

**The Right to Return: Returning Public-Housing Families and Their Decision-Making
Processes on Schooling**

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SUMMARY

This paper seeks to tell a particular story of public-housing demolition coupled with widespread school closings and relocations in one Chicago neighborhood. The Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation and Renaissance 2010, two concurrent displacement policies marketed as solutions toward addressing widespread poverty and underachievement in urban communities, are examined as two failed policies that exacerbated inequities rather than improved the overall conditions for public-housing families. The Right to Return, the ability to come back to the neighborhood after developments were demolished and mixed-income homes were built in its place, is a focal point of this study.

Coming back to a neighborhood that had dramatically changed, the families that did return continued to face some of the same challenges, as it relates to access to resources, they endured while living in public housing. Housing and school policies at the forefront of this process continued to ostracize the disenfranchised poor and further supported inequities and impediments to access to critical resources. In turn, as returning families made decisions regarding where they would live and where they would send their children to school, their choices were more a reflection of how they have chosen to overcome the social and economically engineered conflicts in society. The tendency to normalize one set of choices as "better or good" were rejected by returning families. The risks associated with trying to assimilate to a certain decision-making process outweighed any benefits aligned with the ultimate choices that returning residents made for their families.

In seeking to gain first-hand accounts of the dislocation process, former public-housing residents were interviewed. Using a snowball technique, six families that formerly lived in public housing developments were interviewed. Results indicate that when making decisions families

SUMMARY (continued)

were more inclined to make choices based on family, familiarity, and proximity. The prevailing (major) themes included: Family, community, familiarity, proximity and child adjustment.

These themes played an important role in understanding how families made the transition from public housing and, upon returning, how they chose schools for their children. The data collected has the potential to allow us to better understand the role of policy on the decision-making processes of parents as well as the future educational trajectories of children and youth

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The history of housing and school policy in Chicago helps to frame the argument that poor and minority populations have had the least access to decent affordable housing and education. The demarcations and stigmas of being poor, black and living in public housing in Chicago creates a unique opportunity to tell the story of the experiences of the families that were displaced and ultimately returned. The following chapters seek to tell the story of displacement policy and its aftermath, especially as it relates to how families made school-choice decisions upon returning. Of particular importance is understanding displacement policy from the perspective of those who were affected, whether such policies led to further isolation, and the types of decisions families were forced to make in order to negotiate the change in their lives. The story of public housing and schooling for Blacks (interchangeably used with African American) in Chicago has a chartered history of isolation, segregation, disengagement, and indignation

Statement of the Problem:

As public housing in Chicago began to deteriorate it would eventually be condemned by the federal and local government and the face of the urban center would be forever changed. Housing Opportunities for Everyone (HOPE VI), the federal housing policy that provided grants to rebuild, revitalize and even destroy dilapidated public housing developments, helped to fund the Chicago Housing Authority's (the Authority) Plan for Transformation. The Plan for Transformation was to reduce the total number of public housing units in the city from 38,000 to 25,000 (Smith, 2006, p.93). One of the tenets of The Plan for Transformation was that families that lived in developments that were slated for demolition, if qualified, could return to their neighborhoods where public housing once stood and live in the mixed-income community that was to be built in place of the public-housing developments. However, from the beginning, The Plan for Transformation and other concurrent policies were wrought with inequities. Nonetheless, it continued to sell itself as the best option to help families that were living in abject poverty. The Plan for Transformation proposed more viable living conditions, economic opportunity and better schooling options for returning public-housing families. In theory, The Plan for Transformation was perceived to be one of great opportunity but in practice there were several flaws that likely posed significant problems for families.

The Plan for Transformation was to represent a new beginning for some public-housing families that lived in neighborhoods described as "neighborhoods of exile," where only the jobless and social assistance recipients live" (Purdy, 2003, p. 48). However, families that were given the opportunity to return to the mixed-income developments were presented with certain unforeseeable challenges. For instance, access to "good" schools were sparse at best, in part, because of inequities found in Renaissance 2010. Renaissance 2010 was a policy designed to

give parents better educational options by closing underperforming schools and reopening some of them as charter or reconstituted schools. Although returning families lived in proximity to selective high schools and other higher performing schools, many families that did not have the social and human capital to access these schools were potentially left out. In addition to the challenges that returning families faced concerning school choice, families also had to acknowledge and address the additional consequences that hyper mobility would have on the social and academic well being of their children.

Arguably, there were problems with the design and intent of The Plan for Transformation and Renaissance 2010 because it was created within a macrosystem of policies designed for the long-term benefits of the affluent and middle class. This is problematic because each policy was marketed to poor families as a way to improve their overall conditions by giving them access to better choices. However, the policies failed to acknowledge that many public housing families did not have access to a lot of resources, namely income and certain types of social and cultural capital, that would allow them to make certain choices in the housing and education markets of the future. This is a problem because it calls into question the role of access in decision making and how the uneven distribution of resources reproduced inequalities that public housing families would be forced to navigate through. This dynamic presents a great opportunity to understand the process by which families were able to navigate such inequities and ultimately make decisions.

Purpose of Study & Corresponding Research Questions

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to investigate how an inequitable system of housing and school policy altered returning public-housing families' ability to make decisions on where to send their child to school.

Research Questions: This study will address several research questions:

1. What role does access to resources play in the decision-making processes of parents around schools?
2. What role does policy play in determining what types of options are made available to returning families when selecting schools?
3. Can choice markets work outside of the structure in which they were intended to flourish?
4. How do policies, markets, access to resources and other obstacles influence, support or impede the social and academic well-being of children from returning families?

Investigating the decision-making processes of returning families created an opportunity to learn how they adapted, thrived and made decisions in the face of systemic inequitable policies. All of the changes that returning families and their children had to endure potentially posed many challenges as they sought, in many ways, to start afresh. It is particularly important to understand how when faced with a new set of circumstances, the process by which families chose schools as well as the level of adjustment, if any, that their children/youth endured. Possibly, these circumstances reflect and tell a story that can provide a greater perspective into the experiences of returning families. Additionally, the decision-making processes that returning families used to choose schools may inform and help others.

The following section will examine three theories. These theories seek to provide a basis for understanding how inequality works and the role it may have played in the decision making of returning families.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework developed here informs this research by creating a roadmap of the intersection between systemic class and race inequities. These injustices worked together to create social, economic and political hurdles for returning public-housing families. Three theories will be examined, Social Reproduction Theory, Conflict Theory and Critical Race Theory. It is the intention of this framework to help explain how class and race have influenced policies that may have contributed to the negative experiences that poor Black families in Chicago have endured. This framework hopes to show a pattern of access denied, as result of policy decisions, for a large population of families living in Chicago's public housing developments. The historical background that will be presented seeks to provide a frame of reference for analyzing the segregation, isolation and degradation that characterized the displacement experience for many low-income, working-class Black families in Chicago. The history of denied access has altered the experiences of several generations and is an important component is the overall examination of this work. The long-standing inequities in housing and schooling, and the numerous failed attempts to overcome them, may have conditioned families to not take risks in their decision making processes based on their lack of confidence in the system. These theories seek to provide a clear path towards understanding how societies work to maintain certain status quos and how that may help to understand family decision making.

Social Reproduction Theory

The Theory of Social Reproduction helps to explain how structures in society are continuously reinforcing inequalities. It helps one to understand the role society and systems play in reproducing social conditions. These unfair practices play a large role in how people function

and react to certain conditions within society. The Theory of Social Reproduction is rooted in the work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. It offers a paradigm of class analysis argued to be capable of explaining persistent inequalities between education, family and social class (Tzanakis, 2011, p. 76). Education and social class are two constructs that have historically been used to reinforce unequal hegemonic norms. These inequities are so entrenched that they have the ability to produce environments where the day-to-day realities of families either help to reinforce hegemonic norms or outright challenge them as unjust and unfair. Understanding how these two constructs work together may help to better understand access and the how and the why behind returning public housing families decision making. For the purpose of this research, access will be best understood through a thorough examination of economic (as a function of social class) and educational access and its role in the decision-making process of returning public-housing families.

There are ever-present social divisions that exist within society. They oftentimes lead to class and race conflicts, tend to be generational, and can be very difficult to overcome. Economic disenfranchisement has produced a society, where having power and influence can determine who has access to certain resources. As a result of the political economy, public housing families were bound by a weakened economic structure that for generations reproduced families' social position in society. There was a significant wage-gap present, post-industrialism, that widened as employment opportunities became scarce for families living in public housing. Many of the jobs that were available were inaccessible rendering many Blacks without work and ultimately creating a community of families that were unemployed and/or underemployed. To further explain, prior to industry leaving Chicago, there were working class black and white families. As industries left cities and moved to the suburbs, the working class black family

became known as the urban poor. Many working class white families continued to be able to access these suburban jobs as many of them left the city to live in areas outside of the city. Many of these localities that white families were flocking to did not welcome Black residents. As a result, white families were able to follow the jobs and ultimately were able to ascend into the middle class, a socially mobile class by which societies norms would be based. This ascension into the middle class during this time can best be described as a result of Whiteness (as power) or the notion of simply being able to identify as white allows one to access certain economic opportunities that are not readily available to others.

Post-industrialism, employers were leaving cities and moving to suburbs. Having access to transportation was critical to maintaining a certain level of status via employment. Meanwhile, Blacks living in cities, presumably without transportation saw their opportunity to access gainful employment decrease significantly. Hunt (2009) notes “In 1984 only the poorest families lived in the CHA’s 30,000 family apartments, with just ten percent reporting employment and seventy three percent relying on the meager benefits of the federal program Aid to Families with Dependent Children” (p. 184). In 2000, as the buildings were set to come down, the average income and levels of unemployment remained relatively unchanged. Synderman and Daley (2000) indicate, “In 1999, the average CHA household income is \$7,884” (p.1). The problems of access to upward mobility, via employment, would be repeatedly experienced throughout generations for families living in public housing in Chicago creating major roadblocks towards ever achieving real economic equality between the rich and the poor. Brown (1995) notes, occupational stratification should be understood in terms of group conflict over scarce resources. This is because the middle classes have become increasingly dependent upon access to

professional occupations as a means of reproducing social status and privileged life-styles between the generations (.p31).

The social implications of being out of work or underemployed and forced outside the scope of social advancement were difficult obstacles for returning public-housing families because not having access to opportunities limits the types of choices one can make. Public-housing families would face other roadblocks that forced them into economic suffrage as a result of not truly being able to exercise choice in certain decision making processes. As families were unable to access jobs, they were essentially priced out of the housing market throughout Chicago. They would be forced to settle on housing designated for low-income families. Again, access to other market options was unattainable and the ability to choose was really a function of what was made available to families. Families would unlikely be able to generate any wealth through the housing market further disenfranchising them economically. These are only a few examples of ways that returning public-housing families were limited economically preventing them from obtaining a certain social class. Ultimately, the policies set in place were able to keep families within a particular social bracket and may have put limits on the types of decisions they were able to make upon displacement.

Policies set in place continue to reproduce inequitable social conditions making access to the middle class more challenging especially for low-income families living in public housing. Brown (1995) states “In Western capitalist societies the dominant form of social exclusion is individualist. It is based upon formal equality before the law, where entry into elite group is, at least in principle, attainable by all through an open competition for credentials” (p. 30). Entry into the middle class is oftentimes achieved through formal schooling. It is important that children have access to quality education during their formative years. It is equally imperative

that students be given the opportunity to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities that will help create inroads into the middle class. However, oftentimes, problems of affordability arise for some low-income families as they prepare to send their children to college. Those families that can afford to pay for school will likely have an advantage socially as they will have the opportunity to be formally trained and prepared for the jobs of the future. Credentialing through college credits, for example, gives an advantage to those who can afford them because it is a means of preparation for the jobs of the future. The job market can exclude a large segment of the population or as Parkin (1979) states, “Credentialism is a form of closure designed to control and monitor entry to key position in the division of labour” (as cited in Brown, 1995, p. 30). As a result, for families that are not able to receive credentials through formal education, a cycle of unemployment or underemployed is likely to reproduce and helps to perpetuate the already growing gaps in income. Such obstacles embedded within policies surrounding the affordability of college, force one to acknowledge the permanent conflicts within society as there is never truly equal access for all. Instead, there is a reproduction of isolation, exclusion and marginalization of families living in poverty.

Bourdieu argues that education plays an important role in reproducing social inequality and social exclusion. There is an undeniable link between educational attainment and future employment opportunities. Access to quality education separates the middle class from the working and poor class and arguably, is one factor that recreates social status throughout society. Collins (2009) states, “School is an agency of class domination, achieving its effects through ideological practices that inculcate knowledge and dispositions in class-differentiated social subjects, preparing them for their domination or dominated places in the economy and society” (p.35). How students are socialized matters in terms of how society perceives and receives them.

The idea that not all students are being educated under a uniform standard that prepares them with the necessary resources to be successful should create angst among educational policy makers and leaders of educational institutions. The social implication of using education as an agent for perpetuating inequality and predetermining outcomes for students based on class and race are immense and insidious. Theorists, such as Carnoy and Levin (1985) identify “Education as a site of class conflict and social contradiction and they emphasize the role of the state” (as cited in Collins, 2009, p.36). The systemic nature of knowingly under-educating a significant portion of the population supports the notion that education as a gateway to opportunity may never be truly realized for those outside the arch of power.

Research indicates middle class children have different experiences than working class students that help to reinforce and reproduce social status throughout society. It has been argued that all children are not prepared equally because the social advantages that middle class families children bring with them to the classrooms is unequally matched to that of a working-class student. Kaufman (2005) notes, “Middle class social reproduction is largely attributable to a structurally advantageous position” (p. 246). Schools are designed to systematically propagate for the middle-class. For instance, DiMaggio (1982) indicates “Teachers, it is argued, communicate more easily with students who participate in elite status cultures, give them more attention and special assistance, and perceive them as more intelligent or gifted than students who lack cultural capital” (p. 190). Such practices diminish the educational environment and achievements of other students in classrooms with possible consequences in the future. Building strong educational and social identities of some and negating others creates a division that extends far beyond the classroom. Delpit (2012) states, “Given cultural differences that exist among racial groups, African-American children’s intelligence is often ignored or

misrepresented” (as cited in Molett, 2013, p. 77). Students who “lack” certain cultural capital may begin to feel devalued in the educational process, potentially leading to disengagement over time. Teacher biases or self-fulfilling prophecies of low-income, African-American children undermine the gifts and talents that these children possess. Understanding the processes of socialization involved in social reproduction may help to better explain the how and the why of disengagement pertaining to reports of low-academic achievement of low-income students. How teachers invest in the abilities of all students by valuing what each child bring into the classroom may matter more than social status when examining long-term educational outcomes. In examining the decision-making of returning public-housing families surrounding where to send their child to school, selecting educational environments where they feel their child will be valued is likely to factor into their choices.

Class-based doctrines in classrooms and schools promote certain ideologies as common or standard and failure to adhere to such ideals reproduces exclusionary measures that allow the status quo to remain intact. Gordon (1984) questions, “How is the ruling-class hegemony maintained in schools, if not by direct imposition of the dominant ideology on a passive working class” (p. 107)? The lack of course offerings is one way an ideology of inferiority can be reinforced. For instance, “Underrepresented minorities tend to have less access to advanced courses at the same school than other groups and tracking has a strong and consistent impact on the rigor and intensity of courses completed in high school” (Finn, 1999, as cited in Camara and Schmidt, p.8). Students that are trained with certain skills to be successful in college are one step closer to maintain or ascending into the middle class. For other students, class offerings can be viewed as a gatekeeping measure to keep certain types of students from easily obtaining a certain social status through education. Collins (2009) states, “Material resources were ultimate causes

in the reproduction of cultural and educational inequality” (p.35). Thereby, arguably, schools that do not provide the types of resources that can provide quality educational experiences for all children can be viewed as institutions that are socially engineered to reproduce societal inequities and extend status in a strategic and systemic manner. These practices are common and, although challenged, they continue to persist.

Lipman (2004) argues, “Most African American and Latino/a are measured against the success of schools that are generally more white, more middle class. Policies that regulate and punish especially African American, and to some extent Latino/a students and schools also contribute to the pathologizing of African American and Latino/a communities” (p.178). The continual normalizing of education and the acceptance of such practices by people making sweeping policy decisions provides evidence that the current system is flawed and by design cannot create equal educational opportunities for all. As Lareau (2000) states, “Possession of high status cultural resources does not therefore automatically lead to a social investment. Rather these cultural resources must be effectively activated by individuals, in and through their own actions and decisions” (as cited in Kaufmann, 2005, p. 246). Unfair educational practices have to be supported via legislation. The perpetrators of injustice continue to support educational policies that maintain the current status quo and reproduce social advantages for some.

Policy continues to be top down with very little invited participation from black low-income families further disengaging families from an already established social order. In effect, the reliance upon those things that are familiar and accessible may help to govern decision making for families living in public housing. Social Reproduction Theory helps to better understand the difficulties that returning public housing families faced when being displaced and how systems may force certain decisions to be made by families because of the inequalities that

never allow them to truly access equal opportunity. Conflict Theory builds on Social Reproduction by showing how inequalities in place that support the status quo can lead to major conflicts in society.

Conflict Theory

Capitalism is based upon a system of industry and trade controlled by private owners for profit. This type of economic structure always creates social, economic and political disparity. Such inequality is often evidenced by the level of access to adequate housing, schooling and economic opportunity. The wealthy tend to operate from a position of authority, power and control because they tend to have more access to resources and power that can effect change by maintaining the status quo. Those that have not acquired wealth may have less access and may operate from a subservient and reactionary position. According to Tumin (1953) “Social stratification systems function to provide the elite with the political power necessary to procure acceptance and dominance of an ideology which rationalizes the status quo, whatever it may be, as logical, natural and morally right” (p.393). In effect, this dominance creates a society where one group is superordinate and has all of the power to make and enforce policy and another group is subordinate and must follow those rules. Oftentimes, the superordinate does not create and/or support policy that would allow the subordinate group to make any real progress, thereby, maintaining and protecting their elite status in society. This tiered-class system, of sorts, creates a certain level of class conflict and inequity that is ever present. This class conflict that permeates all facets of society is formally known as Conflict Theory. This theory seeks to explain how inequities elicit perpetual class conflicts and how they continue to actively function and benefit certain segments of the population.

Conflict Theory, derived from the ideas of Karl Marx, is a social-science perspective that holds that stratification is dysfunctional and harmful in society, with inequality perpetuated because it benefits the rich and powerful at the expense of the poor. The conflict perspective views social life as competition and society as a dynamic entity constantly undergoing change driven by class conflict. Conflicts arise in the distribution of valued goods and services in society (Kerbo, 2006, 141). In considering the focus of this study, there are several instances of class conflict embedded in housing and school policies. The fight for adequate housing and schools has been a constant source of contention between the rich and the poor. Policies that reinforce such class conflicts are the basis for understanding how and possibly why returning families made certain school-choice decisions.

In most cases, the impact of housing and school policy in Chicago on the lives of residents can be differentiated by class. These inequities are systemic and arguably, intentional, in the quest to maintain levels of dominance and influence over a particular class of people. Lipman (2004) notes, “In the United States, dominant interests convince the vast majority of people to accept massive social inequality and unequal power relations through processes of cultural hegemony” (p. 14). Conflict Theorists believe that there are six types of class conflicts grounded in inequality. All six tenets of Conflict Theory are identified but only four are applicable to this study. Harris (2003) notes that Conflict Theory supports the notion that:

1. Different groups struggle over societal resources and compete for social advantages. Classes exist in conflict with each other as they vie for power and economic, social, and political resources;

2. Inequality results from a system of domination and subordination where those with the most resources exploit and control others;
3. The most powerful use their resources to reproduce their position and advantages. Elites shape societal beliefs and laws to make their unequal privilege seem legitimate and fair;
4. There is blocked mobility in the system because the working class and poor are denied the same opportunities as others;
5. The most vital jobs in society—those that sustain life and the quality of life—are often the least rewarded;
6. Inequality prevents the talents of those at the bottom from being discovered and used. Hence, the more stratified a society, the less likely that society will benefit from the talents of all its citizens

The following paragraphs gives a historical overview of class conflicts in Chicago's housing market between the rich, poor, black and white and demonstrate how the long lasting effects of these conflicts, overtime, may have influenced family decision making for returning families.

Historical Conflicts Over Housing

Historically, the struggle over societal resources and the competition for social advantage has been storied for low-income, working-class African-American families in Chicago. They have constantly been in conflict with an elite bureaucracy over their right to an equal share of vital resources, such as housing and schools. For example, post Jim Crow, integration became a major political buzz word that was used by politicians that gave many Black Americans,

particularly those that were moving from the South to the North, hope that they could escape discrimination. However, many of the same injustices were present upon their arrival in Chicago. Anti-integration housing practices became a lawful and calculated way of robbing Black families of the American Dream. Such practices in the housing market in Chicago created more marginalization and oppression. According to Coates (2014), From the 1930s through the 1960s, Black people across the country were largely cut out of the legitimate home-mortgage market through means both legal and extralegal.

Black Southerners moved to Chicago in hopes of securing jobs and self-sufficiency. Upon finding work, many families wanted to continue to fulfill the American Dream by buying a home. However, Black families were faced with the realities of restrictive covenants and contract peddling. Restrictive covenants legally marginalized African Americans from gaining access and owning homes in certain neighborhoods across the city. Restrictive covenants, as noted by Browley (1978) “Were to preclude property from ever being sold to Blacks” (p. 56). The rights-based view of housing opportunity developed in the 1930’s and 1940’s among African American civil rights leaders in response to the blatant racism of restrictive covenants that blocked the sale of property to nonwhites and also often to Jews (Hunt, 2009, p. 101). Restrictive covenants were active throughout much of Chicago and even for those Blacks that could afford to buy homes in the city, real estate developers would not sell to them. By the 1940s, Chicago led the nation in the use of restrictive covenants, and about half of all residential neighborhoods in the city were effectively off-limits to blacks (Coates, 2014). As a result, many families were ushered into public-housing developments located in certain residential tracts in the city. Economic disenfranchisement via restrictive covenants upheld the status quo, denied many African

Americans from acquiring wealth through homeownership and, as a result, potentially kept many Blacks isolated in one part of the city and in certain types of housing. According to Kerbo (2006), “Wealth is accumulated assets in the form of various types of valued goods, such as real estate, stocks, bonds or money held in reserve” (p.20).

This isolation and exclusion from the rest of the housing market almost rendered it impossible for working-class Blacks to access varied degrees of social capital and thus extend their social networks and access to resources outside of their community. Conflict Theory identifies how certain policies tend to exacerbate inequality as evidenced by the roadblocks put in place making it difficult for poor families’ to secure any upward mobility within the system. This is of particular importance because such practices did not allow for a fair competition of resources between the poor and the rich. Essentially, the opportunity to compete for access to the social and economic advantage that owning a home could potentially bring was stripped away. The struggle for basic resources such as housing would become a major issue for Black families due to the shortage that would ensue. These conflicts intensified as more policies were put into place to reproduce the position and advantage of the most powerful.

Other lawful exclusionary policies and practice include Contract Peddling. In designated tracts where Black families could try to achieve homeownership, the practice of Contract Peddling robbed Black families, many times over, of generating wealth and oftentimes led to the eventual displacement of working-class families from their homes into other segregated sects of the city. As illustrated by Coates (2014), Contract Peddling a predatory agreement that combined all the responsibilities of homeownership with all the disadvantages of renting—while offering the benefits of neither. In a contract sale, the seller kept the deed until the contract was

paid in full—and, unlike with a normal mortgage, would acquire no equity in the meantime. Missing a single payment, would immediately forfeit the down payment, all monthly payments, and the property itself. Once families were forced to move, they did not have very many options within the city limits to reside because they were not welcomed. This, in effect, pushed many Black families to the urban center where public housing would be their only option.

Contract paddling was used against Black working families that had the means to afford a home under normal conditions. These acts against humanity were not simply based upon the class of people but was compounded and supported as an exclusionary measure based on race that was inherently opposite of the integration rhetoric being spewed by politicians and bureaucrats alike. As Conflict Theory notes, a system of domination and subordination can be achieved only by those with the most resources. Despite the resources of the Black working class, in that, they had the means to afford homes, there was a more powerful system in place that could exploit and control their housing experiences. This ultimately lead to a system of blocked mobility. These acts coupled with other measures, such as redlining, justified the frustration and unrest that was building within the Black community.

Redlining established by the Federal Loan Home Bank Board (FHLBB) “established unified national lending standards designed to evaluate neighborhood demographics as a factor far exceeding the condition of the appraised property itself. FHLBB officials rated entire residential communities as hazardous bank investments whenever they were inhabited by undesirable occupants. Ultimately, the standardized lending policies of the FHLBB systematically disadvantaged low-income and minority city-dwelling residents from obtaining mortgage financing, and by midcentury they exacerbated the disproportionately substandard

urban housing conditions endured by nonwhites in the United States” (Woods, 2012, p.1). In other words as, Satter states, “The Federal Housing Administration refused to insure mortgages in neighborhoods that contained more than a "smattering" of African-Americans. Without the FHA guarantees, banks refused to make loans, essentially locking blacks out of mortgages”(as cited by Brotman, 2015, p.1). With all of the red tape families of color endured compounded by the lack of affordable housing in areas where Black families were welcomed, the struggle for basic societal resources, such as shelter, was challenging. As families grew tired of the stratified nature of housing, the community sought to come together in an effort to fight the system. The Contract Buyers League sought to fight against the injustice of restrictive covenants, contract paddling and redlining.

The political movements by residents, although not as powerful as the bureaucracy it was fighting against, continued to be a mainstay in the fight for quality housing. The Contract Buyers League was a collective of African American Chicago homeowners originating in Petworth on Chicago's Front Side, who, in the late 1960s protested the exploitative sale of homes to Blacks through contract selling. As families fell victim to the unfair practices that were being used against them, they decided to withdraw their monthly payments for an entire year. The Contract Buyers risked eviction but knew this was the only way to exert power in a situation in which many felt powerless. Despite the protest, some families still lost their homes. Other families were able to get their contracts negotiated into mortgages. While there were some wins and losses, the Contract Buyers set the precedent for the fight against unfair housing practices.

Despite the momentum they built with their protests and the level of awareness they brought to unfair housing practices, the Contract Buyers League was unable to get any justice on

the Federal level despite the estimated five hundred million dollars that was stolen from the Black community throughout the years (Brotman, 2015, p. 1). Conflict Theorists identify how unfair laws are legitimized and how privilege ultimately prevails. This created a permanent barrier to justice for Black families. The Contract Buyers League is only one example of how the Black community coalesced only to have their efforts create smaller waves than initially hoped. As time progressed, low-income and working class Black families would face similar defeat and conflict trying to fight against unequal but lawful housing policies and procedures. Widespread opposition would grow in the fight against demolition of public-housing developments, only to have thousands of families displaced and in search of another place to live.

Conflicts & Schooling

Historically, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) reform agenda has been riddled with criticism. Reform efforts to “fix” the system have been tested and oftentimes proven ineffective towards improving widespread educational gains. Yet, inequitable school-based policies and ideologies continue to be enforced only to be justified as fair, legitimate and commonsense. The latest “fix” for schools includes closing many schools in the urban center. Reasons for closing schools include low-test scores, under-enrollment and dilapidated buildings, under an auspice of creating more equitable learning opportunities for families and students by giving them better options. However, accounts by parents indicate that there was not much equity associated with decisions to close schools and that the policymakers used the aforementioned and other excuses, such as school repairs, as a mask to cover up the real reasons that schools were closing. For example,

Over a hundred Chicago schools have building assessments showing over \$4 million in needed repairs – the reason given by CPS for closing Carver Elementary. Parent Darlene Penn pointed at new housing being built across the street, where Rose Garden used to stand, and said, That’s the reason they’re closing Carver Elementary. Until last year, the school was one of a handful with seven years of consecutive test score gains, and it had the highest math increases in the area. If Carver closes, many students will end up at lower performing schools. There’s a steamroller going through the schools on One Way Boulevard,” she said. Stability works. We need to give these children stability. (CPS Parent, 2010)

In similar fashion, in the fight against discriminatory housing policies, unions, parents and social justice groups were unable to generate enough influence to thwart the closing of certain schools. Batchell (2009) notes that, “The biggest threat to finally achieving equitable and quality education in Chicago's low-income African American and Latino/a schools is not the individual who carries out the policy but a system of mayoral control and corporate power that locks out democracy (p.1). The closing of schools garnered great support from the Mayor, the school chief, corporate entities, etc. all of whom had great political influence and power based on a system of domination and subordination that was heavily planted in Chicago. The support of some of the city’s highest and most powerful ranking officials help to further the inequitable education agenda. Conflict Theory identifies how the most powerful are able to use their resources to reproduce their position and advantage. In the case of the Mayor of Chicago, he appoints the school board that votes on major school reform efforts. In other words, there is a structure in place that reinforces the power that the Mayor has over major decisions regarding

education. As a result of such control, a new wave of schooling was certain and despite pushback from the community the power-laden agenda would be fulfilled.

The public discourse around better educational opportunities for all children was ultimately flawed for low-income and working-class families of color. In effect, one could argue that school reform in the urban center created more stratification via educational inequality because it led to hyper-mobility, in many cases, as students moved from school to school. Students in the urban center were being sent to schools that were moving them further away from where the proposed “better schools” were to be located, thereby, rendering it almost impossible that they would attend the types of schools that other middle class families were sending their children to. Additionally, as students were shuffled, learning was potentially impacted. It created an unstable environment for students, teachers and parents. As a result, such obstacles likely trump the benefits associated with attending so-called better schools and the competition for social advantage through education becomes more difficult to traverse. The stability that is afforded many middle- class families, as it relates to schooling, looked very different for poor Black kids in the urban center. Macro-level policies that allowed widespread closures of schools and the disenfranchisement of the families that attended closing schools was ultimately harmful. Such policies perpetuate the inequities and conflicts evermore leading to blocked mobility within the system, and ultimately society, because the working poor and their families are continually being denied the same opportunities as others. Conflict Theory is limited because it focuses more on class and ignores the role that race plays in the decision making process. The following theory will seek to link both class and race.

Critical Race Theory

Conflict Theory primarily focuses on class. Class and race are two constructs that are mutually exclusive, yet it is very difficult to talk about one without the other. Therefore, it is important to understand the role that class and race played in the displacement and return of public-housing residents. Critical Race Theory (CRT) helps to demonstrate such interconnectedness.

As the Civil Rights Movement's momentum began to slow, legal scholars became even more critical of the legal system and its treatment of minorities and other oppressed populations. As a result, CRT was developed out of legal scholarship as a response to "perceived delays in civil rights advancements" (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993; Stanley, 2006; Taylor, 2009). The primary foci of CRT are on social justice, liberation, and economic empowerment (Tate, 1997). It provides a critical analysis of race and racism from a legal point of view by identifying that power structures are based on white privilege and white supremacy, which perpetuates the marginalization of people of color (ASHE Higher Education Report, 2015, p.5). CRT helps to better detail how, and in many cases why, certain actions were allowed to take place and ways to fight against the unjust practices towards poor Black families living in Chicago.

As described by Delgado & Stefancic (2001); Solorzano & Yosso (2002) and Taylor, (2009), there are 7 tenets of CRT: (a) the permanence of racism; (b) experiential knowledge (and counter storytelling); (c) interest convergence theory; (d) Whiteness as property; (e) intersectionality (f) critique of liberalism; and (g) commitment to social justice.

For the purpose of this research, the focus will be on the first five tenets of CRT as those are the most applicable. The permanence of racism in Chicago runs deep. Chicago's anti-integrationist policies that have historically oppressed immigrants and minorities alike has created what Coates (2014) identifies as "one of the most segregated cities in the country, a fact that reflects assiduous planning". Racism in the housing market was commonplace and continues to directly impact housing patterns in Chicago. "Racially discriminatory practices of federally sponsored mortgage programs resulted in high levels of black residential segregation as well as encouraged private lending institutions to not make loans to black inner-city neighborhoods" (Haymes, 1995, p.6.) There are clearly identifiable Black neighborhoods and there are clearly identifiable White neighborhoods, or non-black neighborhoods. According to recent census data, "76 percent of the city's African-American population would have to move in order to achieve complete integration" (Bowean, 2016, p.1). This is a lofty goal given that, historically, there has been stout opposition by non-blacks toward integration policy. Such policy has led to white flight and riots. Policy agendas continue to reinforce exclusionary unjust policies such as the ushering of Black families into public housing developments.

During the Great Migration from the South to the North, the Black population in Chicago was growing exponentially. The housing market, however, was not growing at the same rate. Efforts to find housing by many Blacks were thwarted by unwelcomed landlords and neighbors and, as a result, Blacks were being forced to live in certain tracts of the city. Slum land was cleared and in an effort to eliminate the threat of integration and to keep angry anti-integrationist happy, the City of Chicago, determined it would be best to build large towers in one area of the city and house most of the migrating Black population there.

Despite opposition and the discontent expressed by residents regarding not being welcome in certain areas in the city, the public housing developments were built as the only option at the time for Black families. By virtue of being Black in Chicago one was rendered as less than and systematically controlled to the point where all autonomy was lost when deciding where to live. These neighborhoods would eventually be neglected by the City of Chicago and their neglect was later used as a means to criminalize poor Black people as perpetrators of the savage conditions in which they lived. Lipman (2004) notes that “With economic and material decline, the projects became sites of violence and permanent police occupation and terror. They also became ideological sites for the demonization of African Americans. Dehumanizing conditions created by the state were ascribed to the people living there, who were defined in the media as criminal and savage” (p. 73). Throughout the Civil Rights movement there was a wave of momentum that seemed to propel the basic civil rights of Black people throughout the country in a positive direction. Housing policies in Chicago proved that race still permeates all facets of society and that there was still work to be done in terms of fighting for legitimate laws and policies that would allow minorities to truly overcome the unjust and unequal.

Despite how societal beliefs are shaped, CRT lends itself to the importance of hearing first-hand accounts, or counterstories, that can provide objectivity to the experience of living in public housing as well as the process of displacement and return. Arguably, most importantly it reestablishes value around the displacement narrative that residents have to tell. These stories create insight into the strategies that families’ employed throughout the displacement process and seeks to dispel perceptions and opinions formulated by others. Counterstories are a lens into the everyday realities that influence how families decide and ultimately help to answer the questions surrounding choice. A counter story is defined as “a tool for exposing, analyzing, and

challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege” (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 32). It is through that lens that we are able to challenge this notion of supremacy. The common narrative around demolishing the public housing developments and closing schools, was this notion of providing better living and educational experiences for families. This discourse seeks to imply that the daily experiences of living in public housing and attending schools in the urban center were in need of dramatic changes. However, returning families have spoken of the good within their communities and within the classrooms and schools that their children attended. Families speak of strong social capital in housing developments between other residents and within the community as well as the longstanding relationships that they have with the schools in the community. These are experiences they consider to be priceless and that have meaning and value to them culturally.

Counterstories attempt to deconstruct hegemonic ideals about how people should function in society. They go against the grain of normalization by rejecting the “one size fits” all agenda. Rather, they seek to validate their own experiences, cultures and/or customs as relevant. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) note that “The hope is that well-told stories describing the reality of black and brown lives can help bridge the gap between their worlds and those of others. Engaging stories can help us understand what life is like for others” (p. 41). Challenging white supremacy by countering it with tales of truth and objectivity allow public housing families to make choices based on what they see as best for their children based their everyday realities.

Interest Convergence Theory, a third tenet of CRT, challenges intent. Interest convergence is grounded on the premise that People of Color’s interest in achieving racial equality advances only when those interests “converge” with the interests of those in power typically White, heterosexual, Christian, able bodied males (Bell, 1980; Brown & Jackson, 2013;

Taylor, 2009). To that point, in thinking about housing and educational policy in Chicago, it would appear that Interest Convergence is applicable to the tearing down of developments and the closing of schools. For instance, public housing structures had been declining for many years. The lack of economic investment in poor communities of color was commonplace, especially after the manufacturing businesses left the neighborhood. There had been many efforts to help the neighborhood shake the negative persona but instead public housing developments and the schools in the community continued to be stigmatized.

However, as time moved on and opportunities for investment grew, a more concerted interest in the urban center developed. Interest convergence is grounded in Marxist theory—that the bourgeoisie (middle to upper class) tolerate the proletariat's (working class) advances when those advances also benefit the bourgeoisie (Taylor, 2009, p.9). After years of disinvestment, conversations were being had on how to make the area better, in an effort to attract more businesses to Chicago. Now, the longstanding efforts by community members seeking better opportunities for families living in the urban center converged with the interest of the elites, or “White people with the power to influence policy, economics, and political advancement” (ASHE, p.9). The concerns of community members in the urban center and the agenda set forth by the elite ignited a convergence, but only because the elite had more to potentially gain than to lose. As a result, efforts to better the community became a priority. Efforts to save the residents, if you will, became a priority. Efforts to invest in the educational opportunities of poor Black children became a priority. However, this convergence ultimately made the powerful stronger and pushed thousands of Black families out of the neighborhoods and schools. The intent of the convergence, in many ways was nefarious, however as a system of power works, there is very little recourse for such acts. Nonetheless, it is imperative to speak truth to power as

Critical Race Theorists continue to fight against such injustices. Policy decisions were made about the land and space that public housing occupied and did not leave very many options for families as they would essentially be moved out, priced out and left out of the vision for new schools and homes that were envisioned by Chicago elites.

Most of the tenets of CRT speak to the idea of Whiteness as Power. Critical race scholars have claimed that the concept of Whiteness can be considered a property interest because those individuals allowed to self-identify as White have social advantages (DeCuir & Dixson, 2005; Harris, 1993). Their social advantage can be seen in access and resource. For instance, whiteness affords one to be able to live in their neighborhood of choice, oftentimes in neighborhoods that are known for having “good” schools. These schools tend to serve as the model for education across the board. As whiteness is normalized, there are few, if any, adjustments that are needed in order for them to successfully exist within the system. Their access to “good” schools affords them access to social capital that is generational. Other parents that already have children that attend choice schools can help parents that may have questions about the overall enrollment process. They can also provide other parents with school-house information (information about teachers, staff and extracurricular activities) that may be determining factors for how they choose schools. Buras notes that “White identity has historically enabled its possessors to use and enjoy a host of benefits and assets and to exclude communities of color from such entitlements. (Buras, 2015, p. 39). Such benefits continue to amass, whereas, “Whiteness can be bartered and exchanged for other forms of property and capital. Whiteness (as a privilege) could be exchanged for access to high-paying careers, better neighborhoods (such as majority White suburban neighborhoods), and higher quality schools

(Manning, 2013, p.11). These types of advantages continue to undergird conflicts as the most powerful use their resources to reproduce their position and advantages.

At the same time that whiteness affords them the benefit of being able to enjoy such privilege, non-whites are faced with the challenges that are associated with trying to assimilate to societies norms. Failure to successfully accommodate the norm (whiteness) perpetuates the racial divide. Returning families would be forced to make everyday changes when exercising school choice outside of their immediate neighborhoods. Some of the charter schools and selective enrollment schools would be located outside of the urban center. This is of particular importance because many returning families were accustomed to sending their child to the neighborhood school within walking distance. As a result, distance would become a factor. As distance has the potential to be problematic, so too do the costs associated with the added travel to and from school. Other potential disadvantages include not having access to the right types of social and human capital that would allow parents that are new to the choice education system to navigate through it successfully. Although social capital was well established between families living in public housing, there were very few opportunities for residents to expand their social network.

Upon being forced out of the developments, many were scattered even further away, thereby creating a larger obstacle to gaining access to other parents that may be able to assist returning families with the process of navigating through the choice school system. In critically examining this tenet of CRT, one recognizes that this is an important component towards understanding some of the real challenges that families faced when making decisions. Whiteness as power reifies the notion that choice and decision making for returning families would be a

function of race. In other words, poor Black families being displaced were never going to be privy to the advantage because their race automatically placed them at a disadvantage. If they were to access any portion of the power that came with whiteness, they would have to work for it. As a result, decision making may have been reflective of their inability to truly navigate the system of whiteness and the desire to avoid the same resistance they had experienced in the past.

The rights to possession of land and exclusion of those living on the land is another example of Whiteness as Property. The laws and policies that protect the perpetrators of acts against poor people, such as demolishing the homes of thousands of residents in public housing, reifies how power (whiteness) continues to be protected at any cost to others. “White people in the United States have been willing to sacrifice People of Color’s well-being for economic self-interests and the continued subordination of People of Color” (Taylor, 1998 as cited in ASHE higher education report). As history has shown, there have been many instances of land grabs where land once occupied by a group was stolen and the inhabitants were forced away. These instances can be described as the power to exercise eminent domain over oppressed groups. Becher (2014) and Christophers (2010) state “Eminent domain allows the state—at whatever scale—to take private property where the incumbent owner is unwilling to sell, if (as already indicated) it pays “just” compensation and can demonstrate the taking is for a public use. The property thus acquired can then be used either directly by the state itself—e.g. for transportation infrastructure, public utilities, government buildings, and so forth—or it can be transferred to private third parties, for instance for private redevelopment purposes” (as cited in Christophers and Niedt, 2015, p. 4).

In closing, Harris (1993) argued that the intersectionality of race and property have contributed to establishing and sustaining racial and economic subordination (in the ASHE higher education article p. 12). I argue that the intersection of race, property and class continue to work in tandem to recreate inequities and limit the types of choices that returning public housing families have available to them. Nonetheless, returning families found ways to exist and make decisions within the system. Social Reproduction Theory, Conflict Theory and CRT are three theories that are designed to help facilitate an understanding of families' personal experiences related to their own decision-making process. The following literature review will provide a more comprehensive overview of the research related to this study.

CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED LITERATURE

This literature review seeks to provide a comprehensive roadmap of the social, economic and political systems that undergirded the wholesale transition of families living in public housing. These systems potentially played a large role in the decision-making processes of returning public-housing families seeking to make decisions on where to send their children to school. A series of policies that have been introduced, in Chicago and around the country, have shown how top-down policy implementation has the potential to fundamentally control and shape the economic and social landscape of a community. Some of these policies are Neoliberalism, HOPE VI, Renaissance 2010, The Plan for Transformation, Capital Processes and Choice. Understanding the policy language as well as the way in which they were implemented may help paint a clear picture of the elusive trajectories that many returning public-housing families would face when seeking to select schools for their children. (At times, pseudonyms will be used to protect anonymity). This review of literature is intended to analyze a set of policies that arguably denied access, unevenly distributed resources and created oppressive conditions under which returning families would make life-altering decisions for their children.

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism has transnational roots. International juggernauts, such as China, England and the United States set the stage for an uprising, of sorts, by revolutionizing how countries revitalized their economies. According to Jessop (2002), “The initial rise of neoliberalism as a wide-ranging economic and political strategy was associated with the neoliberal regime shift in Britain and the U.S in the late 1970s. This reflects the fact that their uncoordinated market

economies were less well equipped organizationally and institutionally than were coordinated economies to manage the crisis-tendencies of Atlantic Fordism. That provided more fertile ground for the rise of neoliberalism. This was followed by similar shifts in Canada, Australia and New Zealand” (p. 457).

Neoliberalism grew in dominance and changed the urban landscape economically and socially. Neoliberalism was “The first instance of a theory of political economic practices that proposed that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedom and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices (Harvey, 2005, p.2). However, neoliberalism would create an environment where the economic and social freedoms were binding at best for poor Black people. The perpetual state of poverty left many families living in the urban center without the power to exercise certain types of decisions because they lacked access to critical resources, namely economic stability. The power to have flexibility and variety in choice was not available to the thousands of families that were without work. Nonetheless, families were able to make critical decisions while being bound by their circumstances. This process of understanding the adaptability of returning parents is important to the conversation of decision making and critical to answering the overall research question in this study.

Neoliberalism situates itself as a construct steeped in racist principles that changed the trajectory of thousands of families living in Chicago’s urban center by contributing to the beginnings of underemployment and unemployment for many Black families. It helps to situate decision-making within a scope of poverty, lack of access and opportunity. Neoliberalism was felt locally in Chicago, especially in regard to labour and industry. Chicago was once a town that

thrived off manufacturing. According to Wacquant (1989), “In the core of the city's Far side, blue-collar workers (operatives, laborers, craftsmen, and foremen combined) numbered 42,000 — over half of all adults were employed; thirty years later, a mere 6,200 blue-collar workers remained and 73 percent of the residents were out of a job” (p. 511). As the neoliberal school of thought began to trickle into major cities, it became more and more pervasive and Fordist industry principles in Chicago were virtually eliminated. Fordist labor unions, industries, mass production, agriculture and resource extraction proved to be roadblocks in the new economic world order. Theodore (2003) notes, “Chicago-the city of broad shoulders where industry would provide work for anyone with the will and the muscle-provided an enduring image of a city that had thrived during the first century of large-scale industrialization. This image was shattered during the tumultuous 1980s when deindustrialization ravaged older manufacturing centers and forever altered the city’s industrial landscape” (p.1811). The shattering effects of deindustrialization created widespread economic and social hardships for many Black families in Chicago. As deeply rooted as this problem would become a generational cycle of poverty would ensue reproducing a social class that would, as Conflict Theorists denote, be denied many of the same opportunities as others outside of public housing.

In Chicago, the economic impact that neoliberalism had on working-class families was widespread. As noted prior, factories employed thousands of working-class families. As labor was deregulated and industries that working class families traditionally worked began to shutter and close, working-class families were left with few viable employment options. For many public housing and working-class residents deindustrialization “signaled a wrenching period of socioeconomic dislocation. City-wide unemployment rates surged above the national average topping 11 percent in 1982” (Doussard, Peck and Theodore, 2009, 184). According to Harvey

(2005), “Working-class institutions such as labour unions and political parties of the left had very little influence with the state apparatus” (p. 11).

During industrialization, manufacturing jobs were concentrated in the urban center. As the population became more dense as a result of housing policies, it became easier for workers to join together and to fight for better labor practices. The power of unions to fight for better labor laws, via strikes, was unsettling to industrialists. Haymes (1995) notes, “Individual industrialists had realized that the dense concentration of workers in a single geographical area within the city encouraged them to frequently compare their work conditions with those of workers in other factors” (p.74). In an effort to thwart the momentum of the working class, many industries left the central city and moved to the suburbs. For the white working class, moving to the suburbs and working was more of a reality but for many of the Black working-class they were, by law, banned from owning/renting property in suburban communities. Satter (2009) notes, “For Black Chicagoans, the new suburbs generally excluded them; similarly, within the city limits most African Americans who sought to rent or buy outside of the Black Belt or Near West Side were curtly informed by white real estate agents that the apartment or building they inquired about was no longer available” (p. 37). As a result, many working-class Blacks were left behind in dense communities’ void of any economical opportunities. This exclusion and denied access to greater opportunities is a common theme that helps to explain family decision making over time. As groups of people are excluded from certain processes it may influence how they choose in the future.

After industrialist left the city center there was very little incentive for the business district to invest in communities where public housing and low-income black families lived. In the industrial city, which was organized around mass production, the center of the city was the

site for the coordination of raw materials, labor and equipment. The centralization of production was the driving force of the industrial age. However, as the business environment began to change, industrial capitalism's capacity to massively produce, via technological advancements, went beyond the ability of the industrial city to absorb its surplus, causing business to disinvest in the built environment of the industrial city (Haymes, 1995, p.74). The functionality of the old industrial model became outdated. The disinvestment in the old model directly impacted the Black working class because businesses did not need a centralized location for mass production. As technology became more advanced business districts had the flexibility to be more spatial.

The new business environment called for dramatic shifts in the built environment, which would help spur the flow of capital through cities and around the world. David Harvey (1989) speaks of the built environment in terms of it being "useful in the process of capital accumulation, particularly in relation to distribution and consumption" (as cited in Haymes, 1995, p. 75). Critical Race Theorists identify this renewed interest in the built environment, formally known as Interest Convergence. As businesses interest in Chicago grew, the built environment, that public housing families had been fighting to change, would rapidly transform. This extension of capitalism was another means by which to disinvest in the people living in the built environment while at the same time reinvesting in the area in order protect and reproduce the power and advantage of those already in control.

By the 1980s in Chicago, one of the major problems associated with neoliberalism and its attempt to revive economies via entrepreneurship, private property rights, free markets and trade was that many working class people did not have the skill set needed to compete for those jobs. Many of the manufacturing jobs that people worked prior to deindustrialization did not require a set of specialized skills or degree. Manpower and the ability to work were some of the major

requirements for working in factories. As industries began to deregulate, many of the jobs available were more specialized and required advance degrees, thereby, causing a major skills and employment gap. From a policy perspective, credentialing, as outlined before, played a major part in excluding public housing families from the advantages that came with being able to secure jobs and establish a sustainable life outside of public housing.

In the 1980s Chicago's business community slowly sought to reestablish itself as more of a global force. Chicago's economy was beginning to flourish under a more deregulated neoliberal economic structure. This shift would ultimately support privatization and competition of goods and services on a global scale. Referred to formally as globalization, deregulation presented the opportunity for cities like Chicago to open itself up to business with companies throughout the world. As Chicago was becoming more recognized on a global scale, large corporations were making Chicago home. According to Doussard (2009) et al., "The most apt illustration of the city's emerging economic role was the relocation, in September 2001, of the Boeing headquarters from Seattle to a downtown Chicago skyscraper, with access to a heliport and river marina. To promoters of the city's status as a "world-class" location, Boeing's arrival validated the sustained effort to reposition Chicago as a command-and-control center in the globalizing economy" (p. 186). The city was repositioning itself as an epicenter for global corporations, advanced corporate services, real estate and tourism. The arrival of world-class companies and its employees, unequivocally, changed the economic landscape of the urban center in Chicago.

This would attract high-paid professionals, rather than industry workers of the past. Accommodations for this group became priority, all while the urban center, its residents and its businesses continued to economically decay. According to Demissie (2006), "Globalization set

in motion processes such as deindustrialization, defined as the shift to service-based economies and the introduction of new, advanced information technologies; the privatization of public services and the growth of low-wage and casual employment, unemployment, urban poverty and racial and social polarization” (p. 19). Low-wage and casual employment began to characterize the types of jobs that people in the urban center were extended and the struggle, competition and conflict over societal resources and social advantage were intensified. The working class was unable to truly compete for the new jobs of the future. The jobs the working class qualified for neither sustained nor supported families, reproducing the status quo via a cycle of unemployment and poverty.

According to Lipman and Haines (2007) “Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, as stable working-class families became low income and unemployed, parts of Midtown became home to one of the highest concentrations of poverty in the United States (Bennet, 2006; Venkatesh, Celimli, Miller, Murphy, & Turner, 2004). Massive high-rise public housing projects gradually became concrete warehouses for low-income African Americans who were largely marginalized in the city’s restructured economy (Demissie, 2006).

As disparaging as the economic impact of neoliberalism was on the economic well being of families, the social ramifications were also felt by many in the urban center. According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2002) “In Chicago, the citywide distribution of manufacturing employment, during the period from 1958 to 1972, actually grew from 329,000 to 389,000. However, from 1972 to 2000 manufacturing employment plunged by nearly 267,000 jobs” (as cited in Demisse, 2006, p. 23). One of the major social downfalls associated with neoliberalism for people in the urban center came in the inability to transfer generational wealth and knowledge. Demise (2006) notes that “One major consequence of the geographic shift of

employment has been to fracture the employment networks of many inner-city residents. These circumstances have hurt most of those seeking their first jobs-young adults, particularly those who are Black and facing greatly magnified competition by the rapid black concentration of this age segment in central cities” (p. 23). Lipman (2004) notes that “Because global cities are command centers for global networks of production and capital mobility, they concentrate high-paid professionals such as information technology specialists, lawyers, advertising professionals and stock analysts who are primarily male and white” (p.25). Inequality in access to the aforementioned jobs left young, non-college educated black men and women with few employment options.

Other social ramifications of neoliberal policy included the lack of access to strong social networks. Social capital in low income and working-class neighborhoods is sometimes viewed as anemic and incapable of creating certain types of knowledge, experiences, and exposure to acceptable social norms. “Inadequate access to social capital has been added to a growing list of conditions characteristic of high poverty neighborhoods that put residents at a severe disadvantage for escaping poverty and achieving upward mobility” (Curley, 2010, p.79). Many families that were living in the urban center did not have access to very many, if any, translocal social ties. Translocal social ties are relationships or resources that one has access to outside of their community and close knit social or professional groups. Translocal ties can extend into another neighborhood or city. Public-housing families and/or low-income families in general oftentimes served as the one resource for each other in regards to their basic needs.

As a result of the prolonged lengths of unemployment and resulting poverty, access to quality resources that may assist in the process displacement was hard to achieve. Scholars such as Stack (1974) “Found that social capital is utilized often in poor communities, but almost

always to meet basic needs and rarely for advancement” (as cited in Elliott, Haney, & Abiodun, 2010, p.627). Oftentimes in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, “Social cohesion and social capital does not create outwardly perceived social capital for the greater community. There is considerable social capital in the ghetto areas but the assets obtainable through it seldom allows participants to rise above their poverty” (Portes & Landolt, 1996 as cited in Laser & Leibowitz, 2009, p. 93).

Although neoliberalism opened up Chicago as a market for multinational corporations and business elites, it closed itself off and blocked any access towards upward mobility, economically or socially, for the urban-working poor and may have made decision making process more strained. As the middle and elite class continued to perpetuate a system of inequality, domination and subordination, they wholeheartedly exploited the fact that low income, working-class families had minimal access to resources that would aid families in making the transition from public housing. The policies were calculated and orchestrated how families were able to make choices on where to live and where to send their children to school. The way in which policy was implemented essentially controlled many of the social and economic outcomes of this population. The next section will address how a specific neoliberal policy impacted housing and schooling in the urban center via entrepreneurship, private property rights, free markets, free trade and individual freedom. It will address the limits to the purported freedoms aligned to neoliberal policy for Black poor people, beginning with the radical changes in housing followed by similar changes in schools.

HOPE VI

By the early 1990s, neoliberal policies were in full effect. Changes in the urban center housing market in Chicago were in full swing. Public housing developments were being condemned and were slated to undergo radical changes. Meanwhile, downtown Chicago was becoming a global city attracting very high profile businesses and highly skilled, technical workers that would ultimately be in search of good housing. As a result, the housing market would need to be able to accommodate the new residents that were flocking to the city. One way to make room for the city's new residents was embedded in a plan to clear the urban center of dwellings deemed unsightly. In 1992, The National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing determined that there needed to be significant changes in the ways in which the nation's poor were housed. Popkin, Katz, Cunningham, Brown, Gustafson and Turner (2004) indicate that the purpose of the Commission was:

To closely examine public housing in this country and to identify both problems and solutions to improve this system. The Commission issued its report designating 86,000 of the nation's 1.3 million public housing units severely distressed and needed to be redeveloped. A new and comprehensive approach would be required to address the range of problems existing at these developments. (p.1).

Public housing in Chicago represented some 16,000 of the 86,000 units that were identified in the Commission's report. The Commission's report ultimately led Congress to develop a federally funded program called Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere (HOPE VI) which would create a funding source for states and local public housing authorities in America, and Chicago specifically, to radically change the face of public housing. This public housing

revolution taking place throughout the nation would set in motion the beginning of a process that would end with families making a set of decisions around how best to navigate the changes that were ahead of them.

Under HOPE VI the most severely distressed developments around the country were to be revitalized. According to Sullivan and Leitz (2008),

HOPE VI is a nationwide federally funded policy that revitalizes dilapidated public housing projects. Once a public housing area is chosen, most residents are relocated to other conventional housing structures projects. The old structures are rebuilt. If the residents meet the requirements to return, they may move back to the renewed location, a mixed-income neighborhood. (p.134).

Local housing authorities that were deemed eligible for assistance with rebuilding received demolition and revitalization grants, formally known as HOPE VI grants. Chicago's local housing authority was one of the recipients of a HOPE VI grant. According to Levy and Gallagher (2006), "As of 2006, the Authority had received six HOPE VI grants, the most received by any one city" (p. 1). In an effort to undertake such large scale demolition, the Authority instituted a plan which would represent the most ambitious effort in the United States to address the problems of concentrated poverty through both dispersal and redevelopment strategies (Chaskin, Joseph, Voelker & Dworksy, 2012, p. 184).

According to a 2011 report conducted by the Authority,

The Authority was the largest recipient of HOPE VI grants. The Authority developments constituted eleven out of fifteen of the nation's poorest census tracts. Of the more than

38,000 units owned by the Authority, less than 25,000 were habitable and HUD had condemned 14,000 outright. (p.1).

The way HOPE VI funds were used creates some pause about how intentional the Authority was in helping to address the problems of the concentrated poor.

Given the dilapidated nature of the public housing stock in Chicago, HOPE VI grant money was used to fund the demolition of the worst high rises, rather than the revitalization and rehabilitation of developments. Demolition was deemed less costly than rehabilitating many of the developments. To show this, according to Henderson (1998), “The Authority examined the physical condition of developments holding 20,000 apartments to determine if rehabilitation represented a more cost-effective strategy than demolition coupled with the issuance of Section 8 vouchers to displaced tenants. The result of this exercise was the agency’s determination that a majority of the assessed developments could not be economically rehabilitated” (as cited in Bennett, 2006, p. 272). At first, this demolition was backed by the promise that the units demolished would be replaced. This expectation was short lived. Wilen and Stasell (2006) state that “The Authority must supply scattered-site housing on a one-to-one basis for each unit built with HOPE VI funds in a limited area or seek designation of the area as revitalizing, as it has done at other Authority developments. If a revitalizing designation is granted, the Authority does not have to build an equal number of units in general areas” (p. 246). This essentially meant that the demand for public housing would continue to far outreach the supply.

HOPE VI grants were not enough to fully replenish its public housing stock. According to Smith (2006) “This was a momentous occasion since it meant a commitment from HUD to the Authority for \$1.5 billion in funding over ten years to implement The Plan for Transformation.

The Plan for Transformation, which at the time was estimated to require at least \$3billion to complete” (p. 93). Although early estimates indicated that there would not be enough money to fulfill all aspects of The Plan for Transformation, it was still enacted. This would ultimately lead to a shortage of affordable housing for public-housing families. In making decisions, families would have to scurry for housing. Without the proper funding to rebuild more than 25,000 units, a building shortage would severely impact the choices available to the city’s low-income population.

While the Authority acknowledged this predicament, it also claimed, there is no alternative”. Despite the need, it was clear that HUD and Congress were not likely to build new public housing in the near future except for what was needed to replace obsolete units, and even then, the preference was to give relocating residents vouchers rather than hard units (Smith, 2006, p. 102).

Without the proper funding to replace all of the units that were being demolished, it would leave little affordable options for low-income families. As a result, many of them ended up accepting vouchers. Vouchers allowed low-income families to rent quality housing in the private market via federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Chicago Housing Authority, 2016). These vouchers typically landed families in neighborhoods far south of the city in areas that, socioeconomically, resembled the old public housing developments. To show this, according to, Pennick and Stanback (2006), “Sixty-four percent of all voucher holders live in areas defined as offering low economic opportunity. It is thus a cruel irony that, just as the Chicago region’s real estate sector has geared up to meet the housing demands of relocating the well-to-do, the numbers of low-income and working class families of color entering the housing market with Housing Choice Vouchers has reached an unprecedented volume” (p. 235-236).

The Authority realized that this was a problem but brushed it off as unavoidable and poor people were essentially ushered outside of the core of the city. The housing conditions available to displaced families were not of widespread concern. The goal was to rid them of the urban center to make way for new a new built environment.

HOPE VI required that public housing developments that were torn down be replaced by mixed-income communities. According to Popkin (2008) “In place of traditional public housing, federal policy now emphasizes replacing distressed housing with mixed-income developments and dispersing very low-income tenants throughout metropolitan areas using Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, which allow recipients to rent in the private market” (p. 138). The mixed-income developments that were to replace the traditional public housing units were to consist of public housing residents as well as market-rate middle-class residents. One of the ideas of mixed-income housing, outside of attracting more middle class families to the urban center, was to set an example for public housing families for how to properly behave, expose them to elements of opportunity and to break up the compounded levels of concentrated poverty that once characterized the urban center in Chicago. This is problematic because the wholesale nature of the policy was not intended for all public housing residents. Only those that were afforded the right and exercised their right to return could potentially gain the types of exposure that the Plan for Transformation promoted. The reach of better opportunities was oftentimes very limited and impacted very few. Even though returning families were within reach of so-called better opportunities, there remained very little access.

Thousands of public-housing residents would be impacted over a very short span of time.. The Plan for Transformation allowed for this agenda to come to fruition. For the many

public housing families that were rendered helpless, The Plan for Transformation would create more widespread change for many families.

The Plan for Transformation

Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation sought to redevelop and, more fundamentally, to reformulate, the city's public housing (Vale and Graves, 2010, p. 6). The Plan represents the deregulation of the housing market via private property rights, free markets, the purported freedom to choose and increased well-being for all. The destruction of public-housing developments, using neoliberal oppressive policies as the framework, presents an illusion of opportunity for impoverished families. The discourse surrounding the demolition and displacement centered on low-income families having greater control over where they chose to live. Choice was intended to create better opportunities and well-being for families living in poverty. However, access to choice and well being may have been overstated and the promises of the Plan for Transformation did not translate into actual implementation. Instead, this policy would fail a lot of the urban poor in Chicago and alter the decision making of families dramatically.

There are many paradoxes associated with the neoliberal global city that was developing and the communities where public housing stood. For instance, as Chicago became more global and attractive, the One-Way corridor was essentially ignored and left to decay after years of neglect. The Chicago Housing Authority failed to maintain the buildings to the point of being uninhabitable, justifying their demolition (Popkin, Cunningham, & Woodley, 2003). As Chicago became more global and attracted more businessmen and industry elites to work, there were a dearth of jobs near the One-Way Corridor and unemployment was high. As Chicago became

more global and attracted more middle-class families back to the city from the suburbs and from out of town more efforts to find them quality housing were prioritized. Contrastingly, housing on One-Way corridor was on the brink of being demolished and the low-income residents dispersed.

Given such paradoxes, the following paragraphs will seek to expose the Plan for Transformation as a policy that proved to restrict choice and decision making rather than serving as an agent for positive change for public-housing families. The policy design was purported as a way to increase the overall experiences of public-housing residents, while; the policy implementation was undergirded by a perfidious political culture that was able to successfully push its agenda and maintain the status quo. Despite the inability of the policy to make good on many of its promises sold to low-income public housing families, the agenda passed without consequence. This essentially created, what Conflict Theorists identify as, an unstable environment and society. The story of contradictions, followed by the eventual demolition of public housing, is storied below.

In 2000, The Plan for Transformation was set into action resulting in thousands of families being displaced from their homes, communities and schools. Bennett (2006) notes, “The Plan for Transformation envisions a very different Authority. Ongoing demolitions will reduce the Authority’s housing stock to 25,000 units, an 18,000-unit reduction from the agency’s maximum portfolio in the 1980s” (p. 272). Despite the large number of units that were going to be demolished and the thousands of people that were going to be displaced, the Authority’s promises of “better” were often reiterated to residents. The Plan for Transformation marketed itself as an agent that would “Provide quality housing opportunities to very low and low-income household in mixed-income settings, assure that residents had access to local, state and federal

resources, provide greater housing choice and contribute to the improvement of neighborhoods and communities where public housing is located” (Chicago Housing Authority, The Plan for Transformation, 2000).

In examining the Authority’s stated goal of providing quality housing opportunities to low-income households in mixed-income settings, such opportunities would be limited in its reach. Popkin, Katz, Cunningham, Brown, Gustafson and Turner (2004) note, “ Some residents are also offered the option to return to the revitalized HOPE VI site, although screening at some sites may preclude them for eligibility” (p. 35). To further explain, the ability for many residents to benefit from returning was blocked, in that, most of the public-housing residents that would be displaced from their homes would not qualify to return to the mixed-income developments. There were a range of restrictions on eligibility on the Right to Return. Only those residents who were rent compliant as of October 1, 1999 would be given the option to move back to the a public housing development and live in the new mixed-income community once it was completed. Rent-compliant residents were those who were current on their rent or utilities and did not have any recent criminal convictions as of October 1, 1999. This day was used to determine resident compliant or non-compliant status. If public-housing families did not meet the strict rent compliant eligibility criteria families would not have a right to return to the mixed-income developments.

Recent criminal convictions were also used to establish eligibility. According to the Authority’s 2000 annual report, there were a total of 12,136 arrest made in public housing developments, all of which were residents. Arrests made in Beautiful Homes and Rose Garden Terrace totaled 2,919. Rose Garden Terrace represented 14.1% of all the arrests made in public housing developments in Chicago, the most of any development. Beautiful Homes comprised

9.68% of all arrest (Chicago Housing Authority, 2000, pg. 26). Arrests do not equal convictions, however; these statistics are evidence of a potentially high rate of crimes being committed. If convictions resulted, this would provide evidence that a significant portion of the public-housing population would not be granted the right to return to better quality housing in mixed-income communities.

For those families that were not eligible to return to mixed-income communities, The Plan for Transformation presented other choices. These choices were in line with HOPE VI federal guidelines around providing quality housing for families outside of public housing developments. Smith (2006) states, “A central premise of HOPE VI is that it is possible to improve the lives of residents of distressed public housing developments by either helping them to relocate to better neighborhoods or creating a new, healthier community on-site” (p. 69). For those that were not eligible to return there were other more permanent options for them. To further explain, prior to the completion of replacement mixed-income developments, regardless of a resident’s Right to Return status, each resident was initially given the following options: Move to another public housing development that was not slated for demolition, accept a voucher to use in the private market or leave the public housing system all together. Once the mixed-income developments were completed, only those residents that qualified to return could choose to then move back to their former community.

As most displaced residents would not return to mixed-income communities, thousands would find themselves using vouchers to go out into the market. Dispersal patterns of all former public housing residents indicate, only 7.4% (approximately 1,250 people) of residents retained the right to return whereas almost 25% (or 4,097) of residents took vouchers and left for other neighborhoods throughout the city (Eads and Salinas, 2014). However, there was not enough

affordable housing available for voucher uses. According to Pennick and Stanback (2006), “During the last decade, Chicago has experienced a substantial loss of housing that is affordable to the poor and working-class families. Both real estate trends and public policy have led to the destruction of affordable rental units and the conversion of rental units to more expensive for sale housing” (p. 232). Furthermore, Smith (2006) notes, “the Plan for Transformation required the demolition of most buildings before new replacement housing was constructed, which meant the relocation of 6,000 families” (p. 94).

The destruction of affordable housing units and the conversion of rental units provided opportunities for investment and the opening up of the marketplace for those that could afford it. The elite and middle class became active participants by buying and renting properties. As private owners began to saturate the market, they were able to set limits on tenant selection. For instance, an owner could deny a potential resident seeking to use a voucher. As more and more owners exercised this option, this added to the scarcity of affordable housing options that displaced residents were afforded. This created sizeable conflicts between the owners and public-housing residents looking for affordable housing. Voucher users were either unable to find housing either because it did not exist or because owners exercised their right to not accept the vouchers of displaced public-housing residents. Pennick and Stanback (2006) state, “The City of Chicago Human Rights Ordinance does not prohibit landlords from rejecting prospective renters solely on the basis of their carrying a housing voucher” (p. 235). As such, relocation for many displaced residents landed them in areas that mirrored the communities they were forced to leave. In describing the neighborhoods that displaced families relocated to, Smith (2006) notes, “These new neighborhoods are still extremely poor and racially segregated and residents continue to report significant problems with crime and drug trafficking” (p. 69). Pennick and

Stanback (2006), state that, “In the absence of a region-wide strategy for relocating former public housing residents, all available signs indicate that most of those leaving Authority dwellings will search for housing in traditionally poor, largely African-American neighborhoods” (p. 233).

Arguably, the first goal of The Plan for Transformation was poorly executed.

Another goal of The Plan for Transformation was to assure that residents have access to local, state and federal resources for which they are eligible, however; this goal was far-fetched. Originally outlined in HOPE VI, The Community Supportive Services (“CSS”) component was supposed to be put in place to help residents that were struggling to find a form of self-sufficiency after the demolition of the public housing units. Locally, this program was identified as the Service Connectors Program. The Service Connectors program was supposed to provide specialized services for public-housing residents that were deemed ineligible to return. Service Connectors were supposed to help such residents become more sufficient, via access to services such as counseling, so that one day they could qualify for better housing. According to Vale and Graves (2010), “Service connectors were social service agencies contracted by the Authority to provide tenants with employment counseling and placement and referrals to address problems of physical and mental health, substance abuse or family dysfunction. Furthermore, they were to give information about available community resources and were to focus on four areas – employment, lease compliance, community integration and family stability” (p.59).

However, the Service Connector program was wrought with inefficiencies. Popkin (2000) noted that “A frequent criticism of the program is that its caseloads are so high—currently they have been reduced from a high of over 100 to 55 to 1—that case managers are unable to provide effective services” (p.159). This in and of itself is problematic, in that; in order for a program such as the Service Connectors to work effectively the supply must meet the

demand. The myriad of problems that public housing residents were faced with included: criminal records, past due utility payments, poor employment histories and mental health problems. Without the capacity to administer specialized services to those in need, many displaced families would not get the help they were seeking. It was not until 2006, six years after the first developments were demolished and families were displaced, that the Chicago Department of Human Services (CDHS) increased the number of agencies receiving three-year contracts for services to CHA residents as part of the Chicago Housing Authority's (CHA) Service Connector program (Broussard, 2006) focusing primarily on workforce development. Albeit useful, there were still thousands of public-housing residents that required other services before workforce development would represent a viable option for them.

As the Service Connector program did not have the capacity required to meet the needs of displaced public-housing residents, other resident services programs were instituted. The Chicago Family Case Management Demonstration project, instituted from 2007-2010 in partnership with the Urban Institute, the CHA, Heartland Human Care Services, and Housing Choice Partner , was designed to lessen the caseload of contractors in the Service Connector program, all while providing more wraparound services for residents. However, not all public housing residents would benefit from the new partnerships. These new services were only available to families from certain public housing developments, essentially leaving a lot of residents in need of services. Popkin, Theodos, Getsinger, and Parilla (2010) state that "The program provided residents from the Authority's Saint John and Covenant developments with intensive case management services, transitional jobs, financial literacy training and relocation services" (p. 2).

Although The Chicago Case Management Demonstration project was much smaller in scale than the Service Connector program, 90% of residents from the designated developments took part and received services. In addition, there were improvements in service, quality and coordination, cooperation of service providers and the Authority and case load follow-up for upwards of three years, as opposed to the three months provided under the Service Connector program. However, there were still pitfalls for residents in gaining access to neighborhoods of opportunity (Popkin et.al. 2010). This is evidence that despite access to resources public-housing families were still plagued with the difficulties of finding housing in good areas. As a result, it is likely that many public-housing residents fell through the cracks and self-sufficiency, if obtained, may not have been a result of the promises embedded in the Authority's programs.

Another goal of The Plan for Transformation was to contribute to the improvement of the neighborhood and communities where public housing was located. This goal is somewhat vague but access to good schools, jobs, and economic development are some typical characteristics of a quality neighborhood. According to Teitleman and Blumental (2010), one of the goals of The Plan for Transformation was to "Increase access to services such as schools and transportation and increase access to jobs, mentoring and social services" (p.1). However, not implicit in that statement was the problem of accessibility that many returning residents would face. As public housing developments and their communities were devoid of economic development and joblessness, the goal of improving the neighborhood and communities would have to include some provision or plan for creating a rich economic environment for returning families. Recent studies have shown that achieving some equity in the distribution of employment can be challenging. One study of short-term employment outcomes found "No evidence that lower-income residents were more likely to find a job as a result of living in a mixed-income

community” (Rosenbaum, Stroh, and Flynn, 1998, p.712). Another study conducted by Popkin, Katz, Cunningham, Brown, Gustafsan and Turner (2004) notes that, “While it is clearly feasible to create a healthy mixed-income environment that will attract higher-income residents and provide a pleasant and safe community for all residents, it remains less clear what conditions are required to ensure that living in these communities will have substantial payoffs for the social and economic status of low-income families over the long term” (p.24).

As globalization has attracted jobs to downtown areas, many returning residents are unable to access them. Despite having very limited employment options, returning residents were bound by strict work requirements that they had to adhere to within the first year of returning back to the neighborhood. To further explain,

The Authority-wide Minimum Tenant Selection Plan and many site-specific tenant selection plans share a common basic employment requirement keyed to the number of hours worked: non-exempt heads of households (primary leaseholders) must work a minimum of thirty hours per week. All other nonexempt family members between the ages of eighteen and sixty one must also work thirty hours each week or be engaged for that time in any combination of enumerated alternative activities: enrollment and regular attendance in an economic self-sufficiency program; verified job search and/or employment counseling; basic skills training or enrollment and consistent attendance in a regular program of education (Smith, 2006, p. 221).

One may ask, where are residents to work? Where can they earn a living wage when there is a dearth of employment opportunities of which they qualify? Presumably, when the Right to Return contract was written access to jobs in the community was scarce because many

businesses had left the community. However, the work requirement was enforced. If residents are not able to meet the requirements of the Right to Return contract then they jeopardize their access to better housing and potentially better schools. The policy was written conditionally and returning families choices to return to the mixed income community could be stripped away from them if they did not maintain fidelity to the contract. The rigidity of the contract may have detracted some families from deciding to return. Nonetheless, for those that did make the decision to return they knew what was required of them. Finding ways to work around the many hurdles they faced as a result of their decision to move back would require some help along the way.

Fundamental to improving neighborhoods where public housing once stood would require a change in hiring practices by employers, more incentives for businesses being attracted to the area as well as changes to how service jobs adequately pay their employees. According to Urban Juncture “Commercial and industrial development is required to create local jobs that would help lower-income residents find an economic footing as well as to provide the basis for the interaction between all residents that is critical to building cohesive communities.

Unfortunately, commercial lags far behind residential development. The lack of local jobs will make it extremely difficult for long-time residents to remain in the community in the face of rapid gentrification” (“Howard Shaw Case Study,” n.d.). In late 2009, several years after qualified residents began to return to Beautiful Homes and Rose Garden Terrace and years after the first demolition and rebuild took place, The Howard Shaw Alliance, in partnership with the City of Chicago, Regional Transportation Authority, the consulting firm HNTB, asked for the assistance of the Metropolitan Planning Council to help put a plan in motion to revitalize the Howard Shaw area with economic opportunity and commerce (Metropolitan Planning Council,

2012). Over the course of two years, recommendations were comprised. However, it is unlikely that any real economic development will be constructed before 2015/2016. Thereby, providing evidence that over the course of a ten-year period the Authority made very little to no progress towards wholesale economic improvement of the neighborhood and community conditions in the Howard Shaw area.

Perhaps lost in The Commission Report, HOPE VI and The Plan for Transformation was the issue of adjustment that parents and children must face. It is two-fold for children and youth, in that, not only are they moving back to a new development but there is a potential that they may enter into a brand new school environment. Children and youth may have to learn to adjust to new classmates, new teachers, new routes to schools, new rules, etc., all while dealing with the impacts of public- housing relocation. All of these changes can have major impacts on how well children and youth fare socially and academically.

Several research studies have shown links between mobility and student achievement. Scanlon and Devine (2001) note that “Studies examining residential mobility and educational outcomes consistently find higher levels of grade retention among highly mobile youngsters. There is an inverse correlation with high school completion especially for hyper mobile children who move three or more times” (p.126). According to South, Haynie, and Bose (2007), “Mobile youth are likely to be integrated into peer groups whose members exhibit weak educational performance and who do not value highly educational success” (p.71). Given such strong negative links between mobility and achievement, selecting the best school for one’s child is imperative in hopes of giving children the best possible opportunity to meet the challenges of the ever increasing global economy and city. This following section outlines the intersections between housing and schooling policy. It will detail how two very neoliberal, macro-level

policies worked in tandem to potentially make the process of school and housing “choice” for parents more difficult than returning families anticipated.

Renaissance 2010 and The Plan for Transformation

There is an undeniable relationship between the neoliberal urban housing agenda and the neoliberal urban school agenda in Chicago. The neoliberal urban agenda for housing was formalized via The Plan for Transformation, while the neoliberal urban agenda for schooling was formally known as Renaissance 2010. Each of the aforementioned policies has stark similarities in terms of displacement, racial exclusion and privatization. Renaissance 2010 is “A radical reform that will close 60-70 public schools (all so far in low-income communities) and open 100 new schools of choice, two-thirds of which will be run by outside organizations as charter or contract schools” (Lipman, 2008, p. 121) and one third as Chicago Public Schools (CPS) performance schools (public schools subject to Ren2010 funding and policies), (Lipman and Haines, 2007, p.474). The shift from the traditional school model was geared toward a more market-based approach that would allow outside organizations to bid for contracts to open new schools. This reform effort represented a radical operational structure that promoted choice as a drawing point to families. For instance, outside organizations, such as corporations, could offer specialized curriculum and pedagogy and eliminate attendance boundaries. This type of restructuring would allow parents to have more control over where they wanted to send their child to school. Additionally, it would support an environment that would spur competition between schools. Advocates believed that this would, in effect, remake the public school system and recreate Chicago as a global city central to the financial, real estate, retail and service industries (Lipman and Hirsch, 2007, p. 161).

Many of the schools on the One-Way Corridor were slated to be closed. There were a myriad of reasons given to justify the large volume of schools that would be closed in the Shaw Howard area. According to Lipman (2004), “In 1997, less than 20 percent of students were reading at or above national norms as measured by the ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills). By 2001, only about twenty-five percent of students scored at or above national norms on the ITBS” (p. 75). As a district, Chicago Public Schools has been characterized by low test scores, high drop-out rates, low achievement and was once referred to as the worst school district in the nation by the Education Secretary in 1987. To show this, an Associated Press article (1987) notes that Education Secretary William J. Bennett says Chicago's Public Schools are the worst in the nation and parents should consider private schools for their children (p. 1). A Chicago Tribune (1987) article followed the story showing that “More than half the city`s public schools where 40 or more seniors took the ACT reported scores in the bottom one percent of schools nationwide and in Chicago, 33 of 58 high schools where 40 or more students took the ACT were at the bottom of the U.S.” (p. 1). More recently a study conducted by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research (2011) noted that in Chicago Public Schools “Learning gains are modest” despite twenty years of reform (Luppescu, Allensworth, Moore, De La Torre, Murphy, and Jagesic, p.1).

Additionally, as the public housing developments began to be torn down, enrollment plummeted. As buildings aged and were neglected, many required substantive repairs. This grim picture of urban schools, created a prime opportunity for reformers to pitch ideas about radically changing the landscape of education. As a result, schools in the urban center would become ripe with opportunity (although it had been the recipient of very little investment for decades) for investors and elites alike. Reformers spoke of rebuilding a community and creating

better educational opportunities for residents. This phenomenon is formally known as Conscious Capitalism. Theoretically speaking, conscious capitalist establish organizations to address specific problems (Buras, 2015, p. 37) but require a little help along the way from policymakers on the federal, state and local levels to help further an agenda. Lawmakers and entrepreneurs allege they are engaged in a socially conscious effort to advance equity and improve public schools, while urban space is reshaped along racial lines, leading to the criminal dispossession of black working-class communities and the teachers and students who have contributed to the city's culture and history (ibid, 2015, p. 37). These aforementioned statistics provide Conscious Capitalist with the leverage they need to push their agenda under the guise of fair and legitimate policy.

The public discourse surrounding the need for mixed-income housing reflects the discourse surrounding Renaissance 2010, particularly as it relates to this notion of better or high-quality options for low-income families. Chicago Public Schools issued a press release calling:

“Renaissance 2010, a bold initiative whose goal is to increase the number of high-quality education options in communities across Chicago by 2010. This model will generate competition and allow for innovation. It will bring in outside partners who want to get into the business of education. It offers the opportunity to break the mold. It gives parents more options and will shake up the system” (CPS Press Releases, June 8, 2004).

Renaissance 2010 promised dramatic reforms in school policy and had the support of local, city and federal government. This is the type of support that Conscious Capitalists rely upon. These dramatic reforms worked in tandem with the dramatic housing reforms that were also taking place. Lipman & Hursh (2007) note, “Renaissance 2010 opens up the third largest school system

in the U.S.A. to a market model of school choice, privatization and elimination of school employee unions and elected local school councils. This reform is linked to the neoliberal development of the city and the exclusion of working class and low-income people of color. At the same time (that Renaissance 2010 came out) Chicago launched a \$1.6 billion Plan for Transformation” (as cited in Lipman, 2008, p.121). The following paragraphs will highlight how Renaissance 2010 and The Plan for Transformation had very similar, if not, identical disenfranchisement tactics. The effects of The Plan for Transformation and Renaissance 2010 were ever present in the Shaw-Howard area and in particular on One-Way Boulevard. Displacement, exclusion, and privatization are three prominent themes throughout the early 2000’s in Chicago relating to housing and schooling. These policies, in turn, continued to exacerbate the economic and social disparity felt by the Black working class and urban poor while propelling the economic and social agenda’s of the middle class and elite. The examination of concurrent policies highlights the limitations of choice, two fold. The choice model created fewer housing and schooling opportunities for families and their children, in that the policies were designed to appease and appeal to a particular type of resident and student.

In April 2002, in reference to three chronically failing schools in Chicago, then Secretary of Education Arne Duncan stated, We don’t believe these schools as they currently exist will ever measure up. There are better education alternatives within walking distance. Since then CPS has closed or restaffed more than 100 schools (Catalyst Chicago, 2013). Such sentiment, from one of the most influential leaders in education at the time, gave credence to the idea that some schools were not worth the trouble of trying to save. In 2004, the first round of school closures, under Renaissance 2010, was approved by the Chicago Board of Education. Initially, many of the first round closures were going to take place in Shaw Howard. To show this, according to

Lipman and Person (2007), “The first phase of Renaissance 2010 was to be the Midtown Plan. Under the Midtown Plan, 20 of 22 schools in Midtown were to be closed. However, in the face of strong opposition from the community and supporters across the city, CPS backed away from this plan” (p. 9). Despite the original plan being rejected, ultimately, an estimated 8,600 (Williams, July 2004) Midtown area students will be affected by school closings, ninety-seven percent of whom are low-income, African American students.” Although the numbers are not as expansive as the displacement associated with The Plan for Transformation, the process and the means by which a policy disrupted the lives of thousands is similar.

Midtown is an area, inclusive of Beautiful Homes and Rose Garden Terrace, that at the onset of Renaissance 2010 was undergoing significant gentrification in the wake of The Plan for Transformation. As mixed-income developments were being erected, the proposed idea of mixed-income schools was seemingly becoming more and more of a reality in Midtown. Mixed-income schools were seen as a way to potentially reverse years of underperformance of low-income and working-class families in Midtown and throughout Chicago. It was also a marketing strategy to bring more middle-class families to the urban center. According to White (2004), “Integrating schools by income is an effective way to close the achievement gap and fight poverty” (p. 1). Lipman notes (2006) Good schools are the real estate anchors in gentrifying neighborhoods” (p. 253). The idea is that if there are good schools available to the middle-class, neighborhoods will be more attractive to them. Ball (2003) notes, “The logic of the market is that schools will develop policies which are attractive to and serve the interests of middle-class families” (p.46).

As with The Plan for Transformation, the closing, moving and chartering of schools came with a host of unfulfilled promises that led to the eventual exclusion of low income African-

American students and their families. Embedded within these promises were small caveats, of which students and their families may not have been aware. The rhetoric surrounding Renaissance 2010, just like The Plan for Transformation, granted students the right to return. However, this allowance was not always enforced as schools reopened, relocated, chartered, etc. According to the Chicago Board of Education's Board Report on Renaissance 2010 policy, "Students who attend a school that is designated as a Renaissance 2010 Facility or that is selected to be reopened as a Renaissance 2010 School shall be guaranteed the right to return. However, a student's right to return shall not require that a school opened pursuant to this Policy offer the same program or serve the same grades as the school that previously occupied the facility. The Board reserves the discretion to establish other student assignment processes, including but not limited to, establishing a school without attendance boundaries and providing for open, city-wide enrollment either by lottery or other criteria" (Chicago Board of Education Report, Board Report 07-0627-PO4). Although students would be granted the right to return to their schools, there were no guarantees that there would be space for them as the Board of Education reserved the right to overrule any right to return that it saw fit. Additionally, it is very likely that The Plan for Transformation had already displaced students from the neighborhood, thereby; making it harder for families to return their children to their former school and essentially excluding these students from the purported benefits of this new vision of schooling.

Other similarities that exist between The Plan for Transformation and Renaissance 2010 include the privatization of public spaces. Privatization is a major underpinning of the neoliberal agenda. It is part of a wider agenda focusing on the transfer of resources, choices and duties away from the state to the private realm of the family" (Clark and Newman, 2007, as cited in Pedroni, 2007, p.14). There was an extensive transfer of resources, choices and duties in The

Plan for Transformation and Renaissance 2010. To further explain, public housing saw a transfer of public resources for private use when public land was used for private enterprise. The demolition of public housing developments allowed for private developers to build units and advertise them at market value. The transfer of school resources into the hands of organizations and corporations, that would pit private choice as the best option, would be used as the model to privatize schools. The transfer of resources, choices and duties were seen in the public-private partnerships between Chicago Public Schools, the state, and private operators of charter schools.

As one third of the Renaissance 2010 schools were proposed as charters, this essentially opened up the school market to private corporations. Corporations were in charge of operating schools, everything from the curriculum to how the school day was run. All Renaissance 2010 schools had 5-year performance contracts with CPS, but in exchange for this increased accountability, the school district promises them greater flexibility in curriculum, instruction, and school organization (CPS, 2004d as cited by Lipman, 2007, p. 474). This school model would, in turn, give parents more autonomy because they would be able to choose the type of schools based on curriculum, pedagogy, types of teachers, etc that they believed would be the best fit for their children. Seemingly, families would have more autonomy and better choices because the market-based approach would have schools to compete against one another.

Competition between schools was not likely to create overall systemic change, in that; not all schools would be able to equally compete for students. Many traditional schools would not have the access to the required capital and resources necessary to compete with charter schools that had political and financial backing and support. For instance, some Chicago charter schools had a very lucrative support system that traditional public schools were unable to access. For instance, The Commercial Club of Chicago was an organization made up of corporate,

financial and political elites. They played a vital role in supporting and funding Renaissance 2010. A smaller subcommittee, known as the Civic Committee, published a report entitled *Left Behind* that advanced the idea of charters and parental choice in schools as the answer to fix the ailing public school system. More importantly, The Commercial Club would go on to play an integral financial role in Renaissance 2010. The Commercial Club agreed to raise \$50 million for the project. In exchange, it set up a fund-raising and oversight body, New Schools for Chicago (NSC), composed of leading corporate representatives and civic leaders and the Chicago Board of Education president and CPS CEO. Referred to in the press as a “secret cabinet,” this unelected body participates in the selection and evaluation of new schools while distributing Commercial Club funds to these schools (Cholo, 2005,p.1; Rossi, 2004, p.1). In effect, the redistribution of resources (money following the child to charter schools) as well as having the financial backing of heavy weight corporations sets the stage for an unfair and inequitable school policy. This is an example of how the convergence of policy and power helped to perpetuate local level inequalities and further the mission of the neoliberal agenda in Chicago’s schools in the urban center. Lipman notes (2008), “ The seemingly democratic and inclusive discourse of mixed income communities and schools masks the nexus of racialized public policy and investment decisions that produced deindustrialization, disinvestment, unemployment, and degradation of public health, the built environment, and education in inner city neighborhoods ,and schools over the past thirty years” (p. 124). Buras (2015) states “Simple ideas about how to improve urban school performance are not only rapacious in their effects; the process of implementing these reforms, far from being democratic, has been more like a deadly assault on black schools and neighborhoods” (p. 36).

Some of the problems associated with Renaissance 2010 were unanticipated by some families. Problems of access that accompanied The Plan for Transformation were also present as families tried to gain access to the new charters that were opening in the neighborhood. Gaining access to schools that were reopened as charters would not be easy for many low-income and working-class families. One of the hurdles these families faced was unequal access to the same types of information needed to get their children into charter schools. Gaining admission to new charters potentially came with a different set of rules that only those with access to the appropriate information benefited. Gerwitz, Ball & Bowe (1995) state that “The education market constitutes specific cultural arbitrary which privileges those parents who have the appropriate cultural resources for decoding the objects displayed. To decode a complex deregulated admissions system demands particular skills, knowledge and confidence” (p. 161). In other words, as schools seek to compete with one another parents need to have access to certain types of resources that will help them navigate that process. Some schools have deadlines and other requirements that allow for a gate keeping, of sorts, for only those parents that know how to navigate the system. As a result, certain parents and their children are excluded from the process of gaining access to “better” schools in the educational market. As thousands of families were excluded from the Right to Return in The Plan for Transformation, so too were families being excluded from the proposed benefits of choice schools.

Capital and Choice Processes

Capital

Ideology adopted by those in power ascribes value to certain types of capital and devalues others. According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) “The knowledges of the upper and

middle classes are considered capital valuable to a hierarchical society. If one is not born into a family whose knowledge is already deemed valuable, one could then access the knowledges of the middle and upper class and the potential for social mobility through formal schooling.” (as cited in Yosso, 2005, p.70) Although certain types of knowledge, culture and ways of being are valued over others, there are viable forms of capital that public-housing residents relied on for years prior to displacement that many would argue, is just as valuable as more recognizable and acceptable forms of capital. For instance, according to Yosso (2005), “CRT(Critical Race Theory) shifts the research lens away from a deficit view of Communities of Color as places full of cultural poverty disadvantages, and instead focuses on and learns from the array of cultural knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by socially marginalized groups that often go unrecognized and unacknowledged” (p. 69). Counter stories help to acknowledge the strength and diverse nature in which capital was accumulated in public-housing developments. It is imperative to understanding how or why returning residents may have been at a disadvantage upon returning to the neighborhood. In public-housing developments, and in particular Beautiful Homes and Rose Garden Terrace, there were many forms of capital such as, Social, Aspirational, Navigational and Resistance. These may have been instrumental in the daily lives of families prior to displacement. After displacement, it is likely that access to the aforementioned capital may have been more limited.

Many scholars have defined social capital at length and have underscored its importance in the everyday lives of people. According to Coleman (1988), “Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures and they facilitate certain actions of actors within the structure. Social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain

ends that in its absence would not be possible” (p. 98). According to Portes (1998), “Contemporary social capital theory links an individual’s ability to acquire resources through the connection of social networks, and other social commodities to positive outcomes” (as cited in Laser & Leibowitz, 2009, p.87). Other theorists such as Elliott and Haney (2010) believe that “Sociological research emphasizes that personal networks offer social resources in times of need and that this capacity varies by the social position of those involved” (p.624). According to Bell (2009) “Social capital is important for many parent-school interactions, ranging from how parents negotiate school problems to the information parents seek out in school choice decisions” (p.196). Based on the aforementioned definitions, the value of social capital is relative. A particular form of social capital may be more valuable to one group than it is to another, however; that does not lessen its viability and vitality to any given population. In many public-housing communities, there were high levels of social capital for families that represented a means to an end. For instance, for families that lived or came from high poverty areas, such as public housing developments, according to Keating (2000)

The value residents placed on proximity to relatives, friends, and neighbors implies that there were stocks of social trust and social networks and we infer that these functioned for some mutual benefit from practical matters such as temporary child care to providing sense of social identity. HOPE VI researchers have found that relocation often breaks up strong social networks which reduce access to social support (p.394).

Social support was a major component of social capital for families living in public housing. Families that moved back to the Shaw Howard area potentially had less access to their former social networks. Not only were they no longer living in the proximity of relatives and friends but fulfilling some of the practical matters of their lives, such as choosing a school for their children,

may have had to be made in a more isolated type of way. Something as simple as having conversations with friends in the development or in the neighborhood about where to send the children to school could have proved beneficial for returning families. However, seeing that many families did not return, it is unknown what types of relationships were formed, if at all, and how returning families may have made this decision.

Despite the potential fracturing of returning families' social networks, there were other forms of valuable capital that may have helped sustain them during the transition process. Aspirational capital, or "the ability to maintain hopes and dreams of the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers" (Yosso, 2005, p.77) was perhaps at varying levels for families. Even despite the tales of better produced by The Plan for Transformation, a strong level of aspirational capital may be the difference between believing that life after public housing will be wrought with insurmountable hardships or believing that displacement is a chance for a new beginning and better opportunity for families. This form of capital is less tangible. Factors such as families level of self-esteem or self-perception may have led to greater aspirational capital and thereby, more optimism for returning families as they sought to find good schools for their children. According to Abe (2004), "Individuals with a well-developed independent self-construal view of themselves as relatively autonomous from their social context and thus their self concept is primarily defined by internal factors" (p.231). Having high levels of aspirational capital may be very valuable to the confidence associated with being able to adequately navigate the school market for returning families.

Aspirational capital may come with a set of strategies. For instance, returning families had some time in between being displaced and returning to the neighborhood to perhaps strategize with other family members in their social network to discuss schools. During this time,

with their known familial and other social networks, they may have built up the confidence to handle the challenges associated with moving back to the neighborhood and selecting schools. Yosso (2005) states that “Aspirations are developed within social and familial contexts, often through linguistic storytelling and advice that offer specific navigational goals to challenge oppressive conditions” (p. 77). This advice and guidance can come from extended family such as aunts, uncles, church members etc., as each extension may have additional resources to help returning families make their transition. The strength, advice, kinships and friendship present in respective communities possibly transcended the inequities of displacement and were used by returning families to accumulate and maximize their aspiration capital toward the new market of housing and schools in the community of which they returned. Research shows that, “The local community is viewed as a complex system of friendships, kinship networks and formal and informal associational ties rooted in family life and the on-going socialization process” (Silver, 1990).

As capital is fluid, elements of social and aspirational capital are evident in how members in oppressed communities use navigational capital to their advantage and for advancement in social institutions. Burciaga and Erbsstein (2010) define navigational capital as “The various strategies used to navigate social institutions” (p.9). Social institutions, such as schools, can be very difficult and intimidating to navigate. Having the strategies to steer through social institutions, such as schools, is critical to the educational endeavors of returning families children. It is quite possible that returning families had to navigate three different schools, one for each move that was made during their journey back to the mixed-income dwelling. Families that were displaced initially may have had to transfer their children out of the neighborhood school they once attended. Then, returning parents may have enrolled their children into new

schools as they moved to temporary housing and then upon moving back to their mixed-income neighborhood there is the potential that families had to transfer their child into another school.

There had to be a certain level of navigational capital for parents and children to persevere through such change especially given that “Residential mobility operates as a barrier to the development of extensive friendship and kinship bonds and local association ties” (Silver, 1990). In addition to the fractured ties, hyper mobility potentially presented challenges related to coping and adjustments for children and teens. Pittman and Bowen (1994) note that as a result of relocation, teens face “behavior problems, negative impacts on academic functioning, reduced psycho-social function and early initiation of illicit drugs (boys)” (p.71). These extenuating circumstances may have forced families to become savvy in how they navigated schools and in how they tried to ensure that their child stayed on track during the aforementioned transitions. Keeping in touch with teachers, other faculty, and developing relationships with other parents at each school were perhaps some of the navigational strategies used as families transferred their children in and out of schools. This essentially helped to establish social and familial capital building blocks. This same type of navigational capital may have been used upon moving back to the community.

It could be argued that there were high levels of Resistance Capital among returning residents. Using the non-deficit model of capital in disenfranchised communities, the way in which social, aspirational and navigational capital is utilized by families is a great foundation for creating a high level of resistance capital that returning families would potentially need. Resistance capital is rooted in “Challenging inequity and subordination” (Burciago and Erbstein, 2010, p. 7). Paulo Freire describes resistance capital as “those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality” (Freire, 1970). Resistance to racialized

pathologies are some of the inequities and injustices that returning families may have had to attempt to overcome. For instance, Purdy and Kwak (2007) state that public housing and the people that lived in them are “Widely condemned by academics, the media, and politicians as too large and badly designed havens for single mothers, welfare families, magnets for crime, drugs and a sites of potential racial problems” (p.6). Not only are the low-income and working class pathologized on a micro level but in many ways are viewed on a macro level as being problematic to the society as a whole. As a result, returning families constantly have to challenge these misconceptions and stereotypes and situate themselves as visible members of the community who can contribute to the well being of the neighborhood, their children and society as a whole.

Returning families had to be resilient and utilize a lot of aspirational, navigational and resistance capital in order to find schools for their children that would hopefully see them succeed socially and academically. Although the aforementioned types of capital may not be valued by the mainstream, they may be important for the survival and everyday functioning of oppressed groups. However, despite the richness of capital of said groups, it is not always enough to overcome hierarchical and hegemonic practices and policies they continue to fight against.

Choice

Within the last several years, school choice has become a more widespread school reform method. According to Jeynes (2000), “Few educational issues have attracted as much attention in the last fifteen years as school choice” (p. 223). Prior to school choice, a more “traditional” way of school was the norm. Many students went to neighborhood schools. Many of these schools were centrally located and families did not send their children to schools outside of the

neighborhood often. As a result, classrooms, oftentimes, reflected neighborhood demographics. For instance, if a neighborhood was primarily low income and African American, then the school in the neighborhood was also a reflection of this. Additionally, traditional schooling did not offer much in the way of competition given that where one lived determined which school a child attended. However, as school choice would become a more prominent force in education, the traditional way of schooling would be tested against a more reformed and nuanced way of offering education to students and families.

Ben Colburn (2012) notes that “A policy of school choice is one which grants parents freedom to choose between a range of options for their children’s formal education” (p. 208). Of the many elements of school choice as a reform, parental choice is a major defining tenet. Parent choice is designed to transcend neighborhoods, districts and zones. It is designed to increase education outcomes and improve parity in education. This, along with competition, a public-private funding scheme and school-level autonomy make for a reform that seeks to revolutionize the way America’s students are educated. Being able to navigate this new system of school is paramount to being able to gain access to the touted advantages of the new school market that is on the rise around the country and, in particular, Chicago. The ability to navigate the system may depend upon one’s access to networks and groups that can aid in the process. This is particularly important and relevant to returning families because many of them, upon coming back to the Shaw Howard area, were potentially faced with limited accessibility to their normal social networks. Given that networks were potentially fractured and displaced throughout the city, how were returning families making school choice decisions?

In many communities, such as Beautiful Homes and Rose Garden Terrace, school choice for parents is not always as simplistic. Despite all of the cultural capital residents from these

communities have at their disposal, there are still obstacles to achieving parity in the school choice market. Ball (1995) et al., note “Opponents of educational markets have pointed out that the rhetoric of conservative advocates of the market obscures the way in which choice systems privilege certain sorts of families and disadvantages others. Research shows that middle-class families do more choosing than working-class ones” (p. 22). Simply stated, there may be significant differences between middle-class and low-income choice experiences. The following paragraphs will seek to describe such differences.

In many elite circles, parent choice supports the neoliberal ideology of individual freedoms and responsibility. According to this ideology, parents should be able to make the market work for them because they are being given a more proactive role in selecting schools. Many elites believe that, so-called responsible parents should exhibit responsibility by doing their research on schools and exercising their due diligence to enroll their children in school. However, this normalized way of thinking does not take into account that not all families place the same value on certain elements of the school experience. Families likely research schools based on their child’s needs. Therefore, making a general determination of what parental responsibility should look like is cautioned. In some instances, returning families may have researched and placed more emphasis on safety and convenience as those may have been two areas of concern that returning families felt were important in their decision-making process.

As thousands of low-income, working class children were being transferred throughout the city, they would be faced with many challenges. For instance, problems of safety became paramount with the large number of student transfers. “Transfer of students across gang lines and into unfamiliar neighborhoods, coupled with the stress experienced by transfer students, contributed to increased discipline problems, violence and safety concerns” (Lipman and Person,

2007, p. 6). As with most families, safety is important. However, for low-income and working-class families safety for their children is more dimensional, given other neighborhood factors that many of them may have to confront. Studies have shown that some working-class prioritize familiarity. Issues of safety may be linked to familiarity. For instance, working-class families may be more likely to send their children to a school where their children already have established friendships. Working-class families may talk to their children more about their friends and who they feel safe going to school with. In the working-class family the destinations of children's friends and the importance of locality were crucial factors in school choice" (Ball, Bowe, & Gewirtz, 1996). Although returning families come back to neighborhoods that are supposed to offer school choice options that were greater than before, working-class families may opt out of sending their children to those schools and, instead, send their children further to a school where both the parents and children are familiar with others. This is one case, where, parents may forgo the challenges associated with distance to school in order to find a school where their children will be comfortable.

According to Lee, Croninger and Smith (1996), "Some observers contend that the concern for safety rather than quality distinguishes minority and low income households from middle class Anglo households" (as cited in Kleitz, Weiher, Tedin, & Matland, 2000, p.849). Hayes, Phillip and Goldring (2010), "Convenience is another priority parents consider when choosing a school for their child. Because many school choice options do not provide transportation to and from school, convenience includes issues associated with the distance to and from the school and transportation" (p. 763). Consequently, measures related to safety and convenience may have ultimately led to further displacement and exclusion from choice school throughout the city. Working-class families understand that the school choice system is not

designed to meet their needs or the needs of their children. Due to the range of injustices inherent in social, economic and political systems that low-income and working-class families experience, they tend not to trust the education system. Some working class and low-income families tend to engage in a process of self-exclusion, by not actively participating in the school choice revolution, based in part perhaps upon a belief that the system does not work for them. The system of choice presupposes a set of values which give primacy to comparison, mobility and long-term planning; it ignores those cultures which give primacy to the values of community and locality (Ball, 1993, p. 14). “The new market economy in education exacerbates the consequences of unequal social power rather than alleviating them. As a result the working classes are caught up in a game in which they are required or expected to participate with commitment and enthusiasm but are invariably the losers” (Reay and Ball, 1997, p. 96). As a result, some low income, working-class families are likely to navigate around the system in a way they believe is beneficial to their children.

Middle class norms tend to set the standard and any deference from certain acts of responsibility cast parents as irresponsible and not involved in the process of schooling for their children. Edward and Whitty (1990) “Suggest the ideology of the market is built upon a model of ideal parenting and that the ideal parent is treated as the average parent. This is not a neutral effect; rather it is a particular value position and a particular vision of parenting which is constructed to serve the ideology of the markets and the culture of choice” (as cited in Ball, 1993, p.13). As a result, it is oftentimes very difficult for Black low-income and working class families to operate within the school-choice model at a socially acceptable level. The possibility of other experiences or orientations to choice is ignored (Reay and Ball, 1997, p. 90).

Ball (1993) notes, “Even in these early days of the education market there is evidence to suggest the processes and effects of market forces are related to social class and ethnic differences in access to and distribution between schools” (p.12). The impact of the social and ethnic differences continues to be reaffirmed and at the same time ignored by advocates and proponents alike, as important barriers for true equity in the educational market. Tiebout (1956) stated that “Public choice theorists regularly acknowledge the inevitability of inequalities in the market but seem to have little interest in pursuing the implications of these for those who experience them” (p.418). Until the aforementioned is addressed, a stratification will continue to exist between middle and working-class families in the education market. As a result of this stratification, there may continue to be differences in how social classes actually benefit from and experience the education market.

According to Reay and Ball (1998) “ More frequently, children from the middle-class are subject to a process of guiding and channeling which ensures their positive acceptance of the best choice, while many working-class families’ parents defer to the child’s judgment” (p. 432). In other words, middle-class families may have the navigational capital and the wherewithal to successfully negotiate their way through an application process at a choice school. Middle-class families, in effect, may take ownership of the process of finding their children the best schools. Cultural capital provided via educational experience and well-resourced networks provides middle-class families with knowledge of ‘the rules of the game’, understanding of the way the system works and the hierarchies therein, and confidence in liaising with the school.” (Perry and Francis, 2010, p. 13). In some cases, middle-class families research the schools, they may know who to speak with in order to get information and they have the capital to advocate on behalf of their children. As a result of the type of navigational capital that middle-class families may have

they are oftentimes able to navigate the sometimes complicated process of enrolling their children into schools.

According to the research, middle-class families tend to rely less on the wants of their children and more on the internal characteristics, social demography and educational policies of the school (Reay and Ball, 1998, p. 432). For example, as middle-class families search for the best school for their children they may factor their decision on educational offerings such as advanced placement classes. As neighborhood violence and transportation to school, for example, are less of a factor for some middle-class families; they are privileged to use their navigational capital to fully engage the process, as it was intended, of finding the best school for their child. Middle-class families may have extended networks that are able to give them information regarding application deadlines, information of how to secure letters of recommendation which provides them with the ability and confidence, to advocate for their children. Apple (2001) notes that “They often have cars-often more than one-and can afford driving their children across town to attend a better school. Middle class parents are clearly the most advantaged in this kind of cultural assemblage, and not only as we saw because schools seek them out. Middle class parents have become quite skilled, in general, in exploiting market mechanisms in education and bringing their social, economic and cultural capital to bear on them” (p. 415). In effect, this process that middle-class families are able to navigate is essentially recreating social class. Reinoso (2008) says, “Parents are in turn creating social class by putting these mechanisms into operation” (p.180). Choice schools are becoming agents where social class is reproduced and used to ensure the social trajectories of middle and working-class children. As working-class parents are either not interested in this form of navigation or do not have the capital to do so, this process reinforces the social divide in the schools. This may alter

the approach that working- class parents take towards selecting schools for their children. In effect, decision making may be less a consequence of access and, moreso; related to how families (parents) traditionally prefer to experience the schooling process.

Despite the support that charter schools have received, their ability to create better educational environments is debatable. The research that shows charters are not always the best option supports some of the reasons that returning parents made specific school choice decisions upon their return to the neighborhood. A testament to limited access and equality, as was the case for many returning public housing families, is evidenced in the literature and cautions widespread acceptance of this choice model. For instance, given such disparities and the subsequent recreation of class, the racial makeup in charter schools and classrooms tend to be homogenous. Although some proponents of charters believe and push that charters can create more diverse learning environments some research has shown that even when choosing a charter school, parents tend to lean towards the familiar making heterogeneous classrooms difficult to achieve. Henig notes, “Some white families in some locales may be using charter schools to avoid more integrated traditional public schools. In Texas, whites moving into charter schools moved into schools that had ten percent fewer blacks and 2.3 percent fewer Hispanics than the schools they were leaving. Blacks on average enter charter schools with 14.4 percent more blacks and 10.3 percent fewer Hispanics” (p. 100). According to Frankenberg and Lee (2003), 70 % of all African American charter school students are in 90-100% charter schools populated with students of color” (p.26). These statistics do not account for social status but provides an indication that there are similarities in family decision making regardless of race and, quite possibly, class. Nonetheless, the choices of low-income black families tend to be subject to

criticism and scrutiny even if they employ some of the same practices around decision making as others.

Studies examining the implementation of choice programs have found that “Choice has created further social stratification in education. Few students ended up anywhere other than neighborhood schools and Black and Hispanic students, low-income students, low-achieving students had limited opportunities to participate in popular option programs (Moore and Davenport, 1990 as cited in Lee, 1993, p. 137). As a result, the lure of charters may diminish for returning families and the choice to remain at the traditional public school comes at less of a risk than supporters of charters want parents to believe. However, the decision to choose the neighborhood schools comes with a host of judgments. In many political circles, the tendency to support rhetoric that banishes the contributions of the traditional school model has created the stigma that if students are not attending charters than their educational experiences will be less. However, there are studies to suggest that some charter schools are faced with similar challenges as non-charters. Some are failing, mismanaged and face the threat of closing. Henig notes, “The District of Columbia has several charter schools that have received considerable national attention. Some of this has been embarrassing and some of the charters have been lauded for its care of the initial stage of approving charters and subsequently in providing oversight and support” (p.103). As charters are being sold as “better” it is important to highlight the successes and failures of this school model so that parents are able to make informed decisions rather than feeling pushed into choosing schools that may or may not serve their child’s needs. It also contributes to the discussion centered on the idea of “better” schools via charters, a suggestion that many returning families rejected.

Choice appears to magnify differences in the quality of education available to children from diverse social backgrounds (Lee, 1993, p. 141). Schools of choice that are seeking to attract the best students will likely enact strategies to “cream” a particular student population. The 2013 Illinois Report Card is one resource that parents can use to navigate schools. Schools that are able to tout and highlight average ACT scores that are above state and district averages and are able to demonstrate a history of meeting federal education standards are two potential strategies for attracting middle-class families to selective choice schools.

The disparity between neighborhood high schools near Beautiful Homes and Rose Garden and the more selective high schools in the area are stark. According to the 2013 Illinois Report Card, High School C, a neighborhood high school, had an average composite ACT score of 16.9. This trend continued over a twelve-year period. Additionally, High School C did not meet federal education requirements. Under the federal No Child Left Behind law, federal education requirements require that schools are measured by how well students – as tracked by race, income and other factors – score on state standardized exams. If one group of students fails to meet federal expectations, the school faces sanctions that could include replacing teachers or closing the school (2013, Illinois State Report Card). In contrast, High School B, the selective enrollment high school a few miles from Beautiful Homes and Rose Garden Terrace, had an average 2013 ACT score of 25.5 and over the last twelve years has been above the district and state averages. In addition, the selective enrollment school met the federal education requirements for the school year (2013, Illinois State Report Card). It should be noted that High School C reports a low-income population of 88% whereas; High School B reports only 44% of the same. This is just one example of the trends and disparity that are commonplace in Chicago’s schools. This in turn, leads to yet another example of the reproduction of social class and race as

some low-income and working-class students appear to be placed at an educational disadvantage that may impact how prepared some students will be when it comes time to compete for the jobs of the future.

The role of choice for returning public-housing families is an important part of the narrative for families as they made decisions on where to send their child to school. The current debate surrounding choice help to legitimate returning families' choices as valid and challenges the very notion of better schools that were being sold to returning residents. The neoliberal agenda being exercised via housing and schooling in Chicago's urban center has been one that has completely reshaped the social and economic landscape. Returning residents have had to assimilate to new neighborhoods and schools as well as work towards reestablishing themselves as viable members of their community. It is important to uncover first-hand accounts of the dislocation, relocation and school selection process as there are potentially powerful stories to be told in relation the decision making that parents employed. The following chapter seeks to delve deeper into the lived experiences of families before and after demolition that may help to better understand how residents made sense of the layers of the policy and implementation process in housing and schools on the One-Way Corridor.

CHAPTER III

COUNTERSTORYTELLING

This chapter seeks to provide an aerial view of life in public housing on the One-Way Corridor. It describes some of the everyday realities and the many struggles that residents faced as they tried to fight for better living conditions and educational opportunities. This chapter will provide a lens into some of the main factions, such as the resident councils, that either helped or hindered family decision making throughout the displacement process. This chapter is an important component of this work because for many families the resident councils, such as the Local Advisory Council, were the only resources they have available to them to help them make decisions during the displacement process. The ways in which public housing families responded to their conditions with or without these council groups may foreshadow how families eventually made decisions on housing and schooling.

One Way “corridor”—words that used to evoke more than two miles of continuous public housing high-rises, stretching between 54th and 35th Streets and often described as the largest concentration of public housing (and of poverty) in the country. Faust states (2004), “The projects became inhabited by the poorest of the poor, who were becoming increasingly unemployed and dependent on the insufficient social and community amenities” (p.1). There were 28 buildings at the Rose Garden Terrace and eight buildings at Beautiful Homes, (Invisible Institute, 2003). Public housing in Chicago would become notoriously famous for the large scale attempts and, arguably failures, of trying to house and isolate large swaths of people into one area of the city. In 2000, according to Fuerst (2004) high-density, high-rise buildings in black neighborhoods, like Rose Garden Terrace, housed 27,000 people (p.1). More than 99% of the

residents in Robert Taylor were Black. Belluck (1998) notes, “nearly half of the adults live on less than \$5,000 a year (p.1).

Over time, problems continued to mount. Hunt (2001) notes, “CHA’s budget problems in the early 1970s, triggered in part by the decline in tenant incomes, created maintenance shortfalls in areas such as plumbing and elevator maintenance, significantly undermining quality of life, particularly in the high rises” (p. 110). Prince (2013) notes, “The 28 buildings were colossal and gloomy, reaching over fifteen stories each, with perpetually broken elevators. Overcrowding was unavoidable as over 27,000 individuals crammed into a space designed for no more than 11,000. Nearby streets were covered in litter and the neighborhood lack any semblance of banks, libraries or even grocery stores; residents were thus unable to attain public services or purchase basic food staples” (p.1). Belluck (1998) states, “Leaks and broken windows went unfixed. Elevators and hallways reeked of urine” (p.1).

In addition to the problem of maintenance, residents were also faced with problems of crime. Crime coupled with rabid drug use and inadequate police enforcement created lots of tension between tenants and the CHA. Tenants were going through a period of strained relations with CHA officials and municipal police, both of whom suggested that the physical environment was inhibiting them from providing effective law enforcement in the twenty-eight high rises” (Venkatesh, 2009, p.69). By the late 1960s, inadequate police protection led to increasing incidences of burglary, rape, and murder, and press reports fueled the image of a project out of control (Hunt, 2001, p.113). Although media reporting projected a lot of the blame on residents, many of the aforementioned problems were a result of widespread mismanagement at the Chicago Housing Authority. Seemingly, residents became very frustrated and started to demand better living conditions. In turn, resident councils would be formed and leaders would emerge

and represent the concerns of residents directly to CHA. The following paragraphs will highlight the relationships that were formed between the management and the councils, the successes and the failures of this group and the contentious relationships that developed between the councils and residents. This story is important because it helps to understand some of the decisions that residents would make during the displacement process given the resources that were available to them.

The history of tenant participation in public housing developments on the One-Way Corridor is vast. Resident complaints grew numerous and many requests for quality housing were left unanswered. Bennett (2006) notes, “Once the agency began to experience fiscal pressure it was never again able even to begin to address the physical deterioration of its properties” (p. 270). Accordingly, residents grew frustrated and sought to play a more active role in the decision-making taking place on behalf of their developments. In 1960, Resident Councils were put in place by the housing authority management. They consisted of women and were elected and appointed by fellow public housing residents. The Councils were designed to create “Maximum feasible participation of citizens in the decisions that affect their communities” (Venkatesh, 2000, p.50). Resident Councils would serve as a liaison between the tenants and the CHA. At each public housing development, residents would elect one person per floor to serve on the Council and then the building would elect a Council President for that particular development. At the onset the relationships between the Councils, the CHA and the residents was rather harmonious. Problems of maintenance were being addressed and resident relations were growing strong between developments. Council member’s primary role was to manage the everyday upkeep of their respective buildings by delegating responsibilities to residents. For instance, “Councils existed in thirty-nine CHA developments and enabled residents to assume

their share of responsibility for the character of their communities” (Venkatesh, 2000, p.35). Residents relied on members of the Councils to represent them and help them lobby for help from the CHA to get things done within and around developments. For some time, the needs of residents were being met but as the living conditions grew worse in public housing, concerns regarding problems other than maintenance were expressed. However, the Council and tenants soon realized that they did not have enough power to fix other pressing concerns. Venkatesh (2000) describes the limits of the Councils power by describing their role as “helping households by relaying information to the Housing Authority”. He also shows how discontent with this responsibility grew by noting, “they felt removed from the CHA decision-making process [resource allocation, tenant selection, eviction and fines]. One Council member noted, A lot of us was also getting pissed off with the CHA and they wasn’t fulfilling their promise to give us our fair share of control (p.52).

Maximum participation was never fully defined and residents a part of the Council were not able to get a lot accomplished after a certain point. This is representative of Tokenism which includes informing and consulting with residents or placating them by placing a few, but not enough to have power, on boards and committees that actually make decisions (Smith et al.). The contention between residents and the CHA would begin as residents began to demand more control in decision making processes. Arnstein (1969) states, “When the have-nots define participation as redistribution of power, the American consensus on the fundamental principal explodes into many shades of outright racial, ethnic ideological and political opposition” (p. 216). Unbeknownst to residents was the gravity of dissension between the councils and management which led to more chaos and distrust between the CHA, the Council and tenants. Council members could not ignore the tenants increasing dissatisfaction with their role. They

were being criticized by their own constituents” (p.52). Towering buildings without working elevators or adequately lighted hallways presented major problems for residents. When nothing was being done, the Resident Council members would hear these complaints but could do very little to improve conditions.

In the fight towards basic and fair housing rights, the Resident Council members knew they needed a greater role in the decision making that was taking place at CHA. Groups within developments, such as the Chicago Housing Tenants Association, were being organized to address the mistrust and mismanagement that was taking place throughout CHA and an eventual investigation by HUD was conducted regarding complaints that the CHA was not allowing sufficient participation of residents in the allocation of modernization money (Hunt, 2009, p. 216). This was a major success for residents. Residents had demands ranging from all high-rises have day care centers and recreation halls and that the people of the area be entrusted with shaping stimulants for employment and other types of economic development proposals. They wanted the hiring of security guards independent of the CHA” (Hunt et al). CHA tenants no longer believed in the management and did not believe that they had their best interest in mind. HUD continued to press the CHA to include residents in decision making much to their dismay and were resistant to many resident demands.

By the early 1970’s The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) wrote a report, the Memorandum of Accord, describing the need for more resident involvement. The report described “the need to empower residents-to help them be active participants in the future of their development. Examples included community-building initiatives that involve residents in decision making matters such as physical plant, maintenance, and services that affect their lives and the prospects of the community” (Smith, 2016, p.32). This was a major step towards more

equitable decision making for public housing residents but it did not bode well in terms of repairing the fractured relationship that had been developing with the CHA. The Accord gave residents considerable powers to determine day to day CHA operations and decisions over policies and expenditures for their respective developments and any pushback from the CHA would be met by “the Federal government intervening to force the CHA to accede to tenant demands and would be a watchdog over CHA management” (Venkatesh, 2000, p.60). As a result, more resident groups were formed. Despite the activism that was being displayed by resident leaders, it was still a challenge to rebuild the trust that residents had lost in their designated leaders.

Two new groups were formed as a result of the Accord, the Central Advisory Council (CAC) and the Local Advisory Council (LAC). The CAC was the board made up of LAC presidents of each housing complex across the city. The LAC was a democratically elected resident council at traditional public housing developments. The presidents of the individual LAC’s were members of the CAC which negotiated system wide issues with the CHA” (Chaskin, Khare, and Joseph, 2012, p. 875). The LAC was the board that offered input into the CHA’s policies for a given complex” (Venkatesh, 2002, p. 60). Each group was elected by public housing tenants. However, from the beginning residents questioned their effectiveness and whether they would be able to be a true resource for them and their families.

The LAC relationship with residents was tenuous and even though they were elected by residents there was still a lot to prove. Although there were some successes, there were also major obstacles facing the CHA and the LAC/CAC. As the circumstances in public housing began to worsen, such as the increase in crime, drugs and policing, the LAC was blamed for not doing more. Securing public housing developments was a major concern for the LAC and was

further complicated by the CHA's inability and lack of responsibility it placed on hiring adequate police officers. This, in turn, led to a lot of finger pointing and distrust by residents. "The lack of proper security dates back to the late 1960's when the police department recommended 160 officers at an annual cost of \$1.4 million. The CHA's appeal for federal assistance netted only an ineffective forty man security force for one of the largest and notorious public housing developments in the nation" Hunt, 2001, p.112). Residents wanted to believe the LAC could be a vehicle towards getting their voices heard and concerns resolved but eventually tenants grew restless. Ventakesh (2000) states, "To voice their frustration , residents turned their critical gaze to elected tenant representatives who served on the Local Advisory Council". Tenants alleged that the LAC and the CAC officers were responsible for the declining state of affairs. No one expected them to fix up all the apartments, but after a while we was getting pissed when they wasn't even listening to us and even trying to do something for us" (p.121).

Residents began to accuse LAC members of getting special privileges. For instance, as residents waited for problems in their units to be fixed, residents accused LAC members of getting special treatment by the CHA and having their problems attended to in a timely manner. Residents noted, "They need to do a complete reorganization of the LAC's because the tenants have some of the worst representatives in the world. You've got mothers of drug dealers and rapist dictating to the managers" (Fuerst, 2003, p. 31). This contentious state of affairs between the LAC and residents would continue as life in public housing grew worse. Unfortunately, for many residents these councils were their only available resource, outside of the familial networks, towards improving their living conditions. Eventually, Federal legislation would provide housing authorities with grants to demolish many dilapidated buildings. The LAC/CAC

impact on the policy decisions being made around demolition and displacement would be heavily documented and criticized by residents.

The CAC played a pivotal role in The Plan for Transformation, the \$1.6 billion plan that completely remade the physical and social landscape of public housing in the city (Chaskin, et al, 2012, p. 871). They were particularly active in the negotiation of the Right to Return contract that outlined the requirements for eligibility for coming back to mixed-income developments. According to Bennett (2006), The Central Advisory Council (CAC), recognized the weak commitment the Relocation Act offered and negotiated a much tighter agreement that spells out the rights and responsibilities of both tenants and the CHA. It “ensures that all lease-compliant residents (as of Oct. 1, 1999) are guaranteed a ‘Right of Return’ to a new or upgraded public-housing unit, if (a) they choose to return to public housing, and (b) they meet the site-specific screening criteria” (p.217). One-Way corridor was home to thousands of families for many years. Upon learning that families would be displaced, many wanted to return but many would not meet the Right to Return requirements. Roughly 75% of displaced CHA families expressed a desire to return to their original neighborhoods.

Researchers predict that fewer than 20% of Chicago families will be able to return because of the relatively low number of available units and the restrictive eligibility criteria (Thompson, 2006, p. 275). In addition to guaranteeing a right to return, the contract provided a process for notifying residents about relocation and guaranteed them certain rights during the relocation process. It also defined the services that would be offered to residents during the transformation, including supportive services and relocation counseling (Popkin and Cunningham, 2002, p.6). Despite the provisions outlined in the agreement, the Right to Return left many families having to look for other housing options. As a result, arguably, this left many

public housing families scrambling to determine their next move. The efforts of the CAC would prove to be less beneficial for the majority of the public housing residents that were being displaced. There were several iterations of the Relocation Contract that included providing more services for residents. However, as time passed between iterations more families were being lost in the system or leaving and the neighborhoods where public housing once stood were becoming more desolate. Some questioned whether the CHA's official resident organization, the CAC, truly represented the interests of all residents (Popkin and Cunningham, 2002, p. 9).

It should be noted that some residents did benefit from some of the help offered to them by the CAC/LAC during the displacement process. However, this experience should not be normalized but rather seen as the exception. For many residents, they would make decisions without the help of their tenant representatives. Families would employ other resources as they went through the displacement process. They would have to utilize the same survival tactics they used when being displaced in order to tackle the set of radical changes that were taking place in the schools on the One-Way corridor. Given the eventual dissolution of the LAC/CAC, returning families would have to make school decisions in isolation of any help that CHA could have provided. The following paragraphs describe the changes that were concurrently taking place in schools.

Schools on the One-Way corridor were staples in the community. Many of the schools had been in the neighborhood for decades. There was a strong sense of community as generations of families attended the same school. Most students were enrolled in the neighborhood school, which for many was within walking distance from Rose Garden Terrace and Beautiful Homes. For instance, there were eight elementary schools within walking distance from the developments. One of the schools was located directly across the street from one of the

buildings at Rose Garden Terrace. The neighborhood mirrored community demographics. Ninety-nine percent of families living on the One-Way Corridor were Black and living below the poverty rate. The amount of children living in the developments on the corridor was numerous and over the years, the number ballooned. According to Chaskin (2006) “By the mid 1960s, the CHA estimated that 20,000 children lived at Rose Garden Terrace” (p.270). As more children occupied the developments, so too did they occupy seats in the schools in the neighborhood. As a result, schools and classrooms were overcrowded.

Venkatesh (2000) notes, “ In Chicago as in other cities, decades of municipal neglect, had produced overcrowded and deteriorating schools in poor and working-class black neighborhoods, and as middle-class flight lowered city tax bases, political officials responded by favoring white constituents” (p.26). Of the eight schools on the One-Way corridor, some schools forced over forty students per classroom. Early on, the CHA stepped in to try and alleviate some of the overcrowding. “The CHA solved the immediate crisis in 1962 by leasing the school board fifty- six first floor apartments for conversion to classrooms as a temporary solution that lasted ten years” (Hunt, 2001, p.114). This solution was short-lived and the problem of finding space for children in schools would continue. Other problems included ensuring that children were getting to school safely as gang wars began to take fold. The trembling continues long after the echo of gunfire has faded. It left playgrounds vacant and some classrooms half-empty as mothers kept their children virtually imprisoned in apartments. At McCorkle and Colman Schools, at the edges of Rose Garden Terrace, teachers saw the emotional price the violence takes on the children. It stresses them out (Papajohn and Rectenwald, 1993, p.1).

As the years passed and the Plan for Transformation became a reality for residents, schools on the One-Way corridor also began to change. As developments were demolished, the

doors on many of the schools shuttered. Attendance rates began to fall and schools began to empty. Deanes (2005) notes, "According to CHA planning documents, more than six thousand households will be re-located from public housing during the first five years of this century. This is an average of 1,200 families each year" (p.1). In some instances, schools were forced to merge or cluster with other schools to fill school buildings. Problems of overcrowding later became a problem of under enrollment. Weissman et.al (2001) note that "Between 1995 and 2000, the enrollment of CHA kids in HOPE VI area schools declined by 3,636" (p.1).

There were some contingency plans put in place by Chicago Public Schools to try and lessen the impact of such widespread dislocation on families and schools in the neighborhood. For instance, children that were forced to move mid-year could "Ride on the school board's dime to their old school for the remainder of the year and seventh-graders can get free transportation for an additional year so that they could graduate with classmates" (Weissman and Rogal, 2005, p.1). Many families took advantage of this provision or found other ways to keep their children enrolled in schools on the corridor. There were still many instances where students were travelling back and forth from their new neighborhoods to the schools that they attended before demolition. Seemingly, families valued familiarity over distance when educating their children. Even as some of the neighborhood schools that students once attended closed and students were being transferred to receiving schools, some families still chose those schools over others.

Studies indicate a trend where during displaced families took measures to keep their children enrolled in schools in their former neighborhood. The value of familiarity as it relates to education was priceless. For instance, Venkatesh notes, "Families had established relationships with school staff and were comfortable that their kids could make their way in a familiar community. Some parents moved to Harvey or Dixmoor but paid relatives or friends

that still lived in Rose Garden Terrace to board their children during the week. The children attend a Rose Garden Terrace-area school then go home to their parents on the weekend” (as cited in Weismman and Rogal, 2005, p. 6). The importance of schools in the neighborhood was high for families and they were willing to exercise extreme measures to keep their child enrolled in a school where they were most comfortable.

Post demolition, schools on the One-Way Corridor are no longer as numerous as they once were. Some have become charter schools. Henig notes, “Charter schools generally are designed to straddle the line that traditionally distinguishes public schools from private” (p.2). As residents in this study indicated, many of them preferred not to send their children to the charter because of the lack of information, admission requirements and their familiarity with the neighborhood school their child was already attending. Post demolition, the number of children attending schools on the corridor has significantly declined. Families were faced with a set of decisions that needed to be made once they were displaced and returned. Finding a home and finding a school were paramount to regaining a sense of normalcy within abnormal circumstances. The findings section that follows will show how six families made decisions given the array of things they were faced with during the displacement process.

Chapter IV

METHODOLOGY

Using a Phenomenological Research Design, this study seeks to investigate the lived experience of a small number of people through a series of in-depth interviews in an effort to understand the deep meaning of a person's experiences (Rossman and Rallis, 2003, p. 97).

Sample

According to Rossman and Rallis (2003), "In qualitative research, sampling strategies are purposeful. Typical strategies for purposeful selection of cases and individuals, events, or processes include snowball or chain sampling' (p. 137). A snowball sampling technique was purposefully used as it "offers real benefits for studies which seek to access difficult to reach or hidden populations" (Atkinson and Flint, 2001, p.2). The returning public housing population was difficult to access because many families that were displaced did not return. Using a snowball technique, a method, "for finding research subjects where one subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on" (Vogt, 1999 as cited in Atkinson and Flint), was deemed as the best way to get my data. My sample of six families, all women, was chosen because they met a certain criteria set out at the beginning of the research study and I believed they could best help to answer the question of access and decision making. Of the six, five of them were mothers raising school-aged children and one was a grandmother. Five participants lived in Beautiful Homes before demolition and one was from Rose Garden Terrace. All participants consisted of former public-housing residents from Beautiful Homes and Rose Garden Terrace that were displaced but later returned to the mixed-income development built in place of the public housing developments. All of the families

that participated in the study had school-age children, elementary through high school, and were willing to talk about the process they went through regarding where to send their children to school upon their return to the community. Participants were also able to speak towards any social or academic adjustments their children may have gone through as a result of multiple transitions.

Although the snowballing technique is recommended for hard to find populations, it came with a host of disadvantages which contributed to the small sample size. The main objective of this sampling technique was to be able to build participation with each interview conducted. Each interview has a probability of producing another. However, one of the many challenges incurred was the inability to build upon the snowball. In speaking with former public housing residents, after each interview, I posed a couple questions to them asking them if they could recommend others to participate in the study. One of the biggest obstacles to this approach is most participants did not want to give out others contact information. For instance, in asking participants did they know of anyone else that may qualify for the study, many of them answered yes. I, then, followed up asking for the information of their contact. Many of them were reluctant and offered to reach out to their contact on their own to see if they would be willing to participate. I obliged and indicated that I would follow up with them (the current research participant) in a couple of days. More often than not, the follow-up was challenging because I was unable to reach former participants after their initial interview was conducted. In some cases, my initial contact followed up with me by giving me someone to contact. However, after calling the new contact several times and leaving multiple voicemails, I made very little progress. In other instances, after a little time had passed, phone lines of the potential participants became disconnected.

Essentially, my snowball technique failed, in many regards, because research participants were not willing or fearful of providing a researcher with personal information of other former residents. The history of intimidation and mistrust that public housing residents had with officials may have also played a role in finding participants. This process made finding a sample challenging and ultimately slowed down the data collection. Perhaps, if there were more incentives associated with the research, returning families would have been more willing to participate.

Another barrier to a large sample size was the criteria of the study and the nature of disbursement. To further explain, the research plan was very specific in that participation was limited to former public-housing families that lived in Rose Gardens or Beautiful Homes, had been granted the Right to Return and came back to the neighborhood to live, had school-aged children and were at least eighteen years old. Given the criteria, many of the possible participants that were recommended through the snowballing technique were not eligible. It is possible that those residents that did participate did not effectively communicate the criteria to perspective participants. For those residents that did not qualify, they were asked the same questions as qualified residents regarding recommending other public-housing residents they felt may be a good fit for the study. However, this effort to snowball the unqualified participants did not yield high results. The effort to find qualified residents may be a result of the widespread disbursement and a limited number of families exercising their Right to Return.

Data collection

Using a Phenomenological Research Design, interviews were the best way to collect data. According to Mertler (2009), “In traditional research qualitative research methodologies necessitate the collection and analysis of narrative data (e.g., observation notes, interview transcripts and journal entries)” (p. 8). I conducted one-on-one interviews with parents. Each interview asked twenty-six open-ended questions. Interviews lasted between twenty-five minutes to an hour and a half. After each interview I assessed the quality of the conversation, insomuch, as to determine how well I managed time, how well I asked each question, and gauged if I was able to keep the interview on task and on topic. Some of the interviews required additional follow-up questions for the purpose of elaboration. According to Rossman and Rallis (2003) “Follow-up questions take the interview to a deeper level by asking for more detail” (p. 185).

The interview questions sought to capture the displacement experience from the moment families received the news that they were displaced, until they moved back to the mixed-income development and community and had to make certain decisions for their children. Questions were open-ended. Some interviews took place in the library, whereas, some participants felt most comfortable doing the interviews in their home. Turner notes (2010), “It might be easier to conduct the interviews with participants in a comfortable environment where the participants do not feel restricted or uncomfortable to share information” (p. 757).

Confidentiality of interviews was of the utmost importance. According to Baez (2002), “The convention of confidentiality is upheld as a means to protect the privacy of all persons, to build trust and rapport with study participants, and to maintain ethical standards and the integrity of the research process” (p.43). To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms were created for each

person and place mentioned throughout the study. This measure was taken to protect participants' identity. All interviews were recorded and all interviews were transcribed. The following section provides a description of how the data was analyzed. .

Data Analysis

After conducting and transcribing all of the interviews, I conducted a thematic analysis. According to Boyatzis (1998), "Thematic analysis in its simplest form is a categorizing strategy for qualitative data. Researchers review their data, make notes and begin to sort it into categories. Styled as a data analytic strategy, it helps researchers move their analysis from a broad reading of the data towards discovering patterns and developing themes" (p.4). I started by conducting a cursory overview as a refresher of the interviews conducted. After the overview, there was a more focused approach on being more intentional on finding reoccurring themes throughout the data. There were key words, based on the literature review, that I assumed would be revealed in the data set. Some of the key words when studying the experiences of public-housing families included family and social network. However, the data set was unique and some common themes were not as prevalent as expected or they were nuanced. Both common and nuanced themes were all put into categories and organized as either a major or minor theme.

Given that the data set was small, the data analysis was accomplished manually. Looking through the data, the goal was to find reoccurring themes. As each research participant had a different story to tell, the data was uniquely informed. As I read through the data, there were several themes that continuously stood out. I identified those as the major themes. After I identified the major themes, I then made a determination as to how many times the major themes were mentioned throughout the data. The major themes were given alphanumeric identifiers.

For instance, if a theme was labeled with A1, that indicated that it was a major theme and it was mentioned the most. If a theme was labeled A2, it was also a major theme but it was not mentioned as much as the other theme but was the second most mentioned theme found throughout the data. An example of an A theme was family. Family was one of the more frequent themes. In fact, family was coded as A1. Another less prominent “A” theme was proximity. As proximity was not mentioned more than family, it was still a prominent mention throughout the data garnering it a code of A3. This process continued throughout the data until all of the major themes were identified and given numeric pairings.

At various points throughout the data, there were instances where non-major themes were identified. These were referred to as minor themes. These themes would appear periodically throughout the dataset, but not enough to be considered a major theme. These themes were given an alpha code of a B. Depending on the frequency of a B theme determined the numeric code that would be associated with the letter. An example of a B1 theme is access to resources. Another example of a B theme was convenience. Again this theme was seen throughout the data but not with enough frequency to be labeled as major.

I continued this process until I believed that all of the major and minor themes were revealed enough to be able to tell a story of the experiences of families. Using this method allowed me to organize and categorize the data thematically uncovering what was new, important, interesting, different, and supportive of the experiences and decision-making processes of each research participant.

There was a lot of crossover between interviews as many families had very similar experiences with displacement, relocation, returning and school choice. This process of finding

similarities and differences is more formally referred to as categorical analyses. Categorical analysis allowed for the identification of similarities and differences among the data, which uncovered the variability in experiences and decision making processes that were employed by returning families.

There are several moving pieces in this research that are interconnected and help to tell the overall story. In working to connect the dots between resident accounts of their experience, it can all be traced back to a history of carefully engineered and executed policies that unjustly positioned poor people of color in precarious situations. In the past, poor people of color have not truly had a voice in the decision-making processes regarding their livelihoods but were forced to deal with the circumstances they faced. Understanding the totality of the overall experience (the history of oppression, marginalization and exclusionary policies) creates a certain perspective for better understanding the decision-making process of returning families.

According to Rossman and Rallis (2003) “Qualitative methodologists tend to recognize two sets of overall analytic strategies, one emphasizing the development of analytic strategies and the other focusing more on description” (p. 273). The findings in this study focus more on the rich experiences given by the research participants. The description of their experiences helps to tell the story of displacement, return and choice more accurately. The findings presented in the following section are intended to bring attention to a particular period of time in Chicago history that saw thousands and thousands of families faced with a traumatic situation and how they were able to overcome any obstacles as a result.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

The findings section presents the data of the six interviews conducted. This section details how returning public-housing families navigated the process of displacement and how they ultimately made decisions regarding the next steps for their family.

Family/Community

There was a tale of two stories, as it relates to family and community, when examining the experiences and decisions of returning public-housing families. On one hand, prior to demolition returning families talked of a strong sense of community and network ties created by families living in public housing. Participants reported a lack of other resources outside of the community, resulting in families relying on one another for support. According to the literature, for some public-housing families access to translocal ties may be somewhat limited. “Different kinds and amounts of support are provided to and received from people operating outside of the professional and bureaucratic arenas (Uehara 1990:521). Despite what some may view as a disadvantage, their support systems helped public-housing families over time. There was solidarity and reliance upon one another as families dealt with many of the realities they faced while living in the developments prior to demolition. The counterstories that residents present indicate a neighborhood that residents took pride in. These stories are evidence of the reasons why residents were attached to their communities and were able to form lasting relationships that proved helpful during their time in public housing. For instance, when asked to “Describe this neighborhood before the developments were torn down. The buildings, the people, churches”, some of the following responses were offered:

The community they stuck together. They were more a family with everybody”. I think because we were so close of living and growing up and being there for so many years.

(Ms. W)

You can go to the next person’s house and sit, talk with them, you had close babysitters in case you needed somebody to watch the kids and you know you ain’t got to go way out south and get on the bus. If you needed a little something, we had to walk a little distance and go to the next person’s house and borrow a cup of sugar or something (Ms.

C)

To further inquire about the amount and quality of support that families had for one another while living in public housing, a follow-up question was posed that asked participants: “Did you have a lot of family that lived in the building prior to demolition”? Some of the responses included:

Knew everybody. And when a stranger comes in, it’s a whole different thing (Ms. R)

Yeah, my family, my sisters and brothers. It was like 10 of us and we all lived in Cook Hall (Ms. C)

Yeah Cook Hall, They stuck together. The kids listened. They had a lot of support (Ms. W).

My friends, they grew up and I was with them like family as well. So their mother disciplined and watched them. One thing about Cook Hall when they say a village raised that was a village that raised (Ms. W).

Further evidence of the interconnectedness of families to one another and to their homes is shown in how one participant described how she felt upon learning that the public-housing developments were going to be torn down:

It's like you are losing out on stuff. You were safe in public housing. It was like you were safe in the building. You were confident that you didn't have to worry about your child because the people in the building knew you and knew all of you and your mother and all that (Ms. O)

Even during times of unrest and violence, participants gave descriptions of the neighborhood that were centered on trust and togetherness in the community. For instance, when describing how residents looked out for one another and protected the children, participants stated:

That is why they were always on their guard about letting some people in they never saw before (Ms. R)

We would all fight each other but we didn't let nobody else come in and try to take over or do nothing to the kids (Ms. R)

The data highlights the strength of many of these local relationships and how arrangements with one another helped to form a community that families grew to love. It helped to create a community that families never wanted to see torn down.

It was kind of sad, because I'm like they're going to tear down the buildings. When they tore the first building down, I thought they were going to remodel it. Next building, it didn't feel right (Ms. O)

No, I didn't want to see it torn down but I wanted it to change (Ms. R)

At the micro-level, feelings of family and community were linked to memories that families shared throughout the years. Families were interconnected and the cohesiveness of a community were marveled and brought back memories of “the good ole days”. Even though some of these memories may have been filled with obstacles, facets of life in public housing were still cherished by many residents. Boyd (2008) speaks of what she calls, A Jim Crow Nostalgia, to describe how even in the midst of some the most challenging circumstances there were still sentiments of a sense of longing for the past. The reimagining of black life is significant because it is the bases for a specific understanding of contemporary black identity-of the values, characteristics and behaviors that have defined the African-American residents of this neighborhood (p.xiii). For many public-housing residents, even though their neighborhoods were devoid of essential resources and the developments they were living in had been neglected for years, families still remembered the good times spent with family and friends. The connection to these memories helped to facilitate a shared community experience that only those families living in public housing could appreciate and celebrate. Ms. W recounts her time in public housing as trustworthy and supportive especially during difficult times:

Even when your mother passed you still had mothers around that gave you that support, that discipline or whatever you needed to just keep going (Ms. W)

Even though the discourse around the residents and the conditions in which they lived was moreso negative, for many residents the experiences of living in public housing were defining moments in their lives. These sets of shared experiences helped to form a community life that may have helped to create the positive nostalgia that residents expressed despite the negative conditions portrayed in the media and that they may have faced.

Despite strong familial and communal ties, the data indicates that there was a shift in how returning families experienced displacement and return. In fact, during this time, the extension of translocal ties becomes very important in the overall discussion of public-housing families and their decision-making processes. Despite previous literature that has written about the over-reliance and weak social networks of families in public housing, this data demonstrates that once physical communities were designated as dispensable and people were displaced, families found other ways to survive and make decisions outside of their typical networks of the past. The shift from family as the sole source may be an indication that returning families were aware of the importance of having access to a variety of different resources during the transition period. Even as families came to the realization of the need to extend their networks, access for some would remain an obstacle that would have to be overcome.

The conversation of access is a critical component to this work because it speaks not only to how the process of displacement maintained the status quo but also to how families made decisions based on what was made available and useful to them. One of the sub, or minor themes that appeared in the data was access to resources. Beggs, Haines and Hurlbert (1996) reviewed the work of Granovetter who identifies the idea that families living in poverty tend to have strong ties. The weak ties, however; are what Granovetter believes to be the most beneficial. “Compared to the strong ties that characterize dense networks, weak ties are more likely to link dissimilar individuals, to connect more individuals to more diverse parts of the social structure and therefore to provide access to non-redundant information that leads to successful instrumental action” (p.205). This notion that having access to weak ties allows individuals to have more options is particularly relevant to this discussion of decision-making. For those returning families that may have had very limited access to weak ties upon learning

they would be forced from their home, their displacement/return/choice experiences may reflect differently from those that had greater access. I argue that, in addition to the structural inequality that families faced, access to weak ties was a major challenge that many returning families faced. The resources that were made available were depleted.

As not all families members were granted the right to return, the issue of access for returning families becomes two-fold. Not only were parts of families being pushed further away from the central city and their potential access to weak ties became non-existent, the returning public-housing families were also separated from their traditional strong ties. The distance from the strong ties that once existed within the public-housing developments is critical to understand as it essentially leaves families, that may have limited access to weak ties, with very little support in making critical life decisions. These set of conditions, in effect, quite possibly contributed to the discontinuity of the entire displacement and return process for families. Blocked mobility, as a function of limited access to weak and strong ties made it difficult for families to navigate during times of crisis. The stories from research participants regarding access varied. Access to weak ties for some was abundant and allowed for families to make a more seamless transition, whereas, for other access was limited in scope.

As demolition was underway, the data shows that there were shifts from the sole reliance on family networks as some sought out any assistance that the Local Advisory Council (LAC) could provide. Despite the tempestuous history between tenants and the LAC some residents looked to them to help them make certain decisions around how to find housing after displacement. The LAC became a means of support for some returning families and a primary source of information, oftentimes, trumping support received from family, that many research participants relied upon. For example, one of the interview questions states: “Take me back to

the moment when you found out that they were going to tear down the development. Who did you talk to? Did you talk to mostly family or did you talk to your friends”?

We had the LAC, and the LAC was like a board. It was like 15 of us. So, when The Authority decided to tear it down, we protested. We called meetings at the Field House, so whatever you had to do, we're for the residents. We called a meeting every month and had the residents come and let them get on the speaker and say how they feel and why they would like to come back to Cook Hall (Ms. R).

Me being on the LAC they gave us a little format of whatever happens, it was going to be so it wasn't hard for me to adjust (Ms. C)

There was this lady name Francine-[she was also an LAC member], she used to be over there in Cook Hall, she was good, she helps people out (Ms. J)

As evidenced by the data, some families that were being displaced did not rely on their family or friends for information.

More relied on the LAC as a resource. In some instances, displaced families relied on the LAC and the Authority to provide them with housing resources. Unlike previous literature that stated that the demand did not meet the supply, some of the residents that participated in this research indicate that the LAC and the Authority were a great resource when trying to decide on where to move after being displaced. Some residents felt they had a fair and equal chance of making a smooth transition from public housing and instead of making decisions as a family unit or as a community, relied on the LAC or the Authority to help them make decisions. This point of view was expressed by residents who served on the LAC and even by some who were not a

part of the LAC. For example, when asked, “How did you decide where to go after being displaced”?

Well, actually, the Section 8, the Authority, they took us around. They let us know that you can go here or wherever and they took us to some places that they were affiliated with or you go out on your own and look. But I didn’t go out on my own, I went through them and let me them take me to certain areas to look at the place and see if that’s where I wanted to go.(Ms. C)

It’s like they gave us a voucher. And they helped them go look for a place and they had four people to take you out. They come to the building everyday to take you out and look in the area that you think you might want to go. And if you like it, then they talk to the landlord before they let them fill the paperwork out and they come in, and they inspect the apartment and make sure it’s built by the book (Ms. R)

They had a relocation system set up where they would give you a listing of addresses, apartments, different subsidized low-income or Section 8 so you could choose out of the three which one you wanted (Ms. W)

Even outside of housing, the Authority offered other types of resources to residents that were being displaced.

They have representatives, they had the Service Connectors back then and you’d have to stay involved with them and they’d help you find a job or help you with your job interview or whatever you needed to be able to get a job (Ms. C)

When I came back, they had a little program where they helped teens. And they helped them try to do stuff, helped them try to find a job (Ms. O)

The Service Connectors program was initially designed to help families that did not have the right to return. It was to provide specialized services by helping displaced residents become more sufficient, via access to services such as counseling, so that one day they could qualify for better housing. However, the Service Connectors program was extended to all residents, as evidenced by the stories of participants who did return. For some residents that participated in the study, they spoke of the varied assistance that they received from the Service Connectors during the dislocation and relocation process. Help with housing, jobs and other soft skills (such as help with writing resumes, how to get dressed for an interview and typing classes) were offered to some during this time. However, this is not to assert that this was the norm for prior research has shown that the Service Connectors program was unable to match the supply with the demand of services being requested by displaced public-housing residents. For instance, one participant quipped, when asked: “Did the Authority help you at all with job placement, counseling? Did they do anything for you, knowing that you had been displaced?”

No. I even filled out an application, and I still haven’t— No help. I would have taken advantage of a workshop, a job. I would have taken advantage of an apartment, a stable place that I could say was my own. I think I’d have been a better person with that than I am now. Right now, I’m struggling, but it’s OK. You go do that, pick yourself up—that’s what I’m trying to do now. (Ms. O)

As not all of the families that participated in the study are still living in the mixed-income communities they once returned to, those that remained (3 families) spoke more favorably of the

services offered by the Service Connectors as opposed to those families that temporarily returned to the neighborhood and later moved away.

The decision-making process for families was a journey. It also changed over time as displacement became more of a reality. The shift from family decision-making was just a foreshadowing into how families would ultimately make decisions on where to send their children to school. There were many factors that helped parents to make school-choice decisions and most of the decisions on schools were also made outside of the typical family network. The next section examines another major theme that supports an understanding of how returning families made decisions about schools for their children.

Familiarity

According to a CPS release, dated July 2013, “Blackburn Elementary served 275 students in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten through 8th grades”. The memo went on to further state that:

“Our District faces a \$1 billion deficit, which threatens everything in our system by making it difficult to provide the robust supports and services that all children deserve. Our District’s financial crisis is significantly challenged by underutilization, resulting in financial resources being invested in half-empty buildings that are costly to maintain and repair. The plan proposes to close schools that are underutilized. These actions will enable CPS to maximize resources by supporting a reduced number of school buildings, which will improve our capacity to provide all children with greater access to critical resources and supports such as libraries, technology, playgrounds, nurses, and counselors” (CPS Memo, July 2013.)

The CPS memo is indicative of the type of challenges that returning families faced. As more and more families returned, they dealt with many of the realities of flagship schools being closed, moved or chartered. However, for many returning families that was a small deterrent and despite some of the obstacles they would face when deciding on schools for their children, familiarity would aid families in the decision-making process.

Upon returning to the neighborhood, families were faced with major decisions. Where would they send their children to school? What schools were still open? What school choices did parents have and were they going to exercise those choices? The Plan for Transformation touted that along with better neighborhoods, families would have access to better schools. Families would also have more choices. However, for many returning families, school consideration was not about access or choice. Some families were more focused on schools that were familiar, proximal and ones they considered to be safe. According to Rhodes & Deluca (2014) "Because residential moves for low-income families often involve unplanned and distressed searches for hard-to-find housing, families try to meet basic needs such as safety, proximity to child care, and housing unit qualities rather than focusing on schools" (p.138). For returning families, familiarity and community played a large role in how they made decisions on where to send their children to school. These two constructs are interconnected because for returning families the cohesive network (community) that was established before demolition became a critical component that families relied on in their school selection process. The reliance on the familiar for returning families is discussed below.

Familiarity/Community

For many families living in public-housing developments prior to displacement, their schooling habits, in terms of how they selected schools for their children, were very similar. For instance, there were eight elementary schools on the One-Way Boulevard prior to demolition. However, most of the families that were living in Rose Gardens and Beautiful Homes, all of their children attended the same school. Many of them attended the same school because it was familiar and it was a part of the community. As many of the schools in the neighborhood prior to demolition were flagship schools and had been the school of choice for previous generations, familiarity was a logical choice for many returning parents. To show this, residents talked about their experience with selecting schools prior to their displacement from public housing:

When I went to Blackburn Elementary my grandmother had been working there. She had been working there since her kids were kids. So, that's a lot of years. And my grandmother just stopped working there last year because they closed the school down last year. It was nice. It was clean, nice, warm inside Blackburn and we had really good teachers (Ms. O)

Blackburn Elementary, awesome. A family-oriented school where they support, they watch over, they look out, they teach. You had all the student from those buildings [public housing developments] went there, and if you didn't go there you went to Slowe Elementary which was right across the street (Ms. W)

Returning residents had longstanding relationships with teachers, principals and other parents that helped to form a sense of community. This strong network may have been the driving force for many parents, prior to demolition, to keep their children in a school that was familiar. As the

learning environments were more homogeneous in the traditional school setting, choosing the neighborhood schools helps to guard against the biases and social disadvantages that tend to exist in classrooms where there are a mix of students from different social classes. To that end, even during the displacement process and school transitions (being closed, moving, becoming charters); returning parents still found a way to keep their children at familiar schools. For example, one participant, when asked to describe the neighborhood after demolition, she described how schools had closed and how she navigated the school process for her child.

But the thing was, you know, like I said, then they closed up and she had to go down on 51st [where the school was relocated] you know to go there. And that was a problem but they did have the bus service where they come pick you up, the school did have that come pick them up and stuff and take them to school and bring them back (Ms. C)

I didn't have to transfer my kids. I was able to get the bus cards. And they had these school buses that picks them up and takes them to school and brings them back home. So I had to meet them over by my old school, to pick them up if they went to after school because they can't get on the bus. So it was really tough (Ms. W)

This is a trend that characterized how parents preferred to deal with the challenges of keeping their child enrolled in schools that had serviced the community for generations, rather than accessing the purported better schools and facing the same forms of resistance, embedded within maintaining the status quo, that had denied them access to better educational opportunities in the past.

Returning families had a long history with the schools in the neighborhood. These existing ties with schools may have helped to make choosing easier. On the other hand, links to

the community cannot be overshadowed by the lack of access or blocked mobility that met families upon returning. This may help to explain why some returning families decided not to explore the “better” options that were being sold to them. The denial of opportunity is usually implemented through policies that deny certain types of students’ access to a certain type of education further reproducing the social order. It is not because poor and working-class families do not have interest in so-called better schools but, in some instances, it is a direct result of them not feeling like they truly have access. Many times when this occurs, familiarity becomes the more commonplace option for these families. When asking Ms. C to describe the neighborhood upon returning, her observations clearly show that she is aware of the so-called “better” schooling options available in the neighborhood but access to them was difficult.

I was a little upset when they took out our little school right there and made it into something else for somebody else and then you got to have real high scores to go there.
(Ms. C)

For many returning public-housing residents longstanding relationships with their neighborhood school and access to transportation were two factors that helped families decide where to send their child to school. When asked, “Upon returning, how did you decide which school you were going to send your child to? Did you continue to send them to Blackburn”? Residents responded by saying:

Yes, the busses came. She [her daughter] said she didn’t want to go anywhere else. She didn’t want to try to meet no other kids, no other teachers. So, she wanted to stay there
(Ms. R)

The teachers were very nice there [neighborhood school]; I liked the teachers and the principal too, very nice (Ms. J)

She went to Blackburn. She was in kindergarten, really Pre-K. Ms. Berry's been there since her father was there. Blackburn Elementary is like our roots. Most of them went there because like we already know the family of Blackburn (Ms. W)

Oh if you come back when they was in elementary school, they would have went right there to Blackburn (Ms. C)

As evidenced by the data, embedded within familiarity is a strong sense of community that has developed based on the strength of the relationships that returning residents have made with teachers and families throughout the years. The value placed on being a part of a community appears to outweigh any ostensible benefits of other schools in other communities. Such a choice would require returning families to leave the familiarity of their community and their schools, where robust relationships already exist, and integrate into an already established network. The risk associated with such choice may have been too great and returning families decided to remain close to what has kept them connected to one another in the past. Albeit important, familiarity and community were not the only factors that returning parents considered when deciding where to send their children to school. Proximity was also another major theme that was prevalent throughout the data.

Proximity

Rhodes and DeLuca (2014) note that “Unlike middle-class families, who explicitly connect their residential decisions to school considerations, our families [low income] prioritize nonschool factors in residential choices and decide on the school their children attend in a separate step” (p.146). These distinctions are particularly relevant, in that, some returning families already had their mind made up before returning regarding where to send their child to school. These decisions did not include charters or selective enrollment high schools. However, proximity was a common variable. For example when asked: “How did you decide which school to send your child to upon returning”, responses included:

I have a 17 year old but you know, I didn’t even try to put her over here because I wanted her to go right to West High School because I said it shouldn’t matter which school you go to. So she goes right over there (Ms. C)

Yes, it was close, and I knew it was a good school. It was a really good school” (Ms. R)[Referring to the local neighborhood school which was not a charter or selective enrollment]

I don’t want to do the charters schools but I know the charters are great. Some of them lack things. They just make it seem they’re good because it’s a charter school (Ms. W)

Ms. W may have been one of very few parents that was able to express an understanding of the inequality that existed with the school choice options available to returning parents.

Charter schools were touted as being very good options for families when, in fact, some of the charters in the neighborhood had strict requirements for admission, thereby leading to less

interest by some returning parents. The educational policy agenda supporting charters as viable options continues to exclude certain types of families. Arguably, the school choice agenda throughout Chicago signifies less of a shift toward inclusive educational environments but instead more of the same where, as Conflict Theory notes, different groups continue to struggle and compete for social advantages. School “choice” within the context of charters and/or selective enrollment schools for many returning families was not a reality because many returning families did not have the resources to fully access such options. Dingerson (as cited in Fabricant & Fine (2012) notes that “Virtually all charter schools require parents and students to sign a contract upon enrollment. The contracts typically require parents to offer some number of hours volunteering for the school...some charters use parents refusal to sign a contract as a reason to deny admission, or parents’ noncompliance with the contract as the basis for what they euphemistically call voluntary withdrawal hearing to push kids out” (p.50). “With subtlety and bold action, charters are more likely (and able) to selectively admit, maintain and remove students” (ibid).

These practices continue to exacerbate high levels of class and racial segregation, within schools and communities, throughout Chicago. As a result, the choices that the Plan for Transformation acknowledged as possible for returning parents became merely a façade of a legitimate and fair school-choice process. This façade supports the neoliberal ideology and agenda, which more often than not, creates barriers to a particular set of resources. Such illusory practices have been written about and highlight ways that charters detract low-income families of color from enrolling and create ways to remove students once they are enrolled. One of the defining features of charters is flexibility and autonomy. Charters have flexibility in how they enroll students, hire and fire teachers and how they administer curriculum. As a result, charter

schools can implement a range of admission policies, at will, to serve the best interest of a particular set of students and their families. This begs the question: who are choice schools really designed to serve? Do low-income families of color truly have equal and equitable access, and if so, upon gaining access will students be able to benefit from any long-term advantages of the supposed “choice”?

Upon returning, families are faced with strict requirements in order to qualify for housing and classrooms. They continuously have to prove themselves and their children as worthy or qualified for the opportunity to live in a decent home and provide their children with the greatest educational opportunities available. In turn, proximity of schools, rather than fighting the bureaucratic machine of injustice, becomes more of a driving force for the decision making of returning families. Other returning parents also speak to the convenience of proximity in their decision to send their child to a school close by:

That was the closest school (Ms. J)

It's walking distance for one thing and technology wise she is very good and a lot of their programs they have computers and stuff like that and I'm getting older now and I cannot keep taking her long distances in my vehicle and especially in the winter times it's challenging so if push comes to shove she can walk home and she can walk to school (Ms. L)

Many of the families that took part in the study experienced the effects of closing, merged and moving schools because of underperformance and/or underutilization. Some of the schools would close and then reopen in another location or they would close and then students would have the option of enrolling in a welcoming school. The welcoming school as described

by The University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research (2015) “Assigned all displaced students to a “welcoming school” that was rated higher-performing than their closed schools. The district made investments in these welcoming schools and expanded the already existing Safe Passage program to include routes to these schools with adult monitors. Although the district assigned students to specific higher-rated welcoming schools, given the open enrollment system in Chicago, families could enroll their children in any other school in the district with open seats” (p.2). Despite the University of Chicago report, the welcoming school for many returning families was not much different from the schools that were being closed. Many of the welcoming schools were under-enrolled and were not performing at an exceptionally high standard. Nonetheless, some returning parents still considered the welcoming school as a more viable option for their children.

According to a 2009 Consortium on Chicago School Research report, “A large proportion of displaced students enrolled in schools with weak academic performance. Almost 40 percent of displaced students enrolled in receiving schools that were on academic probation. Forty-two percent of displaced students enrolled in receiving schools with Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) scores that were in the lowest quartile of the elementary schools in the system, 38 percent in the second quartile, 13 percent in the third quartile, and 6 percent in the top quartile ”(De la Torre and Gwynne, 2009, pps. 15-16). Returning families valued the proximity of their neighborhood school and had developed connections with them over the years. They also felt access to charters or selective enrollment schools were limited and, as a result, many returning families made the decision to keep their child enrolled in the welcoming school or other neighborhood schools. One parent describes her experience with deciding where to send her child to school, despite the “better” options that were being made available:

When Slowe Elementary closed, they gave us the option to send them to Blackburn Elementary or send them somewhere else which I would have to be spending some car fare so I was trying to get my own car fare to do what I've got to do to help her so I sent her right there. (Ms. C)

To that end, the Consortium report (2015) notes that "Finding a school close to home was not only about convenience and safety but also about families' practical circumstances and realities. Parents and guardians worried about being able to get children to and from school when the weather was bad or when their children got sick" (p.3).

One parent in particular, although she had a very good relationship with the closing school, she opted to send her child to another school, still in the neighborhood, that she felt better met the needs of her child. It should be noted that even though the returning parent decided not to send her child to a welcoming school she also decided not to send her to a charter or selective enrollment.

I'm not going to do the transition. I'm not going to send them to the school that they want them to. I'm going to end up sending her to a school that I know is going to support her, help her, teach her as well as going to be in an area that I can trust and she can get home and her brother safely (Ms. W)

The school choice argument of offering better schooling options, through charters or selective enrollment, does not always resonate with families. Although certain school policy would like families to believe that charters are better, some returning families appear to be rejecting that idea and instead opting for the more traditional route for educating their child. Ideally, all parents should have good quality schools in their neighborhood that are not in

jeopardy of being closed. For returning families although their proximal options were not vast, they took great pride in their decisions to send their child to the local neighborhood school of their choice. Each returning parent made their own set of decisions, from what appears to be, in isolation of their familial and social networks. The experiences and possible obstacles that children faced as a result of all the radical changes they faced with housing and schooling cannot be forgotten in the examination of decision-making processes for returning families. In some instances, their children did experience adversity in adjusting, whereas, other children may not have experienced any effects. Despite the hyper mobility, the data is mixed on its affect on student achievement. However it is important to highlight the wide spectrum of change on returning families children.

Child Adjustment

For returning families, children endured hyper mobility. For many children and youth they not only moved from home to home but because of the changing nature of schools in the community, they also moved from school to school. Previous research has shown the ill effects that hyper mobility can have on children. Simpson and Fowler (1994) found that students who moved three or more times had 60 % greater odds of repeating a grade and 80% greater odds of being expelled or suspended (p.306). The data was mixed for returning families that participated in this study. Some families saw the decline in their child's grades and psychological well-being. Other parents did not notice any ill effects of the transition period on their children. When asking returning families to describe any adjustment period their child experienced as a result of changing schools, some of the responses that were given included:

Yeah they went down [grades], then they went up. But her grades were never actually all the way up there, she wasn't even a B. Sometimes she had some B's and then for some reason she'd have a problem at school talking or somebody want to do something and they go down, and stay down. So she probably had a lot of adjustments (Ms. C)

My baby, when she first went, she was shy. In those years, she stayed quiet. She wouldn't talk (Ms. O)

I think from the transition of constantly having different teachers, the students couldn't really learn. The teachers can't really teach. The tests are starting to be different (Ms.W)

To the contrary, other returning families describe their child's adjustment process as:

No, he didn't have any [adjustments] (Ms. J)

No, her grades did not suffer (Ms. R)

I don't feel like she will be like an underprivileged child because I have a daughter that can help her. We stay on her and we chastise her when she is not doing well (Ms. L)

There is an obvious divide between those returning parents who believed hyper mobility was in some ways detrimental to their child either socially or academically. In speaking with some of the parents some of them described their involvement with their child's education. Some parents were on school boards and had vetted the schools that their children attended. In determining whether or not their child attended a good school, one parent indicated,

I did research and I was on the school board there (Ms. R).

Given the bevy of research highlighting the detrimental effects of moving multiple times, we should understand the layered realities of school and housing mobility. “Although not all moves result in a need to transfer to a new school, a residential change can still create stress for children who face adjusting to new living space and integrating into a new neighborhood. This is especially relevant for highly mobile families who may have relatively few resources to support the many transitions required by a move” (Ersing, Sutphen and Loeffler, 2009, p. 1). Helping students make the transition from school to school may be embedded in a number of factors. One has to consider, not just parental involvement but how supportive the school environment is to students that are transferring in and out.

Urban Education Institute at the University of Chicago recently published an evidence-based system designed to drive improvement in schools. They identified five essential characteristics of successful schools that, if implemented appropriately, could help to address the negative effects that hyper-mobility can have on children. The key tenets are: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, Involved Families, Supportive Environment and Ambitious Instruction (2013). These essentials seek to show that there has to be cohesion between all of the working parts in a school building. Addressing hyper-mobility will likely require a commitment by the administration and staff alike to work towards creating an environment that welcomes displaced families and can provide supports that can help make the transition as seamless as possible. As some schools are able to execute the Five Essentials more effectively, perhaps for the children that adjusted better than others there was a greater school support system in place. This should not be an attempt to diminish the role that parents have as it relates to helping their child adjust to a new school environment. Simultaneously, it is equally important to highlight the roles and

responsibilities that schools have, particularly the welcoming schools, towards displaced families and the degree to which they are able to effectively execute the model for a successful school.

Outside the scope of the Five Essentials, perhaps it was familiarity that helped some students excel over others. Familiarity was very important to returning families in this study, so even though there was lots of school mobility at least children were able to make these moves with peers and in some cases with familiar teachers. Moving forward, researchers interested in school and housing mobility should consider the impact of familiarity and its ability to address some of the negative aspects of having to move several times. While there are many reasons why some returning families' children did better than others the link between hyper mobility and achievement was not as strong as previous research has indicated.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The story of public housing and schooling in Chicago is rooted in racist and classist ideology. From the construction of the public-housing developments, until the final high-rise building was demolished, poor Black families were fighting to be heard. From multiple iterations of school reform and the final steps to close schools, poor urban families were fighting to overcome inherent injustices and make the best decisions for their families.

Given the small sample size of this study, future research should include more interviews with families who are former residents of public housing. Certain monetary research supports may have been helpful in garnering interest of former residents as proper compensation for their time. A sample between fifty to one-hundred participants would provide fruitful analysis as to the affects of housing and schooling mobility on the educational achievement of children and youth. As returning families from different public-housing development sites experience their particular returns differently, variation in experience could provide critical perspectives into the ways returning families make adjustments. Additionally, speaking with young people that have experienced hyper-mobility would also be valuable. Youth voices are just as important as the adults that have gone through the displacement process given their ability to speak to their own feelings about changing homes and schools multiple times. First-hand accounts are very important to mobility research, while employing a holistic approach to excavate and address the multiple layers of displacement.

Despite some of the challenges faced throughout this study, this research experience provided me with a vast perspective on the ebb and flow of a Phenomenological Research

Design. There was a lot of optimism and expectation surrounding securing a hearty dataset. However, as time progressed and the interviews grew few, lessons in patience and perseverance ensued. As research studies tend to have waves of momentum, I learned how valuable remaining intentional and forthright in finding participants, despite widespread rejection, will be in the long term. While small in number, the dataset was still able to tell a story that directly challenges most pathologies that have been placed on families that are current or former public-housing residents.

Throughout the entire research process, the interview process was the most revealing. For instance, walking into each interview with a prescribed set of research questions only allowed for, at times, a surface level understanding of each experience. Much more of the richness of the data was uncovered when participants would answer a question but then expound by either telling a story or further identifying how certain actions impacted them. As a result, for family members that had been displaced and took part in the interview, there was a space created for them to speak their truth to power. This was a really transformative moment as a budding researcher. Using their stories to uncover even deeper messages and meanings behind what has happened to the One-Way Corridor over the last decade showed how intentionally poor policy making can disrupt and even devastate entire communities.

Other takeaways include the deep connection that was developed as I learned more and more about the displacement process and the public-housing residents that would go through the entire Plan for Transformation process from beginning to end. Over time it became more and more important to not only record, listen and write about the process that families went through, but ensuring that this research represented resident voices responsibly and with integrity. What started as an idea grew into a meaningful, and hopefully, impactful piece of work. Arguably, this

is what makes this kind of research so special. It has sparked an interest in future research on public-housing residents and education. I am excited to see where the research can potentially go.

In thinking about how policy could best be used to promote more equitable outcomes, it is imperative that scholars, policymakers and bureaucrats alike seek to enforce and create policy initiatives that are not rooted in pathology-driven stereotypes. If the goal is to fight against injustices that are being forced upon poor people of color, then practical policy initiatives centered in community stability must be the focus. For example, investment in infrastructure (housing and schooling, alike) and the fight for living wages are critical entry points for the success of families and the educational opportunities for children.

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APPENDICES

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Informed Consent

University of Illinois at Chicago

Research Information and Consent for Participation in Social Behavioral Research

The Right to Return: Returning Public-Housing Families and Their Decision-Making Processes
on Schooling

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Researchers are required to provide a consent form such as this one to tell you about the research, to explain that taking part is voluntary, to describe the risks and benefits of participation, and to help you to make an informed decision. You should feel free to ask the researchers any questions you may have.

Principal Investigator Name and Title: Endea Murry, Principal Investigator, Student

Department and Institution: Educational Policy Studies, University of Illinois at Chicago

Address and Contact Information: 1040 W. Harrison, Chicago, IL 60607, 312-996-4532

Why am I being asked?

You are being asked to be a subject in a research study about public- housing families that were displaced as a result of their public housing development being torn down. I am seeking to understand how families that returned back to the site of their former public housing dwelling, into mixed-income developments, decided where to send their children to school given an array of obstacles.

You have been asked to participate in the research because you agreed to take part and it was also determined that you eligible to participate in this study based on the series of five eligibility questions I asked of you previously.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future dealings with the University of Illinois at Chicago. **If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.**

A minimum of 6-12 subjects, with a maximum of 25 subjects may be involved in this research at UIC.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research is trying to understand the process that returning public housing residents used to make decisions regarding where to send their children to school. The decisions are important because when residents came back to the neighborhood many of the schools that were there prior to moving were no longer there. As a result, this research wants to focus on how you, a returning resident, overcame certain obstacles to make these decisions. What helped or hindered your decision on where to send your child to school? What resources were made available to you once you returned that assisted you in making school choices? This research knows that there are untold stories to be told about this process, either good or bad, that can potentially help to improve housing policy for other returning families in the future.

Having access to better schools creates a more educated population. An educated population creates a stronger workforce and better economic gains for society as a whole. The decision making process of selecting a school for your child is the foundation for securing a high-quality education, a better workforce, and a better society. Equally important, this research seeks to help other returning families understand the challenges they may face in regards to selecting schools, upon return, and ways in which to overcome such obstacles. Knowing that good educational opportunities are key to the betterment of society, this study may provide a window into ways in which to create policy that can create better educational options for returning families so that, in turn, their children can have an equal opportunity of contributing to society in a positive and meaningful way.

What procedures are involved?

This research will be conducted at Chicago Bee Public Library located at 3647 S. State St. where the interviews will be held in a private room. Each returning resident that agrees to take part in the study will interview separately from one another and their privacy will be upheld.

You will need to come to the study site one time over the next three months. In the event, I require additional information after the initial interview, I may ask you speak with you one additional time. In total, I hope to interview a maximum of twenty-five people which should take no longer than three months.

Each visit/interview will take about one hour to an hour and a half to complete.

The study procedures are:

- Upon arriving for the interview, (You) potential subjects will have a chance to ask any questions related to the study or the informed consent form. When all is clear and understood, the subject will hand over their signed informed consent form to me, the principal investigator. It is at this time that you will become an official subject in this research study.
- Upon having all of the required documents, you, the subject will be informed that there will be a series of 26 questions directly related to your return experience back to the mixed-income neighborhood and how you choose or chose schools for your children. All of the interview questions have been pre-approved.
- I, the principal investigator, will be asking all of the questions and you, the subject, will choose to respond. All questions and answers will be electronically recorded.
- All names, locations and any other identifiable information will be kept confidential and data will be stored in an assigned locked locker at the University of Illinois at Chicago upon completion of each interview.
- Interviews with other subjects will not overlap, ensuring that privacy and confidentiality is upheld.

What are the potential risks and discomforts?

There is the risk that a breach of privacy (others will know the subject is participating in the research) and confidentiality (accidental disclosure of identifiable data) may occur.

Are there benefits to taking part in the research?

There are no direct benefits. However, it is the hope of this research that it will be able to inform the conversation around housing policy for returning families in the future.

What other options are there?

You have the option to not participate in this study.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

The only other person who will know that you are a research subject is the principal investigator. Other participants that may have recommended you for the study may know that you have been recommended but they will not have any confirmation that you agreed and were eligible for this study. That is one way to ensure anonymity of study participants. Potential subjects that are recommending others also have the option to ask the principal investigator to not use their name when approaching those they have recommended. Any information that is written up about the process of recruitment will include only pseudonyms (false names) for people and places in order to protect your identity and other identifiable information. Otherwise information about you will only be disclosed to others with your written permission, or if necessary to protect your rights or welfare or if required by law.

Study information which identifies you and the consent form signed by you will be looked at and/or copied for checking up on the research by: UIC OPRS and State of Illinois Auditors. When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your identity or other identifiable information (neighborhood, landmarks, etc.).

- Personal information, research data and related records will be coded to prevent access by unauthorized personnel.
- Upon collecting the data, using a digital recorder, the recorder and the data will be stored in a locked locker. I, the principal investigator, am the only person that will have access to this data and locked locker.
- As the write up of the data begins and I begin to submit drafts of the work to my research advisor, each copy submitted will not have any identifiable information. There will be a master copy, that I will have access to only, that will contain identifiable information for the purpose of matching the data to the correct pseudonym. However, I am the only person in this study that has access to it as it will be in a locked locker. I will only use this document when I am typing up the data analysis in my home or in a private room in the library, thereby; avoiding all instance of identifiable information being made public. Once I have finished transcribing all of the data and/or writing up the analysis, the data will be returned to the locked locker.

- (You) All subjects will have the right to listen to their interviews, if requested. Subjects will not be allowed to listen to others interviews. However, at the end of the study, all subjects will get a copy of the final product. No identifiable information will be included in the final product.
- All interviews will be transcribed by the principal investigator. In typing up the transcriptions, I will be able to safeguard all identities. In the write up, if the subject has used any identifiable information, I will use the code that was designated for that identifier in its place.
- After the study is completed, in terms of presentations, publications, and all request by subjects to listen to their interviews have been granted, etc. all data will be destroyed. Files will be erased and any hard copies, with identifiable information, will be shredded.

What are the costs for participating in this research?

There are no costs to you for participating in this research.

Will I be reimbursed for any of my expenses or paid for my participation in this research?

No. You should not incur any expenses as a result of participating in this research.

Can I withdraw or be removed from the study?

If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time. The procedure for orderly termination include, at any point, you the subject feel uncomfortable with continuing with the research, it is at that point you can request to withdraw from the research study without consequence. All requests for termination will be honored. Any data that have been collected or recorded, on the withdrawing subjects behalf, will immediately be erased and/or shredded.

The Researchers also have the right to stop your participation in this study without your consent if:

- They believe it is in your best interests, however; it is not anticipated that there will be an instance where the researcher will have to stop a subjects' participation in this study. The minimal risks are explicitly spelled out and all questions will be answered prior to subjects' participation in the interview.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

Contact the researchers Endea Murry, Principal Investigator at 202-489-7068, emurry2@uic.edu or the faculty sponsor, David Stovall at dostovall@uic.edu or 312-413-5014

- if you have any questions about this study or your part in it,
- if you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research.

What are my rights as a research subject?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or if you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, including questions, concerns, complaints, or to offer input, you may call the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) at 312-996-1711 or 1-866-789-6215 (toll-free) or e-mail OPRS at uicirb@uic.edu.

Remember:

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

Signature of Subject

I have read (or someone has read to me) the above information. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research. I will be given a copy of this signed and dated form.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Seed Participant Recruitment Script

Hi (Insert the name of the person I am speaking with),

My name is Endea Murry and I am a student at the University of Illinois at Chicago. I am currently in the process of conducting a research study that I hope you are available to participate in. I believe you will find this research study very valuable, informative and enlightening. My research is trying to understand the processes that returning public housing residents used to make decisions regarding where to send their children to school. My research wants to focus on how you, a returning resident, overcame certain obstacles to make these decisions. What helped or hindered your decision on where to send your child to school? What resources were made available to you once you returned that assisted you in making school choices? This research knows that there are untold stories to be told about this process, either good or bad, that can potentially help to improve housing policy for other returning families in the future.

I am sure you are wondering, are there any risks or benefits to participating in this study. Yes, there are minor risks associated with this study. There is the potential that other subjects in this study will know of your participation and there is also the possibility that there will be an accidental disclosure of identifiable data. These risks, however, are very minimal. To minimize risks, all information that is shared with me will be stored in a locked locker at the University of Illinois at Chicago and identifiable information will be given pseudonyms so that all of your information shared with me remains anonymous. I will be the only person with access to all data that you share with me.

You are probably also wondering, how much of your time will be needed. I plan to conduct interviews at Chicago Bee Library, located at 3647 S. State St., in a private room. Each interview requires is at minimum, one hour of your time and maximum an hour and a half. There is a slight possibility I may need to follow up with you regarding some of your responses but I do not expect this to be the norm. At the conclusion of the study, you will access to the final report as well as the transcription from your interview.

Does this research sound like something you would be interested in potentially participating in? If yes, there are a series of eligibility questions that I will need to ask of you to determine if you are the right fit for the research. If no, thank you for allowing me to share my research with you.

Regardless of your decision to participate in this study, would you be willing to lend a hand to the research and recommend other friends/family members/coworkers/neighbors alike that you believe may be willing and eligible to speak on their experiences as a returning resident that had to make decisions on schooling? If yes, all I will ask of you is that I you give me their contact information (name, telephone number and/or address). **Please note:** When introducing myself to your recommendation, I will inform them that you have provided me with their contact information. Please let me know if you would prefer that your name not be used or any other identifiable information when approaching your recommendation. .

If you are not willing to participate in the research, allow me to determine your eligibility or provide a recommendation, there will be no further information requested of you.

Should you have any questions about this research at a later point in time, feel free to reach me at 202-489-7068 or email me at emurry2@uic.edu.

“Recommended” Participant Script

Hi (Insert the name of the person I am speaking with either via phone or in person),

My name is Endea Murry and I am a student at the University of Illinois at Chicago. I received your contact information from (insert the name of the person that provided me with the contact information, if appropriate. If recommender has not given permission, I will explain that to the person that has been recommended for this study). I am currently in the process of conducting a research study that I hope you are available to participate in. I believe you will find this research study very valuable, informative and enlightening. My research is trying to understand the processes that returning public housing residents used to make decisions regarding where to send their children to school. My research wants to focus on how you, a returning resident, overcame certain obstacles to make these decisions. What helped or hindered your decision on where to send your child to school? What resources were made available to you once you returned that assisted you in making school choices? This research knows that there are untold stories to be told about this process, either good or bad, that can potentially help to improve housing policy for other returning families in the future.

I am sure you are wondering, are there any risks or benefits to participating in this study. Yes, there are minor risks associated with this study. There is the potential that other subjects in this study will know of your participation and there is also the possibility that there will be an accidental disclosure of identifiable data. These risks, however, are very minimal. To minimize risks, all information that is shared with me will be stored in a locked locker at the University of Illinois at Chicago and identifiable information will be given pseudonyms so that all of your information shared with me remains anonymous. I will be the only person with access to all data that you share with me.

You are probably also wondering, how much of your time will be needed. I plan to conduct interviews at Chicago Bee Library, located at 3647 S. State St., in a private room. Each interview requires is at minimum, one hour of your time and maximum an hour and a half. There is a slight possibility I may need to follow up with you regarding some of your responses but I do not expect this to be the norm. At the conclusion of the study, you will access to the final report as well as the transcription from your interview.

Does this research sound like something you would be interested in potentially participating in? If yes, there are a series of eligibility questions that I will need to ask of you to determine if you are the right fit for the research. If no, thank you for allowing me to share my research with you.

Regardless of your decision to participate in this study, would you be willing to lend a hand to the research and recommend other friends/family members/coworkers/neighbors alike that you believe may be willing and eligible to speak on their experiences as a returning resident that had to make decisions on schooling? If yes, all I will ask of you is that I you give me their contact information (name, telephone number and/or address). Please note: When introducing myself to your recommendation, I will inform them that you have provided me with their contact

information. Please let me know if you would prefer that your name not be used or any other identifiable information when approaching your recommendation. .

If you are not willing to participate in the research, allow me to determine your eligibility or provide a recommendation, there will be no further information requested of you.

Should you have any questions about this research at a later point in time, feel free to reach me at 202-489-7068 or email me at emurry2@uic.edu.

Eligibility Script

Hi (Insert the name of the person I am speaking with),

As I described to you when presenting this research to you initially, my research is seeking to understand the process that returning public housing residents used to make decisions regarding where to send their children to school. I plan to recruit subjects using a snowballing technique. Snowball sampling is defined as a technique for gathering research subjects through the identification of an initial subject who is used to provide the names of other actors (Atkins & Flint, 2004) Once potential subjects have agreed to take part in the study, have been deemed eligible and have signed an informed consent form (which provides a more detailed overview of the research), I will schedule interviews. I plan to interview at least 10-15 subjects but no more than 25. I will ask subjects twenty-six questions each. If you are deemed eligible, I will only ask to interview you once, with the potential for a follow-up interview, if necessary. After all interviews are completed, data will be coded, such that, no identifiable information is made available to the public. The data gathered from the interviews will be thematically coded as I try to uncover reoccurring themes in the data. The data collected will remain confidential in the final write up and in presentations. Data will be destroyed upon completion of the research project.

Would you be willing to answer a series of five questions that will determine if you meet the criteria for this study? If your decline to determine your eligibility for this study or are not interested, I appreciate your time and there will be no further questions asked of you going forward.

If yes, please answer the following questions with a yes or no:

1. Are you are a former public housing resident that lived in Stateway Gardens or Robert Taylor Homes?
2. Have you returned back to the site of those old developments and now live in the mixed income development that was built in the housing developments place?
3. Are you at least 18 years or older?
4. Do you have or did you have school-aged children when you initially returned to the neighborhood?
5. Can you talk about your child's adjustment, academically and socially, to the number of changes/challenges they are/have experienced upon returning back to the neighborhood?

If you are eligible to participate, I will supply you with an informed consent form that we will go over together, however; I also plan to leave it with you to go over in private. Upon meeting for the interview, I will collect the signed informed consent form from you.

ELIGIBILITY PARTICIPANT LOG

*Check all that apply (to be filled out by Principal Investigator)

Name:

Please check yes or no	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Are you are a former public housing resident that lived in Stateway Gardens or Robert Taylor Homes?		
Have you returned back to the site of those old developments and now live in the mixed income development that was built in the housing developments place?		
Are you at least 18 years or older?		
Do you have or did you have school-aged children when you initially returned to the neighborhood?		
Can you talk about your child's adjustment, academically and socially, to the number of changes/challenges they are/have experienced upon returning back to the neighborhood?		

RECRUITMENT LOG

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>MADE CONTACT?</u>

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

1. Describe the neighborhood before demolition. The buildings? The people? The churches? The schools? Business, etc.
2. How long did you live in this neighborhood prior to demolition?
3. Take me back to the moment that you found out that your building was going to be demolished. What types of emotions did you experience? Who did you talk to about the demolition? Family? Friends? Colleagues?
4. What was your process for deciding whether to move to another public housing development or accept a Section 8 voucher before ultimately deciding to return back to the community?
5. What types of resources were available to you before being displaced?
6. What resources did you frequently take advantage of prior to displacement?
7. What resources were available to you upon returning to the neighborhood?
8. What resources did you actively pursue upon returning to the neighborhood?
9. Prior to displacement, what community/neighborhood resources were made available to you that helped you with the displacement process? Were there certain neighborhood/community resources that, if made available, you would have used?
10. During your return to the neighborhood, what community/neighborhood resources were made available to you to aid in the transition? Were there certain neighborhood/community resources, had they been available, you would have utilized?
11. Did anyone or anything help you make decisions around particular resources to use?
12. What are your expectations of schools in your neighborhood?
13. How old were your children when you initially were displaced? How old are they now?
14. Did you have a lot of family that lived in the development?
15. Were most of your friends also residents living in the development or were they spread out around the city?
16. Did your children go to school locally before demolition?
17. Describe their former school? How did you decide to send your child to that school?

18. What type of student was your child before demolition?
19. Did you child have a lot of friends?
20. Most residents that were displaced from public housing did not return to the mixed-income community. Describe why you came back and how you made that decision.
21. Describe the neighborhood upon returning?
22. What schools/types of schools were in the neighborhood when you returned?
23. It appears that many of the schools in the neighborhood are different from before displacement. How did you decide which school to send your child to upon returning? Was it based on family, location, other school related factors?
24. Do you feel the schools in the neighborhood now are better than the schools that were here before you were displaced? What are the differences, if any?
25. Describe the adjustment period, if any, that your child experienced with their new school.
26. Is there anything else that you would like to share related to being displaced from public housing, returning to the neighborhood and deciding on where to send your child to school?

VITA

NAME: Endea Murry

EDUCATION: B.S., Psychology, Howard University, Washington, DC, 2003

M.A., Educational Psychology, Howard University, Washington, DC, 2006

Ph.D., Policy Studies in Urban Education, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, 2017

HONORS: Board of Trustees Tuition and Selected Fees Waiver, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL, 2015;

Diversifying Faculty in Illinois, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL, 2007-2011;

Ronald E. McNair Fellowship, Howard University, Washington, DC, 2004

Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program, Howard University, Washington, DC, 2001

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PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP: Federal Women's Program Committee

Phi Delta Kappa International

PUBLICATIONS: Murry, E. (2001). Stereotype threat and its effect on the intellectual performance of African americans. *The McNair Journal*, 7, 16-18.