

HOUSING SUMMIT
MOVIES & VIDEOS ON HOUSING ISSUES

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This is the latest version of the evolving list of long-form documentaries, feature-length fictional films, and YouTube videos I've been compiling on housing issues. It is meant to serve as an archival resource for personal learning or teaching regarding these issues and also for working out whether there are any pieces we'd like to screen before the housing summit to build interest in the issues, during it, and/or afterwards to help continue the conversation. It begins by grouping the pieces by *theme* and then provides *detailed entries* first on long-form documentaries (currently 37 of them), then on feature-length fiction films (currently 6 of them), and finally on YouTube videos (currently 20). Many of the entries were written in 2016, some in 2018.

In the lists, I use an asterisk to mark pieces that seem worth putting on a short list of candidates for a lead-in series for the summit and a hash tag to mark pieces that seem worth considering for a follow-up series. Videos marked with an asterisk *and* a hash tag are ones I see as candidates for showing either before the summit or after it.

Each entry begins with a synopsis provided by the distributor or director. Most are then followed by my own observations about the pieces and/or their suitability for use in connection with the housing summit. The entries also include information about ways of accessing the pieces. Some of the pieces, including a number of the long-form documentaries, are currently available on YouTube. A few are available as DVDs from the Carnegie Library. It's also worth checking with commercial streaming services to see if any of the long-form documentaries are available through them. Unfortunately, however, quite a few of the pieces are only available for individual viewing via Kanopy, a streaming service that's open to all faculty and students at Pitt and CMU (and perhaps other local colleges and universities) but not to the public at large. I use "Pitt streaming" to identify the ones available via Pitt's version of Kanopy. (Kanopy films can be shown on TVs by downloading the company's app to streaming devices such as Roku and Apple TV.)

The list currently focuses almost exclusively on the United States but I'd be happy to expand it to include other parts of the world. Please also send me any comments you'd like to make on pieces on this list that you've seen in the past or have the chance to watch now. Feel free to comment on my comments as well. They are personal judgments, sometimes written as quick first impressions. I don't just expect some disagreement; I welcome it. I'll add any comments you provide to my own unless you ask me not to.

THEMES

F = feature-length fictional film; Y = short You Tube video; C = cable channel. Anything without a letter is a long-form documentary. Some long-form documentaries are available on You Tube.

(1) **Overviews & Explanations:** How Class Works (Y); Slums and Skyscrapers (Y); Ida Susser's remarks after Gut Renovation; Inside Job; Margin Call (F); The Big Short (F)

(2) **Urban Redevelopment:** 70 Acres in Chicago: Cabrini Green; A Hole in a Fence; Brooklyn Matters: Urban Neighborhoods on the Brink of Change; Chavez Ravine; City Rising: Examining Gentrification and its Historical Roots; Class Divide (C); Gaining Ground; Holding Ground; Land of Opportunity; My Brooklyn; Rezoning Harlem; The Hill; Third Ward TX

(3) **Urban Redevelopment (sports arenas):** Brooklyn Matters: Urban Neighborhoods on the Brink of Change; Chavez Ravine (Y – but currently unavailable); The Atlanta Way (Y); The Hill District's Carl Redwood (Y);

(4) **Gentrification:** 70 Acres in Chicago: Cabrini Green; A House Divided: Inequality in Housing in New York City; Brooklyn Matters: Urban Neighborhoods on the Brink of Change; Chocolate City; City Rising: Examining Gentrification and its Historical Roots; Class Divide (C); Flag Wars; Gut Renovation; Priced Out: 15 Years of Gentrification in Portland, Oregon; Rezoning Harlem; Whose Barrio?: The Gentrification of Spanish Harlem; Gentrification and What Can Be Done to Stop It (Y); Gentrification: The Atlanta Way (Y); Million-Dollar Shack (Y); Movement for Justice in El Barrio (Y); The Atlanta Way (Y); What We Don't Understand about Gentrification (Y); Blindspotting (F); Little Men (F)

(5) **Foreclosure & Evictions:** A House Divided: Inequality in Housing in New York City; City Rising: Examining Gentrification and its Historical Roots; Inside Job; Sold Out: Affordable Housing at Risk; Desperate Households (Y); Fighting for Our Homes (Y); For Sale (Y); How Class Works (Y); New Occupy Homes Coalition (Y); Si Se Puede; 99 Homes (F); Cathy Come Home (F)

(6) **Assault on Public Housing:** 70 Acres in Chicago: Cabrini Green; A House Divided: Inequality in Housing in New York City; Chocolate City; Class Divide (C); Dispossession: The Great Social Housing Swindle; Estate, a Reverie: The Social Effects of Public Housing in London; Land of Opportunity; Our Journey Home; Public Housing; Spanish Lake: Political and Economic Oppression in Missouri; The Atlanta Way (Y); The Pruitt-Igoe Myth; Chavez Ravine (Y)

(7) **The Role of Big Banks and Real Estate Developers:** Brooklyn Matters: Urban Neighborhoods on the Brink of Change; Dispossession: The Great Social Housing Swindle; Inside Job; Poverty, Politics, and Profit: America's Housing Crisis; Si Se Puede;

Sold Out: Affordable Housing at Risk; Desperate Households (Y); Fighting for Our Homes (Y); For Sale (Y); How Class Works (Y); New Occupy Homes Coalition (Y); Zombies from Wall St. (Y); 99 Homes (F); Margin Call (F); The Big Short (F)

(8) **Disinvestment & Neglect:** Detropia; Spanish Lake: Political and Economic Oppression in Missouri; Movement for Justice in El Barrio (Y); Race and Redlining: Why Are Cities Still So Segregated? (Y); Zombies from Wall Street (Y)

(9) **Affordable Housing and Housing Activism:** A House Divided: Inequality in Housing in New York City; Arc of Justice; At Home in Utopia; Brooklyn Matters: Urban Neighborhoods on the Brink of Change; City Rising: Examining Gentrification and its Historical Roots; Dispossession: The Great Social Housing Swindle; Gaining Ground; Holding Ground; Homes and Hands: Community Land Trusts in Action; Rezoning Harlem: A Community Fights Against Gentrification; Si Se Puede; Streets of Dreams; The Hill; A Matter of Place (Y); Fighting for Our Homes (Y); Gentrification and What Can Be Done to Stop It (Y); Movement for Justice in El Barrio (Y); New Occupy Homes Coalition (Y); North Side Coalition for Fair Housing (Y); Prisoners in Our Own Homes: Public Transit and Affordable Housing in the City of Pittsburgh (Y); The Hill District's Carl Redwood on May Day (Y)

(10) **Community Land Trusts:** Arc of Justice; Homes and Hands: Community Land Trusts in Action; City Rising: Examining Gentrification and its Historical Roots; Streets of Dreams; Gentrification and What Can Be Done to Stop It (Y)

(11) **Artists & Arts Activism:** Chocolate City; Detropia; Gut Renovation; Third Ward TX; My Cure for the Common City: Eve Picker at TEDxCMU (Y); Cathy Come Home (F)

(11) **Pittsburgh:** East of Liberty; My Cure for the Common City: Eve Picker at TEDxCMU (Y); North Side Coalition for Fair Housing (Y); The Hill District's Carl Redwood...(Y)

(12) **Historical Perspectives:** At Home in Utopia; Banished; The Pruitt-Igoe Myth; Chavez Ravine (Y); Race and Redlining: Why Are Cities Still So Segregated? (Y)

(12) **Beyond the U.S.:** Dispossession: The Great Social Housing Swindle; Estate, a Reverie: The Social Effects of Public Housing in London; Movement for Justice in El Barrio (Y); Si Se Puede; Narvik (Y); Cathy Come Home (F)

DETAILED ENTRIES

LONG-FORM DOCUMENTARIES

***#70 Acres in Chicago: Cabrini Green** (2015) – Filmed over a period of 20 years, 70 ACRES IN CHICAGO chronicles the demolition of Chicago's Cabrini Green public housing development, the clearing of an African-American community, and the building of mixed-income communities on the valuable land where Cabrini once stood. More than a specific portrait of a single housing development, 70 ACRES IN CHICAGO illuminates the layers of socio-economic forces and the difficult questions behind urban redevelopment and gentrification taking place in cities throughout the United States today. (59 mins., dir. Ronit Bezael) [Pitt Library – streaming; DVD with public performance rights: \$295] [Carnegie Library]

[This video charts about the demolition of a high-rise public-housing complex just north of downtown Chicago that at one point was home to about 15,000 people, the great majority of them African-American, and its replacement with mixed-income housing. Most residents were forced to leave the complex and, in many cases, the neighborhood in which it was located, and less than a third were given the chance to move back. It took significant organizing by residents and the filing of lawsuits against the original plans to yield a “compromise” in which, if I understand things correctly, fifty per cent of the new units were made available at “market rate” (either for rent or for sale as condominiums), 20% were made available for rent at an “affordable rate”, and 30% were reserved for rent at a subsidized rate (30% of household income) to people who’d lived in the old complex, though they had to meet extremely stringent criteria to be readmitted and then allowed to stay – e.g. no-one in the household could have a criminal record of any kind, including for misdemeanors incurred for things as minor as getting into a fight at school, and everyone had to submit to and pass an annual drug test. Put another way, a public resource was 70% privatized and the whole complex was turned into a medium for private profit-making. In the process, African-Americans in the complex were turned into a clearly demarcated and often stigmatized minority, and those living in the subsidized units were also disenfranchised by being barred from voting on some issues significant to the new “community” as a whole. The only people from the original complex who were not forced out were those living in the low-rise buildings but they have been subject to increasingly strict monitoring and regulation by the Chicago Housing Authority, something they interpret as an attempt to force them out. The story includes the perspectives of people who have bought or rented new units at “market rate,” almost all of whom seem to be white, but it is told largely from the viewpoint of African-American residents of the old complex, almost all of whom critique what’s happened and the damage it has done to the forms of community they once enjoyed. The story is moving and will resonate for anyone concerned with gentrification, displacement, and the destruction of public housing. It also serves as a warning about the dangers of naivety, myopia, and insensitivity among wealthy people who move into “mixed-income” housing and about ways that city governments and

developers claiming to promote progressive forms of mixing may, deliberately or otherwise, be contributing to the eventual displacement of all low-income people of color. However, the video does have some weaknesses: it isn't as clear as it should be about key developments and relevant numbers; its dominant tone is one of lament; it spends very little time on the collective forms of organizing that produced the "compromise"; and it doesn't highlight any collective efforts to produce viable alternatives or even suggest what these might involve.]

A Hole in a Fence (2008) -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1297278/> -- Chronicling the changing fortunes of a unique abandoned lot in Red Hook, Brooklyn, *A Hole in a Fence* explores the complicated issues of development, class and identity facing the city's most populous borough. It's the story of a vanished homeless community and the young architect who documented it; of a real urban farm run by local kids amidst a landscape of industrial decay; of young graffiti writers losing their stomping grounds; of the arrival of a controversial Ikea megastore; of a photographer's vision of nature's renewal; of the doomed struggle to save a rare part of the neighborhood's working waterfront; and of a filmmaker's discovery of a fleeting, hidden world on the other side of a rusty old fence. [46 mins., dir. D.W. Young] [Carnegie Library]

[A somewhat quirky film that offers an indirect view on the impact of urban redevelopment in Red Hook but without enough attention to housing issues for our purposes.]

***#A House Divided: Inequality in Housing in New York City (2017)** – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXICIKpf7k4> -- Norman Lear explores the housing divide in New York City, where he is confronted by one of the nation's starkest images of inequality: a record number of homeless people living in the shadows of luxury skyscrapers filled with apartments purposely being kept empty. The creator of "All in the Family," "Good Times" and "The Jeffersons" speaks with tenants, realtors, homeless people, housing activists, landlords and city officials -- investigating the Big Apple's affordability crisis, hedge fund speculation on residential housing, and a legacy of racist discrimination that still persists today. (dir. Lucian Read, Richard Rowley, Solly Granatstein, 46 mins.) [Pitt Library -- streaming; You Tube]

[The video focuses on New York City to tell a sadly familiar story about the polarized housing market, gentrification, and the ways that problems for people with moderate and low incomes are significantly intensified when structural racism is also involved. Among other things, it describes the discriminatory provision of government support for white suburbanization since the 1930s, the resulting intensification of residential segregation (NYC is today the third most segregated city in the U.S.), and related racial discrimination in the rental practices of many landlords. It gives particular attention to Brooklyn and the ways in which housing there is becoming increasingly expensive as wealthy people from around the world have bought up spaces in Manhattan (often as an investment rather than to live there) and as investment and development companies

have sought to profit from the consequent rise in demand across the East River by displacing existing residents, many of them people of color. The video tells the story clearly and, at 46 minutes, does so relatively briefly, so if we were to screen it, there would be ample time for discussion afterwards. Moreover, its sympathies are clearly with the lower-income residents and housing activists it interviews (one of whom is Rob Robinson, who participated in our first housing summit) though it does allow us to hear from people representing a variety of positions. One of these is the “progressive” mayor, Bill de Blasio, who – in an argument that will be familiar to many people in Pittsburgh -- describes gentrification as “a double-edged sword” and claims that the best way to protect lower-income residents is to require developers to provide a certain amount of “affordable” housing. The video also connects well with other, often lengthier and older documentaries that focus on NYC (e.g. *Class Divide*) or Brooklyn in particular (e.g. *My Brooklyn*; *Brooklyn Matters*) as well as the shorter YouTube video, *A Matter of Place*, which was made by the Fair Housing Justice Center, an organization featured towards the end of this film. My main reservations are that it gives too much attention to Norman Lear himself, is too gentle with de Blasio (e.g. never challenging him on what “affordable” means in practice), puts more emphasis on what’s wrong than on collective efforts to come up with better ways of doing things, and oversimplifies the city’s racial and ethnic complexity by leaving Latinos out of the picture entirely even though they represent a slightly larger proportion of the population than African Americans (as of 2010, 29% vs. 26%).]

At Home in Utopia (2008) -- A home of one's own: that's the American dream. But what happens when the dreamers are immigrants, factory workers, and Communists? In the mid-1920s, thousands of Jewish immigrant garment workers managed to catapult themselves out of urban slums and ghettos by pooling their resources and building four cooperatively owned and run apartment complexes in the Bronx. They believed that owning one's home went a long way toward controlling one's fate. *At Home in Utopia* focuses on the United Workers Cooperative Colony -- also known as the Coops -- the most grassroots and member-driven of the Jewish labor housing cooperatives, where many of the residents were Communists or sympathetic to the communist movement. Beginning as a stalwartly secular East European Jewish working-class enclave, they were part of an international movement, the power of which blows minds today. In the 1930s they opted to bring their passion for racial justice home, by racially integrating their own cooperative house, with unexpected consequences. An epic tale of the struggle for equity and justice across two generations, the film tracks the rise and fall of one community from the 1920s into the 1950s, paying close attention to the passions that bound them together and those that tore them apart. Along the way, *At Home in Utopia* bears witness to lives lived with courage across the barriers of race, nation, language, convention, and sometimes even common sense. (58 mins., dir. Michael Goldman) [Pitt Library -- streaming]

#Arc of Justice: The Rise, Fall and Rebirth of a Beloved Community (2016) -- This film traces the remarkable journey of New Communities, Inc. and the struggle for racial

justice and economic empowerment among African Americans in southwest Georgia. NCI was created in 1969 in Albany, Georgia, by leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, including Congressman John Lewis, and Charles and Shirley Sherrod, to help secure economic independence for African American families. For 15 years, NCI cooperatively farmed nearly 6,000 acres, the largest tract of land in the United States owned by African Americans at the time, but racist opposition prevented them from implementing plans to build 500 affordable homes as part of their community land trust. Unable to secure government loans to cope with the impact of successive years of drought, NCI lost the land to foreclosure in 1985. But 25 years later it was given new life as a result of a successful and little-known class action lawsuit brought by hundreds of African American farmers against the U.S. Department of Agriculture for loan discrimination. With the settlement, the original founders purchased a 1,600-acre plantation once owned by the largest slave owner and richest man in Georgia. NCI is now growing pecans and using the antebellum mansion on the property as a retreat and training center, still committed to its original mission of promoting racial justice and economic development. [23 mins.; dirs. Helen Cohen, Mark Lipman] [Pitt Library – streaming]

[This is an important story that is well told. It highlights the efforts of African-Americans in Albany, Georgia to pursue not only land ownership in itself but also cooperative farming on collectively owned land and then the development of perpetually affordable housing on that land through a Community Land Trust. It also vividly illustrates the way class antagonism, red-baiting, and racism combined to thwart the initial plans and how people who were initially defeated were able eventually to win an important though still only partial victory. As an historical account, it complements *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth* and *Chavez Ravine*. As a story of effective collective struggle, it goes nicely with *Holding Ground*. And as an account of the first efforts to create a Community Land Trust, it provides valuable background to *Streets of Dreams*. However, I think the focus may be too narrow and too historical for the purposes of a film series related to the Housing Summit; and if we were to show one piece on Community Land Trusts, I think it would be better to go with *Streets of Dreams*, which looks at their pursuit in several parts of the country, gives more weight to the present, and is shorter.]

#Banished: American Ethnic Cleansings (2007) (Also subtitled, How Whites Drove Blacks out of Town in America.) -- <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/banished/film.html> -- A hundred years ago, in communities across the U.S., white residents forced thousands of black families to flee their homes. Even a century later, these towns remain almost entirely white. BANISHED tells the story of three of these communities and their black descendants, who return to learn their shocking histories. In Forsyth County, Georgia, where a thousand black residents were expelled, the film explores the question of land fraudulently taken, and follows some descendants in their quest to uncover the real story of their family's land. In Pierce City, Missouri, a man has designed his own creative form of reparation—he wishes to disinter the remains of his great-grandfather, who was buried there before the banishment. And in Harrison, Arkansas, home to the headquarters of the Ku Klux Klan, a white community struggles with their town's legacy

of hate. By investigating this little-known chapter in American history, BANISHED also takes a contemporary look at the legacy of racial cleansing. Through conversations with current residents and the descendants of those who were driven out, the film contemplates questions of privilege, responsibility, denial, healing, reparations and identity. What can be done to redress past injustices? What is the ongoing impact of the expulsions on families and communities today? In the stories of black families whose land and livelihood were stolen, the film illustrates the limits of the American legal system and the need for creative forms of repair. By introducing these families and the white communities who forced them out, BANISHED raises the question of responsibility for past wrongs and what is involved in righting them. [84 mins.; dir. Marco Williams] [Pitt Library – streaming]

[This is an important film that deals as much with present struggles for varied forms of reparation or at least for acknowledgement of past wrongs as with revelations about the violent processes of racial cleansing in the early twentieth century that drove so many African Americans from their land, their homes, and the communities of which they were a part. I think it's well worth watching and discussing but I don't think it's as relevant as some other films on the list to the immediate concerns of the summit. I therefore don't recommend it for any lead-in series, though it might be worth showing in an extended follow-up series. It's difficult to know if the turnout would be adversely affected by the fact that the film has recently become available on YouTube.]

Brooklyn Matters: Urban Neighborhoods on the Brink of Change (2007/2009) – Brooklyn Matters reveals how a few powerful men tried to tilt the Brooklyn landscape in favor of big real estate at the expense of urban livability. Disregarding time-honored urban planning principles and manipulating a desperate need in the African-American community for jobs and affordable housing, they pushed their own interests forward--luxury housing and a 20,000 seat sports arena. The film poses vital, timely questions that are relevant to cities across the country: What is the proper use of eminent domain? What role does environmental and economic justice play in government-sponsored projects? Who does represent the community? Should traffic-intensive projects be approved without mandatory mitigation measures? Should taxpayer money go to acquire private property for a sports arena? What and who determines if an area is "blighted?" Does the public have a right to know about the use of public finances in large-scale real estate projects? (58 mins., dir. Isabel Hill) [Pitt Library -- streaming]

[This video portrays the efforts of community activists in Brooklyn to challenge billionaire developer Bruce Ratner's project of constructing a huge complex of buildings on a site initially referred to as the Atlantic Yards and more recently, rather strangely, as Pacific Park. It tells the story almost entirely from the perspective of the activists, though it does draw attention to support for the project from other groups based in Brooklyn and to the fact that Ratner's company, Forest City Ratner, signed a Community Benefits Agreement with some of these groups, thus raising interesting questions about what constitutes 'the community,' who gets to speak on its behalf, and to what extent

they are chosen by any kind of democratic process. According to opponents of the project, the leaders of many of the groups that supported the project and signed the CBA had been bought off by FCR. (This claim was supported by local investigative journalists who drew on records from the IRS.) The video also critiques developers' claims to be providing "affordable" housing, suggesting that this is a common tactic used to gain political support and that the claims often turn out to be misleading (though it doesn't go deeply into the controversies about how affordability is calculated). And it highlights the willingness of city and state politicians to use eminent domain to turn over land to developers for the pursuit of private profit rather than to governments for public use. Most of the film was shot in 2007, when the original version was released but the version I saw includes a fairly extensive update from 2009. (Although the film doesn't mention this, Ratner parlayed a significant inheritance and control of his family's construction company to become a major player via Forest City Ratner in real-estate ventures in New York and other major U.S. cities including Pittsburgh. As of 2016, the company owned both Station Square and the Mall at Robinson as well as federally assisted housing complexes in New Kensington, Pittsburgh and Coraopolis -- <https://www.bizjournals.com/pittsburgh/news/2016/08/23/forest-city-to-consider-options-for-mall-portfolio.html>.) There are obvious connections to the many other films I've listed that focus on housing issues in New York City in general and Brooklyn in particular. Especially given the Pittsburgh connection, there's also quite a lot here that might be of interest to local audiences, above all regarding the kinds of techniques developers use to push through their projects. However, although some of the African-American activists make their points clearly and succinctly, other "talking heads" use a technical vocabulary that isn't always easy to grasp for people unfamiliar with the issues. Moreover, the activists seem to have pursued their case primarily through litigation and, after the updated version of the video was completed, ended up losing on almost every count. This means that, especially for people who know or ask about the outcome, the video might not be a great way of encouraging collective opposition to alliances between developers and local politicians, at least via strategies that rely primarily on lawsuits.]

Chavez Ravine (2004) – <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0383261/> -- Narrated by Cheech Marin and scored by Ry Cooder, this half-hour documentary captures how a community was betrayed by greed, political hypocrisy, and good intentions gone astray. [24mins.; dir. Jordan Mechner] [You Tube – Currently unavailable.]

[This video is currently unavailable on You Tube but it was available in the past and might return. It deals with the way people from a poor Latino community in Los Angeles were promised progressive public housing in the 1950s but ended up being displaced when the land was turned over to the Dodgers baseball team for its new stadium. The story has some striking twists, is well told, and in my view, is very moving. It offers some interesting resonances with what happened to the lower Hill and would allow us to bring Latino experiences of displacement into the picture. My only reservations are that it's already available on YouTube and our potential audience might prefer

something that's more about the present than what happened over fifty years ago and that's more about the Rust Belt than the Sun Belt.]

#Chocolate City (2006) -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1NkfATQvj4> -- This documentary addresses the issue of gentrification of Washington, DC. Through the experiences of a number of largely black residents the film explores how the city is being altered as property prices rise and local communities are forced out of the world's most famous capital. [45 mins.; dirs.. Ellie Walton & Sam Wild] [Also see the four-minute pitch video for a documentary that's currently being made about the state of gentrification in DC today. The film is called "Chocolate City's Last Stand?" The producer is William Michael Cunningham, who's featured in the video; the director is Norman Kelley -- <https://vimeo.com/148123988?from=outro-local>]

[This is a moving story about struggles in DC against the HOPE VI plan to replace public housing that many of the residents value with "mixed-income" housing schemes that offer only a limited amount of "affordable housing" at prices most low-income people can't afford and thus threaten to displace most of the residents and dissolve the community bonds they've developed. It gives particular attention to two very impressive women, an African-American activist from one of the public-housing projects that's under threat and a sympathetic Indian performance artist and activist who develops a one-person play to dramatize what's at stake in the efforts to resist HOPE VI in the poorer parts of DC. I don't think it's ideal for a lead-in series for the Housing Summit because, sadly, it ends up being another story of people bashing their heads against a brick wall and also because it's now a bit dated. However, it might be worth showing in a follow-up series, perhaps by using excerpts in a session on creative uses of the arts in collective struggles over housing.]

***#City Rising: Examining Gentrification and its Historical Roots** (2017, 6 videos, 92 mins.) – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11508ex1Xxg&list=PLWu5ajp6Zk8e3KC2vsJ_jEQLKRRvDedOJ -- City Rising illuminates the history of discriminatory laws and practices at the root of the gentrification and affordable housing crisis in the United States, revealing how gentrification is traditionally molded and dictated by those in power. Through the stories of California's rapidly developing urban centers, City Rising features a growing movement of advocacy as communities fight gentrification and seek responsible development across the state. People of color who cherish their neighborhood's culture and sense of community mobilize against unsustainable rents and other forces that are pushing neighbors into homelessness. (92 mins., dir. Jeremiah Hammerling) [Pitt Library -- streaming; You Tube]

[This is an excellent piece that consists of six separate but interrelated videos, each 15-17 minutes long. The titles are Legacy, Resilience, Return to the Cities, Impact, Mobilization, and The Future. Together they tell a continuous story of housing inequalities and the struggles to address them via an examination of developments in

Santa Ana, Long Beach, and Boyle Heights in southern California and Oakland and Sacramento in the northern part of the state. They set issues regarding gentrification in the context of a wide range of concerns about housing. They include people with a wide variety of views but they focus primarily on African Americans and Latinos dealing with the implications of racism and exploitation. And while highlighting problems, they give a lot of emphasis, especially in Resilience, Mobilization, and The Future, to collective, community-based efforts to address these problems and, especially in The Future, to the promotion of alternatives such as Community Land Trusts. The videos lay out information and contending views in a clear and accessible manner. The focus on California may not be ideal for engaging audiences in the Pittsburgh area but almost all the issues addressed in the videos are directly relevant to what's happening here and the attention to Latinos as well as African Americans is valuable given the growing presence of low-paid Latino migrants in our region. The division into six separate videos does somewhat interrupt the flow and means that viewers have to watch the same brief introduction six times but it would also make it easier in public screenings to pause intermittently for discussion and, if need be, to hold two separate sessions (though I don't think it would be good to end a session with Return to the Cities, which deals largely with the views of developers and allied city officials).

***Class Divide (2016)** -- <https://www.hbo.com/documentaries/class-divide> -- Highlights the effects of hyper-gentrification and growing inequality through the microcosm of New York City's West Chelsea neighborhood, focusing on an intersection where an elite private school sits directly across the street from low-income public housing. The final film in a trilogy about economic forces affecting ordinary people from director Marc Levin and producer Daphne Pinkerson (HBO's "Schmatta: Rags to Riches to Rags" and "Hard Times: Lost on Long Island"), this moving chronicle bears witness to the effects of gentrification and stagnant class mobility on young people who share the same neighborhood — yet live in very different worlds — as they try to navigate this rapidly changing landscape. [74 mins.; dir. Marc Levin]

[The documentary's greatest strength is the pressing importance of the issue it explores: the workings of urban redevelopment and gentrification in the context of growing class polarization in the US and the wider world. It focuses on a powerful illustration of this: the juxtaposition of housing projects and an elite private school on opposite sides of the street in the West Chelsea part of Manhattan, an area where apartments are now selling for up to \$20m while the average earnings of families in the projects is around \$21,000 pa. And it gains some emotional force by exploring this juxtaposition mainly through the eyes of young people in the projects and the school, some of whom are very articulate about the situation, including a quite remarkable eight-year old from the projects. Global issues also surface in a couple of ways — the elite school calls itself The World School and boasts that it is training its students (whose tuition costs around \$45,000 per year) to function effectively in a global economy; and about 40% of the people acquiring expensive properties in the area are either foreign or anonymous buyers. The filmmaking is OK but not striking and, like so many documentaries these

days, the film doesn't get into the broader shifts in the workings of capitalism in the US and the wider world over the last forty years that have produced the massive increases in social inequality, the increased privatization of housing markets, and the dramatic growth in speculative investment in real estate. This means that the only solutions that are addressed for the people in the projects are ones involving the individual self-advancement and/or the forging of dialogues with wealth kids from across the street. There's only fleeting attention to collective efforts to challenge the broad forces shaping the inequalities we see. If we were to show the film, I think it could provoke very interesting discussions though it's main drawback in terms of its relevance to what's happening in Pittsburgh is that it portrays levels of inequality that can be found in some of the world's most expensive cities but aren't representative of the significant but less extreme kinds of inequality affecting housing issues here.]

Detropia (2012) -- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Detropia> -- A documentary about the city of Detroit, Michigan. It focuses on the decline of the economy of Detroit due to long-term changes in the automobile industry, and the effects that the decline has had on the city's residents and infrastructure. The film does not feature any narration or spoken comments from the filmmakers. Instead, it primarily follows three residents of Detroit in various situations around the city, circa 2010. Interspersed is contemporary footage of different areas of Detroit shot by the filmmakers, and clips of historic footage. The three Detroiters who are profiled are video blogger Crystal Starr, nightclub owner Tommy Stephens, and United Auto Workers local President George McGregor, each of whom reflect on their own experiences and share their observations about the city, its problems, and its opportunities. Also featured are portions of Mayor Dave Bing's discussions with city officials and residents about the possibility of geographically consolidating Detroit residents as a cost-saving measure. A group of artists, mostly newcomers to Detroit, are shown as well, particularly Steve and Dorota Coy. The Coys, who are performance artists, are featured on the poster and DVD cover for the film. [90 mins.; dirs.. Heidi Ewing, Rachel Grady] [Carnegie Library and Netflix]

[I think this film is at its best when it's tracking the lives of its three central characters and their overlapping but somewhat different perspectives on the city, enhanced by the fact that Tommy Stephens has been a history teacher, by George McGregor's insights as someone who has been at the forefront of efforts to defend autoworkers against huge cuts in their pay and benefits and the partially successful attempt to bring electric-car production to a Detroit plant, and by Crystal Starr's distinctive views as a younger woman and her keen eye as a video blogger. The story about the growing presence of young artists and the illustrative scenes focused on the Coys aren't as well integrated into the narrative as I'd like. Housing, foreclosures, and housing destruction receive some attention, as does the promotion of urban gardening, but a lot of the film is focused, quite reasonably, on the impact of decades of white flight, severe job loss for those that remain, and the difficulties local residents face in paying bills for increasingly antiquated and ineffective utilities, especially water. The emphasis seems to be mainly on capturing the look and feel of decay in visually quirky, sometimes arresting ways and

not on what I understand has been the emergence of significant and inventive forms of collective resistance.]

Dispossession: The Great Social Housing Swindle (2017, 82 mins.) --

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5934402/> -- For some people, a housing crisis means not getting planning permission for a loft conversion. For others it means, quite simply, losing their home. *Dispossession: The Great Social Housing Swindle* is a feature documentary directed by Paul Sng (Sleaford Mods - *Invisible Britain*) and narrated by Maxine Peake, exploring the catastrophic failures that have led to a chronic shortage of social [i.e. public] housing in Britain. The film focuses on the neglect, demolition and regeneration of council estates [large areas of public housing] across the UK and investigates how the state works with the private sector to demolish council estates to build on the land they stand on, making properties that are unaffordable to the majority of people. *Dispossession* is the story of people fighting for their communities, of people who know the difference between a house and a home, and who believe that housing is a human right, not an expensive luxury.

[This video has been very well reviewed in the U.K. but I have not been able to see it because it is not yet available in the U.S. Even if it were to become available, I doubt that it would interest a general audience in Pittsburgh even though many of the processes it describes are sadly similar to ones that are and have been unfolding in the city and the U.S. more generally. For people who do have a strong interest in housing issues in Britain as well as the U.S. or, more broadly, at a global scale, I suspect it would be interesting to see this film alongside *Estate, a Reverie*, which focuses on the forced decline of a specific public housing project in the East End of London.]

***East of Liberty Series** – <http://eastofliberty.com/shop/> -- [dir. Chris Ivey]

I: A Story of Good Intentions -- The first film in a series documenting the redevelopment and gentrification of blighted community in Pittsburgh. Filmed over several years, the series of films takes a raw look at changes happening in one community reflecting a national trend. The first film, “A Story of Good Intentions” follows displaced residents from low income high rises that have been demolished for new redevelopment. Featuring interviews with residents and social examiner and author Mindy Fullilove, MD (“Root Shock”), “East of Liberty” takes a unique approach to tackling the global issue of gentrification. [84 mins.]

II: The Fear of Us -- The second film follows small business owners fighting to survive as new businesses emerge designed to cater to a different clientele unlike the ones before. A true examination of survival of the fittest. Featuring interviews with business owners and social examiner Mindy Fullilove, MD (“Root Shock”) and others, “The Fear of Us” digs deep into the issues of class and race as we continue to tackle gentrification issues in redevelopment. [104 mins.]

III: In Unlivable Times -- The third film, “In Unlivable Times” is uniquely different from the previous chapters in the “East of Liberty” series as we inject the voices of Pittsburgh youth to create an educational experience unlike others. Filled with heartfelt stories of determination and the will to succeed, “In Unlivable Times” is a definitive portrait of inner city of youth surviving through all odds. [53 mins.]

East of Liberty (2009?) – Edited version of A Story of Good Intentions and The Fear of Us. [58 mins.; dir. Chris Ivey] [Carnegie Library]

[This will no doubt already be familiar to many people in Pittsburgh. Like the series from which it was drawn, it’s directed and written by East Liberty resident, Chris Ivey, who mobilizes videography and many testimonials from local residents and business owners to produce a sensitive, indignant portrait of what the neighborhood was going through during the 2000s. There is some attention to the destruction of its public housing towers and the resulting displacement, fortified by brief interviews with Mindy Fullilove, one of the guest speakers at the summit, but the main focus is on the damage done to the mainly African-American small businesses by rising rents in the wake of the arrival of Home Depot, Whole Foods, and then Target, as well as the arrogant indifference or naivety of some of the city’s politicians and developers.]

El Barrio Tours (2012) --

<https://www.gofundme.com/elbarriotours>; <http://www.americasquarterly.org/content/el-barrio-tours> [accessed on 6.16.18 on You Tube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_sj7vxHc3A] -- An in depth look at the phenomena of gentrification as seen through the change in the largest Puerto Rican neighborhood in the 50 states; East Harlem. Join Congressman Charlie Rangel, Edwin Torres, writer of Carlito's way, and a host of neighborhood activists, residents, and small business owners, as they debate the past, present, and future of their beloved Barrio. [28 mins., dir. Andrew J. Padilla]

[When I talked with Andrew Padilla, he said he feels this is already out of date. He referred me instead to short videos he’s made more recently in conjunction with local videographers about the impact of urban redevelopment and gentrification on low-income Latino neighborhoods around the United States. This is part of a project he calls El Barrio Tours: Gentrification U.S.A. Unfortunately, I don’t think the two videos I was able to see are suitable for what we have in mind.]

Estate, a Reverie: The Social Effects of Public Housing in London (2015) – When it was built in the 1930's, the massive Haggerston Estate in East London was the model of public housing and what it could achieve. After decades of neglect, however, the whole area was condemned and with it the utopian dream it promised. Award-winning filmmaker Andrea Luke Zimmerman, herself a resident for 17 years, chronicles the project's passing and celebrates its inhabitants in this beautiful, poetic documentary. Weaving together intimate resident portraits with historical re-enactments (performed

by the residents themselves), landscape and architectural studies, and dramatized scenes, the film questions how stereotypes - based on class, gender, disability, even geography - are constructed. (84 mins., dir. Andrea Luke Zimmerman). [Pitt Library -- streaming.]

[I doubt that many people in Pittsburgh would be interested in this film but it's a quietly powerful elegy to the Haggerston public housing "estate" in the East End of London, which was built by London Council between 1935 and 1948, and the people who lived there in the final years of its existence between 2010 and 2014. The focus is very much on the residents, who come from a variety of racial and national backgrounds, and the ways they support one another amidst the growing isolation and institutional neglect. Many of the people are elderly and have lived on the estate for decades. Quite a few have serious health problems. But they, like their younger neighbors, are deeply attached to the place and to the relationships they have forged there. Echoing the lives of the residents, the film engagingly oscillates between gritty realism and surreal flights of fancy. It does not to address directly the broader processes shaping residents' lives, most notably, from the late 1970s onwards, increasing state divestment in public housing, increasing privatization of the public housing stock, the growing displacement of residents who could not afford to buy the places they had previously rented, and the growing demonization and neglect of the people who remained. More specifically regarding London's East End, there was also a massive redevelopment project from the 1980s onwards that destroyed many of the working-class neighborhoods in the area first to create new office complexes, many of them occupied by leading financial firms, and then to build the stadiums and athletes' housing for the 2008 Olympics. These developments significantly increased the value of local land and the pressure on local governments to put it on the market, no doubt accelerating the demise of the Haggerston estate. I think some attention to these processes would have been helpful, especially for audiences outside the UK, but I can understand the filmmaker's decision to focus on the people and the place. Many of the framing factors are no doubt addressed in *Dispossession* (see above) but this is not yet available for viewing in the U.S.]

***#Flag Wars (2003)** -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0359281/> -- A cinema vérité documentary that follows the conflicts that arise when gay white professionals move into a black working-class neighborhood. Filmed over a four years in Columbus, Ohio, "Flag Wars" leads viewers on an eye-opening journey into a divided community. [88 mins.; dirs.. Linda Goode Bryant, Laura Poitras] [Carnegie Library]

[This is a good portrait of the tensions gentrification often provokes between established residents and wealthier newcomers. There's also some interest, for me at least, in the fact that it's one of the earliest pieces by Laura Poitras, who went on to make some great documentaries including the Academy-Award-winning piece, *Citizenfour*, about Edward Snowden. In fact, Poitras was the first person Snowden approached when he wanted to go public with his story. In this film, the gay newcomers

do not come off well, almost all of them seeming horribly uninterested in talking with the existing residents about their concerns, let alone in trying to work together to address them. For our purposes, it could serve as a useful way of getting people to talk about whether people should contribute to the gentrification of poor neighborhoods and, if they do, how they should relate to their new neighbors. However, the developments the film portrays took place fifteen years ago and the way it presents them may do more to divide than foster coalition building. Moreover, like almost all the documentaries on gentrification, its tight focus on the established residents, the newcomers, and a few individual realtors means it has nothing to say about the key role so often played by big banks and development companies let alone the local ramifications of broad shifts in the workings of global capitalism since the 1970s.]

Gaining Ground: Building Community on Dudley Street (2012) --

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2290355/> -- In the midst of the economic meltdown, 'Gaining Ground' explores the innovative, grassroots organizing efforts of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) in Boston. Over the course of two years, we watch a new generation of leaders working to prevent foreclosures and bring jobs and opportunities for young people to one of the city's most diverse and economically challenged neighborhoods. DSNI was created 25 years ago when the community had been devastated by bank redlining, arson-for-profit, and illegal dumping, and has become one of the preeminent models for community-based change. [58 mins; dir. Llewellyn M. Smith] [Carnegie Library] [Sequel to *Holding Ground* – see below.]

[I like aspects of this follow-up to *Holding Ground* , especially its willingness to explore many of the tensions and ironies in the developments it portrays and its effort to highlight emerging solutions to the neighborhood's housing problems. However, I don't think it delves as deeply or as critically as it should into the roles played by the Salvation Army, the Kroc Foundation, and McDonald's, the primary source of the foundation's money, especially given the negative impact of McDonald's on impoverished groups, their neighborhoods, their diets, and the labor market they confront, as well as the broader problem of people in poor neighborhoods increasingly being asked to invest their hopes in selective and often heavily slanted forms of private charity. This diverts attention from arguments in favor of community self-organization and public funding from the state guided by the ideas of adequate housing as a right and cooperative or communal ownership.]

Gut Renovation (2012) -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2368897/> -- Charts the destruction of Williamsburg - a neighborhood in Brooklyn, NY - after the city passed a re-zoning plan in 2005 which allowed developers to build luxury condos where there were once thriving industries, working-class families, and artists. The filmmaker lived in the neighborhood for 20 years and was one of the many who were forced out by the changes that occurred. [81 mins.; dir. Su Friedrich] [Carnegie Library]

*#[contextualizing interview with urban anthropologist Ida Susser (CUNY Graduate

School), 39 mins. In my view, this is more useful than the documentary itself, especially in highlighting some of the broad forces at play in contemporary gentrification.]
[Carnegie Library]

[This is one of quite a few documentaries focused on New York, helping replicate the disproportionate amount of academic and journalistic work on gentrification and other housing issues that focuses on the city. I think the film is quite good but it tends to give more attention to the concerns of the artists than to those of their poorer neighbors, tacitly legitimating this by implying that their interests are largely the same. In my view, Ida Susser's comments are more useful than the film itself, especially in highlighting some of the broad forces at play in contemporary gentrification. Indeed, it might be worth pairing her comments with a shortish video on a different situation rather than showing Gut Renovation itself, especially as it's too long to permit screening of the film itself and the interview with Susser. However, I wonder whether Susser's comments may be too academic and "wordy" for a broad audience.]

***Holding Ground: The Rebirth of Dudley Street (1996) --**

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0116542/reviews> -- Nowhere else in the US has a community organization achieved the right to use eminent domain to acquire vacant land for the construction of new, affordable homes. In Boston's Roxbury neighborhood, community groups of cape verdean, latino and African American descent went from fighting their own independent battles with gangs and illegal activities to working together to form a cohesive coalition that transformed their neighborhood. The power that they generated working as a group to ensure political accountability and safety is immeasurable. The filmmakers do an excellent job of showing how years of dedication and hard work can make an extraordinary difference in the history and outcome of neighborhood. It is a case example for communities around the world. [58 mins.; dirs.. Mark Lipman & Leah Mahan] [Ronell mentioned that this is one of her favorites. [Followed by *Gaining Ground* – see above.] [Pitt Library – streaming]

[Ronell Guy mentioned that this is one of her favorites and that she has screened it successfully in the past. Carl Redwood also told me that he's shown it often in courses looking at community activism. I can see why Ronell and Carl like it so much. It offers an inspiring picture of people in a poor part of Boston building multiracial and multiethnic coalitions as they attempt to revitalize their neighborhood in ways that address local economic, social, and cultural concerns as the community defines them and to get city hall to work with them rather than impose redevelopment from above. It shows them having some notable successes, especially in gaining the right to use eminent domain, while still having a long way to go. In my view, it's a lot better than the sequel, *Gaining Ground*, mainly because I'm less comfortable with the newer efforts that film portrays. I do have a couple of reservations that have nothing to do with the film itself but with its suitability for use in a lead-in series for the summit. First, it's now twenty years old. Second, given that Ronell and Carl have shown it in the past,

it might not have as much drawing power for the groups they work with as something these groups haven't seen.]

***#Homes and Hands: Community Land Trusts in Action (1998/2008) –**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNU7St9AtMU> -- Three tenacious and visionary communities deliver the American dream of owning a home to low-income residents. It has been over 40 years since leaders of the southern civil rights movement formed the first community land trust to secure access to land for African-Americans. This equitable and sustainable model of affordable housing and community development has since become a critical tool in preventing rampant foreclosures and land price speculation while stimulating revitalization without gentrification. Through the personal stories of community activists in Durham, North Carolina, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Burlington, Vermont, audiences are compelled to rethink their assumptions about housing and community development in the United States. (40 mins., dirs. Debra Chasnoff, Helen Cohen) [Pitt Library – streaming; on You Tube version in four parts, one for each of the three cases plus an epilogue.]

[This video does a nice job of advertising the merits of Community Land Trusts through a focus on the three cases. It was released in 1998 but also has a brief epilogue from a decade later that updates the situation in each place. In the first case, in Durham, NC, the focus is on a mix of organizers and regular residents in an almost entirely African-American neighborhood; in the other two cases, the focus is mainly on organizers and activists who were motivated to use the land-trust model at least partly because of fears of gentrification. The Albuquerque case deals with the efforts of what seems to be a mixed Anglo and Latino neighborhood to develop a large, vacant plot of land in co-operation with the city though in 1998 these efforts were still at the planning stage. The Burlington case is about a land trust that began operating in 1983 and had by 1998 grown to become the second largest land owner in the city. In the process, it had launched several joint operations with housing co-operatives, so the video deals at least briefly with the issue of co-operative rather than individual ownership. Although the documentary doesn't mention this, the Burlington trust was set up with the support of Bernie Sanders, who served as mayor of the city from 1981 to 1990. The main merits of the video are that, instead of focusing on what's wrong, it suggests one way of making things better; it's quite easy to understand (though this may come from glossing over some of the complexities regarding financing); and, at 40 minutes, it's short enough to allow for screening in combination with Arc of Justice, which deals with the development of an exemplary land trust in Georgia in the 1960s and 70s, and/or for leaving a significant amount of time for discussion. It also complements Streets of Dreams, another film about land trusts, though the two pieces overlap too much to be shown together. The main drawback is that the video is clearly a promotional exercise. It paints a very rosy picture, never shows any problems, and doesn't offer views from people who are critical of the model. I should add that in both the Pitt library version and the You Tube version, the 2008 epilogue consists of short paragraphs that, for some reason, are written in Spanish. However, if the video were shown in public, it would be

easy for a someone with a modest amount of Spanish to pause the video and translate each paragraph for non-Spanish speakers in the audience.]

Inside Job (2010) -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1645089/> -- Inside Job provides a comprehensive analysis of the global financial crisis of 2008, which at a cost over \$20 trillion, caused millions of people to lose their jobs and homes in the worst recession since the Great Depression, and nearly resulted in a global financial collapse. Through exhaustive research and extensive interviews with key financial insiders, politicians, journalists, and academics, the film traces the rise of a rogue industry which has corrupted politics, regulation, and academia. It was made on location in the United States, Iceland, England, France, Singapore, and China. [105 mins., dir. Charles Ferguson]

[I'm ambivalent. I think we need something that provides a clear and effective overview of the finance industry's impact on housing and jobs but I worry that this is too long, a bit too technical, too much of an insider critique, and perhaps a bit dated. Richard Wolff's video, *How Class Works*, covers some of the same ground much more briefly and accessibly, and the fiction film, *99 Homes*, brings the nastiness and the social costs to light in a way that's more vivid and perhaps ultimately more compelling, though it largely skirts around the impact of the financial and real estate industries on impoverished African Americans.]

#Land of Opportunity (2010) -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1658811/> -- Compiling over 7 years and 1,000 hours of filming and footage, respectively, the vérité-style documentary *Land of Opportunity* captures the early years of post-catastrophe New Orleans through the eyes of those most affected by its devastation. From the urban planner to the immigrant worker, the pragmatist to the activist, our protagonists represent the rich diversity of lives and stories that call New Orleans home. Through their eyes, we experience the personal and emotional impact of an unprecedented urban reconstruction process. The people in the film are examples of urban paradox: marginalized, multi-racial, moneyed or not and often contradictory. Their stories echo a universally applicable paradigm: that of ordinary people in cities and towns across the world, grappling with extraordinary circumstances much larger than themselves. [96 mins.; dir. Luisa Dantas]

[I like the way this film provides multiple perspectives on the reconstruction of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina by focusing on the lives and concerns of a diverse array of people, from poor local residents, many of them African-American, to unauthorized immigrant workers from Latin American and a Cuban-born, Miami-based architect hired to guide the transformation of the Gentilly neighborhood. The film highlights issues of urban redevelopment in general and access to affordable housing in particular. It is at its best, in my view, when it focuses on the efforts of poorer residents to have a voice in the redevelopment process and especially when it looks at their collective struggles to reopen a highly valued public-housing project that was closed and slated for demolition after the hurricane even though it could easily have been repaired and returned to the

people previously living there. Interesting comparisons could be made here with *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth*, *Chavez Ravine*, and *Chocolate City*. My main reservations are, first, that it's not only long but also, given its emphasis on multiple experiences, a bit too sprawling and ill-focused, and second, that it doesn't say as much as it could about (a) the predatory and often corrupt efforts of corporate interests, the Bush administration, and key local officials to use the effects of the hurricane to get rid of a wide range of public facilities in New Orleans (including schools as well as housing) and to facilitate rampant privatization and the permanent displacement of a significant proportion of the city's low-income African-American population, let alone (b) how all this relates to broader transformations in the U.S. and the wider world associated with the growing emphasis on neoliberal policies and, increasingly, on neoliberal solutions to the problems these policies have helped produce or worsen. It might work as part of an extended series following the summit but I don't think it's a great candidate for any lead-in series.]

***My Brooklyn (2012)** -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2322519/> -- Director Kelly Anderson's personal journey as a Brooklyn 'gentrifier' to understand the forces reshaping her neighborhood along lines of race and class. The film reframes the gentrification debate to expose the corporate actors and government policies driving displacement and neighborhood change. [85 mins.; dir. Kelly Anderson] [Pitt Library – streaming]

[I think this one of the best films on urban redevelopment that I've seen, mainly because it does what many others don't do, namely situate the experiences of the people whose neighborhoods are being redeveloped in the context of both the history of housing policy in the United States and the powerful influence exerted by the big developers over both the property market and the branches of city government meant to regulate it. Indeed, Craig Wilder, one of the scholars the director interviews, says quite explicitly at one point that gentrifications isn't principally about some people moving in and other people having to move out but instead about developers working with city officials to reshape neighborhoods as sources of greater profit, often in return for significant government tax breaks and other kinds of subsidy. I also like the fact that the film shows people organizing to try to push development in more equitable directions. My only reservation is that the director focuses mainly on the experiences of small business owners facing displacement from the spaces they rent and by extension on the interests of local residents as consumers. I would have liked to see her do more to situate this part of the story in relation to the experiences of local people as home owners and renters (other than herself) facing the threat and reality of displacement and as wage workers facing job loss or significant declines in income, especially real income in the context of what I assume are rapidly rising local prices. Also, like quite a few of the films on this list, it ends up being more of a lament than a source of encouragement, mainly because it doesn't give much attention to collectively organized challenges and especially ones that enjoyed at least some success.]

Our Journey Home (2015) -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EO63Owo9IE8> – This documentary focuses on the common belief that everyone deserves a safe and stable place to call home, and the benefits of public housing. The documentary examines the role we all can play in supporting those who struggle in having a stable place from where they can grow and dream. Narrated by Jewel and produced by Emmy award-winning film company, Stillmotion, “Our Journey Home” follows the stories of three families and shares how their relationship to home has shaped them as they strive to support their families, further their education and careers, and give back to their communities. (55 mins., dir. Patrick Moreau) [You Tube]

[This focuses on three families who have benefitted from access to public housing to make a broader argument about the importance of a secure home as a foundation for dealing with the rest of life and of public housing as a key source of that security for many people. One of the families is African-American and based in Denver, another is Latino and based in Ventura, CA, and the third involves a once-homeless couple based somewhere else in southern California involving a man who is African-American man and a woman whose racial-ethnic background I found hard to work out from her appearance. The central characters are strong and articulate and their stories are interspersed with forceful and effective contextualizing comments from Tony Robinson, a professor of political science at University of Colorado, Denver. However, the three families have clearly been selected because of their relative success; the video is slickly produced – with lighting that makes everything seem glossy and a soundtrack that keeps telling you how you’re meant to feel; and although the introduction and voice-over by the singer, Jewel, seem well-meaning and sincere, they also struck me as overly sentimental. The video might work fairly well as an inspirational narrative for relatively sheltered undergraduates but it lacks the complexity and hard edges that would, I think, make it seem compellingly real to more mature adults, especially ones who’ve had to grapple with the realities of pressing poverty and uncertain access to secure housing.]

Poverty, Politics, and Profit: America’s Housing Crisis (2017) -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1mXDzzThEw> – A joint PBS-NPR investigation into the billions spent on housing the poor, and why so few get the help they need. The film examines the politics, profits and problems of an affordable housing system in crisis. For more information and shorter videos, see <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/poverty-politics-and-profit/> (52 mins.) [You Tube] [Carnegie Library]

[This PBS Frontline investigation does a pretty good job of showing how difficult it is for people in the U.S. today to access affordable rental housing and explaining some of the factors contributing to the problem, though it doesn’t address issues such as the concentration of wealth at the top via the intensified exploitation of people’s labor and the associated decline in real wages per hour and benefits for most paid workers. It focuses initially on Dallas, introduces three women who are trying to make use of the Section-8 vouchers they’ve been given, shows the hostility of prosperous neighborhoods

to the construction of mixed-income apartment complexes that include “affordable” and Section-8 units, and reports on developers already making millions from using government funds to construct affordable housing who have been convicted of bribing local and state politicians in order to pursue new projects. It then shifts to southern Florida and highlights significant fraud in the use of funds provided to developers via the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit system that was created under Reagan to encourage private-sector (rather than public) investment in the construction of affordable housing. It shows that in the few cases that have been prosecuted in south Florida, tens of millions of dollars have been fraudulently diverted from investment in new housing units to the pockets of wealthy developers. The video ends by returning to Dallas to see whether the three women were able to use their Section-8 vouchers before they expired. The piece is pretty effective at exposing the failings of the current system, including the scope it offers for corruption. However, it never develops its implicit argument that there’s a desperate need, at a minimum, for more effective monitoring and regulation by the federal government; nor does it address the broader neoliberalizing processes that have turned public services into vehicles for private profiteering and that continue to put political obstacles in the way of effective federal oversight of the public subsidies that developers receive. Moreover, it never considers any collective efforts to address the problems and promote alternative approaches.]

Priced Out: 15 Years of Gentrification in Portland, Oregon (2017, 60 mins.) --

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6719680/> -- In the late 1990s, Nikki Williams, a single mother living in Portland's only "ghetto," embraced the idea of gentrification. At that time, her neighborhood was dominated by abandoned buildings and the fear of drug dealers. Fifteen years later, Nikki was one of the last black residents on her block, as high-end restaurants and throngs of young newcomers came to dominate the area. While some black residents said good riddance to the old neighborhood, others felt betrayed by city officials who promised revitalization without displacement. As gentrification grew beyond Nikki's neighborhood and plunged the entire city into a housing crisis, Nikki found herself torn between feelings of grief about the loss of her community and the opportunity to sell her home and achieve economic freedom for the first time in her life. In 2002, "North East Passage" chronicled a neighborhood that embraced gentrification and fought off affordable housing. Over a decade later, the sequel "Priced Out" offers a complex view of gentrification rarely seen in conventional news coverage.

Public Housing (1997) -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0130200/> -- Renowned documentarian Frederick Wiseman takes an intimate and nuanced look at the Ida B. Wells housing project in the south side of Chicago, Illinois. [200 mins.; dir. Frederick Wiseman] [Pitt – Stark Media Services]

#Rezoning Harlem: A Community Fights Against Gentrification (2008) -- Rezoning Harlem follows longtime members of the Harlem community as they fight a 2008 rezoning that threatens to erase the history and culture of their legendary

neighborhood and replace it with luxury housing, offices, and big-box retail. A shocking expose of how a group of ordinary citizens, who are passionate about the future of one of the city's most treasured neighborhoods, are systematically shut out of the city's decision-making process, revealing New York City's broken public review system and provoking discussion on what we can do about it. [41 mins.; dirs. Natasha Florentino & Tamara Gubernat] [Pitt Library – streaming]

[This is a powerful account of community activism to protect not only minority-owned small businesses but also affordable housing. However, although the activists are impressive, the film shows them repeatedly being frustrated by elite members of the planning commission and the developers whose interests they promote so it ends up being rather depressing, more of a cautionary tale than a source of inspiration. It's also a little bit dated.]

#Sí Se Puede: Seven Days At PAH Barcelona (2014) --

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=caD17RKJfbc> -- Do you want to know about the main anti-eviction citizen's movement in Spain? Comando Video invites you to view this daily account of Barcelona's Platform for People Affected by Mortgages that portrays what a common week, and its tireless activities, could look like. Seven interviews - combined with images collected over one year- lead the viewer through the different activities performed weekly at PAH Barcelona. This documentary placed cameras at the heart of the organization to depict not only the post-housing bubble drama but most importantly the huge invisible work behind the PAH and the deep process of transformation and empowerment of those who participate in it. [52 mins.; dir. Pau Faus] [You Tube]

[I really like the story this video tells about the popular mobilization to address the housing crisis in Spain from 2008 onwards, especially in support of people facing evictions for being unable to keep up with their mortgage payments. Although PAH has become a national movement, the video focuses on the daily activities of its branch in Barcelona. It shows how PAH uses grassroots activism to provide emotional, economic, legal, and political support to people who often feel isolated and ashamed in the face of actual and threatened evictions even though the problems they face are the result of the rampant over-marketing of mortgages by the big banks until the bubble burst in 2008, the dramatic increase in unemployment and savage wage cuts that followed, and the national government's emphasis on bailing out the banks rather than the borrowers. The video encourages us to see how developments that may seem specific to the United States have in fact been played out in broadly similar ways in many countries in the global North. It also encourages discussion about the best ways of responding collectively to these developments and in so doing provides an interesting complement to *New Occupy Homes Coalition...*, *Fighting for Our Homes*, and *Movement for Justice in El Barrio*. Together, videos like this highlight collective forms of mobilization against eviction and displacement that are notably absent from Matthew Desmond's recent and widely read book, *Evicted*. The only drawbacks when it comes to thinking of the video

as a candidate for a follow-up series aimed at a general audience are that all of the interviewees are speaking in Spanish, many of them speak quite quickly, and the subtitling not only has a hard time keeping up with what's being said but also, written in small, white letters, can sometimes be a bit difficult to read. The film is, however, well worth considering for use in an academic setting such as a course on global housing issues, social work, or community organizing.]

Sold Out: Affordable Housing at Risk (2017) –

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YEW4GeSjtY -- The voices of tenants and owners, advocates and elected officials raise the urgency and opportunity to address the loss of affordable housing in a new documentary. Produced by Twin Cities PBS, in partnership with local advocates and funders, "Sold Out: Affordable Housing at Risk" reveals the price we all pay when families are pushed out of our communities as modestly priced units are replaced with upscale developments. For more information, go to <https://www.mhponline.org/communications/sold-out-affordable-housing-at-risk> (57 mins.) [You Tube]

[This video examines the growing problems with access to affordable housing in the Minneapolis metro area (and by implication, around the country) by focusing on what happened to low-income residents of the Crossroads apartment complex and the surrounding neighborhood after the 700-unit set of buildings was bought by a company seeking to rent to wealthier tenants without children. By changing the eligibility conditions for renters, the company forced over 95% of the residents to leave, in most cases in a matter of weeks. This disrupted and dispersed a tight-knit, multi-generational community that included whites, African Americans, and recent immigrants of color. It also suddenly and significantly reduced the customer base for small stores that catered to the people in the complex as well as attendance at the local church and the local elementary school, which had invested heavily in catering to its multi-national, multi-lingual student population. The filmmakers interview not only ex-residents of the Crossroads and local housing activists but also local politicians and property developers (some of whom are gratingly complacent and myopic about the causes and consequences of the displacement process). Towards the end, they also identify various attempts to challenge what happened, including organizing efforts by ex-tenants and supporters and a resulting class-action lawsuit accusing the developers of contravening the terms of the Fair Housing Act. Overall, the video provides a good example of processes that are horribly familiar around the country and it allows for interesting comparisons between what's happened to residents of the Crossroads and Penn Plaza. However, it doesn't do much to address the structural factors shaping these processes, it doesn't say enough about the organizing efforts and other possible responses, and its tone and content seem better suited to educating well-meaning middle-class viewers than to resonating with the people directly affected by the kinds of displacement it describes.]

Spanish Lake: Political and Economic Oppression in Missouri (2014) – A bold and uncompromising documentary focused on economic oppression in the suburb of Spanish Lake, Missouri. Operating without a local government, the lack of community leadership has disastrous effects, including a mass exodus of the white population in the late 1990's. The themes of the film parallel America's growing political divide, underlying racism, and rise of anti-government sentiment. Highlighted in the film is a landmark U.S. Supreme Court case from 1971, spearheaded by then HUD Secretary George Romney, which changed the course of public housing for the nation. (79 mins., dir, Phillip Andrew Morton) [Pitt Library -- streaming]

[I don't think the description above really captures the content or tone of the video. It's made by a young white man who grew up in Spanish Lake (in the northeast corner of St. Louis county, Missouri), moved to LA, and then returned to interview people about what's happened to this unincorporated and once almost entirely white, lower-middle-class area since the early to mid-70s. In those years, the destruction of the famous Pruitt-Igoe public housing complex on the near north side of St. Louis and of other public housing complexes in the city, plus the federal government's introduction of Section 8 vouchers, and steering and blockbusting by local realtors helped initiate an increasing influx of African Americans, many of whom were quite impoverished, and, especially from the early 1990s onwards, rapidly accelerating white flight. Despite the fact that the area's population was by 2013 at least 85% African-American, the director tells the story very largely from the perspective of white residents and especially white ex-residents, some of whom had begun holding an annual picnic in the area to re-connect with one another, celebrate the lifestyle they remember, mourn what they feel they've lost, and/or critique what has happened since their families moved out. Some of the white residents who have stayed seem to have tried to build solidarities with African American residents, at least with those who have "middle-class" lifestyles like their own, and many of the white residents and ex-residents are emphatic that they're not racists. However, some of them do express an offensive mix of racial insensitivity and self-affirming ignorance and almost no-one interviewed (including Jacqueline Leavitt, a Professor of Urban and Regional Planning at UCLA) seems to understand the ways in which the interplay of structural racism and class-based exploitation has shaped developments in the country, the St. Louis area, and Spanish Lake in particular. This lack of understanding unfortunately extends to the director so the film is particularly poor at providing any kind of critical contextualization. Moreover, with stunning insensitivity, the video begins by graphically representing areas of African-American settlement in the 1950s and '60s as black ink spots on an otherwise white map and then portrays the spread of African Americans towards ex-urban locations such as Spanish Lake as the spilling of ink across this map until whole areas are engulfed in blackness. The film is interesting as one piece in a jigsaw puzzle of St. Louis county that also includes the Pruitt-Igoe story, captured in a much more nuanced way by the 2011 documentary, *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth*, and, of course, the story of Ferguson, which is just to the southwest of Spanish Lake. It may also serve as a useful window into white myopia and the ways this can be reinforced by concerns about property values stoked by manipulative realtors

and developers. However, given all the myopia and offensiveness, including the film's own, I don't recommend showing it in a public setting.]

***Streets of Dreams: Development without Displacement in Communities of Color (2013)** -- Inspiring portraits of grassroots activists in communities of color who are using a community land trust (CLT) to preserve affordable housing and promote development without the displacement of longtime residents. By combining community ownership of land with individual ownership of homes, the CLT gives communities a powerful way to shape and secure their future, while opening the door to affordable homeownership for low-income residents. [16 mins.; dir. Mark Lipman] [Pitt Library – streaming]

[This is an effective overview of efforts to use Community Land Trusts as a way of addressing the pursuit of housing that low-income African Americans and others can really afford. It looks at current or very recent efforts in several parts of the country and packs a lot into sixteen minutes. It might be interesting to show it in conjunction with another film such as *Holding Ground* or several other short videos in a session on possible solutions that have a strong collective dimension.]

#The Hill: A Story of New Haven, Connecticut (2013) -- <http://www.thehillfilm.com> -- Set upon building a new school, the city of New Haven claims eminent domain over the Upper Hill neighborhood. While the city argues the building of the new school corresponds to a need for better school facilities, the residents of the area, mostly struggling low-income African-American families, say the decision corresponds to the city's determination to sanitize the neighborhood in the proximity of the Yale-New Haven Hospital. Together with the help of community leaders and a civil rights lawyer, the unlikely group of neighbors decides to contest the city's claim and take the case to federal court. *The Hill* is a fascinating look at the complex issues surrounding urban planning, gentrification and economic renewal. [60 mins.; dir. Lisa Molomot] [Carnegie Library]

[This is the first film on urban redevelopment that I watched this summer and it left a good enough impression for me to want to look at it again as a candidate for showing in any series we offer. Even though I wish it were about Pittsburgh's Hill District, I think it has local resonance because of its attention to the ways low-income African Americans are affected by plans for university expansion and the backing these receive from city authorities and private developers. It's relatively short, the developments it portrays are fairly recent, and it highlights concerted efforts by community leaders to push back against the city's plans while also raising interesting questions about the merits of legal action as a way of addressing political conflicts.]

#The Pruitt-Igoe Myth (2011) -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1788461/> [accessed on 6.16.18 on You Tube, though I don't know how long it will be there -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKgZM8y3hso>]-- Destroyed in a dramatic and highly-publicized implosion, the Pruitt-Igoe public housing complex has become a

widespread symbol of failure amongst architects, politicians and policy makers. The Pruitt-Igoe Myth explores the social, economic and legislative issues that led to the decline of conventional public housing in America, and the city centers in which they resided, while tracing the personal and poignant narratives of several of the project's residents. In the post-War years, the American city changed in ways that made it unrecognizable from a generation earlier, privileging some and leaving others in its wake. The next time the city changes, remember Pruitt-Igoe. [79 mins.; dir. Chad Freidrichs]

[I think this provides some excellent insight into U.S. housing policies from the 1930s to the 1970s and their implications for residents of public housing. It uses a focus on a notorious set of projects in St. Louis to tell a powerful story about the fate of public housing in the U.S., the way its viability was actively undermined by wealthy opponents and the racially unequal impacts of deindustrialization, and the subsequent development of a mythology that uses the resulting problems to demonize both the kinds of people who lived there and the whole idea of public housing and other state efforts to mitigate structural violence. I particularly liked the way it draws on the investigative reporting of an African-American journalist who grew up in these projects and on extended interviews with several African-American ex-residents, while setting these in the context of major shifts in national and local housing policies between the 1930s and the 1970s. In these regards, it makes for interesting comparison with the shorter, Latino-oriented *Chavez Ravine*, with *Land of Opportunity*, and with *Chocolate City*. My only reservations concerning its suitability for a lead-in series for the summit are that it's too focused on a past phase in the struggles over housing in the U.S. to address our most pressing needs regarding the present and that it may be a bit too long for people with lots of demands on their time, especially given that we want to follow our screenings with extended discussion. However, it might be a good candidate for any follow-up series.]

***#Third Ward TX (2007)** -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0999915/> -- The left-for-dead Third Ward neighborhood in Houston's inner-city stirs to new life when a group of African-American artists found Project Row Houses. A step ahead of city demolition crews, they clean up around a row of condemned shotgun houses and do a "Drive-by" exhibit. Eventually, they purchase 22 houses on two blocks for a song. Then they do something really unusual. They ask the community what it needs-and listen to the answers. Third Ward TX explores how this tidy little row of born-again houses, glowing in the Texas sun, has become home to cutting-edge public art and a home-grown challenge to traditional notions of community development. By 2006, big development moves in, threatening to destroy the very qualities that make the neighborhood so vital. The bold and creative response of Project Row Houses is a gambit that just might work. [56 mins.; dir. Andrew Garrison] [Pitt – Stark Media Services]

[I like the fact that this film looks at efforts to produce constructive, collectively developed solutions to the problems of a poor neighborhood dealing first with neglect

and then with the threat of profit-driven redevelopment. Moreover, it's focused on African Americans and it's relatively short. In all these respects, it's similar to *The Hill*, but I don't think it works quite as well for our purposes. My main reservation is that the model the artists offer could only work elsewhere as one part of a broader set of community responses and the film doesn't really examine what these should involve or how art projects can be made integral to them.]

Whose Barrio?: The Gentrification of Spanish Harlem (2009) – Residents, elected officials and activists clash over gentrification of a Latino New York neighborhood. Author and journalist Ed Morales introduces the conflict between real estate developers and residents of East Harlem who feel they are being priced out of the neighborhood that is their spiritual and cultural home. He explains his personal connection with the neighborhood and introduces two residents, Jose Rivera and James Garcia, who have opposing views of the changes coming to the neighborhood. (50 mins., dir. Ed Morales, Laura Rivera) [Pitt Library -- streaming]

[This relatively short feature-length video deals with gentrification and redevelopment in a neighborhood on the upper east side of Manhattan that had a largely Italian and Jewish population until the 1940s and then, in the ensuing decades, became a home for growing numbers of working-class people from Puerto Rico. By 2009, the predominantly Puerto Rican area, known locally as El Barrio, also included Dominicans, African Americans, and a growing number of migrants from Mexico but the main change taking place was the rapid spread of upscale development, gentrification, and the related arrival of much wealthier residents, many of them white. The video starts by contrasting the views of Rivera, a long-time resident who values the area's strong sense of community, and Garcia, a wealthy new arrival who sees his condominium primarily as an investment whose value is threatened by the public-housing project across the street and what he calls crime, drugs, and dirt in the area. However, it moves on to include a much wider range of views and forms of engagement, from the confrontational activism of Movement for Justice in El Barrio, though the more accommodationist stance of Hope Community Inc., to the willing compromises being made by local councilmember Melissa Mark-Viverito, a close ally of Bill de Blasio who claims to be part of the 99% and to be fighting for it but who is in fact a multi-millionaire landlord known for her willingness to work with big developers. In the process, the video gives a fair amount of attention to the fact that the "affordable housing" touted by developers isn't anywhere near being affordable to most local residents given the familiar use of city-wide income levels rather than neighborhood ones to calculate affordability. Many of these residents fear being forced to moved far away to find housing they really can afford or see this happening to their neighbors and friends. They also worry about the kinds of displacement that can happen when people stay in their neighborhood but lose long-held political and cultural influence over what happens there. The video clearly links to the many others dealing with housing issues in New York, especially Rezoning Harlem, Movement for Justice in El Barrio, and Class Divide. There is even a brief reference to the way the Atlantic Yards project described in Brooklyn Matters led to growing

pressure on neighborhoods like El Barrio by the raising the cost of housing throughout New York City and pushing poorer Brooklyn residents to look for new places to live. The film is useful as a reminder that the racial politics of housing in the U.S., including those in Pittsburgh, are not reducible to black-white relations and its focus may resonate with some Latinos living here though the processes it portrays have more in common with what's happened and is happening to African-American neighborhoods in Pittsburgh than with the challenges faced by the city's small but growing population of working-class Latino (im)migrants.]

FEATURE-LENGTH FICTIONAL FILMS (many based on real events)

#99 Homes (2014) -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2891174/> -- A recently unemployed single father struggles to get back his foreclosed home by working for the real estate broker who is the source of his frustration. (Fiction.) [112 mins.; Ramin Bahrani] [Carnegie Library]

[This is the best fiction film I've seen on the ways the financial crisis that exploded in 2008 has affected people's access to housing and jobs. It's better in this regard than the overly slick *The Big Short* and better than *Margin Call*, which is good but focuses almost entirely on the inside workings of a thinly disguised version of Lehmann brothers in the immediate lead-up to the firm's collapse. It may also be more effective than the documentary, *Inside Job*, at making the nastiness and the social costs vivid and emotionally compelling. It brings to a wider audience much of the sensitivity to the concerns of marginalized members of the working-class that Bahrani displayed in two earlier independent movies, *Chop Shop* and *Man Push Cart*. However, there are several aspects of the film that may limit its value for our purposes, especially given our desire to involve people facing dire housing problems in Pittsburgh, most of whom are African-American or Latino. It looks mainly at realtors trying to make quick profits from the sudden proliferation of foreclosures, pushes the role of the big banks and development companies into the background, and largely ignores the experiences of impoverished African Americans and Latinos. All the film's central characters are white.]

***Blindspotting (2018, 95 mins.)** -- Collin (Daveed Diggs) must make it through his final three days of probation for a chance at a new beginning. He and his troublemaking childhood best friend, Miles (Rafael Casal), work as movers and are forced to watch their old neighborhood become a trendy spot in the rapidly gentrifying Bay Area. When a life-altering event causes Collin to miss his mandatory curfew, the two men struggle to maintain their friendship as the changing social landscape exposes their differences. Lifelong friends Daveed Diggs and Rafael Casal co-wrote and star in this timely and wildly entertaining story about friendship and the intersection of race and class set against the backdrop of Oakland. Bursting with energy, style and humor, *Blindspotting*, boldly directed by Carlos López Estrada in his feature film debut, is a provocative hometown love letter that glistens with humanity.

[This is a powerful film that, as the summary suggests, explores the intersection of race and class as two young men, one black, one white, confront the gentrification of the Oakland, California neighborhood in which they grew up. It also movingly highlights the vulnerability of a young black man to hyper-policing and potential violence, and the ways his experiences differ not only from those of the white gentrifiers moving into their neighborhoods but also from those of the white, working-class friend with whom he grew up. And it shows the two men working to frame their experiences in part by improvising raps together. It's thus a very interesting complement to *Sorry to Bother You* and to the earlier film, *Fruitvale Station*, which also focus on the experiences of young black men dealing with the multiple challenges of daily life in Oakland amidst growing class polarization and accelerating displacement, sometimes geographical but also cultural and political. My only criticism is that, although the women in the film are represented as tough and strong, they're all secondary and less complexly developed characters. The film apparently played briefly in Pittsburgh in late July. I think it would be great if we could get a local theater to bring it back in the week or two before the Housing summit, ideally a theater easily accessible to the wide range of groups likely to be interested in the film.]

Cathy Come Home (1966) – <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0059020/> -- A 1966 BBC television play about homelessness, it tells the story of a young couple, Cathy and Reg. Initially their relationship flourishes; they have a child and move into a modern home. When Reg is injured and loses his job, they are evicted by bailiffs, and they face a life of poverty and unemployment, illegally squatting in empty houses and staying in shelters for the homeless. Finally, Cathy has her children taken away by social services. A 1998 *Radio Times* readers' poll voted it the "best single television drama" and a 2000 industry poll rated it as the second best British television program ever made. [75 mins.; dir. Ken Loach] [You Tube.]

[This is a brilliant example of activism via the use of social realism as a form that thinly fictionalizes real experiences and makes the audience feel immersed in the midst of people's everyday experiences as they're actually lived, not as commercial C and the film industry commonly portray them. Shown during prime time on one of the two C channels available in Britain at the time, it was seen by a large number of people and had a profound impact on the public debate about affordable housing and employment though, sadly, rather less impact than many hoped on the law and government policies. It's too old and the world it portrays is too unfamiliar to many U.S. viewers to warrant showing it in connection with the summit but it's still worth watching for anyone interested in the underside of the so-called "swinging sixties" in Britain and/or in the use of the visual arts to address urgent social issues. It's generally available on YouTube.]

Little Men (2016)-- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt4919484/> -- A new pair of best friends have their bond tested by their parents' battle over a dress shop lease. (Fiction – in context of gentrification in NYC) [85 mins.; dir. Ira Sachs]

[I was quite disappointed in it as a film in itself and as an exploration of gentrification, especially in the light of the gushing reviews it's received and the claims in some of these reviews that it provides a powerful critique of housing issues in the U.S. today. It doesn't.]

Margin Call (2011) -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1615147/> -- A respected financial company is downsizing and one of the victims is the risk management division head, who was working on a major analysis just when he was let go. His protégé completes the study late into the night and then frantically calls his colleagues in about the company's financial disaster he has discovered. What follows is a long night of panicked double checking and double dealing as the senior management prepare to do whatever it takes to mitigate the debacle to come even as the handful of conscientious comrades find themselves dragged along into the unethical abyss. [107 mins., J.C. Chandor]

[This is a well-made drama about of the collapse of a slightly fictionalized version of Lehman Brothers that leads the audience through the various tiers of the company from the bottom to the top. In the process, it provides some interesting insight into social and cultural dynamics of Wall Street and into how they helped bring about the second largest crisis in capitalism after the Great Depression. However, the film doesn't focus enough on what Wall Street's pursuit of profit meant for ordinary people's jobs and housing to be worth showing in connection with the summit.]

The Big Short (2015) -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1596363/> -- Based on the book by Michael Lewis (author of *Moneyball*, *Liar's Poker* and *Flash Boys*, among others), the true story of a handful of investors who bet against the US mortgage market in 2006-7. Through their own research they discovered that the US mortgage backed securities market was a bubble about to burst, and they invested accordingly. What they didn't initially know was how structurally flawed the MBS system was, the level of corruption in the market...and the impact on the average person when the bubble burst. [130 mins.; Adam McKay.]

[An interesting attempt to illuminate the overlapping worlds of finance explored by *Inside Job*, *Margin Call*, and *99 Homes* through the use of dark humor. In my view, though, it's a bit too slick for its own good. I also found it difficult to distinguish between the misogyny of the world the film was trying to portray and the attitude of the filmmakers themselves.]

YOU TUBE VIDEOS -- short videos

If a long-form documentary or feature-length fiction film is available on YouTube, I've indicated that in the entry for it.

***#A Matter of Place (2013, 28 mins.)** -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkYfa5IX-nU> -- The Fair Housing Justice Center has partnered with Kavanagh Productions to produce the film "A Matter of Place", a documentary film that shines a bright light on

housing discrimination, one of the most shrouded and misunderstood civil rights issues in America. The film connects past struggles for fair housing to contemporary incidents of housing bias based on race, sexual orientation, disability, and source of income, and presents three stories of people who faced housing discrimination in present-day New York City. They poignantly describe the injuries inflicted on them during these incidents, as well as their resolve to fight for justice. Through experts, civil rights advocates, and fair housing testers, the film also recounts our nation's often overlooked history of residential segregation and introduces viewers to systemic and pervasive injustices that, despite the existence of fair housing laws, continue to inflict harm on entire communities and individuals throughout America.

[This is a straightforward, half-hour account that does exactly what the description suggests. There's no real drama or suspense and the video tends to gloss over the time and effort involved in filing and following through on lawsuits on behalf of people who have suffered housing discrimination. It also focuses, like so many housing documentaries, on the situation in the New York area, which is where the Fair Housing Justice Center operates. However, both the information about the history of housing policy in the United States and the information on people's current rights regarding housing may well be of interest to people who want to learn more about the issues. It could be pared with another short piece, for example about community land trusts, to give people a sense of a variety of ways of responding to exploitative and discriminatory housing practices.]

***#Desperate Households (2008)** -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eo0rYhI0swU> -- This year, millions of homes in the US will be repossessed. Wall Street was aware of the risks involved with sub-prime lending but chose to ignore them. No ethics, just money-- here is a story of greed and recklessness. In California, the sub-prime crisis has hit homeowners full on. Repossessions have become routine and the foreclosure rate is still accelerating. Neat façades and tidy gardens can't prevent houses being sold for almost half of what they cost a year ago. Pressed for time and money, owners are torn out of their homes: "It's like leaving your children" says Rob. He is hoping the bank will accept a quick sale and forgive the loss, but this is unlikely. Most are made to wait until they default on repayment, which wrecks their credit record. Former bankers reveal how low interest rates were meant to boost the economy. Banks looked for ways to make profit despite low rates and chased high-risk mortgages that would pay 8 or 9%, ignoring the consequences for borrowers if prices fell and interest rates rose again: "There's no perception of the guy in some tiny little house in Detroit or in Philadelphia or in Stockton who basically might be losing their home. "Now that the system has failed, banks are less ready to lend money and this impacts on the entire economy. Families lose their homes, businesses fail; Wall Street gambled and the world has to pay. [24 mins.] [Journeyman Films]

[This is a very good Australian account of the foreclosure crisis in the U.S., the role of the big banks in creating it, and the devastating effects on people faced with losing their

homes. It visits Stockton, California, the city that in 2008 was suffering the highest foreclosure rates in the U.S. It goes to New York to find out about why the crisis arose and the contribution of the big banks. And it goes briefly to Sacramento to indicate how the housing crisis undermines government income and thus its capacity to provide public services. It is a very good alternative to *Inside Job* because it focuses primarily on the foreclosure part of the broader financial crisis (with a brief allusion to the student-debt crisis), it pays more attention to the experiences of people facing foreclosure, and it's a lot shorter. It complements *For Sale* (it's difficult to decide which is more effective) and it would combine nicely with *How Class Works* as well as videos about collective responses such as *New Occupy Homes Coalition...* or *Fighting for our Homes*. A minor drawback is that it was made at a very early stage in the crisis so it's not fully up to date.]

***#Fighting For Our Homes (2009)** -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJGTuqciTGo> --

The housing crisis is not just a problem for families facing foreclosure it is a problem for every homeowner in America. As long as foreclosures persist, home values will keep going down, and everyone loses. We are collecting stories from people all over the country who have been hit by the housing crisis so we can show what is really happening on Main Street and we need your help. Have you been affected by the housing meltdown? Foreclosed on? Underwater? Trapped in a predatory loan? Do you know anyone else whose life has been turned upside down by the collapse of the real estate market? Record your story, or the story of a friend, family member, co-worker, or neighbor, and send it to us. [6 mins.] [Don't go to the website highlighted in the video. It doesn't have anything to do with the efforts described above.]

[This is a good short introduction to collective efforts to prevent foreclosures, focused on Latinos from Pacoima, in LA's San Fernando Valley, and broader efforts across the LA area. It emphasizes that the government bailout helped the big banks but not the people who had been victimized by the high-pressure and sometimes fraudulent marketing of sub-prime, adjustable-rate mortgages. It also suggests that it's much better to combat these problems collectively than on one's own. It would add a more constructive side to the powerful stories told in *How Class Works* and *For Sale*. However, because it's so short, it doesn't provide any detail about what the collective efforts it describes are actually doing. In this regard, *New Occupy Homes Coalition...* may be better.]

***For Sale: The American Dream (2012)** --

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3rzN42HE00> -- The US' housing bubble burst nearly six years ago, but the worst may be yet to come. After a landmark settlement, the major banks have lifted a freeze on foreclosures and government relief has been too small to make a difference. Public housing budgets have been slashed, leaving larger numbers of people with no place to call home. The line between home ownership and homelessness is growing ever more blurry, but neither President Barack Obama nor Governor Mitt Romney have made housing a major campaign issue. Meanwhile,

popular anger is rising over the perceived impunity of the banks and some have found innovative ways of fighting back in an age of austerity. Fault Lines travels to Chicago and California to see how people at the frontlines of the crisis are confronting the collapse of the American dream. [25 mins.]

[I think this is a very good introduction to the foreclosure crisis in the U.S. as it has intensified since 2008 and the reasons behind the crisis. It covers a lot of the issues addressed in a fictional way by *99 Homes* and does so much more briefly, with the added punch of documentary realism. It uses comments by the famous radical geographer, David Harvey, to set the U.S. crisis in a global context and to help explain how it came about but his insights are delivered more briefly than in the YouTube video, *Slums and Skyscrapers*, and also more accessibly, partly because of the primary emphasis on the experiences of people directly involved in the foreclosure process and the consequent displacements. If we wanted to have a session on the foreclosure crisis in the lead-up to the summit, I think this could be combined quite effectively with the short Richard Wolff YouTube video, *How Class Works*, which uses foreclosure and the broader crisis of genuinely affordable housing to illustrate its very accessible introduction to capitalist class dynamics, and with either *New Occupy Homes Coalition... or Fighting for our Homes*.]

***#Gentrification and What Can Be Done to Stop It (2014) --**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMz1x5_yF2Q -- Loretta Lees, a Professor of Human Geography at the University of Leicester, tells us that 2014 is the 50th anniversary of the term 'gentrification'. Referring to newly labeled Midtown London (aka Holborn), with its influx of swanky hotels and new apartments, she asks: 'Where do the people who get replaced go?' She believes there are better creative and people-led solutions – self builds, co-ops, community and trusts -- all of which would help keep housing affordable in mixed income communities. Loretta Lees was part of a team that recently launched the Anti-Gentrification Toolkit for Council Tenants in London and is co-organizer of the Urban Salon: a London forum for architecture, cities and international urbanism (www.theurbansalon.org). She is also the co-author of *Planetary Gentrification* (2016) and the co-editor of *Global Gentrifications* (2015). [19 mins.]

[I don't think the presentation is electrifying but Lees is one of the most prominent scholars of gentrification in the world and what she says is valuable in a number of ways. She begins by providing an overview of gentrification, talks briefly about it as something that's being globalized, and offers a useful way of distinguishing key variants. She highlights the role of big money in most gentrification processes, critiques the move from public housing to "mixed-income" developments, tracks briefly the dispersal of people displaced by such developments, and, perhaps most importantly, goes beyond lamenting the harm that gentrification often does to explore or at least list some creative alternatives. Moreover, although she focuses on gentrification in London and some of what she says may seem obscure to people unfamiliar with the city, her emphasis on the fate of "council estates" is simply a British way of talking about the fate

of public housing and most of what she says about alternatives such as the refurbishment of public housing, Community Land Trusts, cooperatives, and community housing associations is relevant well-beyond the London context. In relation to the summit, it may be worth noting that one of our guest speakers, Ernesto Lopez-Morales, is a co-author with Lees and Hyun Bang Shin of the recent book, *Planetary Gentrification* and a co-editor with them of the recent collection, *Global Gentrifications*.]

Gentrification: The Atlanta Way (2015) --

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1M0dH8iuet8> -- Is it ever okay to cut off your finger to save your hand? In this talk about gentrification, filmmaker King Williams shares the story of gentrification in Atlanta and the challenges that arose due to the decisions that were made. King Williams is both a New York City and Atlanta based filmmaker, who from 2011-2012 interned under the tutelage of director Spike Lee. Williams is currently working on 3 separate projects: his debut film, 'The Atlanta Way' due this summer, his film blog 'Free Film University', and a debut novel to be released in fall of 2015. With a passion for community engagement, Williams also splits his time to support the non-profit My Birthday Fundraiser in NYC and his father's business Edwin Williams Music focusing on Jazz appreciation. [12 mins.]

[This is a very accessible Tedx talk delivered to students at Georgia State University. However, in my view, Williams' efforts to make things intelligible lead him not just to simplify too much but also to significantly distort some key issues. I think he addresses the struggles over gentrification and displacement in Atlanta more effectively in the rough cut of The Atlanta Way, also on You Tube.]

***How Class Works (2011) --** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGOA2WedlQo> --

Richard Wolff is an economist who has studied class issues for more than 40 years. In this animation and audio presentation, he explains what class is all about and applies that understanding to the foreclosure crisis of 2007--2011. He argues that class concerns the "way our society splits up the output [and] leaves those who get the profits in the position of deciding and figuring out what to do with them... We all live with the results of what a really tiny minority in our society decides to do with the profits everybody produces." As you watch and listen, consider how investment decisions in neighborhoods, over transportation, school facilities, parks, location of grocery stores, quality of affordable housing, etc. are influenced by powerful interests and how they affect the quality of life for large segments of the population. This video was produced by the National Association of County and City Public Health Officials (NACCHO) as a part of the Roots of Health Inequality Project -- <http://www.rootsofhealthinequity.org/>. [13 mins.]

[Richard Wolff, one of the world's best known radical economists, presents his ideas about capitalist class relations and the foreclosure crisis along with an animation illustrating what he's saying. He devotes the first four minutes to a simplified and very accessible account of how radicals understand capitalist class processes and relations,

especially as they operate in the United States. He then devotes the remainder of the video to illustrating his argument by reference to the housing bubble and what happened when it burst. In my view, this is a very effective introduction to the reasons behind the foreclosure crisis and a pretty good introduction to what radicals mean by critical class analysis. It's a lot shorter and more critical than *Inside Job* and a lot less technical than *Slums and Skyscrapers*. It could be combined effectively with a short report on foreclosures and evictions, either *For Sale* or *Desperate Households*, and with a short video on collective challenges to these processes, perhaps *New Occupy Homes Coalition...or Fighting for our Homes*. The only drawback is that it focuses solely on the workings of capitalism in the United States, failing to provide the global perspective offered by David Harvey in *Slums and Skyscrapers*.]

#Million Dollar Shack: Trapped in Silicon Valley's Housing Bubble (2015) --

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBjXUBMkkE8> -- Our family has been priced out! Has the Bay Area gone crazy? Real estate prices have doubled in the last few years, a tent in the backyard can rent for \$900/month, foreign investors are driving up prices, evictions and rent hikes are everywhere, people are commuting longer than ever, the middle class is disappearing, empty investment homes are everywhere, and locals are leaving in record numbers. The worst part? Some people are calling it "progress". [23 mins.; dirs.: Michelle Joyce & Steve Fyffe]

[Probably not something we want to show in any lead-in series for the Housing Summit but it is a good way of making clear that the current housing crisis in the United States is tied to the development of global speculation in real estate and that it negatively affects not only minoritized low-income populations but also, and increasingly, white members of the so-called "middle class." I worked for most of the 1980s with low-income Latino immigrants in the area on which the video focuses and have continued to track what's been happening to them since I moved away. I can attest to the enormous problems regarding housing and displacement they have face as a result of successive waves of urban redevelopment and high-tech gentrification. I wonder whether this might be worth considering for a follow-up series.]

***#Movement for Justice in El Barrio: Fighting Gentrification (2010?) -- Part I --**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtoT8jA4pW8>; **Part II --**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= EUfnETnulg> -- Movement for Justice in El Barrio, inspired by the Zapatistas and adherents of The Other Campaign, have had incredible success fighting gentrification in East Harlem as the rest of New York falls prey to property developers and corrupt politicians. Here's how they did it. [17 mins. in total]

[This two-part video focuses on a radical movement that, since 2004, has been struggling against wealthy property companies operating in East Harlem and the local politicians who support them. Drawing on the example of the Zapatistas in Mexico, it emphasizes participatory democracy from below through tenants' councils and community meetings to challenge landlords who fail maintain their rental properties

and then seek to raise rents and evict working-class tenants, contributing to the broad processes of gentrification and displacement affecting Latino immigrants and other low-income residents in the neighborhood. Partly in response to the fact that several of the property companies operate in a variety of cities and countries and partly in recognition of the many countries represented among the working class in East Harlem, the movement has developed national and transnational ties, linking its efforts to the struggles of other groups around the world that are trying to help people obtain genuinely affordable housing in the communities where they live. It also argues that the ultimate source of the global housing crisis is not bad landlords and malleable politicians but neoliberal capitalism as a system. The video thus offers an interesting provocation to discuss and debate about the relationship between bottom-up and top-down organizing strategies and between ones that focused solely on local conditions and others that seek to identify global developments and build transnational connections. My main reservations about showing it in connection with the Housing Summit are that the video quality is serviceable but not great, the piece consists almost entirely of one activist explaining what the movement is about as he tours the neighborhood, the explanations of the movements' successes are, given the brevity of the video, quite truncated, and some people – however regrettably – might be put off by the fact that the activist speaks solely in subtitled Spanish.]

My Cure for the Common City: Eve Picker at TEDxCMU (2013, 14 mins.) --

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXNt3_uYOOA -- Eve Picker's world is wrapped around cities and change. Her background as an architect, city planner, urban designer, real estate developer, community development strategist, publisher and instigator gives her a rich understanding of how cities work, how urban neighborhoods can be revitalized, what policies are needed to do it, and the unique marketing that creates the buzz needed for regeneration. With cityLAB, her first non-profit venture, Eve is turning her passion for cities to broader, city-wide revitalization issues.

[This TedTalk given at CMU in 2013 contrasts costly top-down urban development projects often favored by city officials with relatively inexpensive bottom-up projects and illustrates the argument with examples from Pittsburgh, specifically the Consol Energy Center, now the PPG Paints Arena, in the lower Hill vs. the Waffle Shop and Conflict Kitchen when they were in East Liberty and the Toonseum downtown. Picker suggests that the subsidized cost per visitor to the Consol Energy Center over the course of its likely life is about four times the cost per visitor to the Waffle Shop and more than ten times the cost per visitor to Conflict Kitchen and the Toonseum. She also argues that these bottom up projects help generate a lot of related small-scale development around them. The argument and the numbers supporting it are striking but I was bothered by Picker's apparent indifference to the race and class politics of all four projects. She describes both the Hill and East Liberty as "blighted" areas (without discussing their race and class make up) and doesn't address the fact that both the Waffle Shop and Conflict Kitchen were, for all their merits, parachuted in to East Liberty by relatively privileged outsiders rather than developed organically from the interests of

the area's existing residents. She is dismissive of the surrounding small businesses (without mentioning that many of them were black-owned and increasingly imperiled by the redevelopment process) and she seems to suggest that both projects brought "better" kinds of people to the neighborhood. As with the additional examples she includes briefly at the end from Pittsburgh and other parts of the world, she doesn't address their relationship to gentrification and displacement and, in fact, seems indirectly to be promoting the former if not the latter. I saw only one apparently black body in the photos illustrating bottom-up urbanism that she showed in the concluding four minutes of her video. In addition, despite her seemingly strong preference for bottom-up projects over top-down ones, she concludes at one point that what most cities need is a combination of the two, without any consideration of the ways in which the often massive public subsidies given to top-down developments could be used much more effectively to address the inequities behind what she calls "blight."]

[Postscript: I recently discovered that someone called Eve Picker is described in local media either as owning the company that manages the building in East Liberty in which The Waffle Shop and Conflict Kitchen rented space or as owning the building itself. If the speaker is also the owner of the property or the company that manages it, I think she should have mentioned this during the talk. It's also worth noting that "Eve Picker" was listed as the "landlord" when the black-owned Shadow Lounge and AVA Bar and Lounge left the building prior to The Waffle Shop and Conflict Kitchen moving in and during their subsequent replacement by The Livermore and, now, a new bar, both of which are, as far as I know, white-owned. "Eve Picker" also seems to have been the owner the property or the company that manages it during the recent incident in which a sign on top of the building reading "There are Black People in the Future" was removed, only to be restored a few days later after significant public protest.]

Narvik: The Small Norwegian Town Struggling to Cope After the Global Financial Crisis (2008) -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqtB4nvgpcs> -- In the sleepy town of Narvik, the global economic meltdown has caused havoc. Finding itself caught in a spiral of deceit and debt, people are considering leaving town as public services struggle to stay open. There seems to be no place, however small, that hasn't been affected by the downturn in the US economy. This small seaport town of Narvik is home to only 14,000 people but it has become another victim of high-risk sub prime mortgage lending. The local council agreed to this loan lemon that was sold to them by an Oslo based brokerage company, which is owned by 78 different banks including Citigroup. According to the local political opponent to the mayor the town has lost at least 200 million Norwegian krone (approx \$35million) and public services such as schools and nursing homes are facing closure. [13 mins.] [Journeyman TV]

[This short video, made for Australian TV, gives a sense of how the big global banks' efforts to sell increasingly risky loans, their seemingly deceptive marketing practices, and the resulting financial crisis led to significant harm even in a remote town in Norway. It's an interesting way of getting a handle on the global reach of the crisis and

the activities that produced it though I don't think it's worth considering for any lead-in or follow-up series for the Housing Summit.]

***#New Occupy Homes Coalition Links Homeowners, Activists in Direct Action to Halt Foreclosures (2011)** -- A loose-knit coalition of activists known as the "Occupy Homes" are working to stave off pending evictions by occupying homes at risk of foreclosure when tenants enlist their support. The movement has recently enjoyed a number of successes. Democracy Now! speaks with Monique White, a Minneapolis resident who is facing foreclosure and recently requested the help of Occupy Minneapolis. Now two dozen of its members are occupying her home in order to stave off eviction. Also interviewed is Nick Espinosa, an organizer with Occupy Minneapolis, and Max Rameau, a key organizer with Take Back the Land who for the past five years has worked on direct-actions that reclaim and occupy homes at risk of foreclosure. "The banks are actually occupying our homes," Rameau says. "This sets up for an incredible movement where we have a one-two punch. On the one hand, we're occupying them on their turf, and on the other, we're liberating our own turf so human beings can have access to housing — rather than them sitting vacant so that corporations can benefit from them one time in the future." [15 mins.] [Democracy Now!]

[This tells an important story about the role of the Occupy movement in one of several collective responses around the U.S. to the foreclosure crisis. It allows us to hear from African-American and Latino homeowners facing foreclosure, to learn about organizing strategies and tactics by the Take Back the Land and the Occupy Homes coalition, and to find out how the banks and police were responding as of November 2011. The Take Back the Land movement is scheduled to be a focus of discussion at the summit. The only limitation is that the video consists almost entirely of "talking-head" interviews, which some viewers might not find as effective as a visually more striking documentary format.]

***#North Side Coalition for Fair Housing (2014)** -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2AtLiGrvCcs> -- Ronell Guy describes the problems regarding access to affordable housing in Pittsburgh, especially for women, and what the Coalition is doing to address them. [5 mins.] [See also the 2015 clip with Ronell and Laura Bivins on the Coalition's Walk for Peace and its focus on the national increase in homicides of women -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjRs97MJT6k> -- 5 mins.]

***#Prisoners in Our Own Homes: Public Transit and Affordable Housing in the City of Pittsburgh (2016, 7 mins.)** -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tiDW8GFbe9c> -- The main purpose of the film is to highlight the connection between social justice and sustainability. This was accomplished by bringing to light the fundamental need for affordable housing near public transportation in the City of Pittsburgh. Pittsburghers for Public Transit (PPT), a project of the Thomas Merton Center, is a grassroots organization that advocates for mass Public Transit in the City of Pittsburgh. The organization also advocates for transit riders, drivers and supporters. PPT activists are voicing concerns

residents are being forced to move into suburban towns and no longer have good access to transit to get to work, school, or access to other basic services or needs such as grocery stores and retail shopping centers. Additionally, when residents are uprooted from their homes and face being forced into neighborhoods that may be considered “transit deserts,” this displacement can have devastating effects. The loss of transit near affordable housing can divide families and take away the social benefits of being part of community.

[This is a brief but very good overview, as of 2016, of the relationship between affordable housing issues and issues regarding access to effective public transportation in the Pittsburgh area. It focuses to some degree on the damaging effects on low-income residents of East Liberty of the combined construction of the new transit hub and the adjoining apartment buildings, none of which includes any units at an “affordable” rate. And it gives particular emphasis to the important differences between transit-oriented development and *equitable* transit-oriented development and between the city’s guidelines on these issues and its policies and practices. Contributors include Molly Nicholls, who was then the head of PPT, local activist, Mel Packer, and displaced resident, Celeste Scott. My only reservation is that, no doubt because of time constraints, the video doesn’t explore the problems regarding the way “affordability” is calculated even when developers can be pressured into including affordable housing in their plans.]

***Race and Redlining: Why Are Cities Still So Segregated?** (2018, 7 mins.) --

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5FBjyqfoLM> -- In 1968, Congress passed the Fair Housing Act that made it illegal to discriminate in housing. Gene Demby of NPR’s Code Switch explains why neighborhoods are still so segregated today.

[This short video tells a painfully familiar story, told in many other documentaries, about the history of discriminatory housing policies and practices in the United States and their continuing significance in the present. However, it tells the story in a particularly powerful and succinct way. Using Baltimore as an example, it underlines how where one lives in a society that is still deeply segregated by race and income profoundly affects one’s health, wealth, and schooling, as well as the degree and kind of policing to which one is subject. The video would work well in an event combining a series of short pieces on housing issues in the United States.]

***#Slums and Skyscrapers: Space, Housing and the City Under Neoliberalism (2015) --**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-3WcrQy8K4> -- A brief talk by David Harvey, one of the best known academic analysts of neoliberal capitalism, especially regarding its impact on real estate, housing, and urban space, and also one of the leading advocates of the right to the city. From the Dangerous Times Festival. [17-minute talk followed by 53 mins. of Q & A; 70 mins. in total]

[In my view, Harvey's 17-minute talk is an excellent starting point for thinking about the global forces that may be at play in specific local developments regarding housing, which is particularly important given the difficulty I've had locating videos that provide a global framing. I would certainly consider using it in an academic course. However, Harvey's language and perspective are more familiar to scholars working on urban issues than to most members of the general public and I've been told that his presentation could thus feel a bit alien and alienating to a general audience.]

#The Atlanta Way: Rough Cut (2011) --

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aa5n_ZivShE -- This is an early look at the 'rough' cut of the film, meaning the film is in the process of being completed and the filmmakers are deciding to share some of this footage with fans of the project. [35 mins.; dir. King Williams]

[I understand that a ninety-minute version was completed in 2015 but I haven't been able to see it yet. This "rough cut" preview is, indeed, somewhat rough but it does give some moving insights into the processes by which Atlanta was, by about 2010, on the verge of becoming the first city in the world to intentionally remove all of the public housing within the boundaries of the city and what that was meaning for local, low-income residents. It also relates recent developments to the earlier phase of displacement associated with arrival of the Olympic Games in 1996, thus encouraging comparisons with the impact of Dodgers' Stadium on *Chavez Ravine* in LA and of the Penguins on the lower Hill here in Pittsburgh. (See Carl Redwood's speech at a rally outside the Consol Center, also on YouTube.)]

***#The Hill District's Carl Redwood on May Day (2012) --**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JXao7vLEG> -- Occupy Pittsburgh and a variety of socialist, anarchist and labor activists pause during a march on May Day at the Consol Energy Center, home of the Pittsburgh Penguins. Carl Redwood, chair of the Hill District Consensus Group, talks about the interplay between public subsidies for the Center's construction, development rights on adjoining land and parking revenue together with concessions, pledges, and promises and intentions to Hill District community. He also touts the "Dollar a Car" campaign to claw back a revenue stream for community development. [10 mins.]

[Carl Redwood speaking informally to a gathering of Occupy people and others with this usual clarity and critical force about the way the Penguins' development activities in the lower Hill have raked in lots of money for the team and its related companies but repeatedly harmed the lives of local residents, reneged on promise about community benefits, and demonstrated a demeaning approach to local histories and ways of the life in their decisions about what to honor outside their stadium and how much to spend on doing so. Might go together nicely with *Chavez Ravine* and the rough cut of *The Atlanta Way*, which both deal with the impact of the publicly subsidized development of sports stadiums on low-income residents and their access to housing.]

What We Don't Understand about Gentrification (2015) --

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqogaDX48nl> -- Gentrification is a term that people throw around a lot, but it's often oversimplified as neighborhood revitalization. In an enlightening talk, urban planning scholar Stacey Sutton shows us the true costs of gentrification. Stacey Sutton teaches at Columbia University. She thinks deeply about our common misconceptions around gentrification. This talk was given on Saturday, November 1, 2014 at TEDxNewYork. [14 mins.]

***#Zombies from Wall Street (Has Wall Street Created Another Housing Crisis?) (2016) -**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7V1IMBzH2J8> -- A wind from Wall Street destroyed the once-proud neighborhoods of Cleveland, Ohio, and hope has vanished from America's former industrial heartland. But ten years on, the worst is yet to come. Since the 2007 sub-prime crisis, an exodus of families ruined by the banks has drained Cleveland's life-blood. Communities declined and family homes are now scarred by the evidence of violent crime. Like many Cleveland residents, politician Jim Rokakis felt helpless against the power of global markets: "A lot of us raised our voices and we screamed and we waved and we said there's a train wreck coming. Well the train wreck came". The city has changed beyond recognition. As Police Chief Brandon Kutz says, "We've had a lot of homicides this year, we've had a lot of people shot. We've had a lot of citizens afraid and scared. It's a serious issue". Those who remain have few choices. Homes are worthless, and long-gone owners are stalked for maintenance costs they can't afford. Resident Stephanie Benifield says, "People are dying and people are just abandoning the homes", because "they can't afford the homes and the upkeep." For Rokakis, the fight against the banks has been lost. "This was a war", he said. "We lost the war and what we're doing now... this clean-up is basically burying the dead". From Journeyman Pictures. [28 mins.]

[This is a very accessible account of how housing in low-income neighborhoods continues to be eroded a decade after the housing bubble burst by the policies of big banks and real-estate speculators, domestic and foreign, large and small, as well as by the failure of government to intervene adequately in support of local residents. It focuses on Cleveland and in so doing allows for some interesting comparisons with what's happened in Pittsburgh in the wake of deindustrialization and its uneven impacts in class, race, and gender terms. My main reservation is that, despite featuring some admirable people who have been trying to push back against the continuing waves of damage, the video's story is ultimately pretty depressing.]