind; the desire to be different. The formation of habitus is expressed through the commoditization of an older and diverse housing stock that has lost its value with a large percentage of the population. Individuals who decide to purchase historic urban homes often do so because every house within a neighborhood is distinct from the one next to it. This allows for a greater display of differentiation; not only from your neighbors, but from the homogenous developments found in the suburbs. It is reinforced by the fact that the amount of historic housing

available pales in comparison suburban development. This fact makes historical urban housing all the more attractive, especially as an expression of Bordieuvian habitus.

> "I married a gal who had a house over here, but once I moved in and saw what it was, I bought my own house here [in the OWE] and bought the second house here. This is the second one. It's beautiful, the houses are fabulous. You can't get these anywhere else." (Glenn, O)

> "I grew up in a suburb and what I didn't like and what I refuse to live in is- every house is the same, everyone has the half acre lots, square houses and windows, everything looks the same. If you have a difference of opinion everybody is against you and hates you. I don't fit in. We don't conform. That's one of the defining factors of this area is that we don't conform...

> It takes a special quality or breed of person to live down here. Most of us are very unusual. We are not conformists; we are almost like trendsetters because we don't want to go down the beaten path." (David and Elly, E)

> "It's like we were the same people we were before, with the same values, but here we feel like we are living our values and we are doing an important part to help turn around the rush to the suburbs. As Perrysburg continued to develop and put in fake old sections of town [just] to make it look old, but [even though] it's really new, we didn't like that. We feel like we are part of something great. It is going too slow, but we feel like we are part of the fix rather than the problem." (Ann, B)

> "For better or worse I think it [living here] has [changed us]. A lot of people are like "Ohhh," a few people are like "Where is that?" I'd say most people we hang out with live in xyz development in the suburbs, so in a way we are very different. I think it has sort of become a part of us." (Rick, Q)

Dissatisfaction with suburban development was a very popular theme especially as it related to architecture. Many of the OWE homeowners could rightly be considered as counter-suburban. There was a sense of comparison between the design of the suburbs versus older neighborhoods like the OWE. Points of comparison included elements such as; homogenous design, the use of new construction designed to model an older feel, inclusion/ exclusion of certain design elements, and the quality of construction.

> "I grew up on River Rd and my parents actually owned the last of twelve houses on that road. After the war, the mentality of the American people shifted a bit and the Frank Lloyd-Wright, story-and-a-half houses, style became more popular. They built them everywhere. And in all the houses in the Old West End, they are all different. It would be difficult to find two houses that were the same." (Claire, R)

> "Not only are these homes much more humane to live in than ticky-tacky cracker boxes are, how else are you going to get floors that were put down in 1892 and [with] all the moldings and other things?" (Ellen, O)

> "We live on the front porch. We have wireless out there so my wife can do work out there. My daughter uses it when she comes home and maybe about once a week we end up with a

gathering of people on our porch and have drinks into the wee hours of the night. Yeah, the front porch, if you ever design communities, make the garages in the back, accessed by alleys so cars aren't driving up and down the sidewalk and make everything very pedestrian friendly and put front porches on. That would make a neighborhood." (Bill, H)

"If you lifted this house into the air and dropped it into the suburbs it would cost a half a million dollars or more to have a place like this in the suburbs. We have walnut paneling, large spaces, and high ceilings. These are the kind of things that they just skip in the suburbs." (Phillip, L)

Affordability:

A second predominant theme mentioned throughout the interviews was related to issues of economics. This issue held a relatively high level of importance for the majority of homeowners interviewed. Affordability of housing was not expected to play as dominant of a role given the relative stagnant state of economic development in the greater Toledo area, but a brief comparison of housing valuations juxtaposed with comments from participants proved differently. On average, with cost being equal, a home in the historic Old West End had square footage values that were two to three times larger than its suburban counterparts. For example, one hundred and seventy three thousand dollars can either buy a newly constructed seventeen hundred square foot home in the suburbs of Sylvania or a three thousand nine hundred foot turn-of-the-century home in the Old West End. The cost of a home in the OWE relative to its size was a noticeable factor.

"We [started off by] renting an apartment not more than three blocks from here. The apartment was a good size, probably around eighteen hundred to two thousand square feet itself. Anywhere else we looked we would have been trading down. We just had too much stuff...

We looked at older places, like old Maumee, because we liked the aesthetic of older houses. There were houses there that were falling apart and were about the size of our [current] garage, and they wanted ninety thousand dollars for them just because they were in Maumee." (David and Elly, E)

"Well, it [the cost] played a big role for us. It was our first house. We only spent thirty thousand on a five thousand foot duplex as opposed to spending fifty or sixty thousand in the suburbs for a house of comparable size. We ended up with just as nice a house, only it needed a little bit of work." (Claire, R)

> "When we moved into an apartment down here we moved into a three bedroom, huge dining room, for five fifty a month. It was huge. We had everything we could need. Our apartment was bigger than some people's homes and the space was nice." (Sasha, M)

The difference in cost was even more noticeable to homeowners coming from outside the Toledo area where cost in housing was significantly higher.

> "We actually measured a lot of these things as if we were still living in New York or New Jersey. A house this big... when we lived in New Jersey there was a place I always wanted to live; Ridgewood. It would be better than Ottawa Hills, but along those lines. There was a section called the Heights and I always wanted to live there because they had these great old homes with beautiful tree lined streets. Since we had moved and were unable to live there, I felt like this would be pretty close to the real thing. In a way it would be like living in Ridgewood... and it would be millions of dollars for a house there..." (Erin, Q)

> "We have always liked old houses. When we lived in Seattle we had a new house, but prior to that we had always had old houses. These houses are incredible and for anyone coming form out of the area they are also incredibly cheap." (Bill, H)

While it is true that the homes in the OWE initially seem very financially attractive when compared with housing in the suburbs they must also be valued based on the monthly cost for utilities. Many of the homes in the OWE were built at the turn of the century and still retain many of the original elements including the boiler, electrical wiring, and insulation, not to mention the general energy inefficiencies associated with this older construction. Utilities may have been an unnoticeable monthly cost for their original owners, but the same would not necessarily be true for current residents. Modern costs associated with heating and cooling of homes this age can quickly reach astronomical levels if left unnoticed or unmanaged.

> "Winters are cooooold. We make do. I walk in front of the fireplace or stand in front of the stove. The costs are huge, although we have been able to manipulate that down. You just need to live at a colder temperature. The winters are a challenge." (Byron and Sasha, M)

> "We didn't stand out on the corner in June and say it will probably cost two thousand dollars a month to heat that place. It never crossed our mind. The first bill came in December and it was more than our mortgage and I was ecstatic! Eventually, we got a little smarter at managing our heat." (Erin, Q)

However, the cost of heating these older homes should also take into context the actual square footage of these houses and energy costs in the summer because most homes in the OWE are rather large and do not have central air.

> "I love watching peoples eyes go up. The largest heating bill we have had was eleven hundred dollars and people will go "My gas bill was four hundred." [Well,] our house is eighty two hundred square feet and I use every room. This house doesn't have central air and in fact is very well insulated, so in the summer my electric bills are very low. When I factor in the electricity with the heating bills for this house, in comparison to how we heated our home in the suburbs, I am actually spending less to heat this place. Even though the dollar amount is over, I am heating more rooms and more space. So once you acknowledge this fact, that when you live in a house this size you are going to pay more than you would if you lived in a one bedroom apartment, you should consider buying a house that is much smaller." (Perry, I)

Older homes also carry with them the additional task of maintenance or the updating of originally-installed amenities. Either of these types of projects is noticeably expensive for housing this historic, but seeing the utility cost of an old boiler at work or cooking in a small kitchen original made solely for servants may not necessarily be viable options for families living in the twenty first century. Housing in the OWE requires a significant investment of time and money.

> "You have to look at the opportunity cost of spending your weekends working on the house or golfing. In my case, literally, my wife likes to golf and I didn't go out with her at all because I had to paint the house. It takes a person who is willing to make that tradeoff and is willing to commit to caring for the house." (Phillip, L)

> "I think that one of the things that may price this out of the market for people as time goes on are the utilities. It is not cheap to heat these houses, the electricity is one thing, but when you're talking heating, you're talking another ball game. In the seventies, most of the people that lived here new how to work on the house or at least knew how to barter with the neighbors, then in the eighties things really began to change and we noticed a major wave of "yuppies" moving in. These young up and comers wanted to buy these houses and actually could afford to pay others to work on them. By and large most of the people down here know how to manage a saw or paint. It is costly to maintain these houses and I think that most of us who live here, to this day, still do their own work." (Claire, R)

The simple nature of age can cause contracting work to even double or triple in price. That is why many homeowners choose to do work themselves.

> "I really do believe that as soon as you tell people where you live and you tell them the OWE they see the dollar signs. There is an old saying in the OWE that everything costs five thousand dollars. Having lived here for a while, I've found out that it does. It is the base price to have everything in the OWE done, so when you start doing it yourself, maybe some of the little

> things, you begin to realize how much of a markup people give to your house. If you had a leaky faucet and called someone it would probably cost you three times as much just because you lived in the OWE." (Roger, N)

Renovating in the OWE is simply a fact of life. Anyone who moves into the neighborhood and plans on sticking around has to be aware of the maintenance involved and be willing to get a little dirty otherwise they are unlikely to live in the area for long.

> "Our previous home was about ten to fifteen years old and really didn't require any maintenance... Here, I pretty much expect to do something every weekend... I thought about it [maintenance involved] in some sense, it flood through my mind, but I really didn't consider the consequences. I am okay with it now but what bothers me is that I think we are doing a decent job of maintaining the level of the home, but we are not improving it. I would like to be improving it, but at least it's not falling down around us." (Rick, Q)

> "I got to know a lot of neighbors who were working on their houses; we were all in the same boat together. There were a lot of us out here trying to bring the neighborhood up to better standings. Now we are to the point where the prices have escalated with the houses in it and the new people are coming form the bigger cities and I don't know if they understand what preservation is all about, because they move into a house that is already done for them, but they only stay for three years or so and then move back...
>
> They are what we call yuppies. They are easy and care free. They want it but they don't know what is involved. They are book smart but hands-dumb and the houses are falling apart on them so they move out somewhere else, then we are stuck fixing them back up again." (David, K)

Sometimes a homeowner's desire to renovate their home may run up against the rules and regulations of the historic district. These rules are specifically aimed at preserving the external architectural integrity of the neighborhood. Anyone who wishes to make alterations to their home's facade must first gain approval from the OWE historic commission. Homeowners are limited on the actual materials that they can use for external renovations. These materials must be similar in nature to what they are replacing, so a slate roof needs to be replaced with a comparable substance. The district regulations are viewed, simultaneously, by homeowners in both positive and negative terms. Many homeowners are happy with the regulations preventing housing from looking out of character with the neighborhood, but others find the regulations as a source of frustration from an economic basis. One of the largest sources of complaints

was related to restrictions on the type of replacement windows permitted. From a utility perspective many of these original windows are a significant source of energy loss, so their replacement seems like a logical first step. However, costs involved with purchasing the required type of window prevent many from doing so.

> "I don't know if that designation has any value in this area at all. There are other areas where I could understand having those guidelines. You can do anything you want to this house internally, but everything external requires approval. To me, what they are doing is kind of killing [the neighborhood], because you can't change the windows or do some of the more energy efficient things in your house, or chasing people away. If people were able to get tempered glass windows, I think it would really help sell the neighborhood, but they are so stuck on the wood windows." (Ben, P)

> "We were just children when we bought this house. We didn't know anything, but now a lot of people complain about it, that the historical district is too restrictive. They will tell use what we can and cannot do but they wont help us in any other respect. For example, they wont let us replace our windows with more energy efficient windows, but they are not going to kick in and help us pay the heating bill." (Elly, E)

> "I didn't even understand it [historic designation] until I was here for ten years... You can put in energy efficient windows but they have to be wood and you have to pay extra to get wood windows. Everybody wants maintenance free windows, so why would you buy wood?" (Ed, F)

Outside of issues related to the economic realities, homeowners were generally optimistic about the historic designation.

> "At the time I thought, well there are rules to living in the neighborhood, but I know - both now and then- that it's a good thing. It keeps people from doing crazy "re-muddling." You see homes outside the district where they have done all kinds of crazy things and it looks like crap because of it. Being forced not to do those kinds of things is a great thing." (Tara, N)

> "In some of the newer subdivisions you are limited by the types of trees you can plant. If one of the rules is that you can't put replacement windows in the house, well okay, we won't put them in. Instead we will better insulate the house. It is a trade off...
>
> It's a matter of perspective. I just think it is funny when people say, "Well you have to watch what color you paint the house." No you don't, you could pain your house bubble-gum pink, but if you want to keep the value of your house and maintain its aesthetics of what is right for your house, you are going to research it and paint it a color that is typical for the period of the home, because when you go to sell it, it makes a big difference." (Debby, C)

> "I think everyone in the neighborhood complains about that [historic designation] from time to time. There are some restrictions and it is kind of pain in the neck to do certain changes because you have to present a plan, but we like that because it helps to make sure that the neighborhood is constantly improving." (Ann, B)

In spite of all the negative economic factors mentioned, like utilities, maintenance, renovations, and historic requirements, attitudes were favorable about the original cost of purchasing a home relative to other cost factors involved with living in the OWE.

> "There are times when you get a six hundred dollar heating bill or you open up a fix-it manual where the directions don't even match what you see. There are times when we get ticked off and wonder if we made a bad decision but over all we like living here." (Tara, N)

> "For our first home, I think we made out. We were looking at homes that were a little more than two of these rooms. The magnitude of what we go there versus anywhere else, it was basically a no-brainer. Even recently we started looking at the newer homes, but it's just not the quality with the cost, it would be four or five hundred for a home this size, but it just wouldn't have the integrity." (Byron, M)

> "Well, it [this house] is a money pit for one thing. I would say right now that if someone came in and said they really loved this place and they wanted to buy it or a fair price, I would say to Erin that I would want to buy another house down here. I don't really want to live anywhere else. We talk about that sometimes and we wonder where we would live. It might be a different kind of house, but it would be in the OWE, I think. Maybe it will change in a few years, but for right now I couldn't imagine living anywhere else." (Rick, Q)

Community:

A third factor which strongly influenced homeowners was related to the sense of community found within the historic OWE neighborhood. This was an unexpected finding based on my research in the field of gentrification. Although diversity and tolerance are frequently cited, especially in relation to sexual preference or race, the high value placed on communal interaction has not been. This interaction was described by many interview participants as a continuation of the "Small Town, USA" lifestyle that had been lost with modern suburban development. It was a lifestyle where people knew their neighbors, talked on a consistent basis, and looked out for them.

> "That was really the thing; not so much the character of the houses but the spirit of the neighborhood. To me, I call it a progressive node: those places that you go to and you see those people who are spirited and are interacting with each other in a way that you don't see in most of the places you go." (Phillip, L)

> "I talk to at least two or three of my neighbors every day. There are a few of them that live on either side of me that if I'm not talking to them, I'm waving hi to them at least every single

day. I feel very confident that if we went away for a week and the lights suddenly went on that my neighbors would come and knock on the door and want to know who is there." (Roger, N)

"I think that overall, it is very difficult to go on a walk and not get stopped by a neighbor wanting to chat. You just don't get that in many neighborhoods... Everyone notices everything and you don't really feel nervous about telling people where you live because overall everyone watches out for each other.

Our neighbors are that way. One of our neighbors works nights and we work days. Sometimes we will come home and there are notes on our door or he will stop by later and tell us that so and so was on the porch. Especially on our block, people really look out for each other." (Ben and Suzan, P)

This mentality is supported in large part because of the design of the neighborhood. The streets in the historic OWE are walk-able, sidewalks are lined with trees, and every block is home to a variety of diverse architectural elements. Homes are oriented towards the street and often include spacious front porches. If a home has a garage it is oriented toward the back yard and remains unattached to the primary structure. The combination of walk-able streets and inviting front porches serves as a catalyst for social interaction.

"People know there neighbors around here and it's a front porch neighborhood. In the suburbs, you drive up to your attached garage and the door comes up, you drive in and the door goes down. You are not seen by the neighbors until you drive in the next day. The newer homes are oriented towards the back, they are enclosed spaces with screened in porches and patios. So if you get out and enjoy the weather people don't see you because you are in the back of the house. " (Phillip, L)

"This might also be the time to insert the "Women of the Old West End's" mantra, "you come for the houses but you stay for the people." This is the good old days. I remember the good old days, which were before television and when I was a kid we would come home from school, change our clothes, and go out to play till supper time. Then we ate our evening meal as a family. After dinner we did our homework and the adults would sit on porches; they got out and spent time together. That's what we have in the OWE, people still get out, walk, and sit on their porches, neighbors know each other... People communicate here." (Ed, F)

"We have a beer keg which we put on the front porch. Memorial Day weekend, we put it out on the front porch and we don't put it away till after the Ohio State- Michigan game... It's fun because we had many impromptu parties, but I know that about 6:30 to 7 o'clock you can see them [our neighbors] peeking out their windows to see if we are sitting on the porch. That's the kind of neighborhood it is here. It's very sociable." (Frank, G)

Residents of the OWE are all united by their desire to live in and deal with the problems associated with very old homes. Whether one likes it or not maintenance must

be done and this need serves as the ideal icebreaker for one neighbor to share advice, offer support, or connect residents together because they possess unique renovation skills. This provides a rare social opportunity for residents because individuals in the OWE are connected to each other, if in no other way, by their love for the houses.

> "If you looked in our back yards you would see that we have access to each others yard to help with gardening, communicating, kibitz, working on dead batteries for cars, or moving columns or something else like that. Everyone in the OWE has a common conversation topic which is, "What are you fixing on your house this year?" You have to have that mentality or you shouldn't own a house like this because five years of neglect would cause it to fall apart." (Ellen, O)

> "I would say that this neighborhood reminds me in many ways of small town America. Everybody knows each other and I think that in many cases I know more about what color people are painting their living room than what people are doing for a living. It's not like in suburbia where people ask you, oh what do you do for a living.; where as here it's not about the money you make or your education, it's about what you are doing to the house." (Debby, C)

> "I remember when I first bought my house. A number of my neighbors would come and introduce themselves and I would be embarrassed of the mess I had on my hands. I remember one neighbor who put her hand on mine and said, "Honey, we've all been there." It's kind of like a secret club because we all know what it is like to knock out a ceiling, but then there is also the neighborliness to it, and I don't know if it is because of the front porches. I have no idea. We do a lot of things. We have a lot of parties and that is why I love my block so much. We are all very close. It is kind of live having family who isn't my family. I never feel alone. Everyone is really friendly, they immediately take you in. I think this neighborhood just accepts you and most people love it." (Rachel, J)

Equally important to the idea of community is the idea of acceptance. The OWE is home to a diverse collection of individuals. It is mixture of races, marital status, sexual orientation, families, and ages. All of which are welcome in the OWE. Diversity served as a strong selling point for a number of individuals looking for a place to call home. Naturally, many looked towards the central city for this location in contrast to the suburban lifestyle.

> "We felt that the suburbs were very homogenous, at least here in the Midwest, and we wanted to get our kids exposed to some more diversity...There is not as much racial diversity as I thought, although kids who go to Scott walk up and down the block all day long and you don't see that in Perrysburg. Our neighbors are predominantly white. I would say the biggest diversity would be in terms of sexual preference." (Rick, Q)

> "We came from lovely white Sylvania, I love Syyylvania, but we didn't know any black people. We didn't know any gay people, and so we moved to the OWE and I was like... "Wow, they are all around us." It was a little intimidating at first, at least until we realized they were just

people. So we have this wonderful black family that we have living next door to us and I thought that would never happen in my entire life. Some of our best friends are gay. We have blended into this neighborhood more so than I had ever thought." (Frank, G)

"We like them [our neighbors], although everyone has their issues. We have two guys that live next door; next to them is a traditional family with a wife who may have cancer. We have an artist across the street who is a cool guy, then a doctor next to him, and a stay-at-home father next to him. It is very diverse here." (Byron, M)

Chapter Five

Conclusions

This research was centered on the premise that the geographical context of a city influences the factors which shapes its gentrification. Factors like population growth/ decline, economic conditions, cultural amenities, costs in housing, and commute times all play varying roles depending on where a city finds itself. This was addressed in the first research question of this study. Research question one asked if the causes of gentrification in medium sized Rust Belt cities, like Toledo, Ohio, diverge from the findings of traditional literature. Evidence from the historic Old West End neighborhood indicated that deviation did exist. Gentrifiers there were influenced primarily by architecture, costs in housing, and social opportunities.

Architecture, as expected, turned out to be a dominant motivating factor for gentrification in the historic OWE. The ability for middle class residents to differentiate themselves from other socio-economic groups correlated strongly with reactions against modern suburban development and a preference to connect with and preserve history. The interconnectivity of these three ideas reaffirms the idea that housing can serve as a powerful example of individual identity and self-expression. The importance of architecture to be utilized in this capacity is especially true in places like Toledo, Ohio where the desire to live in an older urban neighborhood is the result of a conscious choice rather than the only viable location due to escalating housing prices or an extremely

competitive housing market. Individuals who chose to live in the historic OWE do so because it allows them to live more congruently with how they see themselves. As long as the economic realities of the greater Toledo area continue to exist, the decision to live in the historic OWE will largely be motivated by the Bordievian idea of habitus; the individual desire for differentiation.

Costs in housing were believed to be relatively comparative. This was true to a degree. The process of gentrification has been ongoing in the historic OWE for nearly four decades, but not anywhere near the pace experienced in flourishing areas. Housing prices in the OWE can be divided into two categories: homes that have undergone major renovations (i.e. modern plumbing/electric, updated heating/insulation) and those that have not. The former category is priced competitively with its suburban counterparts, but the later category offers a significant cost per square foot entry point into the market. This cost difference can vary as much as two to three times for comparable square footage in the suburbs. Because of the slower pace of gentrification in this area and the availability of homes in need of major renovations, cost in housing will continue to be a dominant factor for potential homebuyers.

However, these initial costs in savings are typically offset by costs in utilities. Homes in the historic OWE are large with sizes varying from two thousand square feet up to eight thousand. When this is juxtaposed with housing that has failed to receive cost saving updates, like modern insulation or an updated heating unit, utility costs can reach astronomical levels. One of the easiest ways to alleviate burdens in heating costs, replacing poorly insulated windows, is one of the most difficult tasks in the historic OWE. Regulations established by the historic district, either from the city or national

levels, requires windows to maintain their original feel by requiring the frames to be made out of wood. Comments from residents have indicated that costs of such windows price this update out of the realm of possibilities. Difficulties with addressing utility costs have led a number of potential residents to question whether or not the historic OWE is a viable long term place of residence. Many participants indicated that they had found ways to manage the costs of utilities but these results have been less than desirable, especially when they considered the energy efficient levels of newer construction. It is questionable whether or not new policies initiatives could address the costs of utilities in older homes, but given the increasing costs for energy, utility costs will continue to be one of the dominant issues that prices people out of this market.

Social opportunities were not expected to play a dominant role in the gentrification process. It is believed that this factor has achieved an elevation in importance for precisely the same reasoning behind architecture. Homeowners who live in the historic OWE desire to live out of a framework that runs contrary to the suburbs. This is especially evident in the preference for social and communal interaction. In one sense, living in the historic OWE is like joining a club. It is made up of a diverse group of individuals, albeit mainly homogenous by racial lines, but diverse in lifestyles and beliefs nonetheless. Yet, if individuals are only able to share one thing in common it would be their love of old homes. This topic serves as the ideal catalyst for opening up the lines of communication and offers the perfect opportunity for community to be experienced. Because if there is one thing that is true about living in the historic OWE it is the fact that these homes require a great deal of work and maintenance. Sharing in these experiences

allows individuals to connect in ways that are difficult to do with their suburban counterparts.

These opportunities are especially present because of elements inherent in the design and layout of the neighborhood. The combination of a diverse collection of historical houses, the ability of those homes to create a visually stimulating walk-able environment, and the inclusion of front porches, along with their proximity to sidewalks, offers a unique venue for social interaction. Individual interviews are full of countless examples illustrating the importance that these three elements provide in terms of social interaction and opportunities in the historic OWE. In fact, within the historic OWE there is a sort of an unspoken or implied invitation when someone walking along the sidewalks encounters a resident sitting on their porch. The front porch serves as the ideal focal point for informal social gatherings and its inclusion in a majority of the homes in the historic OWE enhances the opportunity for social interaction to occur.

Examination of the interviews for prominence of the four categories initially articulated in the literature review -which included the demographic, housing, amenities, and economic arguments- revealed that only the housing argument showed a prominent level of importance in the decision making process for potential homeowners. These other factors may have been present to a partial degree but were not nearly as prevalent as the key findings of this research. The amenities argument was present in some degree because of comments mentioned about exposure to diversity and to differences in housing suburban-urban quality hinted at in the interviews. The demographic argument held some importance to potential homeowners given that the majority of those interviewed were empty nesters or childless couples. Those families that were

interviewed opted to send their children to private schools, which tended to reduce a portion of the demographic arguments importance. The shifting economic argument was of minimal importance to those interviewed. This goes along with the researcher's hypothesis that factors like the economic transition from industrial to a service oriented environment located in the heart of a city's central business district had not been realized in the city of Toledo. Some individuals did comment on location to their employment, but it was rarely a primary motivating factor in their purchase.

The second research question of this study examined if preferences for certain architectural features played a significant role in choosing to locate within older inner-city neighborhoods in a city like Toledo. The ability of architecture to influence the decision making process was examined in a variety of ways. Potential homeowners could be looking for a certain aesthetic, an alternative to suburban development, or the ability to differentiate themselves. Of the three, preferences for the historical urban aesthetic and its viability as an alternative to the suburban experience tended to dominate the discussion on architecture. These topics were easier to discuss than a more weighty inquiry into class differentiation. As a result, many of the references relating to class and architecture were inferred from other comments. Expressions of the Bordievian need for human differentiation were best articulated in comments related to aesthetics or design. Differentiation was a common theme among architectural discussion. This could have been in reference to the older historical aesthetic, arguments relating to the superiority in traditional design, or discussions highlighting specific housing features which are no longer available in new construction. Interestingly, comments involving the aesthetic element often focused on the quality of design or use of certain materials as opposed to

technical design elements. This ran in contrast to what was experienced in earlier work done on gentrification and architecture (Jager, 1985).

The underlying statement throughout the discussions on architecture was that housing in the historic Old West End was noticeably different from other areas. It was this difference which attracted many of the participants of the study to the historic Old West End neighborhood. They may not have been specifically aware of this need, but their comments indicated that architecture played a significant role in the decision to purchase a home in that neighborhood.

This work originally set out to examine whether or not the geography of gentrification in cities like New York City, New York or Houston, Texas, would differ with cities like Toledo, Ohio or Gary, Indiana. It argued that the geographical context of a city does matter when it comes to understanding the factors which influence its gentrification. The case study of Toledo, Ohio supported this hypothesis and provides the impetus for researching other medium-sized Rust Belt cities. Gentrification in Toledo was influenced by architecture, costs in housing, and social opportunities. These findings diverged substantially with the literature that has traditionally argued for economic, housing, amenities, and demographic causalities.

The growing reach of gentrification has made it difficult to theorize broadly about its causes, but this does not mean it is impossible. As this research has attempted to point out, success with applying broader theories of causality can only be made among cities that have similar geographic contexts. Results from this pilot study offer support to the idea of studying additional medium-sized Rust Belt cities to discern whether or not the causes of gentrification are comparable to what was experienced in Toledo, Ohio.

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Appendix

Email to Old West End Residents

Dear Old West End Residents,

My name is Josh Lewandowski. I am a master's student at the University of Toledo in the Department of Geography and Planning. I am currently working on my graduate thesis and would like to interview you in connection with this project.

My research is focused on central city reinvestment - more specifically on why people haven chosen central city neighborhoods over suburban locations. I am interested in interviewing 20-25 current Old West End homeowners to explore the variety of reasons that they have chosen the OWE as their place of residence and to examine how this compares with studies done in other U.S. cities. I would like to do these interviews in-person and estimate that it should take around 20-30 minutes to complete. This could be done by you, a co-owner of your home, or both, at a time and location that is most convenient for you – with one possibility for a meeting location being at Mansion View. My only requirement is that the person(s) interviewed are homeowners in the Old West End.

For analysis purposes I will need to record and transcribe the conversation, but this can only be done with your approval. University policy requires me to obtain documentation of participants' consent – a form that indicates that you are willing to be interviewed and that you permit me to record the conversation. This can be done at the time of the interview. Your participation will be anonymous and no direct personal information will be attached to the interview or the research.

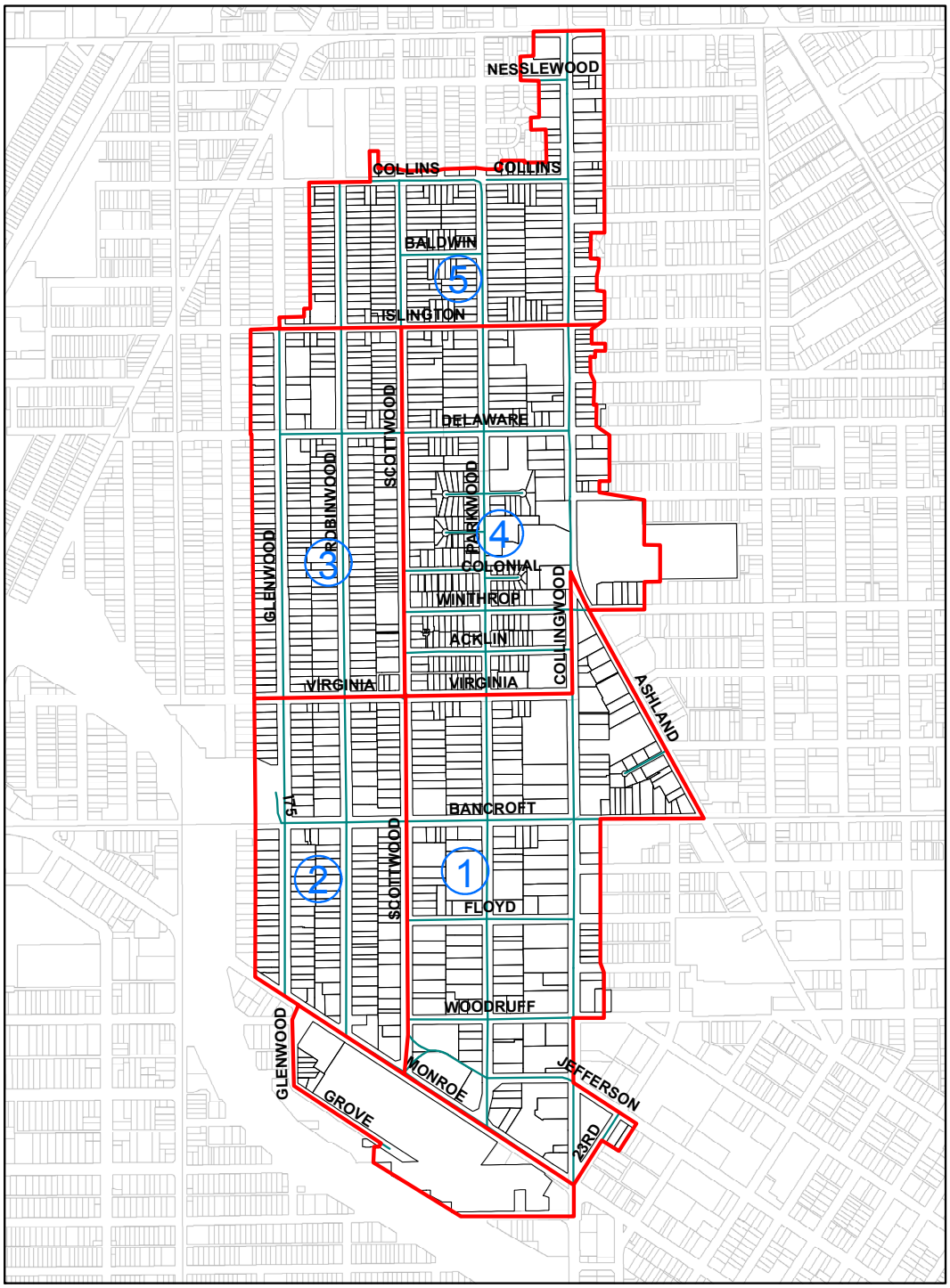
I would love to get a broad spectrum of views and opinions from homeowners in the Old West End and I am hoping that many of you would be willing to be interviewed for this project. If so, could you please reply to this message, or contact me on my cell phone at 419-344-4010? I would also be happy to be directed to other residents of the OWE who you think may be good candidates for me to interview.

I look forward to hearing from you and thank you in advance for your possible participation in studying one of Toledo's most interesting neighborhoods!

Best Regards,

Josh Lewandowski
Geography and Planning Graduate Student
Cell Phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx
Email: xxxx.xxxxxxxx@xxxx.xxx

Map of the Old West End Divided into Sections



Interview Questionnaire

Interview # _____ *Geographies of Gentrification* Date: _____

Part 1:

1) Demographic Questions:

Number of individuals in the household: ____ Number of school age children: ____

Sector(s) of Employment:_____

Highest Level(s) of Completed Education: _____

2) How long have you lived in the Old West End? What were some of the factors that brought you to this area/ keep you in this area?

-Where did you look for homes? What areas of town were they in? (i.e. other Toledo neighborhoods, Sylvania, Perrysburg etc.) Could you estimate the number of potential homes you looked at? Was there anything specific that directed you away from the suburbs?

3) When making your most recent housing decision, how important was it to relocate to the Old West End?

-Do you feel that any of the following factors played into your decision? (a) location to employment, (b) access to cultural facilities, (c) affordability of the house, (d) character of the house or neighborhood? (If yes, look for more detail).

Part 2:

4) Was it important to select this specific house or were neighborhood characteristics more important? If so, could you describe why?

-Did the architectural style of this house play a major role in your selection process? Did it make your decision easier?

5) Did the historic district designation play a role in your decision to buy this house? Could you describe why?

-Do you feel that you have contributed to the preservation of this area with the purchase of your current residence and was this opportunity give consideration when you were looking at potential homes?

6) Do you believe that living in this house or neighborhood has become an important part of who you are?

-Do you recognize a potential value, social or economic, in the decision to purchase an older home with such architectural quality or within this neighborhood?

Tabulated Demographic Data from Interviews

	#	OWE	Age Range	Lifestyle	Family	Race	Indv. HH	Child HH	Employment	Employment 2	Education	Education 2	Years
A	4	30s	Heterosexual	Traditional	White	4	1	Engineering	Nursing	Masters	-	3.5
B	5	50s	Heterosexual	Empty Nester	White	3	0	Teaching	-	Masters	-	8
C	3	50s	Heterosexual	Empty Nester	White	2	0	Telcom	Realtor	Some College	Bachelors	29
D	5	40s	Heterosexual	Traditional	Black	3	1	Drafting	Education	Associates	-	26
E	1	30s	Heterosexual	Non-Traditional	White	2	0	Realtor	Military	Bachelors	Bachelors	14
F	2	60s	Heterosexual	Empty Nester	White	2	0	Manufacturing	Manufacturing	College	Some College	23
G	4	60s	Heterosexual	Empty Nester	White	2	0	Construction	Stay-At-Home	Some College	High School	15
H	3	50s	Heterosexual	Empty Nester	White	2	0	Equities	Health Care	College	College	5
I	1	40s	Homosexual	Non-Traditional	White	2	0	Accounting	Teaching	CPA	Masters	8
J	3	30s	Heterosexual	Single	White	1	0	Medical	-	Bachelors	-	6
K	4	40s	Heterosexual	Single	White	1	0	Medical	-	Bachelors	-	32
L	2	40s	Heterosexual	Non-Traditional	Interracial	2	0	Writing	Psychiatry	Masters	PHD	3
M	3	40s	Heterosexual	Traditional	Black	5	3	Business	Stay-At-Home	College	College	9
N	3	30s	Heterosexual	Traditional	White	2	0	Education	Education	Masters	High School	11
O	2	60s	Heterosexual	Empty Nester	White	2	0	Education	Art	Masters	PHD	23
P	4	20s	Heterosexual	Traditional	White	2	0	Sales	Student	Bachelors	-	4
Q	2	40s	Heterosexual	Traditional	White	6	4	Business	Stay-At-Home	Bachelors	MBA	5
R	3	50s	Heterosexual	Empty Nester	White	2	2	Non-Profit	Sales	Associates	Some College	35
S	3	20s	Heterosexual	Traditional	Black	3	1	Research	Research	Masters	Masters	2
T	5	30s	Homosexual	Non-Traditional	White	3	1	Education	Stay-At-Home	PHD	-	4