

DISPLACING THE DREAM

A Report on Bay Area Newspaper Coverage of Development and Gentrification

Brought to you by the Youth Media Council



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Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth



PROLOGUE

By Gihan Perera, Miami Workers Center

For decades, our cities have been under attack. Since the 1960s, urban renewal programs have literally removed communities of color from major urban centers throughout the United States, including 1,600 black neighborhoods from San Francisco to Miami and dozens of cities in between.¹ These cities have been shaped and reshaped by cycles of government intervention and real estate speculation. Throughout these cycles, vulnerable communities have been displaced, and have fought for their right to stay.

Today, new economic policies have transformed these cycles of displacement into a more entrenched form of market-driven gentrification. While government officials and corporate speculators may not operate with the same explicit intention of wholesale dislocation as in the days of urban renewal, the policies that fuel global finance-driven development have similar impacts on these vulnerable communities.

New Orleans has lost more than 350,000 people—most of them African-American—since Hurricane Katrina.² There, almost 5,000 units of public housing units are currently slated for demolition while big developers have moved in to shape the fate of the city for the next 20 years. Corporations driving this process include the Hyatt hotel chain and the Trump real estate and finance empire.³

Similarly, San Francisco and Oakland have each lost more than 20% of their cities' black populations over the past six years.⁴ African American families and communities have been uprooted because of intentional underdevelopment, the loss of industrial jobs that have been relocated to the global south under neoliberal policies and environmental pollution.

The Globalized City

This internal displacement of low-income communities of color is the result of globalization hitting home. As available pipelines of public financing from the Federal Government to cities have dried up, public services—from welfare to subsidized housing—have been slashed from the federal budget.⁵

As a result of this domestic divestment, cities are more and more dependent on real estate taxes to raise their budgets. Developers that build on city land are essentially giving city governments the money they need to operate; the more upmarket the development, the more taxes the city can col-

lect. In this context the profits that developers reap are both monetary and political, including increased control over the policy and planning decisions that shape civic life.⁶

This privatization of local financing and political power is unprecedented. It has transformed the cyclical process of development into wide-scale privatization of public space and services. As more and more city space sells out to the highest bidder, longstanding communities—usually African-American, Latino, and Asian—which held rich social, economic, and cultural networks, are being displaced and thus, destroyed. And with that destruction, there is tremendous cost.

The Right to the City

There is a growing alliance of organizations working to uphold these communities' right to stay and participate in the cities they call home. These organizations are working on affordable housing, quality schools, accessible transportation, defense of public space from private control, and other issues that affect working class and poor residents of the global city. But for all their good work the carpet is being pulled out from under these organizations as their members and therefore their power is displaced and scattered. Even before communities are displaced the threat of being forced out weakens the ability of organizers to push the grassroots to build power and fight for practical needs.

There is a growing alliance of organizations working to uphold these communities' right to stay and participate in the cities they call home.

Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth



communities are portrayed as crime-ridden, toxic, run-down, and blighted—ghettos where no one would choose to stay.

Within this “common sense” framework gentrification and displacement are welcomed as a natural solution to poverty and the harmful consequences of market forces that they truly remain hidden. The idea that people move only because they want to escape, and that the influx of moneyed newcomers is a natural benefit to these neighborhoods, is an oversimplified and false belief that denies residents their right and the resources to develop their own communities.

Organizers are faced with questions like ‘why would we fix the school if our kids aren’t going to go there?’ This response from community members is understandable and very material, very on the ground.

Organizations are also faced with fighting the “common sense” created by corporate owned mainstream media, right wing think tanks, and a mainstream culture created by those in power to maintain the drive for profit over people. This “common sense” holds that working class and poor neighborhoods, particularly when populated by people of color, have little value. These

Organizations working to establish and defend the right to the city for low-income communities need to increase the visibility, value and importance of historic existing neighborhoods. This was our starting point in Miami, and it has led to sharpened public debate on this issue, as well as concrete victories in affordable housing creation.

By making historic neighborhoods visible in media coverage, we can replace the common sense of “here is a valueless neighborhood, let’s gentrify it” with the common sense that these communities are places of value and worth

beyond land prices. We can also begin to tell broader stories about displacement and development trends in an entire region, like Miami Dade County or the Bay Area. An expanded public dialogue also creates space to explore new concepts like municipal citizenship, a local definition of citizenship that secures the rights of all residents to fully participate in the political decisions of their neighborhoods and cities.

Community organizers, residents and journalists together have a role to play in deepening the way we talk about urban development. The easy way is to continue to attempt to fit dissenting voices into the dominant public conversation

about corporate investment. The harder road is to tell the untold stories of community displacement and the serious and devastating impacts of profit driven development.

This content analysis report is a reflection of strengths and weaknesses in Bay Area newspaper coverage of the complex issue of urban development. Community organizers, residents and journalists can use it to support local coverage that mirrors and nurtures conditions on the ground. Because in the end, we all want neighborhoods that work—we all want to belong to a community. That's what keeps us connected, that's what makes our lives whole.

The Miami Workers Center is a strategy and action center that builds the collective strength of working class and poor Black and Latino communities in Miami. We work to increase the power and self-determination of these communities by initiating and supporting community-led grassroots organizations that confront the critical social issues of our time: poverty, racism, and gender oppression.
www.theworkerscenter.org.



St. Peter's Housing

what does gentrification feel like, part one.

“gentrification smells like how my sister libby got a brand new car, but then went grocery shopping, and left a chicken in there for days, and it smelled like death, even though the car was brand new, she never could get that smell out, smelled like something rotten. gentrification sounds like jackhammers, you hear the bulldozers digging, and it sounds like we are digging a grave here because who, tell me who is going to be there? most parents want the best, something better for their children. what about my children? but hey, its not like we’re 16 being beat up by the benedictine nuns, this is a personal journey and education in learning just how ruthless the machines are.”

—cynthia perez, owner and co-founder, las manitas restaurant and la peña latina arts organization, currently facing multiple evictions.

you’re in austin, texas. on your way to get some tacos and those bomb beans and rice at las manitas. summer heat makes everythang too bright. but with your damp back to the state capitol where bush II first ruled, and your sweaty forehead turned towards town lake river where bats come to rest every fall season, the congress avenue walk to las manitas is worth it. suits to undershirts, sports bras to button up blouses, austin is spilling out the edges of these restaurant doors. and no wonder. entering las manitas is like walking water dipped soul first head-long dive cool pool oceans alive into a fragrant turquoise ring.

in the bhagavadgita, krishna says to arjun, the greatest warrior of all time feeling like not fighting this imminent and epic battle before him, krishna takes him aside for a chariot drive to give him a talking to, krishna says, don’t you worry bout this war in front of you, see, souls do not die and are not born. instead there are simply two periods of being unseen, split by a period of being seen between birth and death.

las manitas won’t die when it closes its doors on july 31, 2008 due to marriott urged evictions, it will simply be unseen for a while. thank you gita, thank you marriot hotels, parent company named white lodging corporation, even a poet couldn’t make that up, for bringing the re-incarnation lesson close enough to smell. evictions are not death, we will move on rock on to make them the best re-incarnations possible, crucible, seminal, warriors be still, hope is ours at will.

www.savelasmanitas.org

politicalpoet.wordpress.com

poet: roopa singh

All poems by Roopa Singh © 2007



Displacing the Dream: An Introduction

The world of news media can be a confusing place. Studies have repeatedly shown that public policy often follows the agenda set by the press.⁷ Given its profound influence on how we vote, think and understand our world, in an ideal world the role of the news media would be to shine light where there is none, expose inequity, amplify grassroots victories, and tell the stories of our communities from as many angles as there are voices. However, news media in the U.S. has for decades been increasingly owned and controlled by multibillion-dollar corporations, and the coverage often reflects the challenge posed when one corporation attempts to hold another to account through reporting. Whether intentional or by default, the stories that result from an overwhelmingly corporate-owned

Just Cause Oakland



media tend to give voice to those in power, while those who struggle at the margins remain voiceless, creating a double-bind—serious danger combined with a lack of opportunity—that communities challenged by corporate control cannot afford to ignore.

The last decade of corporate control of our print media and public airwaves has been matched, if not surpassed, by the corporate control of other types of public space. From housing to parks and schools, urban communities face an unprecedented level of corporate-controlled development.⁸ The result has been mass displacement of poor and working-class people, disappearance of living-wage jobs, closure of public schools, and environmental degradation. This is most obvious in the southern gulf coast in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, but the disaster-for-profit development currently under

way in New Orleans is just the most extreme manifestation of an underreported trend occurring throughout the United States: the overdevelopment of poor and working-class urban communities by predatory corporate developers.

In the Bay Area, the displacement of communities caused by corporate development poses a threat to the lives of thousands of residents, particularly black and immigrant people of color from poor or working-class neighborhoods. By examining the treatment of this issue in more than 300 stories from the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Oakland Tribune*, and the *San Jose Mercury News*, *Displacing the Dream* takes a deep look at how this story is being covered, whose voices are heard loudest in coverage, and how key elements of the issue are framed. While focused on the Bay Area, the report also takes a brief comparative look at how race and racism is framed in coverage of similar issues in other areas during the same time period.

In the final section, *Displacing the Dream* makes recommendations to reporters about how to give this complex story the context it deserves, and offers media strategy ideas to organizers working to confront gentrification, displacement, and corporate development. Conducted in collaboration with dozens of local organizers, this analysis is intended to support campaigns for community-driven solutions to the problems posed by the lack of affordable housing, adequate education, and living-wage

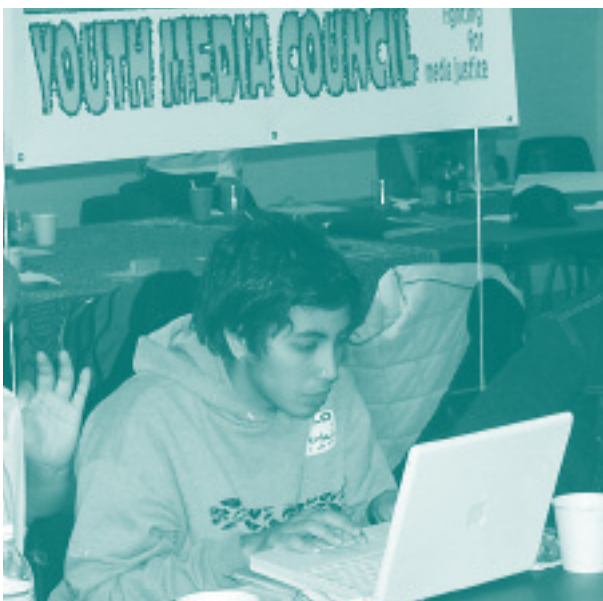
jobs; the criminalization and over-incarceration of people of color; and the toxic environments in which many are forced to live. These strategies also have the potential to deepen relationships between journalists and the leaders who dedicate their lives to healthy community growth.

Sometimes there are inspired stories that stand out from the rest. These are our north stars. These stories and the journalists who write them show us what it might look like to have a public conversation about corporate development and gentrification that includes the voices, perspectives, and experiences of displaced residents and their advocates. *Displacing the Dream* seeks to highlight these stories and honor these journalists, for their work in an environment that increasingly serves the corporate bottom line rather than justice or truth. And yet these reporters shout it out, tell our stories, hand over the mike so we may speak for ourselves. And speak we do: As spokespeople in news stories, poets, journalists, bloggers, and graffiti artists, we create the media and cultural environment necessary for structural social change.

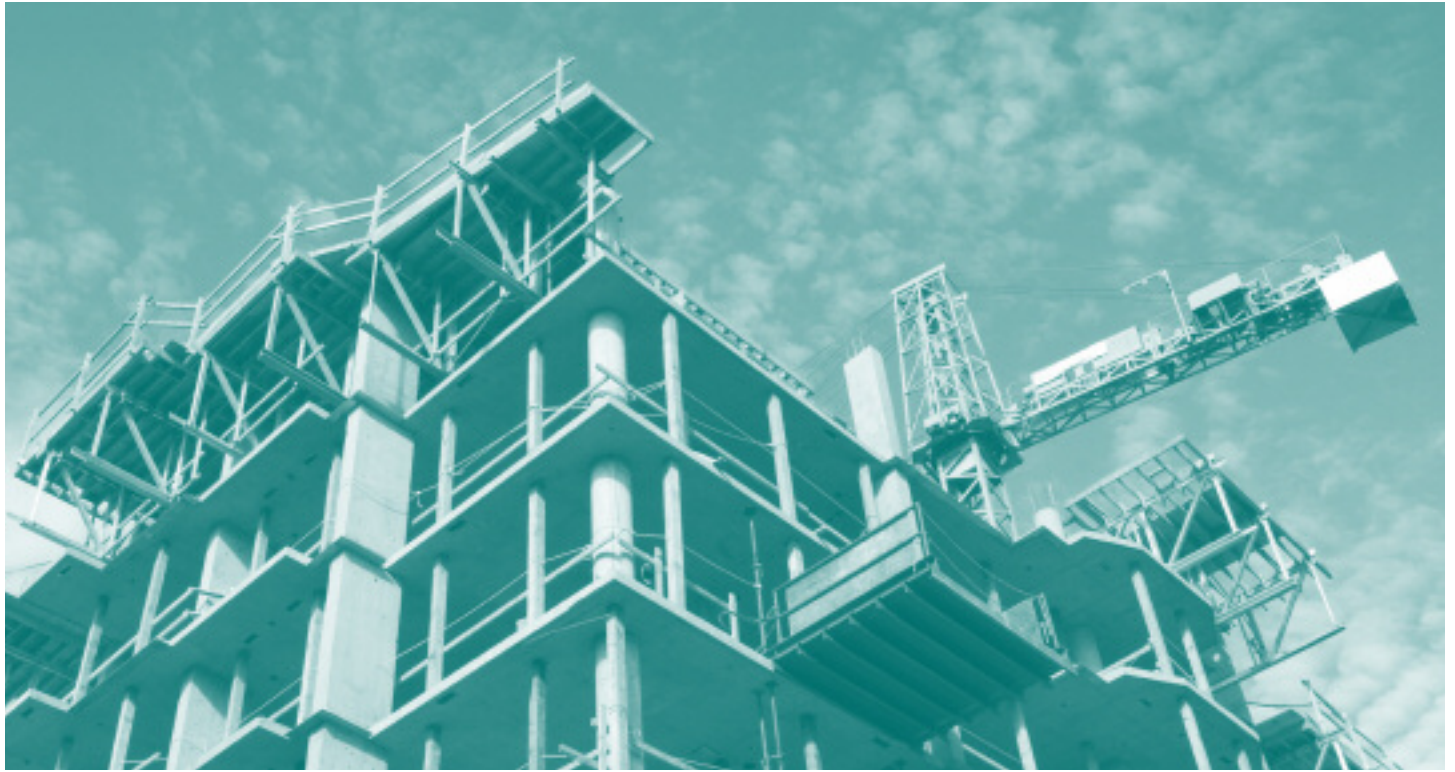
The Youth Media Council (YMC) was founded to help social justice activists create a new public narrative about race, age, public power, and transformation. YMC builds the power of grassroots movements and historically disenfranchised communities to influence public debate and media policy in the service of justice. Launched in 2001 to confront racism and anti-

youth bias in the media, YMC officially became a member-driven media strategy and action center in 2002. We have dedicated the last five years to using and transforming media to create a collaborative movement for racial justice and youth rights.

After more than six months of collective planning, participatory research, media monitoring, community analysis, and staff writing, the Youth Media Council is proud to present *Displacing the Dream*, an analysis of Bay Area coverage of development and displacement. As corporate giants exert more and more control over housing, jobs, and the environment, we hope this report will help spawn a new story about the power of the people—‘cause the power of the people don’t stop.



Youth Media Council



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2007 the Youth Media Council, along with other allied organizations that could no longer afford the skyrocketing rent, was nearly forced to relocate from our office space in central downtown Oakland. The reason? A New York developer had bought our office building and wanted to keep pace with the rising market rates of the new luxury condos and offices now blanketing the area. Just a month earlier, the *Oakland Tribune* moved out of its longtime headquarters in the historic downtown Tribune Tower building and into an office near the Oakland Coliseum. Why? MediaNews group had bought the *Tribune's* parent company and wanted to cut costs by consolidating its regional staff.⁹

These are just two examples of the market forces affecting organizations and communities throughout the Bay Area as they try to improve their jobs, schools and neighborhoods. In *Displacing the Dream*, we answer crucial



questions about framing the pressing issues of gentrification and development: How are opinion-leading newspapers covering the topic? What are the strengths and weaknesses of current coverage? What are the challenges and opportunities for both journalists and organizers who want to improve coverage in a consolidated news environment?

We analyzed coverage of housing, gentrification, and development in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Oakland Tribune*, and *San Jose Mercury* news from February 1, 2007, to April 30, 2007. Using a participatory process that involved our members, organizing groups, and research and policy allies, we applied a double-blind coding process and collective analysis of data to generate these key findings:

Primary Problems:

- Housing market issues such as subprime lending and the stagnation of the market were the primary problems raised in coverage; displacement and gentrification were not portrayed as problems.

Primary Solutions:

- Corporate-driven solutions, including market-rate housing and luxury retail development, overshadowed government and community driven solutions such as expanded affordable housing and improved social services.

Whose Voices Are Heard:

- The voices of government officials, corporate spokespeople, and other traditional experts dominated over those of community advocates and organizers at a rate of 6 to 1.
- Residents appeared in coverage primarily as “scene-setters” who described neighborhood conditions; they rarely appeared as experts who provide analysis or suggest solutions.

What’s Missing:

- Discussion of race and racism was nearly absent from coverage, despite the Bay Area’s racial diversity and the disproportionate impact of development on communities of color.

Conclusions and Recommendations

We expected this study to analyze the details of how displacement is discussed in coverage of urban development. Instead, we found almost no stories about displacement and an abundance of stories about market trends and corporate-driven development that detailed financial figures but ignored impacts on local neighborhoods and communities. It is clear from the results of this report that there is a rich terrain of stories left untold.

Journalists and community organizers alike have both the responsibility and the urgent opportunity to work together to improve local coverage of housing, development and gentrification. Local coverage can begin to reflect the realities of urban displacement and struggles for community control in the Bay Area by:

- centering community perspectives and voices
- highlighting the harmful effects of corporate development
- tracking disproportionate impacts on communities of color
- exploring community—and public-sector-driven solutions to urban development issues.

Our local newspapers face the same market forces that our communities do. With improved stories and an expanded public dialogue on gentrification, displacement and corporate development, together we can put what belongs to the public back into their hands. It begins with a story: Ours.

Youth Media Council



upward bound

upward bound
eyes sky/around/fly
time passes
marked/by
construction/jobs/prestige/its good for the whole neighborhood
truth or lie/
do or die/
and when the corners become lighter shades of cement
and newer cuts of window glass
we gaze

upward bound
at the new neighbor on the corner/
condo/border crossed/
with no checkpoint for them/
no bigger loss/
than our homes/to
a block/ built for owners with credentials/
but no street cred/
a communities legs spread/
but parts of her been dead/
consensual/
unsure/
we gaze

upward bound
at building carcasses/
scaffolding/don't it put on flesh quick/
who can afford it/who's gonna live there
their homes/they're different/to where/
we old and they new/
but too soon/it's us asking permission
in our own homes
to be who we are/smells/volume/cars/
permission for our way/
not when its your turf/ all day/
will we come home from work/
and continue to accommodate your stay/when yall
don't do the same
its known and its true/
we gaze/
upward bound

www.savelasmanitas.org

politicalpoet.wordpress.com

poet: roopa singh

All poems by Roopa Singh © 2007

Youth Media Council



Methodology

When the Youth Media Council decided to embark on this groundbreaking research project, we wanted it to result in something more than a traditional report. In line with our vision of transforming the news into a dialogue with audiences rather than a lecture to them, *Displacing the Dream* is a participatory content analysis based on a community conversation about coverage of corporate development, gentrification and displacement. Our process of community engagement began with the earliest stages of research design and will continue through grassroots promotion and distribution of this report.

Sample Size and Search Terms

YMC monitored three months of coverage in the Bay Area newspapers that we believe shape the regional public debate on corporate development, displacement, and gentrification. We monitored the *Oakland Tribune*, the *San*

San Francisco Chronicle, and the *San Jose Mercury News* between February 1 and April 30, 2007, a time period we believed would generate a sample size large enough to allow for deep examination of ongoing coverage outside of a specific policy debate.

We generated the sample by searching for stories that contained the words “housing,” “gentrification,” or “development” in each issue of the *Chronicle* published during this period, as well as in the Sunday and Wednesday editions of the *Oakland Tribune* and *San Jose Mercury News*. We used the media indexing and archiving database LexisNexis to identify these stories in the *Chronicle* and *Mercury News*. Stories from the *Tribune*, whose content is not included in LexisNexis, were identified by one of our six coders. Once stories containing these words were isolated, we removed all letters to the editor, news briefs, quizzes, “Chron Watch,” “Strictly Commercial,” “Two Cents,” and advice columns.

Articles in which the search terms were used in other contexts (e.g., “child development,” “housing a fugitive”) were also removed from the sample. The total sample size was 334 articles, with 46 articles each from both the



Youth Media Council

Oakland Tribune and the *San Jose Mercury News* and 242 articles from the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Research Questions

The primary research questions that guided our coding were: *Who is controlling the debate? How is race/racism discussed and represented? What’s the primary story being told, and what’s missing from coverage?* We then translated these research questions into 11 specific questions used by coders to review the sample.

Double-Blind Coding and Training

Six paid coders, who had all participated in a two-hour training that included key terms and things to look out for as they read, reviewed the sample. We produced a coding manual with def-

initions, specific instructions on how to understand each coding question, and along with other “how to” elements. (The manual is available for review.) Prior to starting the study, each coder practiced using the manual and coded stories together. Coders were then given portions of the sample to read and code at the YMC office. We used a double-blind coding process to ensure the accuracy and continuity of the resulting data—different coders coded each article twice without looking at the previous coders’ findings. Then members of the YMC staff produced a final data spreadsheet that was imported into SPSS, a statistical analysis program.

Content Analysis 2.0: YMC’s Model for Participatory Media Research

We believe the process we used throughout this project is a model for any group that wants to engage their constituency, their allies, organizers, artists, and journalists in a media research project. In this spirit, we offer 10 principles for participatory, community-based analysis of the news:

1. Keep it local.

Part of the reason why readers of major newspapers are leaving in droves is that traditional corporate media’s thirst for the bottom line has meant a decrease in reporters covering local issues. This report attempts to provide relevant news analysis rooted in specific conditions facing large parts of our local community.

2. Make regional-to-national connections.

While we grounded this analysis in our own community, we know this issue isn’t confined to the Bay Area—displacement is happening all across the globe as cities are struggling to find their way in a new economy. By partnering and engaging groups in the emerging Right to the City Alliance, we sought to make regional, national and international connections to what’s happening right here in the Bay.

3. Ensure representativeness of sample.

We chose to monitor Bay Area newspapers for three months during a period without a significant or specific policy debate to allow for the normal ebbs and flows of the news cycle in coverage of ongoing critical issues that are guided as much by market shifts and corporate decisions as by public policy. We chose to include the Sunday editions of the *Oakland Tribune* and *San Jose Mercury News* because they are the most widely read. Wednesday was chosen because Bay Area city council and other important city meetings usually take place on Tuesdays; we wanted to know how the newspapers were covering those important democratic processes that affect this issue.

4. Engage community experts in research.

What makes this content analysis different from traditional academic analyses is the participatory process we built to ensure that we engaged the voices of organizers and other community

experts working on affordable housing and displacement issues. Leaders from those groups helped us shape our research design, research questions, findings and recommendations.

5. Engage disproportionately impacted communities in monitoring.

Our coding questions were community-generated, and our coders were local community members and members of ally organizations.

6. Engage community members and organizers in the analysis process.

After we logged all the answers to coding questions and tabulated our data, we presented the data and our preliminary findings to organizers, researchers, community members, and allies. We asked what it all meant to them, and how it could support their organizing and advocacy work on the ground. They helped us to refine our findings and recommendations so that the report is relevant and useful to their important work in the community.

7. Recruit allies into the writing process.

We recruited Gihan Perera, director of the Miami Workers Center (MWC), to write a prologue to the content analysis. Again, we wanted each part of the content analysis process to be participatory and engaging to community groups to work on the ground. MWC's groundbreaking work, particularly on communications,

housing and gentrification in Miami has been an inspiration to their allies across the country. MWC is also a leader in the emerging Right to the City national alliance.

8. Seek partnerships with academics, research and policy groups.

We recruited Media Mouse, the DataCenter, and other researchers throughout to support the community process with their expertise.

9. Use creative report design.

As part of the participatory process, YMC engaged staff and allies in designing the final report. The same groups that were a part of the analysis process also provided photos and artwork, and we engaged an ally artist, Roopa Singh, to contribute her original poetry to represent the groundswell of creative commentary that poets, musicians, dancers, and other artists are developing to envision alternatives to corporate overdevelopment around the globe.

10. Develop grassroots distribution channels.

YMC is committed to a grassroots distribution model. We will use existing relationships and networks like the Media Action Grassroots Network, the Right to the City Alliance, the Progressive Communicators Network, Bay Area journalist associations, the Media Justice Fund, and the growing grassroots media justice movement to distribute our analysis.

FINDINGS

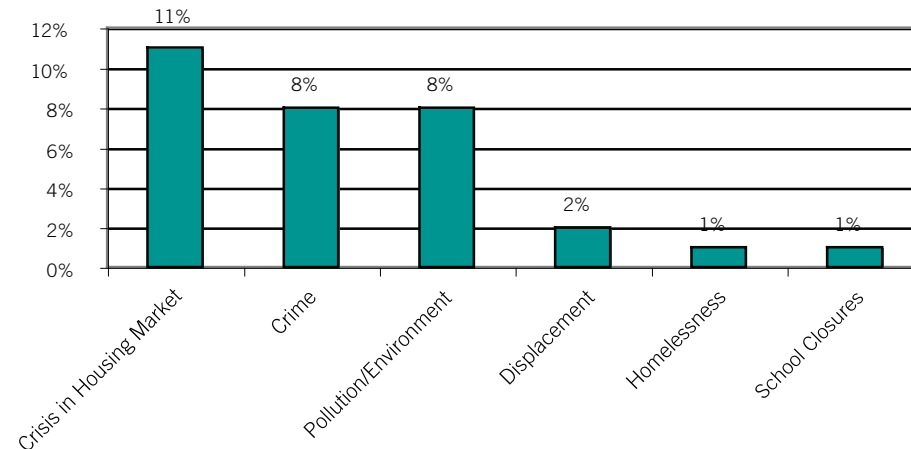
THE OFFICIAL STORY: MARKET PROBLEMS, CORPORATE SOLUTIONS

MARKET PROBLEMS

Approximately 10% of stories in the sample failed to identify or discuss a specific problem, focusing instead on episodic human-interest stories.

Of the stories that did raise a specific problem, subprime mortgages and stagnation of the housing market were the dominant problems in coverage.

Primary Problem Identified



The top three problems the sample coverage discussed were:

- Crisis in the housing market (including stories on the housing “bubble,” subprime lending and stagnating rates of home sales)
- Crime
- Pollution and toxics in the environment

The least frequently mentioned problems included:

- Displacement of communities from Bay Area cities
- Homelessness
- Public school closures

Stories about the housing market outnumbered all stories about displacement, homelessness and school closures at a rate of more than 3 to 1. Despite the fact that San Francisco and Oakland have each lost 20%-25% of their African-American populations over the past five years, **only three out of 334 stories—less than 1% of coverage examined—mentioned displacement connected to development as a problem.** Three additional stories discussed displacement, but as a result of earthquakes and rock slides and not as a result of corporate over-development and unregulated market forces.

Conclusion: The majority of coverage on housing, development and gentrification failed to mention displacement, identify it as a problem, or engage in a discussion of critical related issues. Where problems were identified, housing market concerns dominated coverage. While stories on pollution as it relates to development were some of the most balanced we found in the sample¹⁰ and deserve commendation, the overall failure to identify corporate-controlled development and urban displacement as problems leaves the topic of their harmful impacts woefully unaddressed.

CORPORATE SOLUTIONS:

More than 40% of stories examined failed to offer any solutions to the issues raised in coverage.

In the 60% of stories that did identify solutions, those that involved corporate-controlled investment and development of market-rate housing, commercial space, public space and new “green” markets dominated.

In stories where solutions were identified, the top three solutions were:

- Corporate development, including new green markets
- Affordable housing planning and creation
- Improved government-provided social services

In stories where solutions were identified, the least-mentioned solutions included:

- Community benefits agreements with developers
- Transitional and supportive housing for formerly homeless people, seniors, and youth aged out of foster care, among others
- Landmark and cultural district preservation

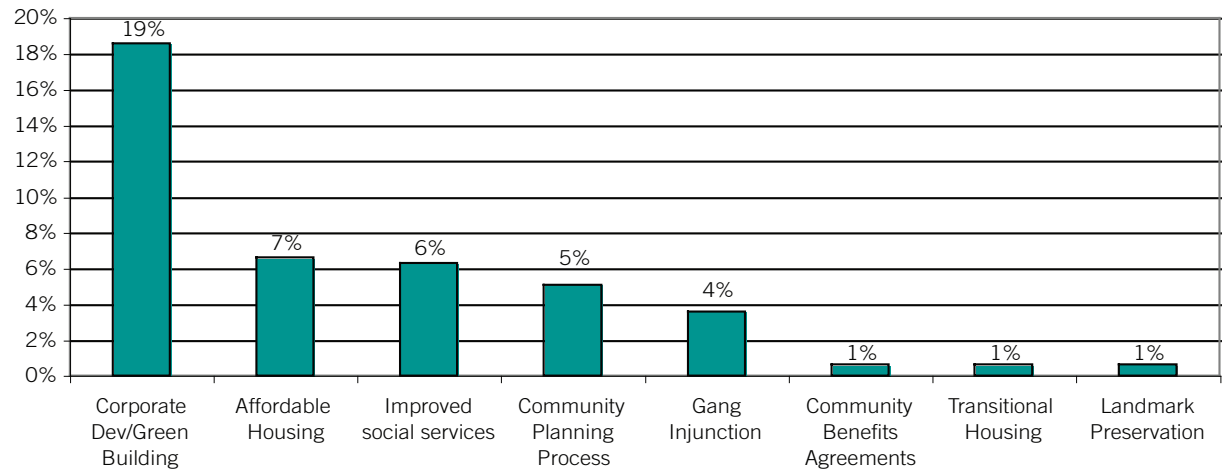
While affordable housing, improved social services, and community planning processes appeared as top solutions in coverage, they were significantly overshadowed by corporate-con-

Market rate development takes credit for stuff that community does. It's the people that do work and build the neighborhoods. It's easy to think it's the developers who make the parks and schools better, but it's actually the people—organized people—who make that stuff happen.

—Chris Durazo,
SOMCAN

“The injunction is doing what we hoped it would do,” deputy city attorney Machaela Hocter said. “It takes away the turf, which is the heart of a street gang. It is the equivalent of taking away a business’ storefront.”
 —March 4, 2007
SF Chronicle

Solutions Identified in Coverage



trolled solutions, which dominated coverage at a rate of 3 to 1.

The majority of stories that mentioned crisis in the housing market and pollution/environment as primary problems called for corporate-controlled development as solutions to these problems.

More than one-third of stories that mentioned crime as a problem highlighted gang injunctions as the primary solution—an intervention that has proven ineffective and contributes to displacement.¹¹

Conclusion: Corporate solutions dominate the public debate on development, displacement and gentrification. The overemphasis on corporate-controlled development in media coverage paints a picture of gentrification in the form of

luxury housing and retail development as the only viable answer to identified problems. Community-driven and government-based solutions were absent by comparison, demonstrating an urgent need to bring community perspectives into this debate.

Significantly, the presence of affordable housing as the number-two solution offers an opportunity for an expanded discussion on the role of government in addressing the housing crisis in the Bay Area. Similarly, the incidence of improved social services and community planning processes as solutions in coverage offers the opportunity to highlight successful community-government partnerships that are contributing to regional development.

Sources and Experts: Official Story Excludes Community Voices and Solutions

Government officials, corporate spokespeople and other traditional experts such as academics, policy sources and authors, were most often quoted in news coverage on housing and development.

a rate of 10 to 1 over those sources identified as displaced residents.

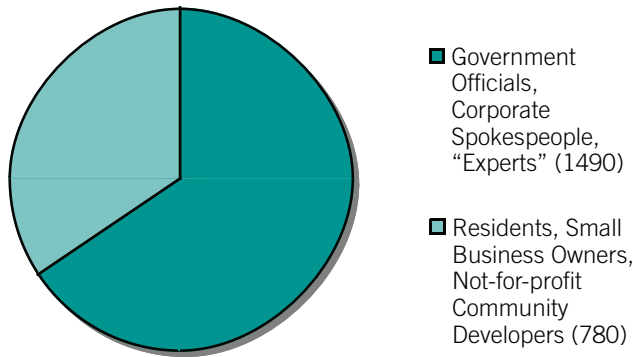
What they're saying

Corporate spokespeople speak most often on housing and the housing market, and government officials speak most often on “quality of life” issues related to development, particularly pollution and crime.

Government officials suggest solutions at a rate of 11.6 to 1 over residents, and 25 to 1 over community advocates and organizers.

While government officials are most often asked to fix the problems identified, corporate development—not government services or regulation—is the dominant solution offered in coverage (see above).

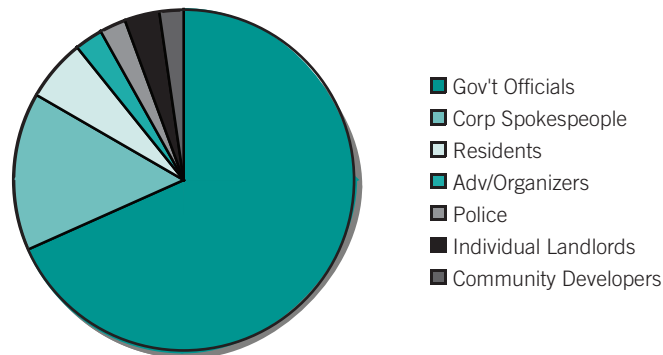
Comparison of Sources in Coverage II



These traditional experts were quoted at a rate of 3 to 1 over neighborhood residents, and a rate of almost 6 to 1 over community advocates and organizers. Overall, the voices of these traditional sources overpowered the voices of those most harmed by the harmful effects of corporate-controlled development—including residents, individual landlords, small business owners and not-for-profit community developers—at a rate of almost 2 to 1.

Corporate spokespeople (including developers and public relations professionals) are quoted at

Sources Referenced for Solutions in Coverage



They say we don't have the power to come up with solutions as a community, when in fact we have solutions and we have the power to make our solutions viable.

—Lupe Arreola,
St. Peter's Housing

Though residents are the second most frequently quoted source, their voices are most often used to describe problems of crime and pollution in their communities; they are rarely called on to offer solutions in any area.

Conclusion: By disproportionately highlighting the voices of government officials and corporate spokespeople, coverage overwhelmingly leans towards an “official” story on development that frames the role of government as experts and

corporations as “white knights” with the resources and capacity to respond to community problems. Meanwhile, residents appear frequently but predominantly as scene-setters who describe conditions but rarely offer analysis or solutions. This results in an unbalanced public debate and paves the way for corporate overdevelopment of Bay Area cities, the same corporate overdevelopment currently driving municipal planning nationwide.¹²

Context: In a complex world, coverage oversimplifies development

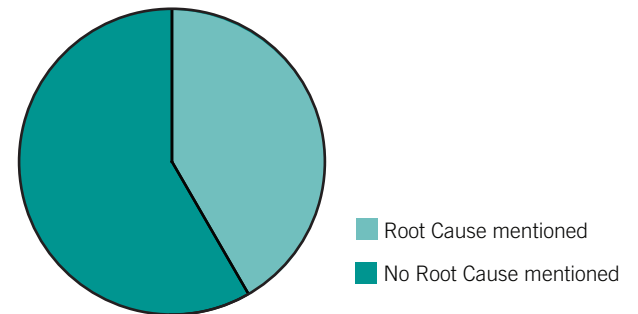
Urban development is an extremely complicated topic that requires clear explanations of problems, root causes, solutions, trends, statistics, and related issues. Most stories examined lacked the information necessary to provide readers a deeper understanding of the history, impacts, trends and implications of urban development in the Bay Area.

ROOT CAUSES

Sixty percent of stories failed to offer root causes.

Where root causes of problems were mentioned, the primary cause identified was lack of affordable housing. Corporate-driven development, deindustrialization and unemployment were least mentioned as root causes.

Root Causes



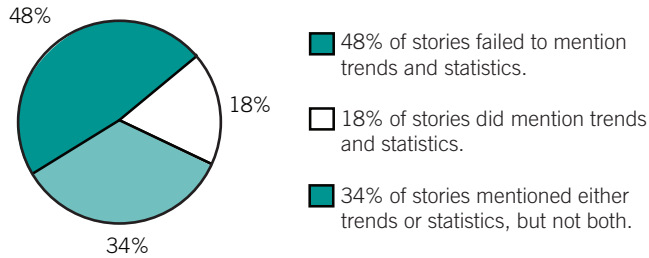
TRENDS AND STATISTICS

Nearly half of all stories analyzed failed to mention any trends or statistics related to development. Less than 1 in 5 stories provided both trends and statistics as context in coverage.

Despite the overwhelming number of renters in the Bay Area,¹⁵ the majority of trends and statistics found in coverage focused on market rate housing

prices. This information outnumbered trends and statistics related to displacement of residents from urban centers at a rate of 11.5 to 1.

Trends and Statistics



complex issue. The coverage creates a dominant story that focuses on the details of the housing market while obscuring the root causes, trends and effects of corporate development overall. Without this necessary information, coverage fails to offer readers a deeper understanding of the issues of gentrification and displacement and their impacts on residents, neighborhoods and cities. In their failure to explore issues such as development finance, the effect of luxury property taxes on city revenue or links between gentrification and poverty, newspapers leave readers without the context they need to make critical policy decisions.

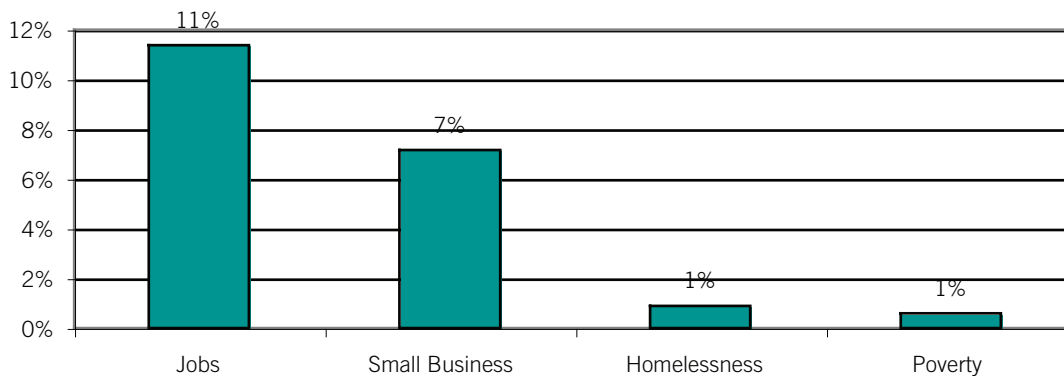
RELATED ISSUES

“Small business” development and job growth were the dominant related issues raised in coverage, adverse conditions for residents were virtually invisible. Mentions of job growth outnumbered discussions of poverty 16 to 1.

There were a few exceptional stories that made connections between the history of urban development, profits of corporate developers and trends in affordable housing.¹⁴ It is impressive that these stories highlighted the lack of affordable housing as a root cause; this is a trend in reporting that should be amplified.

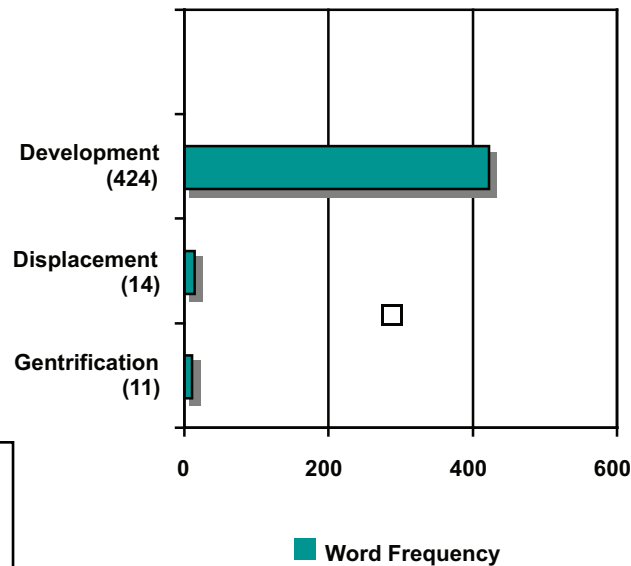
Conclusion: Coverage of housing, development and gentrification fails to accurately portray this

Related Issues Mentioned in Coverage



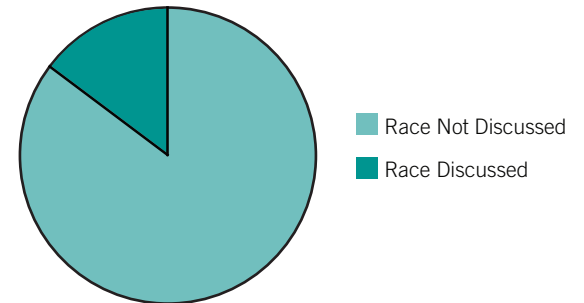
What's Missing: Invisible Impacts, Hidden Profits

Discussion of gentrification and displacement nearly absent in coverage



Racial Impacts Virtually Invisible

A thorough examination of race or racism was virtually absent in coverage.



More than 85% of stories failed to discuss race or racism.

In the stories that mentioned race or racism, 37% mentioned race as part of neighborhood demographics, and more than 10% mentioned race in relation to crime. The neighborhoods discussed in these stories include Bayview Hunter’s Point, the Mission, the South of Market, Western Addition, the Fillmore, the Mexican Heritage Plaza area in San Jose, West Oakland, and neighborhoods in Pittsburgh and Richmond. Only 6% of stories mentioned race in relation to displacement.

Where race is mentioned, no matter what problem was raised, the top solutions were corporate development and affordable housing (each mentioned in ten stories).

Did You Know:

In the *San Francisco Chronicle*, there were four times as many stories about “Simple Lifers” Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie as there were stories about African Americans leaving San Francisco?*



*Source: LexisNexis.

The word “development” was mentioned 424 times in coverage. In contrast, the words “displacement” and “gentrification,” which describe documented impacts of corporate-controlled development, were mentioned only 14 and 11 times respectively.

Of stories that mentioned development, only 7% mentioned disproportionate impacts on people of color as a trend, and only 12% mentioned profits of corporate developers as a trend.

Neighborhood impacts overwhelmingly missing

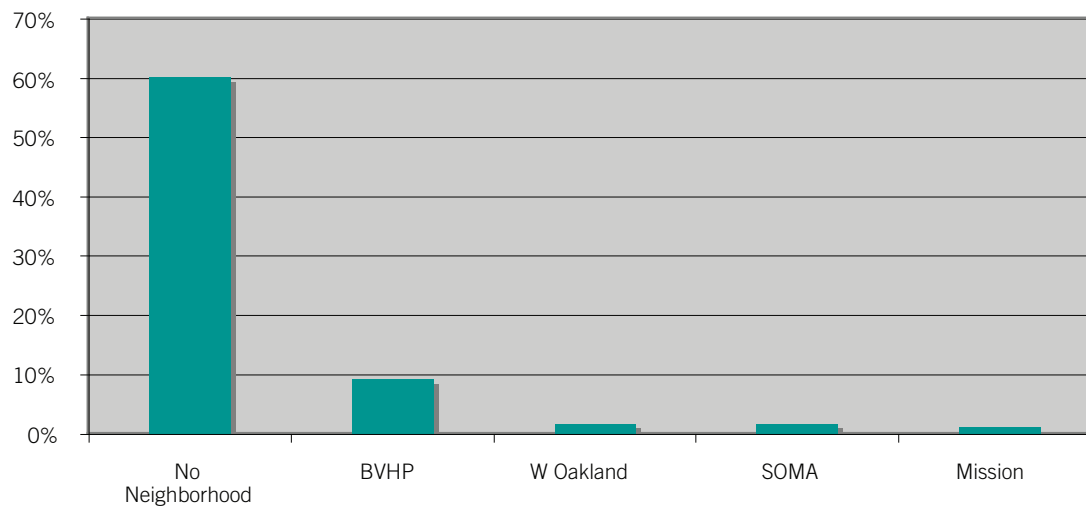
Sixty-three percent of stories failed to mention a specific Bay Area neighborhood in relation to housing, development, or gentrification. Of the stories that did mention a specific neighborhood, Bayview Hunters Point was the most mentioned (31 stories). Other neighborhoods threatened with displacement and gentrification, including West Oakland, South of Market and the Mission, were rarely or never mentioned.

Conclusion: To tell the complex story of corporate development, displacement and gentrification, we need many distinct stories put in the context of larger trends. Stories of racial discrimination in housing, the displacement of

black communities from historically black neighborhoods and the impact of corporate development on immigrant communities were nearly absent in the coverage studied. This clearly misrepresents the issue and leaves the voices and experiences of people of color at the margins of public debate. Without balanced and thorough coverage of the histories of Bay Area neighborhoods and communities, the story of displacement is replaced with the story of development. Instead of reporting that could enrich a public conversation about race and development, coverage replicates the dynamics of exclusion. As communities of color are displaced from Bay Area cities, they are also marginalized from coverage of housing and development in the region.

There is a true crisis for communities of color in the Bay Area. This is particularly true for black families who are being pushed out of San Francisco. Report on conditions that affect families struggling to stay. What does it mean to live with an in-law, what does it mean to live as a family of five in a studio? What does it mean to live as 5 families in a two-bedroom house?
—Ingrid Gonzales, Coleman Advocates

Coverage by neighborhood



RECOMMENDATIONS TO JOURNALISTS

“Money is the great power today...The money power has grown so great that the issue of all issues is whether the corporation shall rule this country or the country shall again rule the corporations.”

—Joseph Pulitzer December 1878, St. Louis Dispatch

The pursuit of balance, accuracy and fairness in news coverage is the life work of a journalist. But in the context of a narrowed public debate and increasing threats to journalistic freedom, it’s a pursuit that can’t be made alone. As journalists, organizers, and media justice activists, we at the Youth Media Council believe in collaborating with media-makers to preserve journalistic integrity and a tradition of quality reporting on issues that matter. In this spirit, we offer these recommendations for improving Bay Area newspaper coverage of urban development and displacement.¹⁵ We hope you will use these recommendations and adopt them as core standards for coverage.

BALANCE

Cover the harmful effects of corporate-controlled development. For thousands of Bay Area residents, displacement is a problem. Yet it is primarily covered as either a natural phenomenon or collateral damage from gentrification and other supposedly viable solutions to community prob-

lems. It’s crucial that journalists engage in critical inquiry to balance stories about the benefits of corporate-driven development with the harm it does to residents’ health, the urban environment, the diversity of neighborhoods, cultural networks and living-wage jobs.¹⁶

Center the voices and perspectives of community members and advocates. Community advocates are experts on the conditions of their neighborhoods and also on solutions for local development. Instead of plugging residents’ voices into traditional stories of corporate development, center community voices and perspectives to tell previously untold stories of community-driven growth and renewal.¹⁷

Strive to deeply understand opposing viewpoints. All too often, media casts community resistance to corporate overdevelopment as “anti-development” and “NIMBY” activism. Acknowledge and check patterns of depicting community opposition to corporate development as simply “anti-development.” Recognize

that development comes in many forms, and explore community solutions as viable alternatives to corporate over-development.¹⁸

Diversify solutions highlighted in coverage.

Increase the number of stories told about residents working to protect and strengthen their own neighborhoods and highlight the wealth of community-government partnerships that have helped the Bay Area become such a diverse and supportive place to live.¹⁹ Seek out community advocates (including policy groups, neighborhood associations, community organizing groups, community development organizations, small business owners) as expert sources with community-based solutions and build lasting relationships with them.

ACCURACY

Highlight compelling contradictions. Investigate and report on contradictions among city regulations, corporate policy, and corporate practice (for example, city policy on affordable housing versus the incidence of market-rate development). Also report on conflicts of interest between government and the private sector.²⁰

Include diverse trends and context. Use human-interest stories as hooks to highlight hidden trends and expose systemic failures. Explain the complex dynamics of development finance in concrete terms that expose the dependence of local governments on real estate taxes to raise city budgets. Focus stories on development and

displacement on demographic changes, available and planned affordable housing, shifts in availability of living-wage jobs, city spending and economic development plans and federal government funding, rather than simply reporting trends in the housing market.²¹

Explore the relationships between development and other core issues like education, health and crime.

When reporting on development, always link it to related issues and effects. When reporting on related issues, illuminate the link to corporate development. For example, when reporting on crime and gang injunctions, explore the relationship between city policy and corporate development and displacement in local communities in the Bay Area.²²

Nationalize and internationalize local stories.

The role of corporations in reshaping cities is a story in almost every urban community in the world. It is important to link local conditions to national trends. For example, tell stories about other projects similar to the naval base conversion in Bayview Hunter's Point. Where else is there redevelopment of former military land happening and what developers are involved? How are toxics problems associated with redevelopment of former military land dealt with in other areas?

FAIRNESS

Localize the story. Readers rely on local papers to learn about what's happening in their own

We'd like to see journalists portray people as not just individual activists, but connected to a bigger body of folks—that they're part of an organized community.

—Alicia Schwartz,
POWER

We want to see stories about the value of our communities, not just stories about crime and violence.

—Robbie Clark,
Just Cause Oakland

Please feel free to contact
Karlos@youthmediacouncil.org
with questions or comments.
We welcome your feedback!

cities. Focus stories on neighborhoods rather than individuals or sweeping market trends. Use community newspapers and websites such as the *SF Bayview*, *El Tecolote*, and the *Oakland Post*, among others listed in the appendix as resources for story ideas. These community media sources can help you identify and amplify neighborhood perspectives, as well as offer community-driven solutions.²³

Incorporate a meaningful discussion about race and racism in coverage of development, displacement and gentrification. Census statistics and everyday experience show that corporate development is contributing to the displacement of significant numbers of people of color from working-class neighborhoods in the Bay Area. Explore these trends in depth; provide accurate historical, political and economic context with regard to shifting demographic trends in the region. Report on policies that could contribute to racial justice in the region, particularly with regard to housing, jobs and the environment.²⁴

Investigate disproportionate impacts. Disenfranchised communities deserve equal, if not more, news time compared to corporations in coverage of development. Expose the impacts of corporate overdevelopment on African American communities in San Francisco and Oakland, and on immigrant-owned small business in the entire Bay Area. Highlight the profits made by developers and contrast these with the costs to communities threatened with displacement.²⁵

Top 10 Underreported Stories in Bay Area Newspaper Coverage of Housing, Gentrification and Development:

1. Budget priorities and how they affect city residents
2. Real-estate-dominated city development and its impacts on affordable housing, displacement and homelessness
3. Policing as a tool of development and lack of housing and living-wage jobs as root cause of crime
4. Scandal and backroom deals between corporate developers and government
5. The relationship between local corporate developments and developers' national and international projects
6. Battles over public space among communities, corporations and government
7. Development and its impacts on community health
8. Corporate development and its effects on tenant rights
9. Cultural and landmark preservation in city development
10. Community-driven growth and neighborhood-centered sustainable development



RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS

“Truth is essential, but it is, of itself, insufficient because disorganized truth can be overcome by an organized lie.” —Minister Christopher Mohammed at the 10th Anniversary of People Organized To Win Employment Rights (POWER)

Organizing truth into a powerful story begins with gathering the resources, infrastructure, and relationships necessary to tell that story. The effective use of mass media, as well as ethnic, alternative and independent media, is critical to a public debate on development, urban displacement and gentrification dominated by private interests. No matter what medium they use, with appropriate media capacity and effective

communications strategy, community advocates can position themselves as valuable sources and move often marginalized voices to the center of public debate. The Youth Media Council is working in partnership with dozens of community organizations to reframe corporate-controlled development. In light of what we learned through this content analysis, we offer these recommendations about where and how to begin.

We want to make sure that individual stories are used to connect the issue to the fact that this is happening systematically and it's not just about what's happening to an individual family. It's about what's happening to a neighborhood, what's happening to the city, and nationally. We want to draw connections between housing and jobs, connections between what's happening in Miami and West Oakland and the Bayview and Chicago and New York.

—Vanessa Moses,
Just Cause Oakland

Identify compelling stories that paint a clear picture of this complex issue. Storytelling is more of an art than a science. Develop storytelling projects to identify compelling narratives that breathe life into the conflicts, solutions and characters most important to your issue. Expose corporate profits and backdoor deals, highlight community solutions, and translate market forces and structural inequalities into a living, breathing story. Develop these stories with your membership. Sharpen them with the help of research and policy groups (see below). Share these stories with journalists through press releases, email briefs or your organizational blog or newsletter.

Deepen relationships with allied research and policy groups. Cultivate working partnerships with research and policy groups to deepen your organization's knowledge of trends, statistics and policies related to your issue. For example, draw on research and policy groups to help identify existing city policies that can protect vulnerable communities and highlight contradictions between local corporate actions and these city policies.

Develop the expertise, competence and confidence of key spokespeople. Identify staff and member leaders who can most consistently and effectively represent your organization to the media. Your team shouldn't be a single star, but a group who best reflect the diverse characters in the story you are trying to tell. Appoint staff

to be media liaisons that connect reporters to this team. Prepare spokespeople by practicing interviews and relationship-building scenarios that build their confidence in being effective and valuable sources to reporters.

Create and share source lists and issue information with journalists. Include your own organizational sources and information as well as other advocates, community sources and research and policy groups who can help journalists flesh out multiple sides and components of the story. List sources' full names, email addresses and phone numbers, as well as brief bios that explain their expertise. Share this list through your press kit and website, and update it regularly.

Build relationships with key reporters who cover housing, business, education, the environment, and other issues related to your community development work. Make a list of who is covering your issues in the outlets that your targets and your constituency read most. If you are based in California, you can use the YMC's Echo Communications Press Database²⁶ to access a complete list of reporters generated from this content analysis study. A list of these reporters and their emails is also included in the appendix. Introduce yourself and your organization to these reporters by phone or email. Reach out to them regularly—not just when you want coverage but whenever you have important new developments to share.

Create a comprehensive communications plan that targets diverse media to share your stories.

Use different forms of media for different purposes. For example, you can create your own videos, newsletters and blogs to flesh out the details of your development stories. Reach out to progressive, alternative, ethnic and community media to mobilize your constituency around community problems and introduce new community solutions. Access mainstream media to respond to issues already up for debate and to introduce a different side to the story that has not been fully told. If you have a corporate target, try telling your story through trade papers and the business sections of mainstream papers.

Monitor, document and respond to bias in coverage.

Set up a media monitoring system in your organization to cull useful information from coverage, build your press list, and identify and document bias. Reframing corporate development is a battle with potential consequences. Anticipate opposition and be prepared to use op-eds, letters to the editor, letters to journalists, editorial meetings, and even direct action to respond to bias and attacks. Respond by directly confronting lies, debunking myths, and advancing your own solutions.

Share best practices and tools with other community advocates.

Document best practices in media work and share them through listservs, newsletters or by submitting them to YMC's Echo Communications Center.²⁷ Create a calendar of newsworthy dates related to urban development, gentrification and displacement—such as election dates, policy vote dates and local events related to affordable housing, public space etc.—and use it to coordinate outreach to journalists. Join a mybloc.net²⁸ circle, the YMC press database,²⁹ or another social networking community to exchange coverage, strategies and resources.

Coordinate your stories across region, issue, and sector.

The story of corporate control over public space is one that crosses many lines. Find common targets and similar conditions and create a meta-frame that links your stories to the stories of others. Through coordinated messaging and framing rooted in specific stories, diverse campaigns can be connected and a national dialogue that centers your voices, highlights your solutions and wins the hearts and minds of the majority can find its voice.

what does gentrification feel like, part two.

“[gentrification,] its frustrating, the schools bailed on us, politicians failing us, all we have left is the block, now that’s leaving, so really, what avenue do we have?”

—sean bates, lifelong resident of pittsburgh, pa.

“for me gentrification feels inevitable, nuanced, void of feeling, void of culture, of history, it smells of nothing. because my parents were political refugees from cambodia, home is a place that exists in memory. there is no place I could move where I would not be a gentrifier.”

—valerie taing, national organizer, right to the city alliance

“gentrification sounds people who are intimate screaming at each other, at home, outside, gentrification causes very stressful situations and you take it out on the people closest to you and the people furthest from you.”

—helena wong (caav tenant organizer)

gentrification feels like its time to look in the mirror. who am I in terms of gentrification? my parents immigrated from india, I was born in chicago, raised in san diego, every two years I lived with family in india for two months, went to college in pittsburgh, stayed in austin for a year, lived in the bay for seven years, mainly oakland but berkeley, the mission, and I now live in brooklyn, new york. I am working class. I am an artist, a professor, an organizer. And I don’t have a hometown.

so when I move to an area, I tryta be warm while taking time to kick back and learn how folks do. I sit on the stoop with my neighbors, and spend hours in a café up the block my neighbors probly aint going to. I try not to shy away from being a bridge. try not to idealize one group and demonize the other. hard. I try hard. and some days I feel pushed outta white spaces. and some days I feel left outta brown spaces. and some times I feel right at home. inside.

www.savelasmanitas.org

politicalpoet.wordpress.com

poet: roopa singh

All poems by Roopa Singh © 2007

APPENDIX:

Acknowledgements

This report would not have been possible without guidance and direction from grassroots organizers and advocates in the Bay Area who are organizing for more just conditions in communities threatened with displacement: Guadalupe Arreola from St. Peter's Housing Committee, Chris Durazo from South of Market Community Action Network (SOMCAN), Tom Jackson and Ingrid Mariano Gonzales-Padilla from Coleman Advocates, Antonio Diaz and Oscar Grande from People Organized to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights (PODER), Alicia Schwartz and Jaron Browne from People Organized to Win Employment Rights (POWER), and Vanessa Moses, Robbie Clark and Magdalene Martinez from Just Cause Oakland.

We'd also like to thank the Right to the City alliance, a national alliance of community-based organizations working on displacement issues for their analysis help, their collective framework and for the great work they're doing to connect people across the country working on this important issue.

And special thanks goes out to Gihan Perera and the Miami Workers Center for helping us write the prologue, and to Jeff Smith of Media Mouse for his solid direction and support.

A special thanks to Roopa Singh, a NY-based,

artist, advocate and activist, for graciously contributing her poetry to this content analysis.

Project Coordination, Research Design, Analysis and Report-Writing: Karlos Schmieder, Jen Soriano, and Malkia Cyril—YMC

Coders: Maria Cristina Rangel, Michele Gutierrez, Samhita Mukhopadhyay, Le Conte Dill, Kusum Crimmel, Muey Saepanh, Illanito Turoff, Oshen Turman and Serena Huang.

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Organizational Information:

The Youth Media Council, is a member-driven media strategy and action center dedicated to creating a collaborative movement for racial justice and youth rights. Launched as an organization in 2002, we build the power of grassroots movements and disenfranchised communities to transform public debate and media policy in the service of justice.

Community Sources List

Coleman Advocates

www.colemanadvocates.org

Phone: 415 239 0161

Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth has become an extremely effective children's advocacy organization over the last 30 years, winning policy and budget victories that have tangibly improved the lives of tens of thousands of San Francisco's children, youth, and families. The results have been dramatic and long lasting, and have led Coleman to be a nationally recognized advocacy organization and a respected local powerhouse for kids.

Coleman has significantly expanded their commitment to grassroots parent and youth leadership, to build a much stronger voice for low and moderate-income families in San Francisco's local policy debates. Coleman is now comprised of two components: our advocacy and provider network called **Coleman Action Network**, and our membership, **Coleman Families**. Coleman Families, in turn, is comprised of three organizing committees: parents for education equity, parents for affordable family housing and Youth Making a Change (Y-MAC). In addition, the entire organization is working on the two crises leading to the exodus of working class families in San Francisco and why the city has the lowest

child population of all the major U.S. cities: the lack of affordable family housing and the state of our public schools.

Tom Jackson, Director of Organizing

415 239 0161, ext. 12

tjackson@colemanadvocates.org

Tom Jackson leads the Affordable Housing and Quality Schools campaigns for Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth. He is an experienced labor and community organizer who is now focused on organizing families to pressure City Hall for improved budget priorities and legislation to help poor and working-class families stay in San Francisco. Contact Tom for information about citywide strategies for affordable housing development and to talk to parents and youth about their vision for improving conditions in San Francisco's eastern and southeastern neighborhoods.

Ingrid Mariano Gonzales-Padilla, Ed.D., Development & Communications Director

415 239 0161, ext. 24

igonzales@colemanadvocates.org

Ingrid received her Doctorate in Education at the University of San Francisco's International & Multicultural Education Program with a minor in Organization and Leadership. Ingrid's

academic and professional background is deeply rooted in student and youth organizing, student retention in higher education, the disconnection of young adults, school and community partnerships, Asian American Studies and Pilipino American Studies. Contact Ingrid for information about citywide public school reform in San Francisco and to talk to youth or parents about why this issue is critical to their right to stay in the city.

People Organized to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights (PODER)

www.podersf.org

Phone: 415 431 4210

PODER is a grassroots, environmental justice organization based in San Francisco's Mission District. PODER's mission is to organize with Mission residents to work on local solutions to issues facing low income communities and communities of color. PODER believes that the solutions to community problems depend on the active participation of all people in decision-making processes.

Antonio Díaz, Director

415 431 4210

poder@igc.org

Antonio Díaz is the Project Director for PODER, Prior to joining PODER, Antonio was the Co-coordinator of the EcoJustice

Networking Project at the Institute for Global Communications in San Francisco. He currently serves on the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board of CorpWatch, the Board of Directors of the Center for Environmental Health and is the Board President of the Environmental Support Center in Washington, D.C. Contact Antonio for his expertise in environmental and health impacts that result from development policies. Antonio is bilingual and available for interviews in Spanish or English.

Oscar Grande, Community Organizer

415 431 4210

ogrande@podersf.org

Oscar Grande is the son of working-class Salvadoran immigrants, Emma and Oscar, who came to San Francisco in the late sixties in search of a better life for their kids. Born and raised in the Excelsior and Mission Districts of San Francisco, Oscar, along with his partner Cynthia, are raising their daughter Xiomara in the same neighborhood he grew up in. His work over the past couple of years has been focused on organizing Mission residents and workers against the displacement of low income Latino/as in the Mission District. In addition to developing grassroots leaders, Oscar has spent much time working alongside Mission youth to fight for their homes, jobs and community. Prior to PODER, he had worked for several years on the streets of the Mission Barrio outreaching to gang affiliated youth, connecting young men

and women with the vital resources needed in order to escape the cycle of violence found on the streets and at home. Contact Oscar as an expert in Mission land use issues and community solutions to problems of development and displacement issues, like PODER's work on the People's Plan for jobs, housing and community. Oscar is bilingual and available for interviews in Spanish or English.

People Organized to win Employment Rights (POWER)

www.Unite-to-fight.org

coming soon: www.peopleorganized.org

Phone: 415 864 8372

POWER is an organization made up of and led by no- and low-wage workers fighting for real change. We have united to fight against the people who defend the economic and social systems that are keeping us down. We will not sit silently while others profit from our poverty. As an organization of largely women and people of color, POWER connects its struggle with the struggle of other working people around the world who make up the backbone of the global economy. In order to build a movement that can change the world, no- and low-wage workers are creating organizations like POWER so that we can rid the world of poverty and oppression—once and for all.

Alicia Schwartz, Organizer

415 864 8372 ext. 302

alicia@peopleorganized.org

Born and raised in the Bay Area, Alicia's previous work includes youth organizing and other racial and economic justice organizing projects. She also has extensive experience organizing around issues of reproductive health justice and in peer education and leadership development. Currently, Alicia is a Lead Organizer on POWER's campaign to support residents of Bayview Hunters Point in their development and environmental struggles. Contact Alicia as an expert in BVHP development issues, and to broker relationships with community residents under threat of displacement.

Jaron Browne, Campaign Director

415 864 8372

jaron@peopleorganized.org

Jaron has been an organizer with POWER since 2002, working in the welfare rights organizing project and the Bayview Justice Organizing Project. Before joining POWER, he did organizing and campaign research with youth and community organizations against racism in the criminal justice system. Jaron was trained as an organizer in Los Angeles at the Labor/Community Strategy Center's National School for Strategic Organizing. His writing has been published in the journal *Race, Poverty, and the Environment*, and the book *Criminal Injustice: Confronting the Prison Crisis*, by

South End Press. Contact Jaron for his expertise in actual conditions for families and communities living under the threat of displacement. Jaron is bilingual and available for interviews in Spanish or English.

Just Cause Oakland

www.justcauseoakland.org

Phone: 510 763 5877

Founded in 2000, JUST CAUSE OAKLAND (JCO) is a membership-based organization building a powerful voice for Oakland's low-income tenants and workers. Our mission is to create a just and diverse city and region by organizing Oakland residents to advocate for housing and jobs as human rights, and to mobilize for policies that produce social and economic justice in low-income communities of color.

Vanessa Moses, Organizer

510 763 5877

Vanessa@justcauseoakland.org

In January of 2006, Vanessa joined the Just Cause staff as Organizer. In the Bay, Vanessa became active with several community and political organizations, including the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, Generation Five, and the Center for Political Education, working for racial justice, against the criminal (in)justice system and for transformative justice. She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1999, and was trained as an organizer at the

National School for Strategic Organizing with the Labor/Community Strategy Center and Bus Riders Union in Los Angeles. Contact Vanessa for affordable housing, zoning, budget and displacement issues in Oakland.

Magdalene Martinez, Organizer

510 763 5877

Magdalene@justcauseoakland.org

Magdalene is an organizer at Just Cause Oakland. She began social justice work at FIERCE, a youth LGTB, member-based organization in NYC. She was a SOUL intern last summer where she had the opportunity to work with organizations like St. Peter's Housing Committee, a housing and immigrant right organization in San Francisco and She graduated from St. John's University with a degree in Psychology. She worked with youth and adults in the educational and mental health field for 5 years. Contact Magdalene as a resource to broker relationships with community residents living under threat of displacement. Magdalene is bilingual and available for interviews in Spanish or English.

St. Peter's Housing

www.comitevivienda.org

Phone: 415 348 1945

Since 1985, St. Peter's Housing Committee has worked in the mission district of San Francisco, CA, to help working class immigrant Latin@

tenants to build collective power, preserve and expand affordable housing and immigrant rights, prevent displacement and improve living conditions in our community through tenant rights counseling, political organizing, movement building, and the development of leadership within the communities we serve.

Guadalupe Arreola

lupe@comitedevivienda.org

Jazmin Barrera

jazmin@comitevivienda.org

415 348 1945

St. Peter's Housing Committee staff consists of an exciting team. We are community workers, six full-time and two part-time. We are all women. Four of us joined the staff after being clients and members of the organization. We come from Argentina, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Mexico. Our age range is between 20-something and 60-something. We are queer and straight. We are high school graduates, college graduates, and graduates from the school of daily struggle. We are immigrants and we were born here. We speak English, Spanish, and Maya. Some of us have worked for social justice for decades, and some of us have done our first work of that sort at this organization.

We are mothers, daughters, sisters, and aunts. We participate actively in our communities in many ways beyond our organization's work—as artists, activists, parishioners, athletes, Aztec

dancers and freedom fighters. Contact us for viable community solutions to the lack of affordable housing in SF. St Peter's Housing is a bilingual organization, and their staff is available for interviews in Spanish or English.

South Of Market Community Action Network

www.somcan.org

415 348 1945

The mission of SOMCAN is to build and support a strong, organized community that takes collective action to achieve equity for the low-income, people of color, immigrant and working class communities in the South of Market through organizing, leadership development and community planning.

Chris Durazo, Community Planning Program Director

415 348 1945

cdurazo@somcan.org

Contact Chris for information on SF planning processes and bodies, and her expertise and relationships in the South of Market.

Miami Workers Center

www.miamiworkerscenter.org

phone: 305 759 8717

The Miami Workers Center is a strategy and action center that builds the collective strength

of working class and poor Black and Latino communities in Miami. We work to increase the power and self-determination of these communities by initiating and supporting community-led grassroots organizations that confront the critical social issues of our time: poverty, racism, and gender oppression. We achieve this by building the broadest and deepest base among our constituencies; developing the strategic and tactical leadership capacity of low-income Blacks and Latinos; shifting the public debate around issues impacting our communities; and building coalitions and alliances that enable us to amplify our power and message.

Gihan Perera

305 759 8717 ext 1008

gihan@theworkerscenter.org

Gihan co-founded the Miami Workers Center together with Tony Romano in 1999. Gihan is a native of Sri Lanka and grew up in South Los Angeles. Prior to founding the Center Gihan was a union organizer, leading union recognition and contract agreement campaigns in Miami, South, and North Carolina. He began his activism at an early age and became a trainer and recruitment director for the AFL-CIO's Organizing Institute before completing college work. He is also a recognized strategist, published writer, and public speaker. Contact Gihan for insightful analysis of the harmful human impacts that arise from corporate development and real estate speculation.

Right to the City Alliance

www.righttothecity.org

phone: 212 473 3032

Right to the City offers a framework for resistance and a vision for a city that meets the needs of working class people. It connects our fights against gentrification and displacement to other local and international struggles for human rights, land, and democracy.

We are coming together under a common framework to increase the strength of our community organizations and our collective power. Our goal is to build a national urban movement for housing, education, health, racial justice and democracy.

Valerie Taing

212 473 3032

vtaing@righttothecity.org

Valerie is the staff organizer for the Right to the City Alliance. She is based in New York City, and housed out of the CAAAV office there. Contact Valerie Taing for nationalizing local stories, and a bird's eye view of what's going on around the country.

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Youth Media Council
1611 Telegraph Avenue
Suite 510
Oakland, CA 94612
p: 510-444-0640
f: 510-251-9810
e: info@youthmediacouncil.org