

MODELS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

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Abstract

This review presents an analysis of current sociology and human ecology dealing with neighborhood change. The review is organized in four major sections. The first deals with the concept of neighborhood. The second discusses the classic models of neighborhood change—*invasion-succession* and *life cycle*. The third deals with the current perspectives on neighborhood change: demographic/ecological, sociocultural/organizational, political economy, and social movements. The final section focuses on urban revitalization and gentrification.

INTRODUCTION

This review presents an analysis of the current sociology and human ecology literature dealing with neighborhood change. The mechanisms and processes by which urban neighborhoods are formed, change, and decline have received increased attention in the last five years as urban revitalization and gentrification have become important phenomena in many cities in the United States and abroad (Badcock & Cloher 1981).

The first section of this review deals with the concept of neighborhood. A working definition is developed and principal uses of the term are reviewed. The second section discusses the classic models of neighborhood change.

The third section deals with the current principal perspectives on neighborhood change: demographic/ecological, socio-cultural/organizational, political economy, and social movements (London 1980). The final section focuses on urban revitalization and gentrification.

BASIC CONCEPTS

Neighborhood Defined

Keller (1968) has pointed out that most definitions of neighborhood involve two general components: the physical and the social. More specifically, the basic elements of a neighborhood are: people, place, interaction system, shared identification, and public symbols. Putting the elements together, I define a neighborhood as a population residing in an identifiable section of a city whose members are organized into a general interaction network of formal and informal ties and express their common identification with the area in public symbols.

As a sociological entity a neighborhood is distinguished from a residential area by the degree of social organization among the residents. Unlike a neighborhood, a residential area has few or no patterned relations among residents. Residential areas may become neighborhoods and vice versa depending on the viability and extent of the network of social relationships among residents.

While many sociologists have been concerned with neighborhood change, the study of change has been limited largely to the demographic and housing items provided in the census (Schwirian 1981). Little research has focused upon the expansion and contraction of the relationship network.

From the broader perspective any change in people, place, interaction system, shared identification, or public symbols represents a type of neighborhood change. Sociologists and more specifically human ecologists usually assume that if the population size or composition of a neighborhood changes then change will follow in the other components of the system as well. This perspective may be traced to the conception, developed by the Chicago School urbanists, of neighborhoods as "natural areas."

Neighborhoods as Natural Areas

The concept of neighborhood as "natural area" is a basic contribution of Robert Park (1952) and his Chicago School associates. These researchers argued that a natural area involves: (a) a geographic area physically distinguishable from other adjacent areas; (b) a population with unique social, demographic, or ethnic composition; (c) a social system with rules, norms, and regularly recurring patterns of social interaction that function as mechanisms of social control; and (d) aggregate emergent behaviors or ways of life that distinguish the area from others around it.

According to the Chicago perspective any change in the population of a natural area must be followed by changes in other elements of the social system. The natural area's population may change through mortality, fertility, and migration. In an area inhabited by a comparatively older population natural attrition will take its toll. Unless new members are added by

fertility or migration the neighborhood's population will decline, the social system will contract, the ways of life will be altered, and the physical environment will deteriorate. If, on the other hand, a natural area's population has a marked upswing in fertility, the social system will have to adjust to accommodate the newcomers and the progressive concerns with the needs and problems of the very young.

The greatest contributor to change in a neighborhood's population composition is migration. Newcomers must be socialized to the ways of life of the area. If the newcomers are culturally or racially different from the indigenous population the problem of integrating them into the social system is greater. If the immigrants are socially unacceptable to the locals they may be resisted—even by force, as is the case in many racial invasions. This resistance may become regular, and violence may become normal in the natural area.

The Chicago sociologists recognized that change in local population composition is a major mechanism by which natural areas change. They developed the invasion-succession model to capture the main processes by which one population supplanted another and one social system replaced its predecessor.

The focus on neighborhood demography as the important element of structure and change carried over into the work of the "social area" analysts.

Neighborhoods as Social Areas

The social area perspective is closely tied to a general theory of social organization and social change (Greer 1962). Accordingly, the degree of social differentiation in life-styles among individual urbanites and among characteristics of city neighborhoods is a function of the "societal scale." Societal scale refers to the extent of the division of labor within a society and the degree of elaboration of integrative mechanisms and institutions centering on transportation and communication. High-scale societies such as those of North America, are characterized by complex occupational and industrial differentiation, an intricate transportation network, and an elaborate system of electronic communication. Low-scale societies, such as those of emerging Africa and Asia, have much more rudimentary occupational and industrial systems, embryonic transportation systems, and incomplete communication networks. As societies increase in scale they increase in social differentiation; this is reflected in the increasing specialization of urban land use and in the social characteristics of the population.

The lives of individuals are organized around three basic dimensions: social status, familism (sometimes called urbanism), and ethnicity. Indicators of social status include educational attainment, income, and occupational standing. Indicators of familism (measuring variations in items

concerning home and family) include degree of fertility, female labor force participation, and housing choice (single-family home or apartment). Ethnicity refers to racial and subcultural differences in such things as language, religious beliefs and practices, and physiognomy.

In high-scale societies there is clear social differentiation on each of the three dimensions. Thus at each status level people opt for different housing, fertility patterns, and family forms. Similarly, among all ethnic and racial groups there are great ranges in social status among group members and a variety of family forms and housing options. At the neighborhood level there is specialization in status composition of the residents. At each status level, neighborhoods vary in the form of family that predominates. Within ethnic areas different neighborhoods cater to different status groups and life-style options.

Social area analysts envision many highly differentiated subareas reflecting different combinations of status, family form, and ethnic specialization. A social area is not considered a neighborhood in the same sense as the natural area is. A social area consists of all those urban subareas with similar combinations of residents' social characteristics on status, familism, and ethnicity. The subareas need not be contiguous. Their similarity arises from the social similarity, not the physical proximity of their residents.

While the social area is the key concept of this perspective, the census tract has been the main operational object of investigation. Census data have provided the demographic indicators of the three dimensions. Most empirical investigations have focused on testing the proposition that status, familism, and ethnicity are separate. The second major empirical focus has been on the spatial distribution pattern of tracts with different index values.

Surprisingly few studies have analyzed the pattern of change in social areas. The most comprehensive study to date is by Hunter (1971, 1974a,b). It focuses on the community areas of Chicago from 1930–1960. Hunter identified four stages of neighborhood change involving the interplay of social status and family characteristics. He also showed that the spatial distribution of neighborhood change patterns are associated with the processes of metropolitan population decentralization.

Social area investigations are rigorous in the use of complex statistical techniques. Typically, however, only demographic or housing variables are studied. Direct observations of social interactions are missing from these investigations.

Neighborhoods as Interaction Systems

Urban ethnography arose from the work of the Chicago School. Most ethnographies of particular areas deal with social structure at a given time and underplay the role of change in the relationship network.

Two major examples of this line of analysis today are the works of Suttles (1972) and Fischer (1971, 1975, 1976, 1981, 1982). Suttles has proposed that neighborhood social organization may exist at several levels; accordingly he has developed a typology of neighborhoods. At one extreme are neighborhoods based on a form of organization that is almost a primary group. At the other extreme are neighborhoods characterized by a highly segmentalized and formalized set of relations structured to deal with outside groups and institutions.

According to Suttles the face-block is the most basic form of city neighborhood. It consists of the immediate residents whose dwellings share common egress and who use the same local facilities on a regular basis.

The defended neighborhood is the next level of organization. It is a residential social system that shuts itself off from other areas and nonresidents through social or physical mechanisms. It has a corporate identity both to local residents and to outsiders. The population of the defended neighborhood share a common fate at the hands of the city and other key decision-making organizations.

Defended neighborhoods are conservative when it comes to change. Changes of any kind are a threat to the very existence of the social system. Residents of defended neighborhoods are more willing than other neighborhood dwellers to act collectively to resist change (Goodwin 1979).

Suttles described two other types of neighborhoods—the community of limited liability and the expanded community of limited liability. These develop in response to the numerous administrative districts found in the city for matters of education, fire protection, urban renewal, and so on. Such areas demand highly segmentalized and limited participation of residents. Change in such areas is usually initiated from the outside (e.g. the city redraws school boundaries).

Fischer's work has focused on the urbanization/disorganization hypothesis of Wirth (1938). The disorganization perspective argues that as cities grow and become more complex the older forms of social control such as the family, neighborhood, and primary groups lose their importance. Secondary and formal organizations take over many of the functions of kin and neighbor.

The disorganization position views neighborhood change as a decline in the importance of the locality group. Fischer has subjected this proposition to several major tests. He has noted large differences among neighborhoods in the amount of neighboring among residents. In general he argues that the neighborhood is but one of many social networks in which the urbanite might find social contact.

While Fischer demonstrates differences in neighborhood involvement among urbanites his data are cross-sectional. He is unable to determine

whether the reported neighboring is increasing or decreasing. Wirth clearly argued that the neighborhood in the sociological sense was disappearing or declining.

The social interaction orientation has shown the various social forms that neighborhood relations may take, but the mainstream of this literature contains little generalization about neighborhood change. The intensity of neighborhood social systems is declining in some areas in some cities but is increasing in others. Factors that systematically account for such differences are not organized into a coherent substantive statement.

Recent Themes in Neighborhood Research

While neighborhood change has been a basic topic in urban research, Olson (1982) has suggested six other major themes in neighborhood research: neighborhood as a form of social organization, an ideology, a determinant of behavior, a consequence of social organization, a social network, and a typology.

Studies of the neighborhood as a form of social interaction focus on the ways of life that characterize various urban subareas. Such studies are identified with the Chicago School and other interactionist investigators. Most studies focused on the neighborhood as ideology are linked to the social reformers and urban planners of the early 1900s. However, others (Allen 1980) have suggested that recent changes in urban neighborhoods, particularly gentrification, must be understood in terms of the changing ideology of urban life.

Some view the neighborhood as the agent rather than the result of change. According to this orientation, on individual's behavior is modified by living with one social group rather than another. Thus the neighborhood becomes an important element of social control. A subculture develops among neighborhood residents. They come to share values, beliefs, and local knowledge. The neighborhood becomes a source of personal identity (Useem et al 1960).

Students of the neighborhood as a social network draw on the urbanization/disorganization approach. The perspectives of Fischer (1982), Warren & Warren (1977), and others lead to the conclusion that the neighborhood is but one of the social networks in which urbanites are involved. It becomes, in Warren's terms, a "proximity anchored helping network."

Typologies of neighborhoods include that of Suttles and those derived from social area analysis. In addition Warren (1975) has identified six neighborhood types: integrated, parochial, stepping stone, transitory, and anomic. Warren's typology is based on two factors: the external linkage of the neighborhood system to other outside social systems, and the extent and nature of internal social organization.

A topic of considerable interest to contemporary investigators—the neighborhood as an object of revitalization and gentrification—spans several of Olson’s categories. Best considered as an extension of the study of neighborhood change, it is a synthesis of several divergent perspectives. Before discussing revitalization I review these different perspectives on neighborhood change.

CLASSIC MODELS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

The two most important models of neighborhood change are the Invasion-Succession model developed by the Chicago School and the Life Cycle model of Hoover & Vernon (1959).

Invasion-Succession

The Chicago sociologists recognized change in local population composition as a major mechanism by which natural areas change. The terms “invasion” and “succession,” taken from plant and animal ecology, were used to describe the processes of neighborhood population alteration.

Competition, conflict, and accommodation were viewed by Park (1952) as natural processes that characterized the relationships among different populations. From this perspective the invasion of a natural area by socially or racially different individuals is met with resistance. Competition for housing may be turned into conflict as the locals and the newcomers attempt to devise strategies to best each other. If some accommodation between the two populations is not reached, one of the two groups will withdraw. If the newcomers withdraw, the invasion has been halted. If the established population withdraw, their departure coupled with the continued arrival of the new group will result in succession.

Invasion and succession were also used by the Chicago School to refer to change in land use or dominant activities in the neighborhood. The Burgess Concentric Zone model deals directly with the encroachment of the business district upon the adjacent residential areas. Residential land is converted to commercial or industrial uses (Smith & McCann 1981; Lee 1974).

Through the years the invasion-succession model has been used by sociologists mainly to describe neighborhood racial and social-status transitions. In the study of racial transitions identifiable substages have been recognized in the change process. Duncan & Duncan (1957) identified four basic stages: penetration, invasion, consolidation, and piling up. They argued that neighborhoods need not pass through all of the stages and that different neighborhoods may pass through the stages at different rates. Taeuber & Taeuber (1965) identified variants on the Duncan stages and discussed the different

patterns of white and black population growth in the city that affect the patterns of racial change. The Duncans and the Taeubers have produced the most comprehensive work on racial invasion and succession.

Within the general framework of the invasion-succession model a number of researchers have attempted to identify the "tipping point"—i.e. the percentage point of new black residents at which the remaining whites move out. Findings on the tipping point vary (Grodzins 1957; Schelling 1972; Steinnes 1977; Schwab & Marsh 1980). Indeed a number of researchers have concluded that neighborhoods are too variable to obey an iron-clad law of transition (Goering 1978). It has also been shown that tipping may be explained by normal turnover rates; racial succession does not necessarily reflect white flight. (Aldrich 1975; Brueckner 1977; Frey 1979; Guest & Zuiches 1971; Moltoch 1969; Van Arsdol & Schuerman 1971).

A number of investigators have attempted to identify the factors that effect racial transition of neighborhoods from white to black. Recent research has focused on the edge of the expanding black ghetto. It is argued that at the ghetto's edge whites are most insecure in their residential status and there the animosity toward blacks is greatest (Schelling 1972). A central hypothesis in this literature is that prejudice acts to produce a ghetto whose shape minimizes the length of the white-black boundary (Yinger 1976; Loury 1978; Rose-Ackerman 1975; Rosser 1980; Yinger 1976).

The most comprehensive work to date on the spatial development and spread of black neighborhoods is by Rose (1970). However, there has long been interest in whether black ghettos expand into contiguous or noncontiguous white areas (Brussat 1951; Cressey 1938; Ford 1950; Gibbard 1938). Several papers have argued that a neighborhood's distance from the ghetto is one of the best predictors of neighborhood transition (Berry 1976; Steinnes 1977); others have suggested that racial transition may be modelled as a spatial diffusion process (O'Neill 1981).

A promising recent trend in this area is the attempt to integrate racial turnover models into the more general models of urban development and land market operation (Anas 1980; Farley et al 1979; Fogerty 1982; Mitchell & Smith 1979; Phillips 1981; Schnare & MacRae 1978; Snow & Leahy 1980; Spain 1979; Taylor 1979; Vandell 1981).

One of the least-studied areas in the general invasion-succession domain is that of the consequences of racial turnover on local institutions. Aldrich & Reiss (1977) report that the business population in an area undergoing succession turns over in the same manner as the resident population—whites leave and are replaced by members of the incoming group. Schmidt & Lee (1978) report that change in racial composition in neighborhoods undergoing transition alters the commercial structure of a neighborhood. Heilbrun & Conant (1972) focused on business performance and survival

during change, while Rose (1970) has studied the association between commercial land use succession and changes in commercial structure. The results of these studies indicate that invasion-succession describes patterns of neighborhood change in social and economic institutions as well as in population composition.

While most of the literature about urban ethnic residential patterns focuses on the extent, persistence, and basis of residential segregation (Aguirre et al 1980; Bleda 1978, 1979; Guest & Weed 1976; Kantrowitz 1973, 1979; Lieberman 1963; Uyeki 1980), the invasion-succession framework has also been used for the analysis of ethnic neighborhood change. Cressey (1938) and Ford (1950) have documented the progressive movement from central city to suburbs of ethnic populations as their length of time in the city increased. More recent works have focused on the role of ethnicity in maintaining community stability and avoiding decay (Chrisman 1981; Gans 1962; Manzo 1980; Rosenthal 1961; Schoenberg 1980; Suttles 1968) and the extent to which ethnic outmovers resettle in a common neighborhood destination (Jaret 1979; Jonassen 1949; Ventresca 1981).

Most studies of neighborhood status are cross-sectional and deal with the extent to which distance from the urban core and sector of location affect the status composition of the area (Anderson & Egeland 1961; Collison & Moge 1959; Guest 1971; Schwirian & Matre 1974; Schwirian & Rico-Velasco 1971). The few longitudinal studies rely on a succession framework. One of the best longitudinal studies for several cities is that conducted by Hagerty (1971). Through the use of a Markov Chain he has shown that for all cities (including those for which the relationship between cross-sectional status and distance from the core is the reverse of that predicted by the Burgess model) the inner city neighborhoods decline in status over time. Discriminant analysis has been applied by Fogarty (1977) to low-income areas of Pittsburgh to identify factors accounting for their long-run decline or upgrading. This approach seems to hold much promise for additional studies of neighborhood change.

Neighborhood Life Cycle

The neighborhood life-cycle model formulated by Hoover & Vernon (1959) is second in importance only to the invasion-succession model in explaining neighborhood change. The two models have come to be used in a complementary fashion. Researchers now often describe neighborhood movement through the life cycle as a series of invasion-succession cycles.

Hoover & Vernon argued that many areas of the city undergo a process of life-cycle change that involves five stages: development, transition, downgrading, thinning out, and renewal. As the neighborhood passes from one stage to the next several things change: the status and the racial and age

composition of the population; the intensity of land and dwelling use; population density; and the quality and condition of housing. Hoover & Vernon pointed out that their model did not describe a set pattern of stages through which all areas passed. Some neighborhoods would not go through the whole process; some would continue to loop through the same two or three stages, and some would remain at one stage indefinitely.

Several factors seem influential in accounting for the movement of neighborhoods through the life cycle (Schwirian 1977). The first is the relative rates of growth of new housing and population (Alonso 1964; Muth 1969). The second is the changing accessibility of the neighborhood to the city's employment opportunities (Sargent 1976). The third is the extent to which residents mobilize resources to resist change (Firey 1945; Goodwin 1979). A fourth is the extent to which public agencies pursue redevelopment projects (Schuler 1974; Strickland 1982) or attempt to frame regulations controlling growth and change (Baldassare & Protash 1982; Garkovich 1982; Shlay & Rossie 1981).

Most empirical tests of the life cycle have focused on change in status, on residential population density, and on neighborhood population size (Choldin & Hanson 1981; Guest 1972, 1973, 1974; Schwab 1976). In general, as neighborhoods age many do exhibit the types of change predicted by the Hoover & Vernon model. The racial succession literature (see above) largely assumes the operation of the life cycle.

Some studies have focused on specific stages of the life cycle or on events taking place as the life cycle progresses. For example, Featherman (1977-78) and Morgan (1980) have researched the causes and consequences of residential housing abandonment. Abandonment, a major event in old neighborhoods, usually indicates that an area is moving from one life-cycle stage to another.

Attempts have been made to reformulate the stages of change in the Hoover & Vernon formulation. For example, Birch's (1971) theory of urban growth includes seven stages: rural; first wave of development; fully developed; high-quality residential; packing; thinning; and recapture. Birch has developed a series of indexes that reportedly measure the particular stage of life cycle for specific neighborhoods. In testing the model Birch reports support for both his formulation and the original Hoover & Vernon model.

CURRENT PERSPECTIVES ON NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

The current literature on neighborhood change reflects several different theoretical perspectives (London 1980; London et al 1980): demographic/ecological, socio-cultural/organizational, political-economy, and social-movements.

Demographic/Ecological

Human ecology deals with the adaptation of the population to its environment; its main focus is on the population and the structured adaptative activities developed by population members (Hawley 1950). The natural area concept and the invasion-succession process model are the core perspectives in the study of neighborhood structure and change. The key demographic element making for neighborhood population change is migration.

A main interest in human ecology is the extent to which neighborhoods maintain their social organization in the face of continued population turnover. Work by Moore (1972) and by Schwirian & Berry (1982) suggests that population turnover and neighborhood change are independent processes. Neighborhoods may change under conditions of low turnover and they may remain socially stable under conditions of high turnover.

The demographic/ecological approach is also concerned with the general growth context of the city. The ratio between population growth and the creation of additional dwellings is an important factor in population redistribution. Growth may be accommodated residentially by increasing central congestion and/or by decentralization (Winsborough 1963; Schwirian et al 1982). Changes in both congestion and decentralization churn the housing market, thus producing situations ripe for neighborhood change and impelling the development of some type of adaptative local strategy.

A long-standing interest in the impact of the physical configuration of the residential environment on neighborhood life (Dennis 1977; Deutsch & Collins 1951; Ebbesen et al 1976; Festinger et al 1950; Baum & Davis 1976; Baum & Valins 1977; Johnston 1976; Newman 1972) has continued to the present (Baum et al 1978). The foci of these studies include the stress created by living in a crowded environment, the degree of social control and regulation of informal social contacts in different architectural configurations, the extent to which neighboring is affected directly by residential design, and the effect of residential distance and social interaction.

Socio-Cultural/Organizational

This perspective deals both with the attitudes and values of the population and with the forms of social relations that evolve within the context of neighborhood. Many of the classic ethnographies by the Chicago School reflect this orientation (Anderson 1923; Reckless 1933; Shaw 1930; Shaw & McKay 1942; Wirth 1928; Zorbaugh 1929). More recently the work of Suttles (1968, 1972), Hunter (1974b), and Gans (1962, 1967) has enhanced and expanded this perspective. Because the work of urban sociologists largely began with the industrial city of the 1900s, until recently few studies had focused on the nature of neighborhood structure and change prior to

the 20th century. However, historians have now begun to make a major contribution to the understanding of neighborhood interactions in the 19th century (Borchert 1981).

Attention has been directed recently to the processes by which neighborhoods move from being categoric to corporate groups (Hawley 1950)—i.e. form viable associations to represent the interests of the local area to outside agencies. The movement for neighborhood organization is not new. Arnold (1979) discussed the 19th century history of such activities. However, the main movement for neighborhood organization began to take shape in the 1950s and 1960s, largely in response to many federal programs including urban renewal (Goering 1979).

Several investigators have considered the appropriate role of neighborhood groups in decision-making (Crenson 1978; Fainstein & Fainstein 1976; O'Brian 1975; Yates 1972; White 1981). A major problem such organizations have is the development or recruitment of strong leaders (Rich 1980).

The interest of sociologists in the "loss of community" hypothesis (Foley 1952) is directly related to Wirth's (1938) urbanization-disorganization argument. Hunter's (1975) recent test of the hypothesis has shown little support for the argument. Using three indexes of community involvement—local facility use, informal neighboring, and sense of community—he found that while over a 20-year period the use of local facilities declined the level of informal neighboring stayed about the same but the sense of community increased. The explanation for this continued vitality of local community is phrased in terms of Mannheim's (1936) distinction between utopia and ideology.

Political-Economy

The emergence of a distinct political economy perspective is one of the more interesting trends in neighborhood analysis in the last 20 years. Guterbock (1980) has pointed out that a major difference exists in this literature in substantive orientation between Marxian and pluralist models. Guterbock argues that a working synthesis of the two approaches may be developed since the two share several assumptions. While many pluralists will find Guterbock's argument compelling it is doubtful that many Marxists will accept it (Levenstein 1981).

The political economy approach views community change in terms of the complex linkages among economic and political institutions and the various segments of the business and housing markets. Molotch's (1969, 1976) image of the city as a "growth machine" is the most comprehensive statement of the perspective by a current sociologist. According to this framework, the city's growth is guided by a coalition of monied land interests.

These interests operate through interorganizational linkages in such a way that there is an uneven distribution across the city in the benefits of development and revitalization. The winners are always the monied; the poor and the minority groups are always the losers.

Research is also being conducted on the ways institutions operate to control the urban land market. The institutional practice of redlining has received much attention (Marcuse 1979; Squires et al 1979). Primarily banks and savings and loan institutions have been studied so far, but now that sociologist's view of the land market has become more sophisticated the other financial institutions (e.g. insurance companies) are also being studied.

The political economy orientation places neighborhood change in the broader perspective of change in the total urban system. For example, Downs (1981) argues that the fate of any neighborhood is determined not by neighborhood councils or individual actors but by economic, political, and social forces outside its boundaries. The options for neighborhood response are limited.

The impact of the general tax structure on neighborhoods has been studied by O'Connell (1982). He identifies the principal trigger for the frequent turnover in large residential buildings as the accelerated depreciation allowance for taxes. The 5–10 year write-off for ownership makes a regular supply of buildings available for ownership "swapping." Such turnover enables owners to recapture their tax advantages. Implicit in this work is the idea that manipulation of the tax structure has a major impact on neighborhood change.

Proponents of the political economy framework have also developed comprehensive models that correlate individual behavior with social structural and market conditions in the explanation of neighborhood change. LaGory & Pipkin (1981) view change as caused by the physical change of housing stock, the demographic and social change of the local population, and the nature of the residential search process. At this point such models are descriptive and inductive.

Another example of this approach is the work of Solomon & Vandell (1982). They argue that there are at least three competing general theories of neighborhood decline: the orthodox economic, the dual, and the radical theories. These contain competing hypotheses, require different methodologies to be tested, and have different policy implications.

Social-Movements

The social-movements perspective was first identified by London (London 1980; London et al 1980) to explain the revitalization of inner city neighborhoods. However, the perspective is general enough to apply to a wide variety

of urban phenomena, including suburbanization, new towns, and the neighborhood organization movement. London argues that the social-movements perspective can subsume the other general orientations—demographic/ecological, social-cultural/organizational, and political-economic. However, the social-movements model is so recent that this claim cannot yet be fully evaluated.

According to this perspective, social movements frequently develop over specific issues of resource allocation. The members of the movement develop ideologies and leadership, formulate strategies to accomplish goals, and compete with other groups for resources.

The most comprehensive statement of the social-movements framework is Van Til's (1980), whose model deals with citizen participation in neighborhood transformation. While no empirical data are presented by which to evaluate the model, it is sufficiently detailed to enable researchers to study a host of neighborhood issues.

REVITALIZATION AND GENTRIFICATION

The most recent focus of neighborhood research has been urban revitalization and gentrification. While urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s was treated largely as a final step in the Hoover & Vernon life-cycle model, the literature on gentrification has gone beyond that. At first revitalization was treated as a "back to the city" movement of suburbanites, but recent research has shown it to be a much more complicated phenomenon (Houstoun & O'Connor 1980; Long 1980; Smith 1979). Gentrification is a resettlement in older rundown areas by middle-class persons already renting in other city neighborhoods (Clay 1980; Grier & Grier 1980; Gale 1980).

Some have taken revitalization as a refutation of traditional urban growth theory, which predicts the decline of inner city areas as the monied classes move to the metropolitan fringe. On the contrary, however, Laska et al (1982) have shown that revitalization is a different expression of fundamental mechanisms already present in the theory. Essentially, the traditional model states that the wealthy can choose their housing from the total city housing market. For a variety of reasons many inner city areas are becoming more attractive, and the well-to-do are selecting their housing in those areas.

Clay (1979, 1980) has pointed out that revitalization can actually involve two different processes: gentrification (movement of middle-class residents into old, lower-income inner city areas) and incumbent upgrading. In gentrification, white, young, middle-class professionals substantially rehabilitate declining but fundamentally sound housing. The architectural appeal of old housing greatly affects the extent to which an older area is gentrified (Laska et al 1982).

Incumbent upgrading involves reinvestment in moderate-income neighborhoods by their long-time residents. Clay identifies several characteristics of neighborhoods where upgrading is likely to be widespread: a strong neighborhood organization, a high percentage of home owners, a strong sense of identification with the area, and housing stock that is basically sound though in decline.

Since gentrification is achieved through private investment it is hard to get a complete picture of its extent. Clay (1980) reports that all major metropolitan areas show some upgrading activity. Although he argues that gentrification is not a major factor in neighborhood change, it is so important to the future of the city that additional empirical study is warranted.

Gentrification and incumbent upgrading are frequently associated with conflict. Auger's (1979) study of Boston's South End clearly illustrates that a variety of social and political strains can develop between long-time residents and incoming gentrifiers. The new residents frequently demand physical and social amenities in keeping with their middle-class life-style. The long-term residents demand services more in keeping with their life-style—e.g. social services for the elderly.

A central topic in urban revitalization is displacement. It is difficult to get firm estimates on the number of urbanites displaced by gentrification each year, but several thousand persons may be displaced annually (US Department of Housing and Urban Development 1981). For some neighborhoods, displacement may be a very serious problem (Sumka 1979). Tracking studies of the displaced are expensive and time-consuming, but they should be done. They would enable us to determine the number of persons displaced, the quality of the housing they find, the nature of their new social ties compared to those at their former residence, and the proximity of needed services. This research would benefit social scientists and policy-makers alike (McGrath 1982).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The invasion-succession model and the life-cycle model make up the main framework of the study of neighborhood change. However, within this framework several theoretical orientations have developed. The demographic/ecological orientation has over the years provided a bridge between the sociological study of neighborhoods and the work of many urban geographers and economists. The socio-cultural/organizational perspective has been used almost exclusively by sociologists, although urban anthropologists and social psychologists have contributed increasingly to its literature.

The political-economic perspective gained momentum over the last ten years. While the Marxian/non-Marxian debate will continue, the increasing focus of sociologists on the links between political and economic institutions

will bring our work closer to the interests of the urban planners and others concerned with making neighborhoods and cities work. The social-movements approach is the most recent and it seems useful in the analysis of certain topics. It remains to be seen to what extent a wide variety of urban phenomena can be analyzed profitably from the movements orientation.

Urban revitalization and gentrification will receive much of the attention of neighborhood researchers in the next ten years. The 1980 census is the first to supply sufficient subarea information to permit sophisticated investigation of the topic. However, the census will not provide data for some of the most interesting questions: Why do the gentrifiers choose the areas they choose? What is the fate of the displaced? Other investigations must be framed to address such concerns.

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