Article

Experiences of Policing in Gentrifying Neighborhoods: Evidence From Chicago

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Abstract

Do patterns of unequal policing persist or transform within gentrifying neighborhoods? Using an original survey of Chicago residents, we assess whether gentrifiers and longtime residents experience policing differently. Building on macro-level studies which rely on aggregate population data and micro-level studies which rely on ethnographies and interviews, we conduct a meso-level study that compares the experiences and views of differently positioned residents. We find that the phenomenon of being "over-policed and under-protected" that characterizes race-class subjugated neighborhoods is replicated within gentrifying neighborhoods for longtime residents. Meanwhile, gentrifiers express less concern about crime and report fewer interactions with police. While the average gentrifier has low levels of police contact, we find some evidence that a subset of gentrifiers are more likely to call the police about quality-of-life issues compared to neighbors. Our methodological approach provides a blueprint for how survey research can provide insights on individual-level experiences and attitudes in gentrifying neighborhoods.

Keywords

gentrification, policing, Chicago, race, ethnicity, politics

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Policing is a critical site where the social inequalities that characterize American cities are reproduced. Most research on big-city inequality focuses on the twentieth-century phenomena of disinvestment, segregation, and separation that may be known broadly as the "American apartheid" regime (Massey and Denton 1993). Such research has persuasively shown that local housing and development policies created racially segregated, impoverished communities (see, e.g., Thurston 2018; Trounstine 2018) that are disproportionately subjugated to aggressive policing practices (Soss and Weaver 2017). The legacy of these public policies continues to powerfully shape day-to-day lives, life-chances, and political rights in cities across the country, as many communities face both underexposure to opportunity and overexposure to the carceral state (Sampson 2012; Burch 2013; Hinton and Cook 2021).

Today, an emergent twenty-first-century phenomenon is being overlaid on the places where the dynamics of "American apartheid" were most powerfully felt: the "rebirth" of American cities characterized by dramatic revalorization of centrally located neighborhoods (Ogorzalek 2021). Often called gentrification, this phenomenon presents new challenges for city residents and theoretical questions for scholars of urban politics. On one level, it represents the reverse phenomenon of segregation and disinvestment: gentrifying neighborhoods are characterized, in the short-term and medium-term, as becoming more diverse, less segregated, and less distant from economic opportunity for residents and especially homeowners (see, e.g., Freeman, Cassola, and Cai 2016). Crucially, however, this revalorization does not take place on a blank slate: it is overlaid on the inequalities and institutions that generated and were generated by the American apartheid regime. The habits and practices of race-class subjugation in cities have not disappeared, but they may manifest differently in these settings. Policing is one critical mechanism through which race-class subjugation has been reproduced, inviting questions about how inequalities in policing may transform as gentrification reshapes many urban neighborhoods.

Several studies have recognized the important intersection between gentrification and policing. Quantitative studies using cities as the unit of analysis have found that the emergence of a comparatively educated "creative class" within American cities to be associated with an increase in arrests for "quality of life" crimes such as graffiti and public drunkenness (Sharp 2014; see also Florida 2005). Studies comparing neighborhoods within cities using aggregate population data have found that gentrification affects localized patterns of punitive policing (Laniyonu 2018; Bloch and Meyer 2019; Beck 2020; Collins, Stuart, and Janulis 2021; Newberry 2021). More in-depth analyses of specific gentrifying neighborhoods tend

to suggest that newcomers rely upon heavy reporting of relatively minor infractions to "clean up" the neighborhood (Parekh 2015; Maharawal 2017; Doering 2020; Ramírez 2020). While these studies offer compelling evidence that gentrification exacerbates punitive policing for race-class subjugated residents and that some gentrifiers play roles in this phenomenon, it remains unclear whether these roles are limited to those gentrifying residents who are actively involved in community "public safety" initiatives or are shared more broadly. This article builds on these prior studies to conduct an analysis of attitudes toward and experiences with policing among differently positioned individuals living *within* gentrifying neighborhoods, using original and publicly available data.

The article proceeds as follows. First, drawing from existing scholarship on gentrification, neighborhood change, and racial threat, we consider possible differences in how gentrifiers and longtime residents of gentrifying neighborhoods might experience and view policing. Second, we build upon previous studies to construct new measures of neighborhood gentrification and individual gentrifier status that make systematic comparisons of views and experiences tractable both across and within neighborhoods. Third, we use data from an original survey of Chicago residents to gauge attitudes and behaviors toward policing among residents of gentrifying neighborhoods (and compare them to those among residents of other types of neighborhoods). Specifically, we assess whether gentrifiers and longtime residents of gentrifying neighborhoods have systematically different relationships with policing, both in terms of their experiences with policing and their attitudes toward it. We contextualize our analysis by comparing these attitudes and experiences with those of residents of non-gentrifying neighborhoods. Fourth, we supplement these survey findings with an analysis of open-ended survey responses and publicly available crime reporting data.

We find that the phenomenon of being "over-policed and under-protected" that characterizes low-socioeconomic status (SES) neighborhoods home to race-class subjugated communities—in contrast to high-SES neighborhoods—is reproduced within gentrifying neighborhoods. In gentrifying neighborhoods, an individual's status shapes their experience of policing: longtime residents report experiences that suggest being "over-policed and under-protected" while gentrifiers express less concern about crime, call the police less often, and report fewer punitive interactions with police. Consistent with existing scholarship, we find that gentrifiers who do call the police are more likely to report quality-of-life crimes than their neighbors or residents of other neighborhoods (Parekh 2015; Maharawal 2017; Bloch and Meyer 2019; Doering 2020; Ramírez 2020). Our analysis offers two key takeaways for scholars of gentrification and policing. First, even

though gentrifiers live in neighborhoods with fraught relationships with policing, their relative privilege allows them to maintain distance from policing akin to their peers in more affluent neighborhoods. Second, prior research's findings that gentrification leads to increased punitive quality-of-life policing is consistent with low levels of police contact by the average gentrifier.

Gentrification and Policing in Contemporary U.S. Cities

Gentrification refers to a phenomenon whereby the character of under-resourced urban areas is changed by the arrival of new wealthier and whiter residents (Freeman, Cassola, and Cai 2016; Hyra 2017). For city leaders, the revalorization has been a boon, and many cities' growth coalitions have developed plans to attract the workers and firms that constitute the "creative class" and the "knowledge economy" firms that employ them (Florida 2005; Hacker et al. 2021; Ogorzalek 2021). For longtime residents of these neighborhoods, often members of race-class subjugated communities, this transformation has led to displacement or the threat thereof.[1] In recent years, scholars of gentrification have moved beyond the study of demographic changes, examining how these transformations shape various spheres of local politics, including contestation over community character (Parekh 2015; Cheshire, Fitzgerald, and Liu 2019), public education (Keels, Burdick–Will, and Keene 2013; Barton and Cohen 2019), and policing (Sharp 2014; Parekh 2015; Maharawal 2017; Schlichtman, Patch, and Hill 2017; Laniyonu 2018; Bloch and Meyer 2019; Beck 2020; Ramírez 2020; Collins, Stuart, and Janulis 2021; Newberry 2021; Zur 2023).

As recent social science scholarship reminds us, the relationship between residents and police is a critical component of urban politics. Beyond the "first-face" dimensions of politics such as elections and representation, policing is central to how local governments "exercise social control" through "various modes of coercion, containment, repression, surveillance, regulation, predation, discipline, and violence" (Soss and Weaver 2017, 567). This "second face" of politics is especially pronounced in race-class subjugated communities, where policing tends to be more punitive and omnipresent in residents' lives (Soss and Weaver 2017, 566–67; Braga, Brunson, and Drakulich 2019).[2] A central finding of research on urban policing in the United States is that white and socioeconomically advantaged residents are able to reap its benefits without being subject to punitive control. Meanwhile, race-class subjugated communities simultaneously experience more crime and violence *and* more punitive policing—in other words, they are "over-policed and under-protected" (see, e.g., Balto 2019; Braga, Brunson, and Drakulich 2019).

This pattern of the over-policing and under-protection of race-class subjugated communities has been built on spatial segregation, itself the result of demographic changes in the early and mid-twentieth century. During the 1930s-70s, after decades of Black migration to industrial northern cities, many African Americans began moving into previously homogeneous white neighborhoods. This kind of population shift—the "encroachment" of a subaltern into the terrain of a more powerful group—informs a broad school of social science on intergroup conflict known as "racial threat" theory, which holds that the introduction of diversity into a previously homogeneous space leads to heightened intergroup animus at both individual and communal levels (see, e.g., Alesina, Baqir, and Hoxby 2004; Hopkins 2010; Enos 2017). These mid-twentieth-century processes of neighborhood change generally led to intense racial and class segregation, where policing played an important role in maintaining boundaries between segregated neighborhoods.

Gentrification, a process in which diversity is introduced "from above," represents a different dynamic, where longtime residents may experience the arrival of relatively affluent new neighbors as a threat to social networks, cultural goods (e.g., community norms), and material resources (e.g., affordable housing and well-known, preferred consumption options) (Hyra 2017). Others, however, suggest that longtime residents of gentrifying neighborhoods also appreciate some aspects of neighborhood change, including an increased police presence and declining crime rates (Freeman, Cassola, and Cai 2006). For the new arrivals (gentrifiers), the very presence of racial diversity—even a diversity that they've opted into by choosing this neighborhood—may prompt them to behave in threatened ways, seeing less affluent neighbors from different ethnoracial groups as threats to their person or property. Relatedly, affluent individuals may seek to impose a vision of upper-middle-class propriety onto the working-class neighborhood into which they've inserted themselves. For example, two San Francisco Bay Area studies conclude that increased policing in gentrifying areas is an important mechanism for enforcing white middle-class values and newcomers' sense of "safety" at the expense of longtime residents of color (Maharawal 2017; Ramírez 2020). Studies of gentrification have long identified how this tension between newcomers' expressed liberal political values and desire for order generates friction between them and longtime residents (Anderson 1990).

Several recent studies examining aggregate data at the local level have established an effect of gentrification on policing outcomes. These studies have found that gentrification at the neighborhood or subneighborhood level is associated with increased punitive policing in the form of stops (Laniyonu 2018; Newberry 2021), arrests (Sharp 2014, 355; Beck 2020), citations (Collins, Stuart, and Janulis 2021), or neighbor complaints

(Laniyonu 2018; Cheshire, Fitzgerald, and Liu 2019). Notably, Beck (2020) and Laniyonu (2018) have found that gentrifying neighborhoods experience increases in "quality-of-life" or "order-maintenance" forms of policing that harshly target perceived social disorder, petty crimes, and nuisances. Examining this phenomenon at the city level, Sharp (2014) finds that "a 10 percentage point increase in employment in the post industrial sectors of interest translates into a 4.6 to 4.8 percentage point increase in the share of arrests devoted to order maintenance—a substantively nontrivial impact given that the average city devotes about 22% of its arrests to order maintenance" (p. 355).

Given the dynamics of gentrifying neighborhoods, gentrifiers are potentially critical actors in ushering greater police presence into communities that are already subjected to high rates of surveillance (Schlichtman, Patch, and Hill 2017, 4; Braga, Brunson, and Drakulich 2019). Just as homeowners are shown to exert disproportionate influence in more conventional forms of politics (Yoder 2020; Hall and Yoder 2022), gentrifiers may leverage their SES and political resources to facilitate greater police presence in the neighborhood, and city elites may accrue second-order benefits from such policing as well. As mentioned above, several studies have found that gentrifying neighborhoods experience high aggregate levels of punitive policing. Related studies drawing on interviews and ethnographic research have also found that some gentrifiers identify crime as a salient feature in how they make sense of neighborhood identity (Hwang 2016) and seek interactions with the police in order to change their neighborhoods (Parekh 2015; Maharawal 2017; Ramírez 2020).

Doering's (2020) ethnographic account of crime-related activism in two gentrifying neighborhoods in Chicago provides evidence of such a pattern, finding that some residents use "positive loitering"—walking around the neighborhood, reporting "problem buildings and businesses," and frequently calling the police—to increase the presence of police officers (p. 1). This approach to proactive neighborhood watching can lead to high levels of "reporting" of noninfractions or relatively minor infractions that get lumped under "quality of life" crimes in annual reports. Impressionistic monitoring of "neighborhood watch" social media groups in Chicago's gentrifying neighborhoods reveals this tendency, as some neighbors report the presence of persons in alleys and gangways with great frequency. As Doering (2020, 61–62) depicts it, this is effectively a citizen-enforced version of "broken windows" policing, a theory through which strict vigilance and deterrence of relatively minor infractions is thought to deter more serious violent or property crimes (see also Kelling and Wilson 1982). Some neighborhood activist groups counter such efforts and argue that greater policing only works to perpetuate continued marginalization and displacement of longtime residents, but Doering (2020) suggests that these groups often struggle due to their

inability to win over wealthier residents and neighborhood power brokers (p. 111). Aligning with Doering's findings, Knight (2019) finds in interviews of Chicago residents that white and socioeconomically-advantaged residents of gentrifying areas continue to express greater confidence in—and greater willingness to call—the police than their neighbors (pp. 74–97).

However, other scholarship suggests that gentrifiers may have distinctive relationships to police compared to peers in wealthy, mostly white neighborhoods. For example, scholars have highlighted the unique positionality of "social preservationists," who "embrace the 'background noise'" of their neighborhoods, arguing that "a little crime keeps the neighborhood authentic and keeps away the yuppies who fear such grittiness" (Brown-Saracino 2010, 93; Schlichtman, Patch, and Hill 2017, 167). Gentrifiers in this mold may, then, be *less* likely to solicit active policing of their new neighborhoods. Of course, adopting this view within neighborhood contexts defined by stark differences in positionality raises concerns about the safety of the most marginalized residents who frequently have no other option than to turn to the police (Braga, Brunson, and Drakulich 2019).

In short, policing is a critical dimension of urban politics, and its manifestation in the experiences and attitudes of residents of gentrifying neighborhoods is worth examining in greater detail. We build on existing studies by drawing on survey evidence, which is rare in the study of gentrification and policing, to examine differences between the experiences and attitudes of gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers. This allows us to more systematically characterize residents' experiences, contextualizing the macrolevel findings of quantitative studies that draw on population data at the city level and the microlevel findings of ethnographic studies that closely examine active residents in particular neighborhoods.

In the sections that follow, we seek to better understand residents' relationship to policing in these neighborhoods by comparing experiences with and attitudes toward policing among gentrifiers, their neighbors, and other city residents. We draw on original survey evidence, supplementing and extending the findings of the aforementioned literature. We examine whether and for what reasons gentrifiers and their neighbors call the police, their levels of concern about crime, and their exposure to negative police interactions.

Methods and Data

Most previous studies of gentrifying neighborhoods employ either an ethnographic approach for the construction of concepts and identification of emergent phenomena (see, e.g., Doering 2020) or use aggregate Census data for specific quantitative insights (see, e.g., Voorhees Center 2014; Grube-Cavers and Patterson 2015; Hwang and Lin 2016). There is a significant empirical

gap between these approaches, especially for the systematic investigation of the *politics* of gentrifying neighborhoods. Census data includes almost no direct information about political beliefs and behaviors, and within-neighborhood analyses about individual behaviors are usually stymied by the challenge of ecological inference. Deep ethnographic studies of individual neighborhoods tend to select on the dependent variable and may draw conclusions based on insights that were salient to authors' informants but may not be applicable to less voluble or visible residents of these areas.

Survey research is a promising middle way to learn more about gentrifying areas (GAs) and residents of GAs (RGAs), adding to the insights drawn from population studies and ethnographies. Several challenges obstruct this approach, however. First, the literature on gentrification does not settle on a clear, agreed-upon, operationalizable measure of what defines gentrifying neighborhoods and how to identify them.[3] In part, this is because gentrification is a temporally unfolding process, with potentially varying manifestations over time and from city to city. Second, the aggregate data sources usually employed do not allow analysts to differentiate between the different "types" of RGAs: the gentrifiers and the longtime residents who are gentrified, for lack of a better phrase. Among individual-level sources, most nationally representative surveys include too few respondents from GAs to include substantial samples from any given city, let alone specific neighborhoods, and few include sufficiently precise geographical indicators to identify respondents' neighborhoods in any case.

This article takes steps to address each of these shortcomings and provides a bridging analysis between aggregate-level analyses and ethnographic or interview-based ones. Building on previous studies and our own substantive definition of gentrification, we use data from an original survey, the Chicago Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Survey (CMANS), to analyze attitudes in and across gentrifying neighborhoods in the City of Chicago. We supplement these survey analyses with publicly-available data on crime reports in Chicago.

The CMANS is an original survey that we designed along with colleagues. The survey was administered by Nielsen Opinion Quest during October to November 2018 through an online panel of respondents. The survey had 2,401 respondents from Chicago and its suburbs, with oversamples of residents of gentrifying neighborhoods and diversifying suburbs (geographic target areas were selected by ZIP codes, as described below). In this article, we draw on our sample of respondents in Chicago only ($n = 657$). In order to conduct our analyses, we constructed measures of *gentrification status* for neighborhoods and *gentrifier status* for individual respondents.

First, we develop an original measure to identify gentrifying areas (GAs). Gentrification, at both aggregate and individual level, is an ill-defined

concept. We synthesize previous studies and public discourse to develop a conceptual definition of gentrification as a process of *neighborhood* change *over time* characterized by an *influx* of individuals with *high levels of income and education* (most often *white*), into a *previously low-SES big-city* neighborhood (most often *predominantly non-white*), with attendant cultural and economic changes.

To identify GAs under this definition, we first need to select *geographic units* of analysis (i.e., define the boundaries of neighborhoods) and select *variables measuring relevant demographic changes*. As Table 1 shows, prior studies have used ZIP codes, city-specific neighborhood boundaries, or Census tracts as their geographic units. We calculated a measure of gentrification status for both the ZIP code level and the neighborhood level. Measuring the gentrification status of ZIP codes was helpful for our survey sampling strategy: having classified certain ZIP codes within Chicago as GAs, we were able to oversample residents of these ZIP codes, a feature not practically available for smaller geographic units. However, since ZIP codes are not socially meaningful units of life, we also measure the gentrification status of Chicago neighborhoods. We use the neighborhood boundaries developed by the city's Office of Tourism (Chicago Data Portal 2018). Note that these are finer-grained boundaries than the "community areas" that are commonly used to divide Chicago into seventy-seven neighborhood-like areas. We prefer the smaller neighborhood boundaries because they more accurately reflect the residential communities with which residents identify and include subdivisions of some large community areas (including, importantly, some instances where only portions of the community area are experiencing gentrification).

To place respondents within neighborhood boundaries, we asked respondents to specify their closest street corner. Where respondents correctly provided this information, we were able to easily geolocate them into neighborhoods. We also asked respondents to select their neighborhood from a dropdown list of options, which enabled us to place respondents who skipped or incorrectly completed the street corner question. All of our empirical analyses in the next section examine neighborhoods as the unit of analysis rather than ZIP codes.

To operationalize our definition's demographic concepts, we incorporate Census measures of residents' race, income, rents, education, and newcomer status. As shown in Table 1, previous quantitative approaches to identifying gentrifying neighborhoods incorporate some but not all of these concepts or estimate them incompletely. New work finds that the vast majority of quantitative studies focus on either economic or ethnoracial change, but rarely both (Lee and Velez 2023). Our measure includes all the dimensions of change we identify as relevant to the concept.

Table 1. List of Recent Approaches to Identify GAs and Which Elements of Gentrification They Include in Their Measurement Algorithm.

	Variables included							
Study	Change	Income	Race	Rent	Education	Newcomers	Unit	City only
Voorhees	√	√	√	√			Neighborhood	√
Hwang & Lin	√	√			√		Tract	
Grube-Calvers	√	√		√			Tract (Canada)	
CMANS	√	√	√	√	√	√	N'hood or ZIP	√

CMANS: Chicago Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Survey; GA: gentrifying areas.

We identified GAs as follows. First, we calculated the *change* from 2010 to 2018 on the census measures included in our concept: median rent, median household income, percent of local households with high incomes (over $100,000), percent of population with bachelor's degree or more, percent who had arrived in the county in the past five years, and percent non-Hispanic white. We then ran those measures of change through a principal components factor analysis to isolate the underlying concept of gentrification that is a combination of all those concepts. Details on this approach, including summary statistics of the variables and results of the principal components analysis are provided in the Appendix.

Applying our approach to Chicago neighborhoods, two significant factors emerged from the principal components analysis: one associated with change in rents and incomes, and one with change in educational attainment and race. We identified neighborhoods whose sum on these two factors' Z-scores was 1 or greater as gentrifying. Figure 1a shows how Chicago neighborhoods scored on these two factors, with the first factor across the x-axis and the second on the y-axis. Each circle indicates a neighborhood, labeled, and sized by population. The shading of the circle indicates the median household income of the neighborhood in the "before" measurement of 2010 (darker neighborhoods started out richer). We identified neighborhoods to the right of the diagonal line ($y = 1 - x$) as gentrifying. Figure 1b maps neighborhoods as one of four groups: gentrifying, high-SES non-gentrifying, middle-SES non-gentrifying, and low-SES non-gentrifying. We will use these as comparison categories in the analyses below.

Our measure produces a set of gentrifying neighborhoods that is extremely well-matched to scholarly and popular accounts of gentrifying neighborhoods in Chicago (Betancur 2002; Hwang and Sampson 2014; Timberlake and Johns-Wolfe 2017; Knight 2019), as well as our known first-hand knowledge of the city, which gives us great confidence in the validity of this measure. Our measure is also correlated with previous measures of gentrification that have been applied to Chicago. For instance, the map in Figure 1b bears a strong resemblance to the map generated by the Voorhees Center (2014), though they apply their classification algorithm to community areas rather than neighborhoods. We also replicated gentrification scoring approaches used in previous studies and compared our measure against them. Our measure is correlated with the underlying measure of relative SES shift used in Hwang and Lin (2016) at $r = .58$. The classification method employed by Grube-Cavers and Patterson (2015) yields a subset of the neighborhoods we identify as GAs, suggesting a common logic with a different threshold for classification as a GA. Neither of these two prior approaches includes a racial composition indicator, which we prefer to include because this cultural-ethnoracial dimension is often salient in qualitative analyses of gentrification.

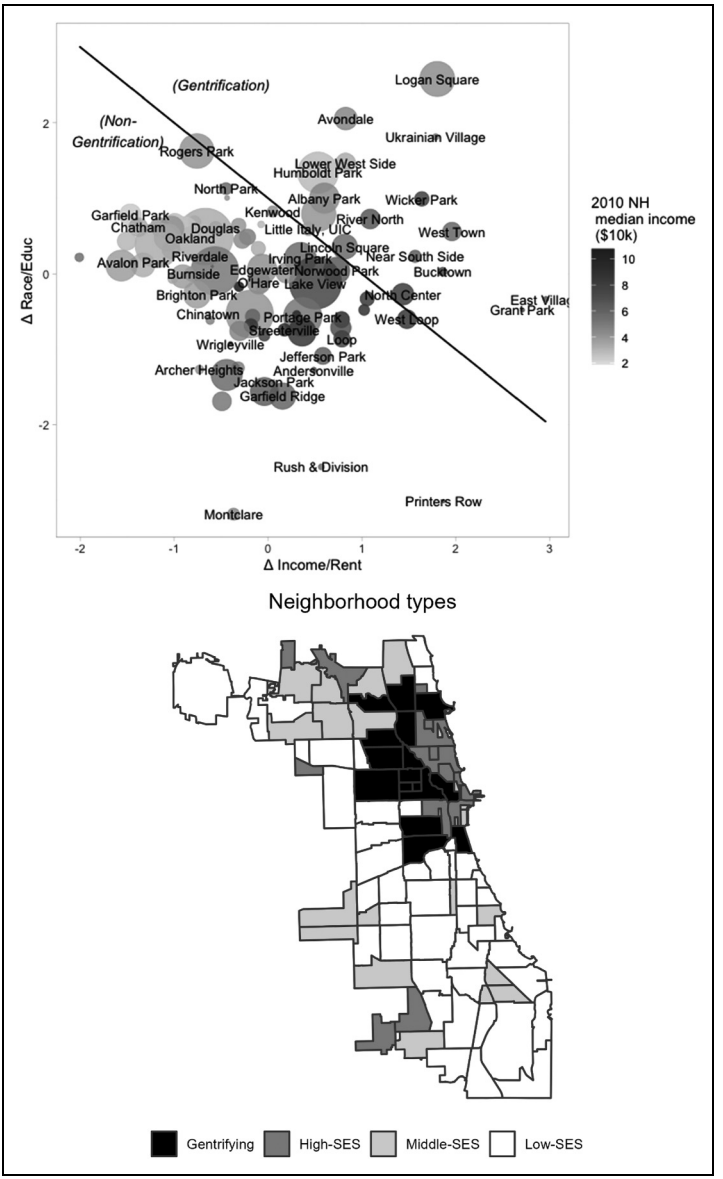

Figure 1 (a) and (b). At left, Chicago neighborhoods plotted by their scores on the first (*x*-axis) and second (*y*-axis) factors that emerge from our principal components analysis, with those above the diagonal line identified as gentrifying. Circle size indicates population size and circle shading indicates median income in 2010. At right, a map of Chicago showing neighborhood types used for the analysis below.

We also used principal components factor analysis to develop an individual-level measure of gentrifier status for respondents in the CMANS survey. This principal components analysis used the survey's measures of race, household income, educational attainment, and duration of local residence (corresponding to all the variables we used in our analysis for measuring neighborhood status, except for rents, which was not available in the survey). At this individual level, the first factor that emerges is significantly correlated with each of the measures from our definition (race, income, education, and duration of residence in their neighborhood and Chicago more generally); these factor loadings are listed in Table 2. We estimated their gentrification score based on this factor,[4] and respondents with a gentrification score greater than 0 who lived in GAs were identified as gentrifiers; those with a score less than 0 who lived in GAs were identified as non-gentrifiers. We acknowledge that this strict binary, even when it is based on a factor that captures five variables, flattens the complexity of social categories highlighted within existing ethnographic work. Short of a more decisive single measure of "gentrifier" status, however, we believe this is a reasonable approach to begin examining the experiences and opinions of differently positioned residents within gentrifying neighborhoods. We return to this point in the conclusion and address robustness concerns about the cut point and marginal cases in the Appendix.

Figure 2 plots respondents' individual gentrifier scores and their neighborhood's gentrification scores. Note that Figure 2 also shows the race of respondents, and that respondents in all four quadrants are ethnoracially heterogeneous. Most notably, the gentrifiers in GAs are not monolithically white: about 10% of them are non-white. This is because the individual measure of gentrifier status is based on a five-variable linear model generated by the principal components analysis, in which race, income, education, and newcomer status are all weighted about equally. Thus members of any racial group may be identified as gentrifiers, especially if they are high-SES

Table 2. Factor Loadings for Variables in Principal Components Analysis to Estimate Individual-Level Gentrifier Scores Among CMANS Respondents.

Variable	Gentrification factor loading
Education	0.68
Household income	0.66
White	0.65
New to neighborhood	0.69
New to Chicago	0.26

Scores were generated using these loadings as coefficients in a linear model (stata "predict" function). CMANS: Chicago Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Survey.

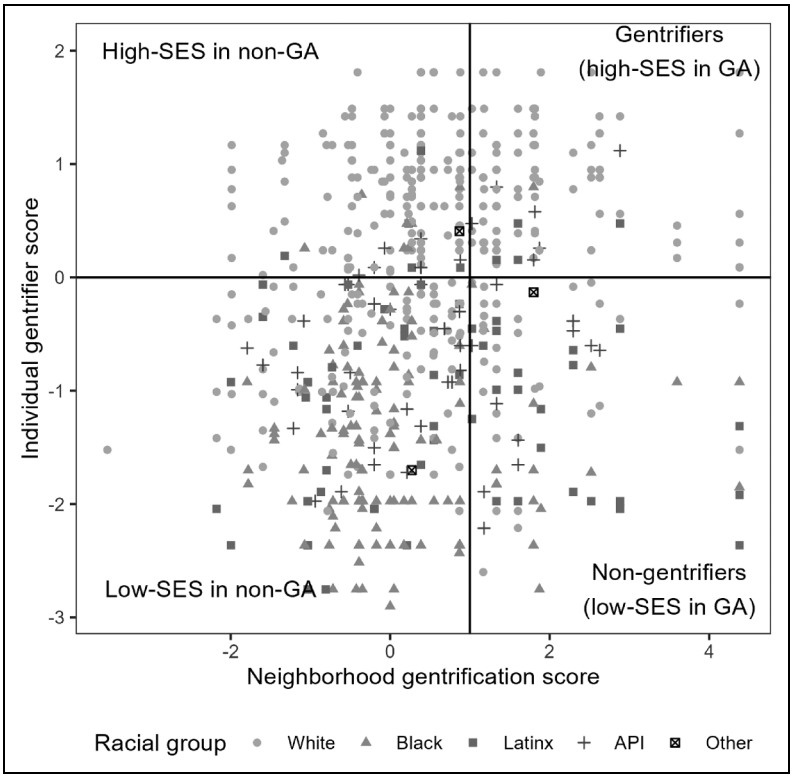

Figure 2. Individual-level and community-level gentrification scores for respondents in the CMANS survey, by race of respondent. CMANS: Chicago Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Survey.

newcomers. Though this model arose from the data, we believe this is conceptually consistent with ethnographic work that emphasizes class *and* race in defining the cultural changes attendant with gentrification. By operationalizing both class and race, we allow for the identification of (for instance) Black gentrifiers as described by Pattillo (1999), as well as those white residents of GAs are not socioeconomically advantaged. Table 3 shows the number of respondents in each neighborhood type, as well as the number of respondents above and below the gentrifier measure threshold within gentrifying neighborhoods.

Gentrification and Policing in Chicago

In this section, we examine attitudes and experiences related to policing within and across neighborhoods in Chicago. For each set of survey

Table 3. Total Number of Chicago Residents in CMANS Sample by Neighborhood Type and Individual-Gentrifier Score (for RGAs).

Respondents in …	*n*
Chicago	657
Gentrifying neighborhoods	198
Gentrifiers	*110*
Non-gentrifiers	*82*
High-SES neighborhoods	138
Middle-SES neighborhoods	201
Low-SES neighborhoods	120

CMANS: Chicago Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Survey; RGA: residents of gentrifying areas; SES: socioeconomic status.

questions, we present two types of comparisons. First, we compare responses across the four neighborhood types (gentrifying, low SES, middle SES, and high SES). For this comparison, we show group means. Second, we estimate a series of regression models to compare gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers within gentrifying neighborhoods and to compare each group with their "peers" in other neighborhoods, that is, residents of more homogeneous high-SES and low-SES neighborhoods, respectively. We estimate and report both bivariate relationships and results from multivariate models where we control for race, gender, age, education, and household income level.[5] Together, the two types of comparisons enable us to assess the differences between gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers and the extent to which such differences converge or diverge with the contrasts between rich and poor neighborhoods across the city. For all analyses, we use survey weights generated using Census data to correct for response bias.[6]

To assess experiences calling on the police, we asked if respondents had ever "called the police to report a crime or disturbance" in their neighborhood. As Figure 3 shows, residents in low-SES neighborhoods call the police most often—slightly over 50% of respondents reported doing so—while residents in high-SES neighborhoods called the police least often. When we compare gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers, we see a similar pattern to the comparison between high-SES and low-SES neighborhoods. As Figure 4 shows, a multivariate model suggests that gentrifiers are less likely to call the police than non-gentrifiers ($p < .001$). Both groups have a similar likelihood of calling the police compared to their "peers" in high-SES and low-SES neighborhoods, respectively.

Patterns of concern about crime are similar. As Figure 3 shows, residents in low-SES neighborhoods were much more concerned about crime: over 50%

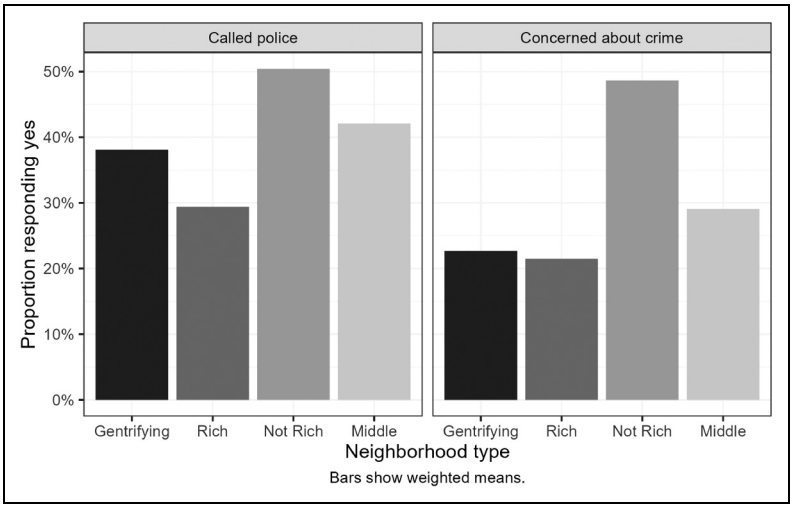

Figure 3. Police contact and concern about crime among CMANS respondents, by neighborhood type. CMANS: Chicago Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Survey.

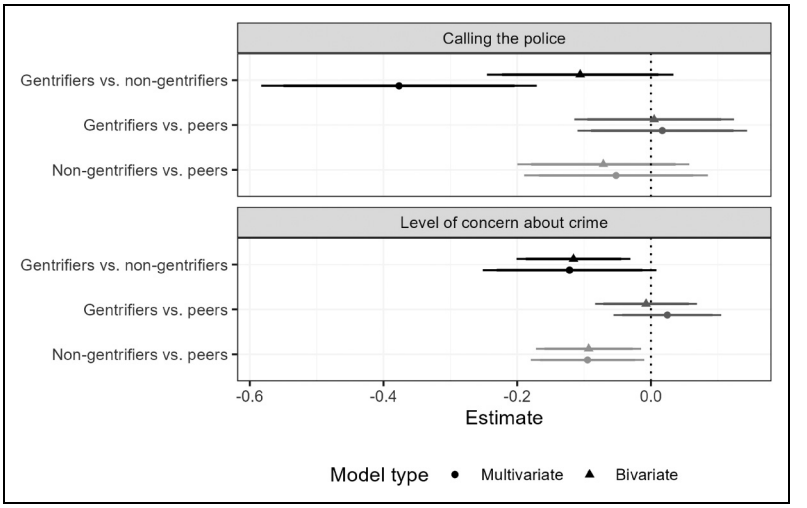

Figure 4. Coefficient estimates for regression models of levels of police contact and concern about crime across key groups of CMANS respondents. CMANS: Chicago Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Survey.

reported being concerned to some degree, compared to about 20% of respondents in high-SES neighborhoods. When we compare gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers in a multivariate model (Figure 4), we see that gentrifiers are less concerned about crime than non-gentrifiers ($p = .07$). Gentrifiers express similar levels of crime concern to residents of high-SES neighborhoods, but we do find that non-gentrifiers express less concern than residents of low-SES neighborhoods ($p = .04$).

Our questions about trust in the police and approval of police (expressed in the form of a letter grade) did not reveal significant differences between neighborhoods. Low-SES neighborhoods report the lowest levels of trust and approval, but the differences are marginal (Figure 5). There are no clear differences between gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers. There are some differences between each group and their peers when estimating bivariate models, but no clear differences emerge in multivariate models (Figure 6).

Our next set of questions asked respondents about their experiences interacting with the police. The weighted means reported in Figure 7 show a clear pattern: residents of low-SES neighborhoods are most likely to have negative experiences with police, residents of high-SES neighborhoods are least likely to do so, and residents of gentrifying neighborhoods are—on average—somewhere in between. Within gentrifying neighborhoods, gentrifiers are less likely than non-gentrifiers to have been stopped while in a car ($p = .11$) or arrested ($p = .11$), as shown in Figure 8. There are bivariate relationships

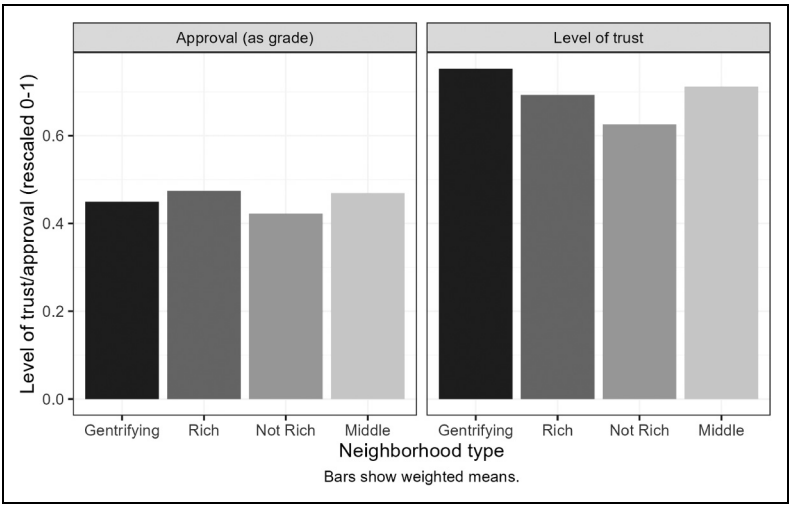

Figure 5. Evaluations of police by CMANS respondents, by neighborhood type. CMANS: Chicago Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Survey.

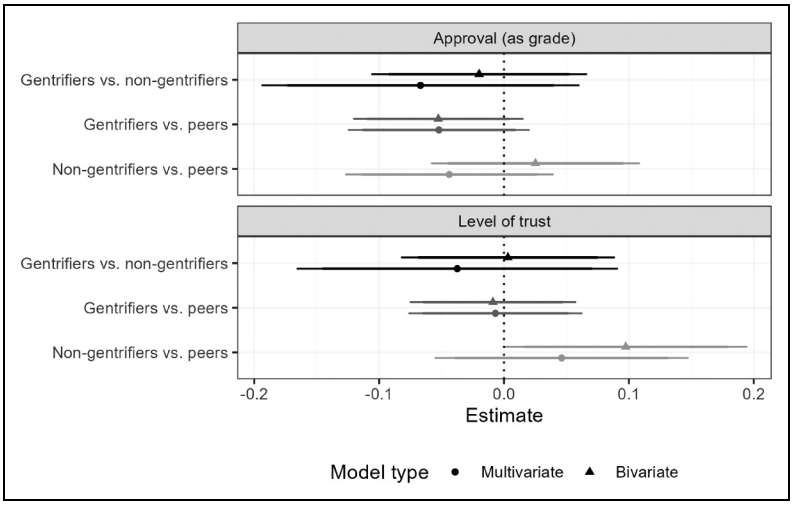

Figure 6. Coefficient estimates for models on evaluations of police across key groups of CMANS respondents. CMANS: Chicago Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Survey.

Figure 7. Experiences with policing among CMANS respondents, by neighborhood type. Bars show weighted means. CMANS: Chicago Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Survey.

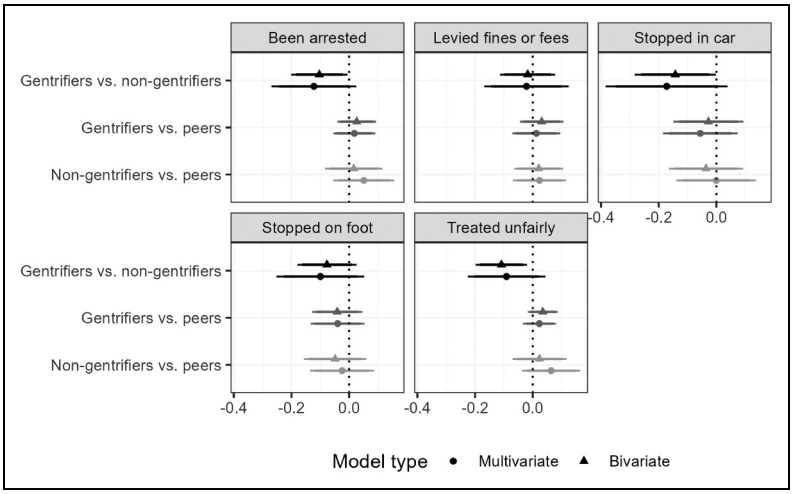

Figure 8. Coefficient estimates for models on experiences with police.

between gentrifier status and having been stopped while on foot ($p = .14$) and having been treated unfairly ($p = .02$), but these relationships are less certain in multivariate models. The other models reported in Figure 9 show that gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers have similar police interaction experiences to residents of high-SES and low-SES neighborhoods, respectively.

Taken together, our analyses of survey responses shows that longtime residents of gentrifying neighborhoods experience a similar phenomenon of being "over-policed and under-protected" as low-SES neighborhood residents. As Braga, Brunson, and Drakulich (2019) write in their review article, "[impoverished communities of color] that are subject to the most aggressive and harmful policing strategies, and who have the least confidence in the police, are also the most dependent on their services" (p. 549). Our findings about the experiences of residents of gentrifying neighborhoods suggests that spatial segregation that has defined U.S. cities since the early twentieth century is not a necessary condition for the punitive policing practices experienced by race-class subjugated communities. Policing, it seems, is nimble enough that it can subject residents of different racial and socioeconomic statuses *within the same neighborhood* to sharply different experiences. Gentrifiers, who are generally affluent and white, are able to enjoy limited contact with police, while their race-class subjugated neighbors continue to experience both high levels of punitive policing and a lack of responsiveness from police toward their concern about crime (see also Maharawal 2017; Ramírez 2020).

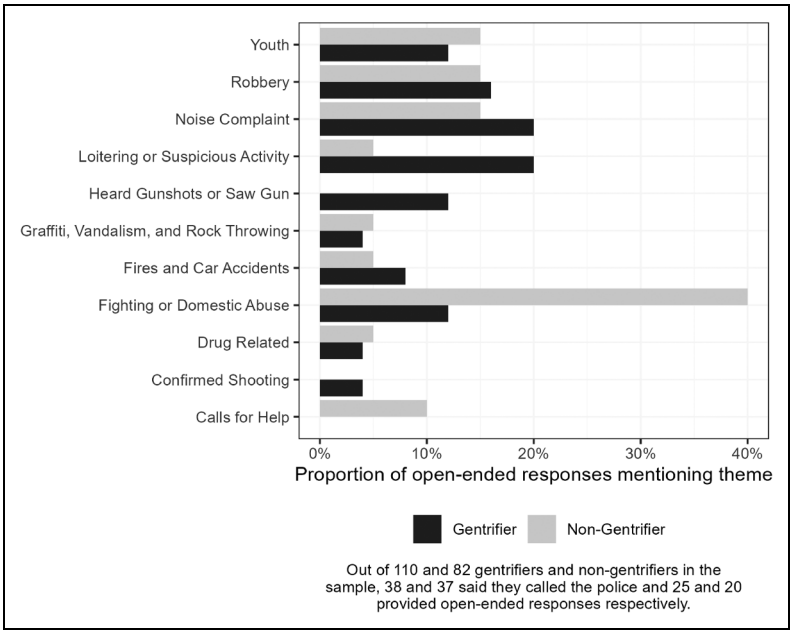

Figure 9. Proportion of open-ended responses about calling the police mentioning each theme.

Our analyses further suggest that this outcome is not the result of widespread calls to police from gentrifiers. This finding, at first glance, may appear surprising given the findings of prior studies that gentrification is associated with increased punitive policing. However, we stress that our findings do not challenge these prior studies, but rather suggest that the link they identify is not primarily the result of direct demand for policing from the modal gentrifier. This relationship may instead be driven by other factors such as demand from public officials or local elites or police practices. This interpretation aligns with two studies, both examining data on 311 calls directed to the police in New York City, which find little evidence that widespread resident demand explains the link between gentrification and punitive policing (Laniyonu 2018; Beck 2020).[7] In making this observation, we do not mean to suggest that the modal gentrifier is not responsible for policing practices in their neighborhoods. There are other ways that gentrifiers can enable punitive policing practices, including electoral support for officials who advance such practices, tacit support for practices as they unfold in their neighborhoods, or expressing support for public policies which elicit such practices (see, e.g., Bloch and Meyer 2019). It is also plausible that a subset of gentrifiers

express demand for punitive policing, even if the modal gentrifier does not, contributing to the aggregate outcomes observed in prior studies. As the next section will show, we also find evidence that *some* gentrifiers do engage the police directly in a manner that invites punitive policing toward their neighbors.

Quality-of-Life Policing in Gentrifying Neighborhoods

Even as gentrifiers as a whole call the police less often than their neighbors, those who do call may do so in a manner that shapes the experiences of their neighbors. In this section, we draw on open-ended responses from the CMANS survey to provide evidence that gentrifiers are more likely to report quality-of-life issues when calling the police. Drawing on public crime reporting data, we also show that quality-of-life crime reports are more prevalent in gentrifying neighborhoods. These findings help contextualize ethnographic studies' findings about the direct role that gentrifiers play in punitive policing. The low levels of police calls we find among gentrifiers suggest that ethnographic studies such as Doering's (2020) are identifying a subset of gentrifiers who are more directly involved in activities such as contacting police or participating in neighborhood watch groups.

In the CMANS survey, we followed up our question on calling the police with an open-ended question: "What prompted the call, and what happened?" Responses to this question were coded using an emic (insider) approach in which the thematic categories we generated for reported crimes derive from narratives shared by the respondents (Strauss 1987). Open-ended responses were cross-coded when relevant. For example, one respondent reported calling the police because a "*kid was spray painting graffiti in the alley.*" This response was coded as both youth-related and graffiti-related since both topics were explicitly mentioned. Thirteen prominent themes emerged when reading these responses.

Out of the 110 gentrifier and eighty-two non-gentrifier RGAs in our sample, thirty-eight and thirty-seven said they called the police and twenty-five and twenty of those provided open-ended responses, respectively. Figure 9 summarizes the proportion of each group that mentioned the thirteen themes we identified.

These qualitative data suggest that gentrifiers tend to call the police more frequently for a number of quality-of-life crimes and concerns, including noise complaints and complaints about loitering and other perceived suspicious activities (see also Maharawal 2017; Ramírez 2020). For example, one white gentrifier in the North Center neighborhood reported calling the police after seeing "*Nefarious characters scouting out houses and cars*." Another white gentrifier in Ukrainian Village shared "*We called the police because the neighbors were throwing a party and the noise was loud and it was very late*."

Some non-gentrifiers also expressed concern about quality-of-life issues. However, they appeared comparatively more concerned about fighting and domestic abuse, and made more calls for help. One Latina non-gentrifier living on Chicago's Lower West Side, for example, described calling the police to break up a large fight within a school yard that occurred late at night. These findings are limited by our small sample size of respondents who provided open-ended responses, as well as the possibility of confounding variables affecting which respondents chose to provide an open-ended response. To assess the validity of our analysis of the open-ended survey responses, we turned to publicly available crime reporting data from the city of Chicago.

The City of Chicago makes crime reporting data available on its city data portal (Chicago Data Portal n.d.). Crime reports in the dataset are geocoded, allowing us to assign each crime report to a neighborhood in the city. The reports also provide information about the nature of the incident being reported, with codes ranging from discretionary enforcement of municipal ordinances to serious felonies. Using these codes, we created an indicator for low-level "quality-of-life" incidents and calculated the ratio of quality-of-life crimes reported to violent crimes in each neighborhood in the city.[8]

Figure 10 shows the number of quality-of-life violations per violent crime for each neighborhood in the city (shown against neighborhood median income for visibility's sake), with markers and linear fit lines breaking the total pool of neighborhoods into gentrifying, non-gentrifying low-SES, non-gentrifying middle-SES, and non-gentrifying high-SES neighborhoods. While the overall ratio of quality-of-life to violent crime reports does *not* vary much by neighborhood income level, there is substantial variation across *types* of neighborhoods. This ratio is about 25% higher in gentrifying neighborhoods, suggesting that relative to comparable big-city neighborhoods, gentrifying areas face more policing on less serious matters.

To compare our findings from the city's crime reports data with our findings from the open-ended responses in our survey data, we grouped the themes identified in the open-ended responses (summarized in Figure 10) into similar broad categories. Figure 11 below reports the proportion of respondents in each neighborhood type whose respondents fell into the "quality-of-life" or "violent" categories.[9] We find that gentrifiers in gentrifying neighborhoods reported more quality-of-life crimes than violent crimes, like residents of high-SES neighborhoods. Meanwhile, non-gentrifiers in gentrifying neighborhoods report more violent crimes than quality-of-life crimes, like residents of low-SES neighborhoods.

Taken alone, the aggregate crime reporting data cannot reveal *who* reports crime in gentrifying neighborhoods. However, when combined with our

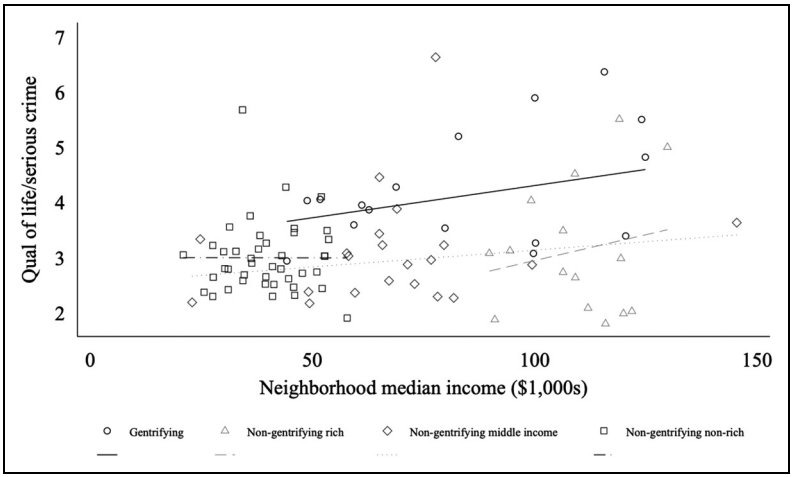

Figure 10. Ratio of quality-of-life crime reports to serious crime reports by neighborhood median income, based on Chicago Police Department crime report data. Each point is a neighborhood, with shape and shading indicating neighborhood type.

survey data, we are able to identify a general pattern where gentrifiers who do call the police are more likely to report quality-of-life concerns. In this way, a subset of gentrifiers contributes to the overall phenomenon wherein gentrifying neighborhoods are increasingly subject to quality-of-life policing. Gentrifiers' increased likelihood of reporting quality-of-life crimes may intensify the policing of longtime residents' minute behaviors in ways that disproportionately expose them to the carceral state, disrupting both individual lives and wider communities (Burch 2013; Soss and Weaver 2017; Braga, Brunson, and Drakulich 2019). This inference is consistent with prior ethnographic and interview-based studies that observe gentrifiers' engagement with police to target their neighbors (Parekh 2015; Maharawal 2017; Ramírez 2020) and with studies that observe increased quality-of-life or order-maintenance policing in gentrifying neighborhoods (Laniyonu 2018; Beck 2020). Building on these earlier studies, our survey analysis paired with public crime reporting data underscores how these phenomena can arise even if only *some* gentrifiers engage the police in this way.

We also note that while our quantitative analyses suggest that on average gentrifiers are less likely to report having called the police than their neighbors, several gentrifiers who did report calling the police shared multiple narratives within a single, open-ended response. This suggests that future work

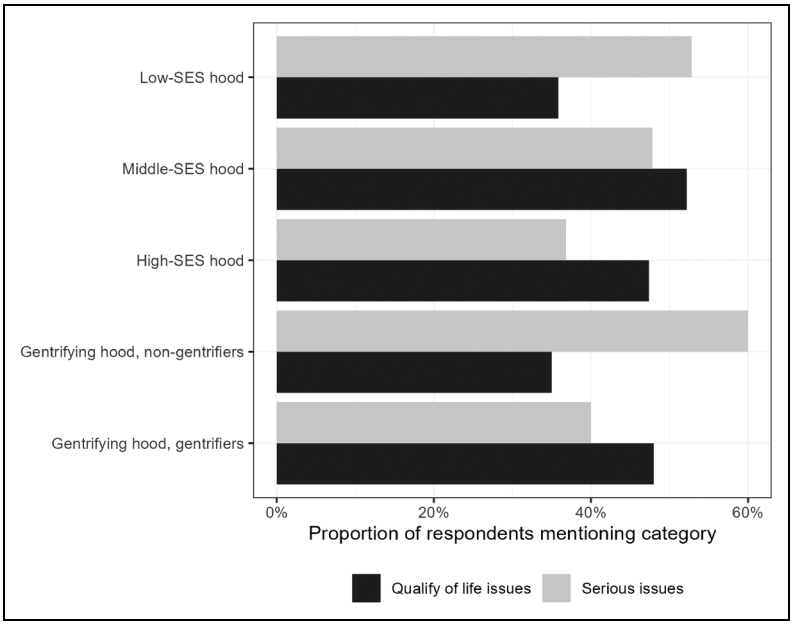

Figure 11. Proportion of respondents by neighborhood type who mention quality-of-life issues or serious crimes (violent or property crimes) in their open-ended responses on calling the police.

addressing this topic should not only measure whether individuals call the police, but the *frequency* at which they take this action and the *reasons* why they do so (building on the work of Doering 2020).

Building on a Single-Case Study

Our article has explored how gentrification shapes experiences of policing through analysis of one city. Case studies of single cities are useful for theory-building social science research. We do not claim that our findings would necessarily generalize to cities elsewhere in the United States, but we encourage future scholars to explore this possibility through other city-level case studies or national-level survey research.

The three key aspects of our survey-based research design—asking detailed questions about experiences of and engagement with policing, creating a measure of gentrifying areas, and creating a measure of gentrifier status—can all be replicated with local or national samples. We note that the primary challenge may be in creating measures of gentrifying areas that

can be paired with individual survey responses. Existing survey data sometimes includes respondents' ZIP code, which can be used to develop measures of gentrifying areas, as previously discussed. However, identification of an area as gentrifying using ZIP codes only is necessarily limited, given that neighborhood boundaries often cut across or divide ZIP codes, and ZIP codes rarely reflect subjective communities. We encourage scholars to collect more fine-grained geographic data in surveys to address this concern. Our survey asked respondents to identify the street corner nearest to their home, but other methods are possible (e.g., asking respondents to select an area on a map).

Conclusion

This article has offered an analysis of attitudes and experiences related to policing in gentrifying neighborhoods in Chicago. Joining the burgeoning social science literature on the social and political dynamics of gentrifying neighborhoods, we underscore that gentrification is more than just a macro-level transformation in urban political economy; it is also a process that creates new forms of longstanding race-class inequalities. Our use of survey research—supplementing prior studies that drew on aggregate population-level data, ethnographies, and interviews—shows how individual attitudes and behaviors are both shaped by and play a role in this process of inequality reproduction.

Our analysis of original survey data shows that gentrifiers express lower levels of concern about crime, call the police less frequently, and report fewer negative interactions with police compared to their non-gentrifying neighbors. In these ways, gentrifiers' experiences are similar to those of residents of high-SES neighborhoods, while non-gentrifiers' experiences are similar to those of residents of low-SES, race-class subjugated neighborhoods in the city. These data suggest that the phenomenon whereby race-class subjugated residents are "over-policed and under-protected" and privileged city residents have less contact with both policing and crime is replicated *within* gentrifying neighborhoods. In other words, although gentrification brings more affluent residents into neighborhoods with lower-SES residents, these two groups experience neighborhood life in markedly different ways. Our findings about residents' experiences are commensurate with recent studies that draw on aggregate population data and find that gentrification is associated with local-level increases in punitive policing practices and "quality-of-life" or "order maintenance" policing. By turning to individual-level survey data, we are able to build on these prior studies and show how policing practices are differentially experienced by residents of gentrifying neighborhoods.

Delving more deeply into *why* residents call the police, we found some evidence in open-ended survey responses and crime reporting data that gentrifiers are more likely to report quality-of-life crimes than their neighbors or residents of high-SES neighborhoods. Juxtaposed with the previous findings, these findings suggest that even as gentrifiers as a group report less concern about crime and contact with policing, a subset of gentrifiers may engage the police in a manner that increases their neighbors' likelihood of exposure to negative experiences with policing. While our evidence cannot show the extent to which this kind of engagement with the police causes the unequal exposure to punitive policing that our study and others have observed in gentrifying neighborhoods, our findings on this front help contextualize and interpret the findings of prior ethnographic studies about gentrifiers' relationship to policing. Several of these studies have traced how some gentrifiers invite increased policing, especially targeting quality-of-life concerns, in a manner that targets longtime residents. We find that gentrifiers overall are *less* likely to call the police or report being concerned about crime than their neighbors, but that those who do call the police are more likely to report quality-of-life crimes. Public crime reporting data also shows that gentrifying neighborhoods in Chicago are subject to more quality-of-life crime reports. Taken together, our findings suggest that gentrifiers reap benefits from punitive and unequal policing similar to their counterparts in high-SES neighborhoods, even if only *some* gentrifiers directly engage the police in a manner that elicits such policing practices.

The methodological approach and data sources used in this article also provide a blueprint for future research aiming to better understand the extent to which policy preferences of gentrifiers differ from those of longtime residents. The rigorous ethnographic and interview-based work that identified and conceptualized gentrification and built the theoretical foundation of this article, and additional survey data can assess how generalizable those insights are. We also recognize that, in order to render quantitative within-neighborhood comparisons tractable, our study relies upon a too-rigid binary of residents ("gentrifiers" vs. "non-gentrifiers") in gentrifying areas. While this article demonstrates that it is possible to study the opinions and experiences of differently positioned residents with greater nuance, future work should continue to draw from ethnographic studies to refine measurement of the complex social categories that exist *within* gentrifying neighborhoods. Indeed, our findings make clear that subsets of gentrifiers behave differently, and research using surveys, interviews, and ethnographies could all provide more insights on these differences.

We also encourage future research to connect findings about residents of gentrifying areas' experiences of policing with analysis of their broader social and political attitudes, in order to support the work of local

organizations working to address the deleterious effects of gentrification on the ground. For example, if gentrifiers do value "neighborhood diversity," as some prior research has found, there may be a window of opportunity to push them to think about how their explicit and implicit behaviors may misalign with this value by subjecting their neighbors to over-policing. As we build a greater understanding of the experiences and attitudes of differently positioned residents in gentrifying neighborhoods, we can equip local organizations with more complete information as they mobilize to redress urban inequalities, both in their longstanding manifestation overlaid on spatial segregation and new forms produced by processes of gentrification.

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Supplemental Material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

Notes

1. Though one quasi-experimental study conducted in England and Wales found that mobility rates—one proxy for displacement—were no higher in low-income gentrifying neighborhoods than they were in non-gentrifying areas (Freeman, Cassola, and Cai 2016).
2. Indeed, by emphasizing the authoritative use of state-legitimized force (see, e.g., Tilly 1985), scholarship that focuses on this dimension of political action may be addressing phenomena that are much more fundamental to politics and the state than the more common "first-face" focus of mainstream political science.
3. See Barton (2016) for a summary of approaches for identifying gentrifying neighborhoods, as well as an analysis of how sensitive results are to the method used to identify these neighborhoods.
4. Full details of the variables included in this analysis, and the full results of the principal components analysis, are also provided in the Appendix. A second significant factor, correlated positively with newness to the neighborhood and

Chicago and negatively with white racial identity and income, also emerged. We interpret this as largely related to something other than gentrification.

5. Our discussion focuses on the multivariate models, but we show results from bivariate models for two reasons. First, due to our small sample sizes, the uncertainty of estimates from multivariate models is quite high. Second, since race is an underlying element in the gentrifier status variable (based on the principal components analysis), we include bivariate models without controlling for race to show that the inclusion of controls does not dramatically change our findings.
6. We generated weights using U.S. Census data from Individual Public Use Microdata samples (Manson et al. 2022). For comparisons across the entire city, weights create a sample that approximates city-wide demography. For analyses within gentrifying areas, weights create a sample that approximates the cumulative demography of these areas.
7. Beck finds mixed evidence for the hypothesis that gentrification leads to increased 311 calls and no evidence that such calls are linked to police actions. Laniyonu finds that gentrifying neighborhoods see an increase in 311 calls, but finds no clear evidence that those calls lead to more police stops.
8. We grouped the types of crime reports in the city's data into four categories: violent, property, quality of life (QOL), and auxiliary. We report the ratios of QOL to violent crime reports. We also examined the ratios of QOL to Violent + Property crimes, QOL + Auxiliary to Violent crimes, QOL + Auxiliary to Violent + Property crimes. Each of these variations generated similar findings.
9. Under "quality of life," we include the following themes: graffiti, vandalism, and rock throwing; loitering or suspicious activity; noise complaints; youth-related; drug-related. Under "violent," we include the following themes: confirmed shootings, fighting or domestic abuse, fires and car accidents, and robbery.

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