

Capital Dilemma: Growth and Inequality in Washington, DC
Derek Hyra and Sabiyha Prince, editors

Capital Dilemma: Growth and Inequality in Washington, DC uncovers and explains the dynamics that have influenced the contemporary economic advancement of Washington, DC. This volume's unique interdisciplinary approach using historical, sociological, anthropological, economic, geographic, political, and linguistic theories and approaches, captures the comprehensive factors related to changes taking place in one of the world's most important cities. While accounting for historic disparities, mainly along race and class lines, this book reveals how more recent federal and city political decisions and circumstances shape the city's current neighborhood gentrification patterns. The *Capital Dilemma* for DC, and other major cities, is how to produce sustainable equitable economic growth. This volume greatly expands our understandings of the contradictions, challenges and opportunities associated with modern-day urban development.

Preface

Derek Hyra and Sabiyha Prince

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Howard Gillette

20th Century Development, Social Inequality and Change

1. Exceptionalism and the National Capital in late 20th c. Washington and Paris, Christopher Klemek

For more than one hundred years—including the first three-quarters of the twentieth century—the French and American republics denied the most basic democratic rights to all the citizens living in their capital cities. Surprisingly, urban historians have largely avoided Paris and Washington, considered either too unrepresentative—or just too unwieldy—to fit into the field's established interpretations. And more generally, capital cities have occupied their own distinct niche of scholarship, even segregated from the mainstream narratives of relevant sub-disciplines like, urban planning, urban political theory, or urban history. While Washington and Paris will ultimately remain special status communities, unique in many ways, they are simultaneously urban crucibles of volatile inequalities—not only economic, but also of status, power, and identities—in ostensibly egalitarian republics.

2. Music, Race, Desegregation and the Fight for Equality in the Nation's Capital, Maurice Jackson

This chapter examines the music of Black Washingtonians and of African Americans who performed in the nation's capital from the turn of the 20th century to the 1950s and 1960s. It demonstrates how music, especially jazz, was more than just entertainment but played an integral

role in desegregating the city and altering race relations for the better. The chapter highlights how Blacks, Jews, Muslims and whites joined together to fight against racial discrimination and for equality.

3. Primed for Development: Washington, DC's Great Society Transition, 1964-1974, Bell Clement

Aggressive Great Society policy interventions lay the foundations of present-day Washington, DC. As always, the approach to reform in the nation's capital was determined by contemporary national policy preoccupations. Sixties DC saw extension of limited self-government and enlargement of citizen participation; new initiatives in both community and economic development; and the renovation of local government administrative structure. The decade left Washingtonians in possession of tools of broadly-based self-government to confront the question Great Society efforts had failed to address: how to generate and sustain equitable urban economic viability.

4. Home Rule from Below: The Cooperative Movement in Washington, DC, Johanna Bockman

In 1975, the District of Columbia formally began home rule. During the previous one hundred years, the U.S. Congress directly governed DC through the House and Senate Committees on the District of Columbia and through an appointed Board of Commissioners. Rather than wait for society to change and offer equal participation in political and economic life, DC residents excluded from these institutions, and in particular African Americans, built autonomous spheres to gain control over their lives and forged new resources in the District beyond formal government. When formal home rule did come to the District, it built on and expanded many of these already existing grassroots strategies to create areas of autonomy and local control in DC. Specifically, I argue that DC residents used the cooperative movement as a form of "home rule from below."

5. Struggling for Housing, from DC to Johannesburg: Washington Inncity Self Help Goes to South Africa, Amanda Huron

In the early 1990s, a group of housing activists from Washington, DC traveled to Johannesburg to help start the first housing cooperatives in South Africa's history. The activists saw housing co-ops as both a source of affordable housing and a grounds on which to learn skills of democratic participation and build political power. They were eager to share their experiences forming co-ops in DC with low-income tenants in the new, post-apartheid South Africa. Together, the DC activists and Johannesburg tenants constructed what Katz calls a countertopography, tracing lines of similar experiences – inequality, disinvestment, organizing, and collective power – across the globe.

6. "We Are Headed for Some Bad Trouble": Gentrification and Displacement in Washington, DC, 1920-2014, Chris Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove

Contemporary discussions of gentrification in the nation's capital identify it as a recent phenomenon. This chapter explores DC gentrification over a ninety-year period, from its origins in Georgetown during the 1920s and 30s to its explosion across much of the city today. The authors argue that gentrification has shaped DC race relations, tenants' rights legislation, and city politics, and that previous battles over gentrification shape how contemporary residents react to the phenomenon today.

Contemporary Urban and Economic Policy

7. Situating Entrepreneurial Place-Making in DC: Business Improvement Districts and Urban (Re) Development in Washington, DC, Susanna F. Schaller

Since the 1970s, business improvement districts (BIDs), a property-based revitalization and governance tool, have refashioned urban districts to appeal to consumers, new businesses, as well as higher-income residents. BIDs were approved in Washington, DC not until the mid-1990s. The chapter delves into both the city-level approval process and the micropolitics of the establishment of a Neighborhood BID in Adams Morgan, at the time one of the city's most ethnically and economically diverse neighborhoods. Taking an ethnographic approach, the chapter illustrates the conflicts over ideologies of place that emerged during the city and neighborhood level policy discussions.

8. Budget Growth, Spending and Inequality in the District of Columbia, 2002-2013, Natwar Gandhi, Jim Spaulding and Gordon McDonald

The District of Columbia's budget has grown with its population growth and its economic development. Government operating budget expenditures have more than doubled since 2002, although expenditure growth has leveled on a constant-dollar per-capita basis, and capital expenditures have grown as well. Over half of the District's operating budget is spent on human support service and education functions. Income distribution data suggest an increasing disparity between high- and low-income residents over this time period. Budget decisions for both the operating and capital budgets will always involve balancing the present-day needs of the population with the vision of the city's future.

9. Bicycling in Washington, DC Region: Trends in Ridership and Policies since 1990, Ralph Buehler and John Stowe

During the last 20 years, cycling levels and cyclist safety have been increasing in the Washington region. Bicycle planning in the region has its roots in the 1970s, but experienced a hiatus in the 1990s, and has witnessed a 'renaissance' since the late 1990s. In the 1970s and 1980s, local jurisdictions focused their bicycle policies on the provision of off-street paths—often shared with pedestrians. Since the late 1990s, all jurisdictions have greatly expanded their on-street bicycle lanes and implemented other innovative programs. Washington, DC, Alexandria City, and Arlington County have implemented more bike-friendly policies and have been at the forefront of experimenting with innovative measures. In spite of the progress, many challenges for cycling remain. Area cyclists are predominantly male, between 25 and 65 years old, White, and from higher income groups. Cycling appears to be spatially concentrated in neighborhoods of the urban core jurisdictions that experienced strong population growth. Moreover, the network of bicycle paths and lanes is still fragmented and often requires cyclists to mix with heavy or fast moving car traffic.

10. Anchoring a Federal Agency in a Washington, DC Community: The Department of Homeland Security and St. Elizabeths, Margaret Cowell and Heike Mayer

The neighborhood that surrounds the District of Columbia's St. Elizabeths hospital campus is one of the most disenfranchised areas within the largely thriving Washington, DC region. Compared to regional averages, residents in this neighborhood experience higher rates of unemployment and lower educational attainment and household incomes. The former hospital campus at St.

Elizabeths is being repurposed to become the headquarters of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). This chapter includes an exploration of the DHS economy, a discussion of how local and federal leaders envision this anchor institution in the community, and an overview of the potential challenges and pitfalls associated with anchoring a federal agency in a disenfranchised community.

Development Impacts in District Neighborhoods and Beyond

11. Beyond Gentrification: Investment and Abandonment on the Waterfront, Brett Williams

Talking about gentrification focuses attention on neighborhood change: an influx of new, usually wealthier, often younger, often whiter residents, the appearance of new shops that cater to them, and the displacement of those who have lived there before. Sometimes gentrification evokes quaint and bounded change in a single place. When gentrification seems to be everywhere, some call it supergentrification. But the typical idea of gentrification distracts us from what's really going on. I have come to believe that gentrification inadequately captures the dialectics of investment and abandonment, development and displacement, accumulation and dispossession that shape urban life and property relations.

12. At Eshu's Crossroad: Pan-African Identity in a Changing City, Michelle Coghill Chatman

In the shadow of the US Capitol, Black people are doing African rituals, pouring libation to ancestors, dancing, drumming, educating children from an African centered perspective and invoking deities of Africa. Since the Black Nationalist era, DC has been home to a robust Pan African community. Yet, a number of these schools, businesses, have closed or relocated within the past decade, while others are struggling to survive. As Washington, DC, rapidly gentrifies and Black neighborhoods increasingly yield to a White, middle-class demographic, it is important to examine how Pan African communities are negotiating their physical and ideological space in the city. Just as Eshu, the deity of opportunity within the Yoruba pantheon of gods, stands at the crossroad of change, the Pan-African community stands at a critical point in their expression of African identity in a changing DC. Using shifts brought about by gentrification as a key part of context, this chapter seeks to explore how Pan Africanist oriented schools, religious groups, and businesses, and arts organizations are affirming and expressing their connectedness to the Motherland as the city transforms.

13. "It's Complicated...": Long-Term Residents and Their Relationships to Gentrification in Washington, DC, Kathryn Howell

For some, Columbia Heights is a best practice in redevelopment, including a robust community process; multi-modal, mix-use, mixed-income development with almost 2,400 units of new and preserved affordable housing units and new jobs targeted to neighborhood residents. Yet, in spite of the actions to address equity in the built environment, the social structure of the neighborhood dramatically shifted, leading to exclusion in the public behavior and expectations in the neighborhood's public spaces. Using interviews, observation, and content analysis of historic plans and documents, this chapter explores the ways in which the community has been dominated and changed in Columbia Heights despite the fact that many low-income residents remained after redevelopment.

14. A Tale of Two Theaters: The Implications of Redevelopment and Gentrification on Community Anchors and Identity in U Street/Shaw, Allison Heck

This chapter chronicles the struggles of both the Howard and Lincoln Theatres to fulfill the role of community anchors against the landscape of gentrification in the U Street/Shaw neighborhood. The different paths of each theatre's restoration reveal what is lost in the translation of a redevelopment plan formed with resident input when implementation is led largely by city and business stakeholders. The tensions between cultural preservation and economic viability each theatre continues to face exposes the implications of culturally-framed redevelopment on community ownership, sense of belonging, and identity.

15. H Street, Main Street and the Neoliberal Aesthetics of Cool, Brandi Summers

The chapter explores the discursive work of *diversity* in the physical transformation of the H Street, NE corridor and how race is imbricated in the physical rebuilding and symbolic re-imagination of the neighborhood. This chapter highlights the relationship between race, diversity, belonging, and urban development in the historical devaluation of H Street as a black space, and its revaluation as an emerging multicultural neighborhood. Furthermore, the chapter highlights a post-racial remaking of blackness as a thread in the multicultural fabric.

16. Representations of Change: Gentrification in the Media, Gabriella Modan and Katie Wells

Media coverage of Washington, DC's gentrification tends to focus on the semiotics of urban change: the new contrasting landscapes, the flaring racial tensions, and the lifestyle choices of young professionals with disposable incomes. What the writers leave largely unexamined are the particular place-making efforts that lead to urban change. Using the tools of critical linguistics, this chapter illustrates how media representations of gentrification render invisible the agents and policymakers driving gentrification. Through their grammatical choices, media writers (consciously or unconsciously) manipulate agency and, in so doing, promulgate a view of gentrification as a natural and spontaneously occurring phenomenon.

Conclusion

Contesting Change and Legacy: Lessons from the DC Story, Blair Ruble