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Race, Space and Democracy: Locally-Based Strategies for Development -- Panel Discussion from Fourth National People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference, Hosted at the American University Washington College of Law

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RACE, SPACE AND DEMOCRACY: LOCALLY-BASED STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT – PANEL DISCUSSION FROM FOURTH NATIONAL PEOPLE OF COLOR LEGAL SCHOLARSHIP CONFERENCE, HOSTED AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW

FEATURING AUDREY MCFARLANE, ERIKA WILSON, EZRA ROSSER, AND MICHÉLE ALEXANDER∞

[Audrey McFarlane] Alright, good morning everyone, thank you for joining us. This is the race, space, and democracy panel, locally based strategies for

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Erika Wilson serves as the Thomas Willis Lambeth Distinguished Chair in Public Policy and associate professor of law at UNC-Chapel Hill. Her research and teaching interests include clinical legal education, education law and policy, specifically obtaining educational equality for disadvantaged students, and the intersection between race and the law. She teaches Critical Race Theory, Education Law, and serves as the director for the UNC Clinical Programs. Wilson attended the UCLA School of Law. After law school she worked as an associate at Arnold & Porter LLP. She also served as the George P. Lindsey Staff Attorney fellow for the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights. Prior to joining the Carolina Law faculty she taught at the University of Baltimore School of Law.

Ezra Rosser joined the Washington College of Law faculty in 2006. He has taught Property, Federal Indian Law, Poverty Law, Land Use, and Housing Law. Previously he served as a visiting professor at Ritsumeiken University, a 1665 Fellow at Harvard University, a visiting scholar at Yale Law School, and a Westerfield Fellow at Loyola University New Orleans School of Law. Ezra is a past chair of the AALS Property Law, Poverty Law, and Indian Nations and Indigenous Peoples sections. His articles have appeared in journals including the California Law Review, Harvard Law & Policy Review, Washington University Law Review, Yale Human Rights and Development Law Journal, Environmental Law, and the American Indian Law Review. Ezra received the Elizabeth Payne Cubberly Scholarship Award in 2017 and 2012, as well as the Emalee C. Godsey Scholarship Award in 2008.

Michéle Alexandre was Colgate University's first black valedictorian (majoring in English and French, with background in philosophy). She earned her Juris Doctor from Harvard Law School. After graduating from law school, she clerked for U.S. District Court Judge John P. Fullam in Philadelphia, and practiced law in New York and Alabama, where she worked on the pivotal Black Farmers Lawsuit. Prior to her appointment at the University of Mississippi School of Law, Alexandre taught at the University of Houston, the University of Baltimore, American University and the University of Memphis. She received Fulbright and Watson fellowships, and at the University of Mississippi was honored with the Ben A. Hardy Faculty Excellence Award for outstanding teaching, scholarship and service in 2016. In 2017, she was selected as an SEC-U Academic Leadership Development Program Fellow for 2017-2018. She was named one of *Ebony Magazine's*Top 100 influential African Americans of 2013 and one of the 50 "Most Influential Minority Law Professors 50 Years of Age or Younger" by *Lawyers of Color Magazine*.

development. Right now we have with us, me. I'm Audrey McFarlane. I'm a professor at the University of Baltimore. We also have Erika Wilson, who is a professor at the University of North Carolina. I'm going to dispense with the long bios, and commend you to the program guide for the long bios. Suffice it to say, that everybody on this panel is extremely distinguished…and now I feel bad, because I [feel I] should explain in more detail. And then we have Ezra Rosser, who's a professor at Washington College of Law. And we have Alexandre, who is an outgoing professor, University of Mississippi, and the incoming dean at Stetson School of Law.

Unfortunately, Renee Hatcher will not be able to join us today. She was going to talk about her cutting edge work in the solidarity economy, and she is taking community economic development to a new level with genuine good kind of grass roots people folk as participatory-controlled approaches to sustainable development. So her presence will be missed, but we have a lot of interesting presentations for you today. So we will start off with Erika, who will talk to us about gentrification and school choice.

[Erika Wilson] Good morning. Thank you all for coming down at 9:00 a.m. Hopefully we will make it worth your while. This panel is about local development strategies, and so when we talk about local development, schools aren't necessarily the first thing that come to mind – particularly public schools. A lot of the work that I've been doing focuses on the intersection between local government law and public schools, because in reality, local government law is a tremendous source of much of the racial and economic segregation we see in schools.

What I want to do in this piece, which I will turn into a paper, is to talk about the intersection between gentrification and public schools, and gentrifying areas. It's a story that is starting to be told a little bit more. But one of the major issues with gentrification, as we know, is displacement, right? [When] we think about gentrification, we think about displacement in the housing context. Well there's a similar story that can be told with gentrification in public schools. The story is nuanced, and so that's what I'm going to aim to do here in the brief time that I have.

To understand the way in which gentrification is impacting the public schools, and gentrifying areas, it's important to understand the way school assignment plans generally work, right? Generally speaking, students are assigned to go to school where they live, and so the result of that is the racial and socio-economic demographics of **[p]**ublic schools tends to replicate the racial and social economic demographics of neighborhoods. To the extent that neighborhoods are segregated by race and class, schools are also segregated by race and class too for the most part.

Over the last 30 years, in urban areas especially, this nexus between residents and schools, and racial and economic segregation, has been particularly acute, in large part, due to White Flight. I don't have to repeat the story, after *Brown versus Board of Education* there was tremendous White Flight, which changed the face of urban public schools.

But gentrification is starting to change that, right? There have been waves of gentrification. In prior waves of gentrification, what we saw was that more [**affluent**], typically white individuals would move into urban areas, and then flee once they had children. That's no longer the story completely. As more professional whites in particular are moving into cities like DC, Chicago, [and] New York, what we're starting to see is that they're staying. There are a number of complex reasons for this. But some have suggested that the influx of gentrification in these areas might be a remedy for the segregation that we see in schools. And so I came to want to talk about this, because I've been seeing this a lot – this idea that gentrification might be bad in terms of housing displacement, but there might be an opportunity in terms of public schools. Particularly in DC and New York, I will say, we've seen these kinds of headlines: "Can Gentrification Increase School Diversity?"; "Can Gentrification Mean Hope for Urban Schools?" There've been some studies [from the] UCLA Civil Rights Project with some empirical data that suggests that gentrifying neighborhoods in New York and DC have seen increases in the diversity, or decreases in hyper segregation, I should say, in those schools.

But an important distinction needs to be made between traditional public schools – meaning schools that are what more people are familiar with, [and are] run by the school district – and charter schools. In charter schools, we're actually seeing that this is not the case…that gentrification, and the intersection with charter schools, is making segregation worse. Put another way, charter schools in gentrifying areas are more likely to be hyper segregated. So on one level, the influx of more professional white families enter[ing] these gentrifying areas could create hope, in terms of diversifying schools, to the extent that they actually attend their local traditional public school to which they would be assigned. But that is not what we see happening

I pulled as an example the changing demographics in the Washington DC school system. Starting with the school year 2011-2012, we see the black population was at 71%. By 2016-2017, it had decreased to 62%. [An] important point also is that Latino or Hispanic student population has also gone up. But the white student population has also gone up, and you can see steady increases every year. So the 14% for the 16-17 school year might not seem like a big deal on its face, right? But even that small increase in the number of white students in a public school system can have a tremendous impact in term of particular schools. I don't have time to go into here today, but in another piece I've written, I've talked about the ways in which white students tend to cluster in particular schools. With the [**4% or 14%**] increase in white student enrollment, and the reality that white students tend to cluster in schools, that means that certain schools within the district are going to see a significant influx in the number of White students in the school. These numbers, in theory at least, offer potential hope in terms of diversifying the schools.

I should also add [that] we see a similar increase in New York, or Brooklyn I should say…Brooklyn specifically. I'll use Brooklyn and DC as examples throughout this presentation. We see that the percentage of white students has gone up from 15.9 to 17.7, and that African American students are going down, and that Asian students are also increasing. Even though these numbers suggest some reason for optimism, what I want to focus on are the points of alarm or concern that we

should worry about. In order to have that conversation, the first thing I like to note is that empirical research – and I didn't, couldn't fit the source on the slides, [but] I'm happy to identify my sources after this if anyone wants to know. An important point that we have to talk about when we talk about school assignment, generally in school choice in particular, is that whites generally tend to choose schools in which their kids will be in the racial majority, or not be in an extreme minority no matter what. And this is consistent regardless of test score, safety, poverty rate, or any other non-race related factors that one might want to point to. The reality is, in terms of gentrification in public schools, what the empirical research has shown is that whites are willing to move into a neighborhood, and be in the racial minority, but they are a lot less willing to send their kids to a school where their kids will be in an extreme racial minority status. The investigative journalist, Nikole Hannah-Jones, has recently started to say, "Our schools are segregated because white parents choose it that way." I've said that for a long time as well.

But one of the realities that colors all of this, is that for better or worse, much of the story about school integration or desegregation has been about preventing whites from fleeing, or trying to keep Whites [in] integrated schools. Gentrification raises this interesting paradox, because we have whites who are willing to be in a more racially diverse neighborhood, but the same is not true for schools.

What does this mean from a local development perspective? It's important to understand that many local governments on some level are aware of the critical roles that schools might play in sustaining gentrification. To that end, one policy point that many gentrifying areas have really focused on is this idea of school choice. I said earlier that whites are gentrifying people, and gentrifying areas, [and] are less likely to want to have their children in schools where they're in the racial minority. But school choice allows an option, right? When I say school choice, I mean magnet schools, open zone enrollment, or charter schools, to name a few. For purposes of this discussion, I use the term school choices to mean policies that disaggregate residence from school assignment so that the school a child attends is not tethered to their residence or where they live. So within the context of gentrification, what we see is a lot of gentrifying areas increasing school choice policies. Again, New York and DC are obvious examples of this.

One of the results of the gentrification in concert with proliferating school choice polices is that it is changing the demographics of the most desired schools. School choice was heavily taken advantage of by African-American and Latino families to get into better schools. We are seeing however that African-American and Latino students are being crowded out of those schools. I pulled for you as an example the New York Brooklyn Academy of Arts and Letters. It's a choice school in Brooklyn, one of the more desirable schools in Brooklyn. You can see that the percentage of black students has gone down since 2013 from 51 to 31%, and the percentage of White students has gone up from 22 to 37%. One of the reasons this happens is because, and I'll talk about in a minute, the ways in which choices [are] racialized, and that choice relies on certain kind of social capital that typically has racial deficits attached to it.

But in any event, one of the impacts that we're seeing is that…to the extent that white students tend to cluster at certain schools, to the extent that choices being

used by gentrifying families in order to escape the neighborhood schools, one effect of that is that black students in particular are being crowded out of the choice schools, and white enrollment is increasing. Another corollary to that is that, in neighborhoods where the traditional public schools are not considered very good, we're seeing a miss-match between the neighborhood and school demographics, and so I pulled for you an example[from] Harlem, [in] an area right next to Columbia. It's PS62 I think, [and] what we see is the neighborhood demographics look very different from the school demographics. In the neighborhood, the percentage of black and latino students is something like 37%, but in the school system it's 96%. The average income of the families in that neighborhood is somewhere around $70,000, which puts them in the 30th percentile, or 20th percentile of income earners, but in the school system it's a lot less, and the average income is somewhere near $20,000, putting them much lower on the percentage of income earners.

The last sort of empirical point is that we also see [occurs] when traditional public schools are good in gentrifying neighborhoods, [then] it's more likely that white parents will take advantage of this, and so we'll see a higher number of white parents exercising the right to stay in their neighborhood school.

All of these things that I've just said have important implications for how we think about school choice and gentrification. I want to specifically point out three potential perils of school choice in gentrifying areas. The first is that the way in which choice is proliferating in gentrifying areas can't be divorced from the racialized history of school choice. And so as some of you may know, in the aftermath of *Brown*, choice was used as a way to evade school integration for many white families in the South. In a case called *Green v. Board of New Kent, Virginia*, the court said something poignant. The court said that by allowing parents to choose, and relying on choices and means of school assignment, the school system is essentially delegating school assignment to parents, which allows for the facilitation of racialized choice. And we see that in the context of gentrification in public schools, that choice is being exercised in a racialized way.

That underscores a second really important point, that many people have disagreed with me about, and that point is that choice generally cannot be exercised without there being racial implications, [and this means] that the ability to choose also coincides with the ability to exclude. Whites can exclude in the aggregate by making choices in the aggregate, which they tend to do, and they're able to do that in large part due to mismatches in social capital between blacks and whites.

And so the third point to really think about in terms of, and I've said this already, so I'm running out of time, [so] I'll skip to the long policy implications. But the third part to really think about in terms of school choice and gentrification is that school choice can't be allowed unabated. There must be some controls put in place, or else what we're going to see are patterns of school assignment that are very much contributing to racial segregation, but [are] a lot harder to attack as a matter of law, mainly because the Supreme Court has a bevy of cases that say, racial segregation, that's a result of private choice is outside of the purview of their remedial authority. Consequently one of the trends we're going to see, or are seeing, is patterns of racial segregation caused by school choice that are as a matter of constitutional law at least it's almost impossible to attack.

In terms of what this means, in terms of policy implications, it means that when we think about school choice, I'm one of the people who say pragmatically we're never going to stop school choice. So the reality is that we're going to have to deal with school choice from a policy perspective. That means that we may want to push more control choice options, meaning that [**you can [have?] school choice]**, but there are certain parameters put around it. For example in North Carolina, one of the things that we're trying to push is that the racial demographics of a neighborhood have to match the demographics of a charter school. And so controlling choice in those kinds of ways is one of the ways that we might be helpful in terms of abating the patterns of racial segregation that we see as a result of gentrification. And so the last thing I will say, and I'm happy to talk about it more in the question and answer session, is this is also important, not just in terms of the school aspect, but in terms of gentrification and development. Generally, there's a lot of empirical research that shows that areas that have school choice are more likely to gentrify. So it's a symbiotic relationship to the extent that we don't put controls on choice. The other ill effects of gentrification will only proliferate.

[Audrey McFarlane] Thank you Erika. Michèle.

[Michèle Alexandre] Thank you. Of course, we all kind of intersect in our work, so it's no surprise that I think I follow very well from Erica's piece on the impact of gentrification on our culture, education, and housing. And I think Audrey's work on the decimation of people's ownership, and t[he exclusion that resulted from that,] is right along with what I will talk about. So I'm mostly focusing today on how to stymy that tide by bringing the community to the table. [Thus], my piece is called Metrics and Negotiation Tools for Preventing Resegregation as a Result of Development Schemes. And that comes from my earlier work where I applied interest convergence as a possibility in the development context. So, [Derrick Bell's] interest convegence theory [allows] for a more practical point of view: gentrification is going to happen; racism, you know, is a systematic operation. What Erica described being the reality, how then do we get people [in these] communities to the bargaining table beforehand? And so in that [prior] piece, I laid out the cultural capital of these existing [communities prior to] gentrification, and how that cultural capital is a main source of attraction for development, and is used to facilitate development,. [But, that is] is rarely acknowledged in the development deals involving the communities that contribute to the incentive to develop. [Those communities] are [leveraged] for the developers to come, for the businesses to come. [Yet], those communities are the one who are excluded, hence Audrey's scholarship.

So in this piece, [**I'm really interested in talking to you about what do].** What should the metrics for cultural capital look like? You know, when talking about bringing our communities to the bargaining table, we've had many grassroots models of that. We have had activism pushing the conversation …like, for example, in Brooklyn, with the Barclay's Center, early awareness, early political power, and all of that. So those models are out there, and I do acknowledge that in scholarship. What I'm really interested in is whether or not [there] could be empirical calculations

that one could formulate to measure the value of the contributions that communities put forth. So in terms of cultural capital, John W. Boudreau's definition, [for example,] of individuals as objectified by the institutionalized assets beyond the economic wealth is a start. But I think that's very limited, because when we [are] thinking about cultural capital, we often talk about what people have to offer in concrete ways. [So I look at examples provided in the scholarship, how people are talking about how we measure cultural capital---I am not the first one to sit here, and start talking about how we measure cultural capital--- and, I think the [general approach is] actually undermining the value that these communities are bringing to the table.

[For instance, metrics offered in the scholarship for measuring cultural capital are: diplomas, certificates, net worth, family investment, etc..] And, the ones that I found the trickiest are: visits to museums, theaters, concerts, cinemas, and [to] special cultural clubs, music lessons, sports participation, scouts, cadets. So you're getting my drift. This [is] inherent in the original idea of cultural capital. There's an inherent, I think, bias towards an [elitist] definition of culture. And that's what I encountered in the scholarship – this idea of cultural legitimacy, that in order for that culture in essence to even be worthy of measuring, you have to be viewed as legitimate, and then you get into this cycle of legitimacy being based on these factors that assume that you have a starting point that is higher, and, generally, accepted, right? So, that would be your university degrees, et cetera. That means that proposed metrics for cultural capital, like Reverend Jessie Jackson says, assume the premise of inequality in itself.

[So] what I want to do is offer is a contrast to that, [to consider more equitable value elements like tracking the value of actual artifacts in relation to the locality where the promise of development is happening, where revitalization projects are under way or were implemented.]. So I'm talking about identifying [specific] cultural artifacts that are considered attractive in those neighborhoods. [T]hen you turn to a comparative assessment of added value after revitalization. Not at the time of blight, but at the time of success after development.

So you know , the gentrified area closest to my heart would be New York – Brooklyn in particular – so if you talk about the culture, about cultural capital, what is the value of the music industry in New York? What is the value of the commercial industry in New York? Or, of the different networks of self-starter commerce, et cetera, and what [they] offer to neighborhoods? That would include the bodegas, the Flatbush neighborhoods, et cetera, what is the net worth of that annually? And so I'm talking about hard numbers. What is a value of some of the local parochial school system, and having access to them? You know, Brooklyn has a number of quality affordable parochial schools, that [are] better than in a lot of bigger cities, in terms of alternative education for lower middle class parents. So what is that value? And then, measuring a kind of tourism value as well. The way we know that the royal family in the UK is still worth maintaining for the UK, not for us here in the U.S., but for the UK, is that they can actually calculate the value that they offer to the U.K. economy. They bring in something like 500 million a year in tourism. The Royal culture can seem like an intangible, but it is measurable. Similarly with what I'm talking about here, the Office of Tourism, can track these numbers with national and

global demand for a particular cultural trend. My brother used to work for the Office of Tourism in Manhattan, and there's tracking, of outgoing and incoming traffic, for example. So that's the first start.

Of course [there is] a counter argument, [which is] that you don't know what is worth for the people, and the investors, after the fact. Particularly when revitalization is actually facilitated more when you can entice blight, or maximize on blight. So, when you are negotiating around low property value, no matter how valuable this culture is, and you can quantify it, that is not going be your strongest bargaining power. However, if you do have some comparative models, where, say, you just developed, and you had similar companies, and similar development structures, you can promote similar vitalization models in these cities with similar cultural metrics. And by looking at these past models with similarly constructed projects, one could analyze the added value obtained after revitalization, where property value went up, etc.

And, then, at that time, the question becomes what is it worth for you to, you know, buy into this area, how can you get into this area, and [how do] we get to preserve meaningful access for people who are already there? In my prior scholarship, I went as far as to advocate for renters to be given some market share, a percentage of market share, negotiated with the city. [We're] talking about minimal percentage. But when you are talking about profit margins, a .5% or 2% of all shares in trust to to allow the city and the locality to help renters, that can be substantial. And what I want us to think about that is the definition and measure of cultural capital , and then think about some of the existing capital in the localities we know have faced displacement as a result of revitalization.

I gave the example of New York. My other focus is New Orleans, and I want play around, with your help, with the idea of the metrics we could use for New Orleans. So [the] history of New Orleans as a unique city, and the kind of business it attracts because of that history are well known. The unique value of Mardi Gras itself – and Mardi Gras is a huge business in New Orleans – would not exist without the community of color, [because] Mardi Gras is a result of syncretism and African culture, that just, would not be in the same form without that influence. And I know that there's Mardi Gras in Italy, but it really isn't the same. [And] then you have the creole food, which is a syncretic type of artifact as well, cultural artifact, a mixture of African culture and French, and now somewhat American, hence creole Cajun food. And you can track the money that each of these industries make. Post-Katrina unfortunately, that level of bargaining power, I think, went away, because we missed the ripe moment, and many of us were writing about seizing that moment, and it is very hard to seize it when disasters occur. What we see is that, now, we have very little access to school districts in New Orleans We have very little ownership in the black community. That community, however, still serves as the basic attraction to New Orleans. I mean that has not changed after Katrina. So I want to have us think about that as a cautionary tale.

The most current tale right now is Detroit, right? So Detroit's value is good, but it's nowhere post-revitalization value, and people are coming in there at the time of blight. And to some extent it is still undergoing revitalization, so it's in the middle of revitalization. And I think there has been some successful kind of capturing of the

cultural capital of Detroit by local entities in the way they stopped the sale of the artifacts of the museum, et cetera. I think you have people underground, and activists alert to that. What I'm hopeful about, I think, is the idea of a more cohesive plan using activism, legal and political collaboration as prevention against systematic exclusion. And, I don't think this is something that is going to happen overnight. I think conversations about metrics for cultural capital and contributions as part of revitalization projects need empirical scholars. That work will, in turn, fuel political activism and policy making.

I think one cautionary tale in all of this is that cultural capital and activism might not translate into equal bargaining power, especially when large corporations are involved. For example, in the saga involving New York and Amazon, not too long ago, in which Amazon opted out of Queens as its headquarters, one perspective is that the local officials in Queens were very aware of the cultural capital that Queens had to offer, and the danger that added revitalization could cost. Some of the things they were concerned about was 40,000 jobs compared to two billion…[that] number potentially did not match up when you had a company that was not committed to unionizing. So, on the one hand Amazon's experience with Queens could be viewed as local officials winning over a large corporation due to its bargaining power. But the cautionary tale here, is one of deep unequal bargaining power. We are talking about a city trying to about make businesses do the thing that they don't want to do: cut a little bit of the profit margin. And Amazon said, okay, you're going to be difficult to work with, somebody else is going give us those tax breaks, and they left. So I end by saying that I don't want present equitable valuation of cultural capital as a pie in the sky. I do think that we have power, and that we have even greater power when we band together. We have all identified communities on alert in our presentations on this panel. My hope is that we can continue to help provide them the tools needed to be back at the bargaining table.

[Audrey McFarlane] Thank you Michèle. Okay, so I will go next, and I'm going to talk about a paper that I have coming out in the UCLA Law Review about mixed income housing. And I think I will just explain the genesis of the paper. I've been working and focused on community economic development issues, and focusing on black communities, and what can be done to improve them. And while I was working in Baltimore, I started working with housing advocates who were working on mobility strategies to get people out of black communities into integrated, more racially integrated, high opportunity neighborhoods. And while I thought and still think it's a positive thing, I always had misgiving that I found difficult to articulate. I actually wondered how were they so sure that this made sense? And then I thought like if you were able to purely put into operation what they were trying to do, once you got all the poor black people out of the city, then what would happen next? It just seemed to me that the trends ultimately – even though we don't see it necessarily in all places – is going to back to cities. And so it just occurred to me that we were working to facilitate something that could end up looking like the way wealth and poverty are distributed in places like Paris, where poverty is on the periphery. But on the other hand, the advocates made a point that many inner city communities were very dangerous, there were real life and death

issues, and that there should be a way out. While I was pondering this city versus suburb, integration versus development in place, I read about a controversy in New York City about mixed income housing – that they were being built with separate entrances for the…well-to-do, I want to say the market rate tenants, but in fact their market rate was subsidized by heavy city subsidies as well…and then what you would call the subsidized tenants, who were the poor people. So this "poor door" controversy provided a way for me to actually start to look at mixed income housing either as a remedy, or kind of a social justice tool, and start to critically evaluate what is it we're exactly trying to accomplish with mixed income housing, why have we chosen this approach?

It's an approach where you focus on income in order to provide access to housing. Certain units are set aside in an otherwise market rate development, and the idea is that you incrementally contribute to the affordable housing supply. But it became clear that with our very pervasive national pattern of racial segregation, and the reasons why the Fair Housing Act was passed (which was to ameliorate that segregation) that in fact, mixed income housing is a racial desegregation strategy, or a racial integration strategy, and it reflects not just a pure theory of the best way is to accomplish racial integration, but actually reflects kind of a realpolitik, some of what Michèle was talking about. How do we pragmatically address the fact that segregation, just racial discrimination, is pervasive? And how can and should we work around it? Mixed income housing presented a kind of a brilliant strategy for working its way around racial discrimination by providing integration on a micro level in a way that won't be noticed until it's too late. But this micro segregation strategy also establishes a cap or a limit on the number of poor black people that you can have in a particular jurisdiction.

As I started to look at mixed income housing, I realized that it was a strategy to manage the discrimination in the larger society. And as you adopt a strategy to take discrimination as a given – and assume as Derrick Bell said, that racism is permanent. So I wondered what are the parameters for us managing that discrimination? Because how do you manage that discrimination without perpetuating it? Without taking into account as a given that the preferences, [the] predilections of the people who would discriminate are in some way justified. Mixed income housing reflects all of that. Mixed income housing is the central component of inclusionary housing, or inclusionary zoning. And inclusionary zoning is usually discussed by lawyers in a very, I would say, clinical way, which is that it's really just a matter of the numbers, or the finances of the deal, and that the reason why we have a certain set percentage is just because it's too expensive to have more. The developer could have takings or exactions claims if you force them to provide more. But I would, I argue that actually those percentages are really a new manifestation of a tipping point, which is that you keep the percentages low enough to cater to the market rate tenants. As one developer said, if you have too high a percentage of lower income people, he said that's a different product. And a lot of development has been kind of streamlined, and standardized, and so that would take it into a low income product. It would be built a different way, marketed a different way, financed a different way.

As we think about mixed income housing, I tried, in this paper to focus less on the finance, and about the social assumptions that are reflected in mixed income housing. Sociologists have an immense literature about what mixed income housing is designed to achieve. The genesis William Julius Wilson's work about the disappearance of the middle class from black neighborhoods, and the role that having higher status, higher income people in the presence of lower income people, it can provide social modeling, social control, and also this idea that it raises the status of a particular development to have wealthier people there. You get taken more seriously by the jurisdiction.

As we think about some of these assumptions, we are now putting our middle class people in the… kind of the role of the savior. That by their presence, that somehow they will be interacting, and teaching, or inculcating proper middle class values on the low income residents. And Robert Chaskin and Mark Joseph have written extensively about [the fact that it] doesn't seem to be quite happening. The role model benefits are dubious, but definitely the social interaction, or the mixing, that is the underlying premise of mixed income housing does not take place. So we have a housing model kind of premised on the neediest recipients of housing being put in social situations where they are not necessarily going to have much status or much voice, and that that's our premise of how you need to live in order to receive the benefit of housing.

So the goal of the paper is to question some of these assumptions, because lawyers are the ones who draw up these schemes without question, or without considering what it is they're actually accomplishing. I looked at based on being clued into it by Erika Wilson, social domination theory, and Darren Hutchinson's work, they are the first two people in the Legal Academy to apply that theory to…through the lens of law. Social domination theory teaches us that all societies create hierarchies, kind of your "in group" and your "out group," and one group is dominating the other, and that we use legitimizing myths in order to justify the outcome, which has been illustrated quite dramatically for us with the school cheating scandal, where if you didn't know the meritocracy was a myth, now you do.

So these legitimizing myths are something that we then use to justify allocations and decisions that have a subordinating effect. I'm hoping use this paper to identify the myths that we have. One of which is that, if poor people live together, you have concentration of poverty. Concentration of poverty is a specific geographic social phenomenon of neighborhoods with hyper poverty that have been disinvested by the larger society. So when we look at concentration of poverty in neighborhoods, we look at it as a problem of that area, when it is actually a problem of the surrounding people who avoid those areas - disinvestment. That is a particular geographic phenomenon, but that if you have a development with poor people living in it, it need not necessarily be concentration of poverty. The real problem is, how do we as a society react rather than [the problem being] anything that the people are doing in their particular community.

Let's see. I have a few more minutes. It's hard to be moderator and speaker. So I guess going forward, I would hope that I guess this work about discrimination management might get us to think about ways in which, even as we like fight to

achieve things, we incorporate the prevailing discriminatory attitudes in what we conceive, or see as solutions to problems. And I think that going forward, we also need to understand that, as Erika and Michèle have illustrated, there is a deep, deep investment in segregation. It's not an accident. As we think about the hierarchy, the interest of the dominant group, and that attachment to that domination as almost vital to their existence, we need to understand that in terms of not just catering to it, but understand where the most resistance will come from as we more thoughtfully try to come up with solutions that may not entirely eliminate the social domination, but may ameliorate some aspects of it, and so that we can think in those terms rather than, I would say, some of the inadequate ways that we've been thinking thus far. So thank you.

[Ezra Rosser] Great, so it's real pleasure to be here, and I will say, when you hear what I have to say, you'll wonder why am I talking on this panel? So I thought I would start with that, and then get to what I'm talking about. I'm on this panel because I'm presenting on something that doesn't fit nicely with really anything else at the conference, and when I had the choice, as I was putting together the program of figuring out where this would fit, the two natural places were the property panel or this panel. The property panel – I'm good with Kristen [Barnes] already, we don't need to get to know each other more – but on this panel, I know Audrey I think okay, but the others I don't know as well, and I really wanted to. I'm a big fan of both of your work, and so I used this as a networking excuse more than anything else.

That being said, what I want to talk about is a project that I'm working on. One of the things that Erika said was about whites in extreme minority status, and I grew up in very small part on the Navajo Nation, and while I was there in middle school, 1 to 2% of the population was non-Indian, and I was one of those non-Indians. What that meant…at the time it felt normal. I will say, when I left for boarding school out east, for high school, it felt very odd to see the number of Mercedes and the number of white people. People have different reactions to that. The non-Indians that grow up there, some have zero interest in returning and others of us are always looking for ways to think about what's going on on the reservation.

So I'm working on a book project, and I'm just going talk about one of the chapters of that book project, as well as another section of perhaps an article. Diné is the Navajo word for themselves. It means the people. And I'm going to be talking about both the poverty on the reservation, and local solutions that align with this panel. So this is a quote from Richard Nixon.[1] He said it in 1970, and it largely continues to be the case. Indians particularly, if you look at social demographic facts, sometimes their poverty is understated, and then but once you break it down to natives living on a reservation, the numbers go dramatically higher. Out east we have sort of a [disconnect], and on the coast we have a misguided idea about reservation

[1] The quote projected on the slide at the talk read: "The first Americans—the Indians—are the most deprived and most isolated minority group in our nation. On virtually every scale of measurement—employment, income, education, health—the condition of the Indian people ranks at the bottom." President Nixon, 1970.

poverty, because we think of the casino tribes. But for most tribes, this is not their life.

This is the reservation I know best.[2] This is the Navajo Nation. I grew up in part right here, which is Kayenta, and my dad now lives here [in Red Valley], and my mother lived in Window Rock for a long time. The reservation is about the size of West Virginia. It is very rural, and it has one, maybe two operating movie theaters. When I was a child, the biggest news was when they put in the Burger King, and they closed the schools because of that. So it is a very underdeveloped area. It also had, again when I was a child, less than 12 total stop lights for the entire reservation. That number has gone up, but it's still a very underdeveloped area. There's been a number of significant changes, and this is all just to set the scene for the local control aspect. For a long time, external development really drove the reservation, and drove growth. It took the form of the extractive industry. Under one particular tribal leader, Peter McDonald, the tribe did retake a lot of that control, in the name of sovereignty and self-determination, but also just as an assertion by the tribe that it should be theirs. The problem was, [it] is such a strong assertion of de facto sovereignty [that they ran] into problems with governance challenges and corruption.

Peter McDonald was a corrupt politician. He was getting a lot of kickbacks. He was getting…he would tell the people giving him bribes that he wanted a certain number of golf balls. Golf balls were code for the number of thousands of dollars he wanted, and his corruption led to open confrontation on the reservation. And that McDonald scandal has basically continued… there's been a continuation of different corruption issues. Even though [after] McDonald there was a reform to the national government, or the tribal government, [and] they gave a lot more power to check the president. [As part of the reform, the tribe] also created the Office of the President. There was a more recent one with tribal council delegates. They had a prohibition against using discretionary money to benefit their own family, and so they were trading that discretionary [money] with others. One tribal member would give it, one tribal council delegate would give it to another tribal council delegate's family, and in return, that tribal council delegate would give it to their family. And when this came out, there was a real question of what consequences this would mean. I am not going to talk too much about this. My own take is that the consequences have been fairly mild, and I am not sure that there has been a real effort to deal with the national level of corruption on this.

The main way that we see this is that a lot of the people that were corrupt were reelected. So people that no doubt were skimming off a significant amount of money for their family got reelected.

But nevertheless, change is coming. It needs to come. I will talk about two examples of the sort of change. The first is one that, just this week, we saw [that] the tribal council rejected the tribe buying Navajo Generating Station, and that was a significant move, and it was significant because it did seem to suggest that the Navajo people are rejecting, to some degree, the development strategy of the past, which was national-centered. And then, the other photo, the horses are a thing that every time I talk about it with students, they [have] a reaction to [it.] But there is a

[2] Projected on the screen was a map of the Navajo Nation.

problem of horses. Horses are considered sort of the locust of the area. They're basically stripping the plant life from the reservation, and overgrazing. Just as the federal government has a real challenge dealing with the wild horse problem that we have on federal lands, so do tribal members . . . the tribe as well…because people put real value on the horses.

. . . Where I see some of the solutions are at the local level. So this is a map of the tribal chapters. There are 110 chapters on the reservation. We generally think of tribal sovereignty, and tribal authority, as being in a national level, but tribal chapters have been granted significant authority under a law called the Local Governance Act, which provides the local chapter the ability to exercise certain powers, in particular to make planning decisions and use eminent domain. In doing so, they could start to solve some of the overgrazing problems that have really hurt the range, but also find other ways of development.

Right now, if you are a tribal member, and you want to do development, your basic choices are perhaps to do a business in Window Rock or the subset of larger towns. But you're largely locked out of getting a business site lease because the process is so overbearing and involves both federal government and tribal government approval. What I think there is space to do is to empower the local chapters to give more weight to local decision making, and to also to empower them to take land back from the grazing rights holder. … How many people have been to the reservation? If you've been there, you know it looks basically empty. You go as a non-Indian, you look around, and my father-in-law's take was this is a great place to contemplate the universe, because you can see the stars beautifully, you don't really see other houses. It looks empty, and yet in all that emptiness, most of the land is claimed, and subject to often overlapping grazing rights claims. I wrote about this for a recent symposium on the grazing rights, but the issue here, is how do you clear some of that land to create space for development that in the formal market rather than just in the informal?

Navajos now, if they are entrepreneurial, tend to be stuck in an informal setting, because they can't get the business site lease, or other permission. I think the local government could be a solution for this, in particular by being a little bit more aggressive in the use of eminent domain to create business spaces that take away from the grazing right holders. They also could do this through the creation of townships. The only formal township is Kayenta. For those of you who've been to Monument Valley, this is the town just South of Monument Valley that's pretty. But other township areas do not exist, and I think some parts of the reservation could follow the township model. The last option that I do think may be the most relevant, if I'd tried a little, for any connection to everyone else, is the idea that local choices could be done even in a national framework. One of the challenges that these chapters have is the lack of human capacity, the number of people who could manage some of the complex accounting, and want to dedicate themselves to that, is often limited, which has pushed decision making to the national government rather than to the chapter house level. . . . My proposal is to create space for local decision making with national partnership, as far as the governance and accounting. Rather than requiring each chapter to take on all aspects of the government, give them more space to take on some, but not all.

And these [are the] last couple challenges I wanted to mention. One is always nimbyism, and nimbyism on the reservation can take a variety of forms, but in particular, [it] could take a split between people with grazing rights, and people that are younger, or people that have long standing family ties versus [newcomers]. The odd part about the reservation is [that] even though there may be a town of only 5,000 people, if you get a job in the formal sector, it can be very hard to find housing in that community, and you often have to drive for significant amounts of time just to commute to your job from off reservation housing.

The last major challenge I'll note is the vision on what is needed for the tribe. And so here is where I, as a non-Indian, have to be particularly careful, and why I think that there is space for empowering localities, but not requiring it of every locality. And so I would like to see more space – and this is very much in line with Jessica Shoemaker at Nebraska's ideas for tribal development – more space for localities to take on some of these powers and roles, but also space to allow those localities chapters that are not going take them on to still rely on the Navajo Nation government to look after their interests. . . .

[Audrey McFarlane] Thank you Ezra.

[Ezra Rosser] No thank you.

[Audrey McFarlane] Okay, so we will open it up to questions from the floor.

[Audience] I had a question for Erika, and I'm interested in her statement that gentrification in public schools may work to increase integration. I was wondering…did you look at, or are there policies or programs to keep people in place? Because when I think about gentrification, I think about displacement rather than racial minorities in particular, so.

[Erika Wilson] Yeah. So I mean, I think at least my take on it is that it is subject to contestation, right? That gentrification can increase integration in schools. And so I think that in order for that to be true, there are a number of controls that we want to put on school assignment policies, especially school choice. But it is challenging, I think, because as Audrey talked about, many ways I see school choice that is happening in gentrifying areas is another form of discrimination management, right? When trying to manage around the reality that, generally speaking, white parents have assiduously avoided sending their children to meaningfully integrated schools. I mean that is just the reality. The research is clear, there are clear tipping points, and so [I] think your question, can you do it without displacement? I'm not an optimist, and so I think that a large part of the story is going to be about displacement, particularly of African-American and Latino children in urban schools, and the best we can do is maybe mitigate, which is why I at least plan to argue in this piece for some form of control choice.

[Audience] Hi, I'm Taunya Banks, and this, actually, this is actually for Erika also. You know, I've struggled in the few articles I've written about education

with this question of [whether] our end goal really [is] integration, or is the end goal better resourced schools, and better quality schools for all people without regard to race? And I wonder…I wonder how much the improvement in resources in gentrifying…in schools in gentrifying neighborhoods has to do with the presence of white children, and whether our goal should be to improve the schools without regard to who's coming into the neighborhood? Because that way, I mean, I think that the non-white children are going to be harmed one way or the other. I mean, they're going to either remain in under-resourced poor schools, or they're going to be forced out of the schools in their neighborhoods as a result of choice. And we are still not doing what the idealistic view of *Brown* was, which is to provide high quality education for everyone. So I guess, and I kept cringing whenever you started talking about integration of the schools. And so this is just, I mean I don't know if it's a question or a comment, but.

[Erika Wilson] No, I mean, I, to be honest, I t grapple with that as well. I mean I think that at the end of the day, the question is how do we improve educational opportunities for children of color? And so I think with *Brown*, the hope was that integration would do it. I think there's good reason to question whether or not integration as a goal is all that it's cracked up to be. I will say though, that in term of improvements in education for children of color, integration is the one thing that we've done, that we have tangible receipts to show has worked, particularly in the South on some level. But I mean, I think it's complicated, because when you talk about improving the resources of the schools that children of color attend in particular, it's a complicated question, because when we think about resources, we tend to think about tangibles, financials, buildings, et cetera. But there are some softer resource questions that are so very much intertwined with the realities of race and racial subordination. Teachers for example, high quality teachers tend to float to schools that don't have our kids in it, to be honest. The combination of race and class, I mean I think there's a lot of good literature that suggests that what makes good educational opportunities is peer to peer learning, and the ability to have a mix of different kinds of kids from different family backgrounds, et cetera. And so these questions are not all outlined by race, they're outlined by race and class, especially the softer resource questions. So I think it's a hard question to answer whether or not improving the resources generally for the kids, the schools that kids of color attend, will be enough, I guess, to improve them.

[Audience] Just what, I mean, because I mean what's happening with gentrification is it's not simply white children, but it's more affluent children…

[Erika Wilson] Yes.

[Audience Continued] Moving in…so there's the class component that you have to factor in. And I do, I agree that you have to have the demographically, the class mixture is really important, but I go back to *Hopson v. Hanson*, which is the old DC case where…oh, I forgot the name of the judge now…but to remedy the resource problems, like experienced teachers, [the judge] forced the school district

to move teachers into these. I mean, the bottom line is, I think that we have a wide variety of ways to deal with the problem at [hand], especially given the documented resistance of white parents across socioeconomic lines to send their children to black schools, and we just have to stop traumatizing Black children by using them as experiments.

[Erika Wilson] Yeah, no I would agree with that. I mean, the last thing I'll say about it is, I think that one of the things that I push for, right, is to re-conceptualize the way we thing about schools in our communities in particular, right? We have a very old notion of what a school should look like. I think in places like Cincinnati for example, they've had some success with community based schools. Given the reality that white parents have across socioeconomic lines, as you've said, avoided integrated schools, that we do have to grapple with the pragmatic reality that even if we could come up with something that would sort of force them to stay, preservation through transformation, it's likely to move on to something else. So on some level, the pragmatic solution has to be to look at alternatives like community based schools that might at least be a step in the right direction to educating our kids.

[Michèle Alexandre] And Taunya, I do want to follow up, because it seems…it struck me that you dovetailed into the question that Audrey is asking, [which] is what would it look like to have well run schools with high quality education? Same question, as what would it like to have poor neighborhoods that are safe, clean, and high quality neighborhoods, without expecting someone to come in, and give it value. I think that is an important question. And that, you know, when you said that one of the solutions – and I'm not putting it on you – but that is all the kind of mitigation we're trying to do. – Well one of the solutions could be that we match the demographics with the school, right? School with the demographics matching, my first reaction was, that's never going happen, because we are going have affirmative action challenges, and et cetera, right? So we are going to be in this cat and mouse game, and I think the community alternative schools all have to be the first starting ground with the question [of] what does it look like for us to do it ourselves, and force these resources to stay in communities, and with all children as fully operative and competitive without depending on this integration? Not that 's bad, but without depending on it.

[Audience] Just going to your questions, Audrey?

[Audrey McFarlaen] Mm-hmm.

[Audience] To your research on mixed income housing, I'm doing research on the state of Maryland inequities in parochial funding over a period of two decades. And one of the things that I've found is that in Montgomery County, this is going back to, sent from the Bradford decision in Baltimore, and remedies for inequities in quality education in Baltimore. Montgomery County was, is one of the wealthiest counties in the state of Maryland. And one of their solutions was mixed

income housing to the question that they were somehow cheating this, somehow cheating the system, and not paying their fair share. In other words, the tax structure was based on housing values, and Baltimore City simply didn't have the money to pay for their, a quality educational system. Montgomery County, they were doing fine. So the Bradford Institute said that it's not fair, and through legal maneuvers and agreements, the tax structure was changed. But Montgomery County said, well we'll try mixed income housing, and that will set up as a model for the solution where you have low income people in a high housing district county, high property value county, and it's held up as an example of for others to follow. I just want your thoughts, I heard some of the comments about that others shouldn't come in, and it's, but this is being held up as a way to remedy…

[Audrey McFarlane] So remedy the problem of inequity in school funding?

[Audience] Essentially inequity in access to quality education.

[Audrey McFarlane] Yes, so I like the Montgomery County program. I think that they did it in a way now, what, four decades. So in a way what they did was they said, everything that we do, I don't think there's any other jurisdiction in the country that's done that. They said every place that we build, will have set aside of a certain number of units. So they disperse their poverty. They run their public housing program through this program as well. And you know, initially when I heard about it, I thought it was great, because you can't see the poverty. It's hidden. And I thought, that's great, and so now I just question, you know, who's that great for?

[Panelist] Yeah.

[Audrey McFarlane] And so it's almost like they're just a number of assumptions, so it's kind of like a shameful thing to be poor, it's stigmatizing to be poor, and they've managed it. So it might be kind of an example of they managed the discrimination in a way that provided some benefits to the people who were eligible to be recipients of the program. And so as an approach possibly, I guess if you could do it comprehensively with a commitment from the very beginning, then and it produced housing units in a number that isn't being held artificially low, then there is something to be said for it. In terms of, I don't know, it would be interesting to find out what's really going on in Montgomery County, and how people actually relate with each other, and who actually--

[Audience] Back up, there was issue you stated that, you said that social interaction does not take place.

[Audrey McFarlane] Right.

[Audience] That you found it--

[Audrey McFarlane] And I would assume that that's the case here as well.

[Audience] And as grandparent of someone who's in the Montgomery County schools, it hasn't taken care of the unequal treatment within the schools. So yes, we have those kids in the school system, but there's no books with a black character in it. The teachers are predominately white, and the principal still call out the black kids whenever they suspect something has happened.

[Audience] I'm someone who has a son and daughter in the Montgomery County school system. My son was the focus of a lot of attention, and the only kids that he hung out with were Korean. There weren't any blacks in the school. But they were together, because there was no one else that they connected with.

[Panelist] Right.

[Audience] And it was a very hard system to be in. But one other thing that I wanted to touch on was that, one of the things that drove the schools was participation of parents in the school, and the running of the school, and demands they made, and these were all basically stay at home mothers, who spent a lot of time and energy on the school, then I think of communities where, as far as I'm concerned, integration isn't, not an ideal goal, but when you're looking at schools in poor neighborhoods, poor folks don't have the time these mothers had to put into and demand of the schools what they should be doing. And so when I was doing a lot of work in DC public schools, there was this problem of the schools not giving these kids what they needed, poorly run. I mean, we couldn't do a class without the intercom interrupting. So there was no cohesion. A lot of it was punitive and not focused on education, and you didn't have parents coming in saying, what the hell is this that's going on? And I think if we're trying to figure out how to make those schools good, one, is putting money into them, but the other is figuring out who in the community can demand of these schools that they do what they're supposed to do for the kids, because it wasn't happening. And it was very frustrating to see this. You go into these classes, and the kids are ready, they want it, and heartbreaking. And it's been a while since I've been in. I'd like to think it's changed, but

[Erika Wilson] I mean on that point, one of the things that we see in places like Philadelphia for example, which is experiencing gentrification is that the white middle class mothers are doing exactly what you suggested, and that even when you have some cohort of black parents who have been trying, they get pushed out by the white parents, and the schools may actively cater to the white parents. And so I think this is--

[Audience] Montgomery County.

[Erika Wislon] Yep, exactly. Yes ma'am, it's a tough--

[Audrey McFarlane] So there is, you know, a question, and again, so we say, whoa, the segregated schools, and the segregated communities are disinvested,

deprived of resources. But then you take this, the stigmatized people and put them in an integrated setting, and those, maybe there are some access benefits that exist, but that same kind of stigmatization takes place, and also now you have a, kind of a numeric minority, and so you decrease the voice, you decrease the ability to advocate on your own behalf.

So it's a paradox in the sense that, you know, whatever setting, you still see that same disadvantage taking place. And it's just the case that we're now starting to look at is, well, if I'm , you know, going to get the disadvantage, you know, in what setting would I have more voice possibly, or more opportunity to coalesce, and advocate on my own behalf?

[Audience] I just wanted to push back on the, I guess, what it seems to be the suggestion of what the term desegregation or integration means. And this is perhaps my view, but I think we often over simplify integration, or maybe mischaracterize what Martin Luther King was suggesting as the physical movement of people, as opposed to changing the nature of political institutions. And I say this from just my reading of Martin Luther King from a philosophical standpoint, but if you think about desegregation, its connection to civil rights largely was inspired by King arguing that segregating access to institutions is if I disempowered certain members of the community, such that they couldn't fully realize their civil rights, and so that was an issue of justice.

But even once desegregation occurred, and I think this dovetails into his movements toward a poor people's campaign, you recognize that from an economic standpoint, political institutions that connect to wealth, or economic power, were still segregated. And so integration was less about the movement of people, and more about integrating political institutions that are connected to wealth and access to economic power, which I think was some of the emphasis taught behind the poor people's campaign. And actually some of his suggestions were more radical, that we don't hear about, in terms of his proposals around tax, or basic income, and things like that that we don't discuss.

So I wonder then, with integration, can we achieve some of the same goals without necessarily moving people, but perhaps moving who owns certain economic institutions that have political influence, right? So within a community, who has access or ownership to economic dollars that are flowing into schools such that integration doesn't mean I bus you to a new school, integration means dollars are being funneled into different communities, such that the schools themselves get more resources, right? Or integration doesn't mean I move you into a mixed unit, a mixed income development unit, integration means from a governance standpoint, dollars are being funneled into communities so that they have more equal ownership of their community, and therefore from a political standpoint, there's greater equality. And so I just push that out there as maybe a different way of thinking about intergradation.

[Audrey McFarlane] Well thank you for that.

[Michèle Alexandre] Thanks. You young man had a question. You want to take him?

[Audrey McFarlane] Question over here?

[Audience] Oh, I did have a question. I just wanted to ask… sort of …it seems though there is really is this double bind, because we want to give people access to greater opportunities, and you know, a lot of the patterns that we said, like there's been disinvestment in a lot of neighborhoods with people of color. What are, you know, what are strategies to you that worked to put in investment into those neighborhoods that also doesn't trigger the problem that we're talking about with gentrification that come into it? And then on the flip side, you know, there is the problem, like you said though, being the one with some color in that school, Montgomery County or something, but as we look, you know, and the others there have shown it still ends up being of benefit for most of those, and they got distracted with, I don't know how they got the tax data. They tracked it with people, their earnings outcomes are significantly better, so you know, how do we actually then go about using those things together, and sort of solving the problems, and doing it both, and where by we might be doing something with mixed income, or moving people to opportunity, particularly those with children, but also coming up with strategies to revitalize neighborhoods without sort of destroying them by gentrification?

[Audrey McFarlane] Right, I'll--

[Erika Wilson]] In two minutes.

[Audrey McFarlane] Yeah, actually like five seconds. But I will add an interesting paradox, that in Baltimore for example, we just made the list of…first we made the New York Times with an article about all of the murder and violence, and then we have made this list of most, one of the most gentrifying cities on the East Coast. Except that gentrification is skipping the Black neighborhoods. And so that represents--

[Audience] Developments. Well gentrification, it's going into…

[Audrey McFarlane] Same thing.

[Audience] …The white low income neighborhood.

[Audrey McFarlane] Right, and so suddenly now, we're in a position where it's like, well, you want the gentrification, but the paradox is that the gentrification, unless you take steps to advocate for, you know, community land trust, or take steps to just, you know, sure up some space, then the very thing that you desire will lead to exactly what you describe.

[Michèle Alexandre] And I would follow up that in addition to social domination theory, that we tend to do hierarchy, I would say that we're quite comfortable with the idea that some people have to be poor, and I think that's what we're fighting in this area. This is capitalism running with our natural instinct to be hierarchical, and we all suffer from it, we're not immune. But until we grapple with that, I think your question will never be answered.

[Audience] Yeah, two seconds. Columbia Heights is a great blend of the entire panel, right? Columbia Heights…Columbia Heights, Mount Pleasant, because we have both poor people who fought for their buildings during gentrification. Not a lot won, but we saved two buildings. The Latino Theater Group threatened to hold up the entire development of the 14th Street corridor
if that historic theater wasn't given to them. And we also managed to get low income housing for, built on one of the corners. The homeless shelter stayed. And if you look, if you walk past it, it looks like it's part of the luxury apartment buildings that's right next to it, because it was constructed to
look like it belonged in the new neighborhood, and it's only homeless people who live up in there. So it can be done, and we haven't won on a big level. They're trying to do mixed income housing on one of the project sites in Southeast, so that's just horrifying, but it's happening. We had two charter schools share a building. One was all white, and the other one was black and latinx, so at three o'clock when the schools got out, it was the most striking thing to see all the white parents on the one corner, and all the brown parents on the other. So the white kids finally moved out, and now it's just brown people on the corner. It's challenging.

[Audrey McFarlane] That's the perfect ending. Thank you.