REVISITING THE HIPPIE GHETTO
A 50 YEAR, FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF A CAMPUS-ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOOD

By

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
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REVISITING THE HIPPIE GHETTO:
A 50 YEAR, FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF A CAMPUS ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOOD

By

Jane L. Wilson

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Chair: Randall Cantrell
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Campus adjacent neighborhoods are home to a notoriously transient, mobile population.
This is one reason for the lack in data on student populations, or the spaces with which they
adopt and identify. This study is intended to fill this gap in the literature by providing an analysis
of who the students are, what they want from housing, and how they are responding to the rapid
redevelopment of Gainesville. Through the comparison of current data to data collected in 1968,
this study intends to conduct a longitudinal analysis of a campus-adjacent neighborhood.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

There is a growing worldwide trend of universities increasing enrollment without increasing student housing capacity. This is a particularly serious issue with large public universities, which cannot afford to house as many of their students, and are at the mercy of state and federal funding grants (Sage, 2011). Gainesville, Florida has experienced a consistent increase in student housing needs.

The purpose of this study is to conduct a comparative analysis of the neighborhood known as “the Hippie Ghetto,” using the qualitative data obtained 50 years ago by William Partridge. When the original analysis was conducted, there was scant literature regarding the residential patterns of university students and the effects of these patterns on communities. However, during the past 20 years a body of literature has been developing that specifically addresses these issues. The term applied to this phenomenon is “studentification” (Sage, 2011).

“Studentification is characterized by the simultaneous expansion of higher education and deregulation of the housing system, often leading to physical transformation and residential turnover as students occupy private rental housing in increasing numbers” (Laidley, 2014, pp. 753). One purpose of this study is to analyze different public university town development strategies, and how they have impacted their communities. There is scant literature on this, especially in the United States.

Campus-adjacent neighborhoods are home to a notoriously transient, mobile population. This is one reason for the lack in data on student populations, or the spaces with which they adopt and identify (Sage, 2011). This study is intended to fill this gap in the literature by providing an analysis of who the students are, what they want from housing, and how they are responding to the rapid redevelopment of Gainesville.
Purpose of Study

This study will focus on the redevelopment of certain areas of Gainesville, Florida. A secondary focus will be to gain knowledge about the history of the communities that are subject to redevelopment. Gainesville has a rich heritage and a unique culture. Some of the low-income neighborhoods near the university are especially steeped in history. Many of the houses that have been converted into student housing are more than 100 years old. These houses have their own character and histories, as do the neighborhoods in which they are located. These campus-adjacent areas are undergoing rapid redevelopment, and the physical structures are changing.

This study will examine the history of Gainesville’s campus-adjacent neighborhoods and will build on this foundation to expand studentification studies to Gainesville, Florida. By exploring the student housing patterns in Gainesville, and interviewing stakeholders and students about these patterns, this study will explore the roles of agents and victims of studentification. In doing so, three research questions will be answered.

1. Has the community identity of the Hippie Ghetto remained the same for the past 50 years? (The working hypothesis is that the Hippie Ghetto will have changed substantially.)

2. Have the community values of the Hippie Ghetto remained the same for the past 50 years?

3. (The working hypothesis is that the community values will not have changed substantially over the past 50 years.

4. How do the residents feel their values are being represented by the current community redevelopment process of Gainesville? (The working hypothesis is that the residents feel that their values are not being represented by the current redevelopment process of Gainesville.)

These questions will be answered by analyzing the community values, identity and perspectives, as independent variables.
The purpose of this study is to review the history of some of the areas of Gainesville under redevelopment, and to learn more about the priorities and opinions of the stakeholders as well as the residents. Gainesville is rapidly developing, and the gentrification of central areas of town has taken on unique characteristics of Studentification. Though there is an emerging body of literature regarding the issue of studentification, there is a limited amount of knowledge about the subject, especially in the USA. Of the recent studies conducted regarding this issue, none reflected student opinions or what they value most in housing.

Thus, one major gap in the studentification literature is the lack of knowledge about students (Nakazawa, 2017). How can we draw conclusions about student housing without hearing from the actual students? Studies have been conducted that examine the geography of student residential patterns while others have interviewed community stakeholders (Allinson, 2006; Gumprecht, 2006). However, there has yet to be a study that comprehensively represents the attitudes and values of the existing residential populations undergoing the process of studentification. By obtaining qualitative data about the residents of these Gainesville neighborhoods, this study will extend knowledge and suggest possible implications to consider when about developing these, and perhaps other similar, communities.

Significance

There is clearly a gap in the studentification literature, regarding the perspectives of actual students. Further, most of the research conducted in this discipline has been geographical or a short-term case study. Conducting a 50-year, follow-up study of the neighborhood identified by Partridge as “the Hippie Ghetto,” could yield novel and valuable information about the long-term effects of studentification (Partridge, 1973).

This study is significant because it will enhance the underdeveloped areas of the studentification literature. It will examine and explore the culture of a historic student ghetto, and
compare data collected 50 years ago with current observations. The researcher has a unique perspective on this topic because she has been experiencing the issues as both a stakeholder (a landlord) and a student living in a campus-adjacent, dilapidated student neighborhood, for several years.

This research will be useful for the redevelopment process of Gainesville because the Hippie Ghetto is a historic neighborhood that is currently undergoing major redevelopment. The proposed plans of both the city of Gainesville and the University of Florida seem to consider this area a blighted slum, and plan to remove it in favor of purpose-built student housing. However, recent studies have indicated that the results of de-studentification of historically student-driven neighborhoods can have adverse effects both socially and economically (Kinton, 2016). De-studentification describes the process of neighborhoods being vacated by previously consistent student populations when large-scale, purpose-built student housing is introduced. To fully understand the topics discussed here, definitions of specific terms should be addressed. In the next section, some of the key terms used in explaining this research will be defined.

**Key Terms Defined**

- **College-town:** Gainesville is an excellent example of a college town. The university represents the main employer of the residents, and controls many of the local assets. Gumprecht explains that a college-town is “any city where a college or university and the cultures that it creates exert a dominant influence over the character of the town” (Gumprecht, 2003, pp.51).

- **Community Redevelopment:** The Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency defines this term as “the publicly-financed rebuilding of an urban, residential or commercial area. Redevelopment is one of the most effective ways to breathe new life into deteriorated areas plagued by social, physical, environmental or economic conditions that act as a barrier to new investment by private enterprise” (GCRA, 2016).

- **Gentrification:** a term commonly applied to certain processes of urban redevelopment, usually in low-income areas. The process can result in displacement of existing populations. “Classical gentrification is understood as the rehabilitation of central city dilapidated working-class housing by middle-class affluent gentrifiers and the consequent
displacement of the poorer, working-class residents from the neighborhood” (Benton, 2014, pp.1).

- **Stakeholder:** The term stakeholder can refer to an individual, group or organization that has a vested interest in the neighborhood such as local business owner, or landlord. Bromley conceptualized universities as infringing on stakeholder status: “Faced with the reality that they cannot move, many colleges and universities have increasingly come to see themselves as ‘local stakeholders’—institutions which have an enlightened self-interest not only in improving their own campuses, but also in improving the neighborhoods around their campuses and in strengthening the economy and image of their municipalities and regions” (Bromley, 2006, pp. 11).

- **Studentification:** A specific type of gentrification, which is characterized by large numbers of transient students, living off campus, in close by communities. The term describes “the growth of high concentrations of students within the localities of colleges and universities, often accommodated within [districts that have a high concentration] of houses in multiple occupation (HMO)” (Universities UK, 2006).
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF CURRENT LITERATURE

As universities and colleges continue to house fewer of their students, and continue to increase enrollment numbers, large numbers of students seek affordable housing in campus-adjacent neighborhoods. The privatization of student housing has resulted in a myriad of implications for both students, and the communities in which they reside (Laidley, 2014).

The review of literature began with seeking knowledge about studies conducted on campus-adjacent neighborhoods, and “student ghettos.” One of the earliest studies, of this kind, was conducted by William Partridge. He conducted an ethnographic case study of the student ghetto in Gainesville, Florida, in which he studied the subculture of the students and “hippies” who lived there. He titled this specific neighborhood the “Hippie Ghetto” because he thought the title “student ghetto” failed to adequately represent the residents, as many of them were young people who were no longer students.

Partridge conducted research from 1967 to 1968, and published his findings in a book named after the neighborhood (Partridge, 1973). This study was ahead of its time in many ways. It was not until the 1990s that a body of literature began to develop on the residential patterns of college students. As college enrollment increases, the effects of high populations of students residing off campus are becoming increasingly noticeable in communities around the world.

Geographies of Student Housing

Much of the research conducted on campus-adjacent neighborhoods is performed in the field of geography (Nakazawa, 2017). In “Fraternity row, the student ghetto, and the faculty enclave: Characteristic residential districts in the American college town,” researcher Blake Gumprecht examined the different residential districts that tend to develop around college campuses. Though many urban centers have different types of boroughs that develop over time,
college towns have their own unique developmental styles (Gumprecht, 2006). Gumprecht described the origins and development of three distinctly different types of residential communities: fraternity row, the student ghetto and the faculty enclave.

By collecting observations and data in Ithaca, New York, Gumprecht provided detailed descriptions of each type of neighborhood and the historical origins leading to its current state. He described the student ghetto as being “characterized by dilapidated houses, beat-up couches, cars parked on lawns, and bicycles chained to anything that won’t move. It is the result of what happened...when enrollments mushroomed following World War II: colleges became less able to house their students, landlords saw an opportunity” (Gumprecht, 2006, P. 15).

The implications of Gumprecht’s 2006 research extend beyond the town of Ithaca, because he could generalize his findings to explain similar situations in other college towns. He even was able to compare the redevelopment policy of these areas. “Neighborhoods such as University Hill in Boulder, Colorado; College Park in Gainesville, Florida; and the College town in Ithaca are locally notorious and the frequent subject of proposals by government officials seeking to control their spread and improve their appearance” (Gumprecht, 2006, P. 15).

Gumprecht’s work regarding college towns has inspired many other studies to examine the effects of large populations of off-campus students on campus-adjacent neighborhoods (Laidley, 2014; Powell, 2013; Martinez, 2012).

**The Impact of Student Populations on Communities**

Though the number of students living off campus continues to increase, so does the body of literature regarding the effects of student populations on existing populations. In 2006 John Allinson conducted a study to discover new information about the residential and migratory patterns of students, and to analyze the effect these patterns have on cities and communities. By interviewing stakeholders and landlords (within the student housing market), the author drew
interesting conclusions about why student housing is clustered as it is, and how it affects the general population.

Respondents reported many consistent issues that they associated with off-campus student housing in residential communities. These issues included burglaries, late-night noise, litter, displacement of original populations and summer vacancy. Allinson explained “the driving out of the indigenous population is reported as a matter of regret by some stakeholders. Typically, tensions arise due to conflicting lifestyles and those that are able to, move out, leaving a ‘monoculture’. Moving out is, to some extent, a matter of choice, and householders will have received a good price for their house (Allinson, 2006, P. 87).” The stakeholders in the housing market acknowledged the issue of displacement of existing populations, but this issue deserves more than an acknowledgement.

Community perspectives on student housing development vary extensively between stakeholders and existing populations. A study conducted in Athens, Georgia explored the redevelopment of a mobile-home community that was replaced with luxury student housing (Pickren, 2012). Low-income renters could not compete with students, and developers were not interested in building more low-income housing. Many of the people in the park owned their homes, but not the land they were living on.

It was incredibly expensive to relocate the mobile homes, so many previous residents ended up losing their home because they could not afford to relocate it. . The majority of participants thought that the process should have been conducted in a different, more equitable process. The redevelopment of the existing community led to displacement of hundreds of people, many of whom had owned their homes. Pickren concluded that “taking a critical stance towards gentrification or studentification may be the only means to find some third way between
the disinvestment and decay of neighborhoods, on the one hand, and gentrification and displacement on the other, that are positions as the only choices for low-income families” (Pickren, 2012, pp. 16). This is an important point that needs to be further explored. Redevelopment policy rarely considers the displacement of low-income residents until it has already happened. Further research is needed to explore options for compromise.

This study introduced an interesting idea regarding whether off-campus student housing developments could be more detrimental for the community than student ghettos. Low-income neighborhoods are targets for redevelopment, and when developers demolish entire blocks for student-apartment complexes, they must consider what existed on the lot before.

Another study that examined the impact of student housing on low-income families was conducted by Thomas Laidley in 2014. In his study “The Privatization of College Housing: Poverty Affordability, and the U.S. Public University” Laidley found that the effects of students on neighborhoods included rising rent costs, and increased poverty rates. This can have negative impacts on the community as well as students. Students are forced to pay more for accommodations close to campus, and historic populations are driven out because they cannot justify or afford the expense of increased rent. Laidley said, “the effects of college students on poverty rates are not only concerns with respect to policy and service provisioning but also issues with respect to how we view and measure the conditions of urban areas in the United States” (Laidley, 2014, P. 762). We must be able to accurately assess the issues in urban areas in order to improve them.

**Studentification**

The effects of students on campus-adjacent communities have become so noticeable that a term has emerged to describe the type of gentrification that can happen to these neighborhoods. The term “studentification” refers to the process of entire areas being taken over by off-campus
student populations. Scholars in the United Kingdom (UK) began using this term in the 2000s (Smith, 2005). Since then, this term has been used worldwide to discuss the impacts of ever-increasing, off-campus populations in college towns (Ackermann & Visser, 2016).

Darren Smith is one of the prominent scholars in this field. He formally introduced the term in his chapter “’Studentification’: the gentrification factory?” in which he dissects the process and defines how it differs from traditional gentrification. Smith explains that there are four dimensions of studentification: economic, social, cultural and physical (Smith, 2005, P.75).

The economic dimension refers to the inflation of property values and rental rates, in areas with high student populations. Smith explains that the economic effects of studentification can range from conversion of previous businesses to student-geared chain bars and restaurants to the restructuring of housing markets. The social effects of studentification include existing populations being displaced, and new social patterns emerging. The cultural dimension refers to the social patterns and consumption practices of the students. The physical effects of studentification can result in either the upgrade or disintegration of the physical environment (Smith, 2005).

Other studies have built on Smith’s definitions of the different dimensions of this process. Laidley employed this framework to expand on the physical effects of the increase in student housing. He explains that “studentification is characterized by the simultaneous expansion of higher education and deregulation of the housing system, often leading to physical transformation and residential turnover as students occupy private rental housing in increasing numbers” (Laidley, 2014, P.753).

**Impact on Students**

The impacts of studentification are not limited to the existing community. The students are heavily impacted by the dynamics of student housing redevelopment. They are forced to pay
higher rents for lower-quality housing due to their reliance on being near the university. Quality of housing has a direct impact on quality of health (Johnson, Cole & Merrill, 2009).

When William Partridge first described the student ghetto in Gainesville, Florida, he documented the physical characteristics of the housing units of the residents in the student ghetto, as well as some of the reasons for the acceptance of such unsuitable housing.

He first described the area as “a deteriorating low-rent section” of town (P. 1). He explained the student ghetto was located in “a fringe area characterized by seedy apartments and dilapidated houses” with “evidence of decaying grandeur mixed with signs of the urban slum marking the neighborhood” (P. 4). He briefly describes some of the specific problems with the student housing: “Peeling paint, rotten porches and steps, clogged plumbing, paper-thin walls and doors, and flaking, gouged plaster are normal...Repairs are temporary and therefore a constant problem” (P.7). Partridge made these observations nearly 50 years ago, but from a preliminary follow-up investigation of the same neighborhood, the quality of historic student dwellings has not changed significantly. Though “peeling paint and rotten porches” may have been acceptable to the residents in 1967, both of those can now result in fines for residential code-enforcement infractions (Gumprecht, 2006).

However, they are still accepted characteristics in some of the off-campus student housing. Partridge said that the residents dealt with the terrible living conditions because the landlords would lower rents to avoid dealing with problems, and the residents of the student ghetto were so transient that they were rarely around long enough to complain (Partridge, 1973). Poor housing conditions have proved to be a consistent problem facing college students (Partridge, 1973; Gumprecht, 2006; Johnson, Cole & Merrill, 2009). Unsuitable housing can

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1 Which in this time period was lead-based paint
cause health problems. A more recent study, “Environmental health risks associated with off-campus student-tenant housing,” investigated the health and safety risks to college students living in rented housing. Researchers collected data from 1,959 students at Brigham Young University about their housing conditions and health problems (Johnson, Cole & Merrill, 2009). The scholars conducting the study explained that housing is an important factor in determining health and risk of disease. Their findings indicated that students renting off-campus housing experienced a myriad of health problems related to poor housing conditions. They found no difference in results based on rental bracket, indicating that paying a higher rent does not prevent students from having to deal with these types of problems (Johnson, Cole & Merrill, 2009).

A social-work scholar, Kathleen Powell, conducted a study in 2013 concerning the social, economic and physical aspects of a campus-adjacent neighborhood in a college town in Appalachia. Her study incorporated the social work perspective, which yielded rich and valuable results regarding the social issues facing the neighborhoods. She conducted interviews with a variety of stakeholders in the neighborhoods, and her findings indicated that there were many conflicts of interest at play (Powell, 2014). Her study was a major inspiration for this current research, and will inform the research methodology as well as the background literature. The only component lacking in her study was a more thorough representation of the student perspective.

**Gaps in Literature**

Though there has been a plethora of recent research on student geographies, residential redevelopment and studentification, the students’ perspective has not been well represented. Some studies, such as the one conducted by Johnson, Cole and Merrill, synthesize survey data from students. That is a good start, but there is a need for student opinions and values to be represented in the studentification literature.
The gaps in the studentification literature are perhaps best explained by Takashi Nakazawa in “Expanding the scope of studentification studies”. In his 2017 study, he explains the recent history and development of studentification literature.

An understanding of studentification results in exaggerations of students' agency. Instead, the root of studentification is the inevitable overflow of student populations as a result of expansion of higher education, and student migrants have little choice but to live close to universities. Students are often regarded as marginal and nuisance population groups and are homogeneously treated and controlled by the urban planning legislation. Future studies should overcome the newcomers- versus- previous- residents framework inherited from gentrification studies (Nakazawa, 2017, P. 8).

Nakazawa is a scholar of geography, but he highlights the need for more social research on the issues relating to studentification. Most previous studies have assumed that students are making conscious real-estate and housing choices, when they are usually emerging adults that typically react to their immediate options. To fully understand the process of studentification we need to understand how and why students endeavor to endure the housing situations they do.
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN

In 1967, William Partridge collected data from the population residing in the student ghetto near the University of Florida (UF). This study will revisit the neighborhood Partridge identified as the “Hippie Ghetto.” This neighborhood is now subject to major redevelopment.

Conducting a 50-year, follow-up study in the same neighborhood would expand on Partridge’s findings and provide information that could be useful for the equitable redevelopment of Gainesville (Partridge, 1973).

This study will compare data collected from two distinct groups: the residents, and the stakeholders. It will compare the values, opinions and perspectives of these two groups, regarding the redevelopment of the campus-adjacent communities in Gainesville, Florida.

Previous studies pertaining to campus-adjacent communities primarily have focused on the opinions of stakeholders, but this study intends to reveal the voices of the residents within the neighborhood as well as the stakeholders in charge of redevelopment (Nakazawa, 2017; Powell, 2013). The goal of this study is to provide a more holistic view of the current situation.

The use of semi-structured interviews is important because qualitative analysis can yield results beyond those of a survey. For example, residents could have unique and important perspectives about their neighborhood that a survey question might fail to capture. By talking to participants and allowing them to respond in an open-ended fashion, this study will attempt to reflect the voices and views of the community surrounding UF (and hopefully other university communities in similar situations).

The population of this study consists of residents and stakeholders in campus-adjacent neighborhoods near UF. Participants varied from 18-year-old college freshmen to retired professors who live in the neighborhood. For the purpose of this study, no one younger than the
age of 18 was permitted to be interviewed. To gain a well-rounded perspective on the state of the neighborhood, data was collected from both temporary residents who live in the neighborhood and persons in charge of its redevelopment.

The snowball method was used to recruit participants. Snowball sampling is defined, in *A Dictionary of Social Research Methods*, as “a method of non-probability sampling where the respondents are themselves used to recruit further respondents from their social networks. This method is often used where no sample frame exists and the population of interest is a hard-to-reach group” (Elliot, Fairweather, Olsen & Pampaka, n.d.). The residents of student ghettos are a highly transient, difficult-to-locate, population. The snowball method is useful in situations such as this because researchers can identify multiple participants through the location of just a few key informants (Tenhouten, 2017). Key informants connect the researcher with other potential participants.

There are certain houses within these campus-adjacent neighborhoods that have become somewhat locally famous. In Partridge’s initial observations of Gainesville, Florida in 1967, he noted that many of the old houses had names by which they were known to local residents (Partridge, 1973). These houses would be a good place to start the snowball sampling method. By connecting with a key informant from each house, other participants could be recruited. Examples include, the Teal House, The Doll House, The Hotel Majestic, Mr. House, The Porch, Whiskeywood Chapel, etc. Key informants were identified at each of these houses who were willing to connect the researcher with other participants.

**Instrumentation**

Data was collected using semi-structured interviews. Participants were asked to identify key issues that they feel are impacting their neighborhood, and how much each issue concerns them. Another portion of the interview specifically addressed housing problems, and how
frequently the participant experienced them. Housing problems include: mold, pest infestation, plumbing problems, etc. Several studies have used surveys regarding the problems that concerned neighborhood residents in college towns, but few have incorporated interviews with students (Johnson, Cole & Merrill, 2009; Powell, 2014).

The semi-structured interviews comprised questions to determine participants’ role within the community, and how they feel about their housing situation and neighborhood. The questions in the interviews were loosely based on an interview guide developed by Kathleen Powell, which was used to interview participants in a campus-adjacent neighborhood about their lives and living situations (Powell, 2013).

**Data Collection Plan**

The interview guide underwent preliminary testing prior to data collection. It was subjected to peer review by academics and practitioners. Once the instrument had been pretested, and IRB approval had been obtained, key informants were asked to participate.

Using snowball sampling, key informants connected researchers with additional participants as well as providing data themselves. Data was collected during spring 2018, which was exactly 50 years after Partridge collected his data in the same location (Partridge, 1973). Though ideally this study would have allowed researchers to spend more time in the neighborhoods, time constraints presented challenges in doing so. Spring semester is a good time for data collection because student neighborhoods often are said to reinvent themselves every fall (Powell, 2013). During the summer, college towns become less active. Most of the apartment leases in these areas renew in August. Thus, data should have been, and was, collected between August 2017 and May 2018.

Data was collected through brief interviews which required fewer than 30 minutes to complete. Interviews were recorded, and the researcher took brief notes as necessary. Interviews
were conducted in locations where participants felt most comfortable. If they wanted to answer questions in their office, or at home, that was fine.

**Data Analysis Plan**

This is a qualitative study. Interviews were recorded, and immediately after the interview the researcher wrote down initial field notes. All notes and recordings were stored in a UF password-protected One-Drive folder. Participants were ensured anonymity.

Interviews were transcribed and coded for themes and keywords. As key themes emerge from interviews, they were categorized accordingly. For example, if several people mentioned the same neighborhood issue and shared their opinions about it, that issue then become a category.

**Limitations**

There are several limitations associated with qualitative methods. It is more difficult to ensure validity and reliability, but it is easier to represent the opinions and perspectives when sampling individuals. The purpose of this study is to convene the various perspectives from within the neighborhood, which can only be done by listening to the actual voices of the people. This is why qualitative methods were employed for this study.

There have already been many quantitative studies conducted on campus-adjacent neighborhoods, and a few qualitative ones, but still the perspectives of the students are not well documented in the literature regarding studentification (Powell, 2013; Nakazawa, 2017).

Ideally, this study would be able to sample an entire year of life in the student ghetto, but unfortunately there were substantial time constraints. This study would benefit from a longer data-collection time frame, but unfortunately that was not feasible. Another possible limitation to this study, in attempt to adhere to the highest academic standards of integrity and transparency, is that the researcher is a resident of the Hippie Ghetto, in which the interviews were conducted.
Thus, there might be an element of bias, but the researcher adhered to the interview guide was without deviation.
CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS

Interviews were conducted during spring semester 2018. The sample of participants was composed of residents of campus-adjacent neighborhoods and local business owners. It was difficult to gain access to the population desired for the study. The locals, who have been residents of this area for a longer duration of time, tend to keep to themselves and avoid strangers.

Initially, the desire was to interview a sample of landlords. However, it was learned through this study that landlords can be even more transient than their tenants. One of the few landlords interviewed explained how difficult it was for him to manage several properties in different residential areas. He felt he was never stationed in one place. For this and several other reasons, data was primarily collected from residents rather than landlords as shown in Table 1.

The sample consisted of 16 participants. Of those, 13(81%) were white, and 3(19%) were of other ethnicity. Their ages ranged from 20 to 50 years old. Thirty-one percent of respondents were students at UF.

After each interview, field notes were compiled about aspects of the conversation that might have been missed during the interview recordings. The interview recordings were transcribed and then subjected to several rounds of qualitative data analysis in the form of coding. A priori codes, ones that were determined before data analysis, were used first. These included simple themes such as "neighborhood issues" or "neighborhood assets". The second round of coding used themes that emerged from the data. Several unexpected categories emerged, including "relationship struggles in college towns."
Findings

The primary goal of this study was to examine a historic campus-adjacent neighborhood to expand studentification research to Gainesville, Florida. To accomplish this goal, several research questions were outlined in the hopes that their answers would provide some clarity about how neighborhoods can be affected by the long-term presence of off-campus student housing.

Neighborhood Change over Time

The first research question addressed by this study was in regard to how the neighborhood of the Hippie Ghetto has changed over time. The results of this study indicated that the unique identity of this historic neighborhood has been somewhat preserved, but is in danger of being lost. In 2017, Nathan Foote published a study in which he examined residential neighborhoods in college towns, and how they have expanded over time. The maps generated in his analysis depicted how residential housing was spreading and growing, as well as the type of housing that was being built. Figure 4-1 shows that Gainesville’s residential housing market has changed substantially since 1980. The area that this study focuses on, the historic Hippie Ghetto, is located in the small blue area entitled "mix/renter." As can be seen from the maps, the elite housing market (brownish/orange) has grown rapidly, while the middle class (green) and mixed neighborhood (blue) areas have lagged behind.

Community Values and Identity

Some of the community values identified in 1967 are still prevalent today. During both periods of data collection spanning these 50 years, civil unrest was on the rise. Partridge describes the civil-rights movement and how it escalated the hippie movement and fueled its ideologies. Similarly, in 2018 Gainesville experienced freedom-of-speech issues when an alleged white supremacist won an overturned petition to speak on the UF campus, an individual was
permitted to walk freely on the UF campus while displaying a Nazi swastika armband, and protests occurred regarding the removal of a Confederate statue.

In his initial 1967 investigation of this neighborhood, William Partridge described the community values of the residents. He explained that the population of the Hippie Ghetto “value isolation from the larger American society. The decaying mansions of an earlier period in the history of University City [Gainesville] provide the hippies with isolation from the bustling, growing duplexes, suburbs, apartment complexes, tract housing projects and trailer parks which mark the growth of urban America” (Partridge, p.65). Isolation from mainstream American society is still a visible value of this neighborhood.

Another value he observed was that of transience. “Opportunities which wax and wane in response to the annual changes in the academic calendar of the State University necessarily cause residents of the ghetto to be highly mobile” (Partridge, p.66). This value has remained strong for at least 50 years. The values of isolation and mobility have paved the way for a “do-it-yourself (DIY) culture,” the physical manifestations of which are clearly visible throughout the neighborhood. In the 1960’s, the residents of this area were able to organize and develop their community identity. However, after conducting research in 2018, the residents seem more concerned with survival.

The first interview from this current research was conducted with a semi-long-term resident, named John, who worked as a chef at a sorority house. He was employed by UF and has lived in the neighborhood, affectionately known as “Taco Heights,” for four years. This area of the historic Hippie Ghetto is now called "Taco Heights" because a Taco Bell drive-through restaurant operates in close vicinity to the houses. John’s house is named “Mr. House,” and has become a part-time music venue and full-time art installation. Mr. House has been the venue for
many “house punk”\textsuperscript{1} shows. John has been the unofficial property manager for his house for the duration of his time living there. When asked how many roommates he had seen come and go during the years he has been there, he replied: "easily 20, probably more." Four people currently share his three-bedroom house and its one bathroom. John provided a wonderful description of the DIY mentality and culture that is observed in this neighborhood.

“\textit{It somehow makes it more homey when you do it all yourself. I do most everything myself. I built this wall myself out of some scrap wood. We put up these walls, put up this door. I put in the ac}^{2} \textit{unit.}"

Unfortunately, this DIY mentality seemed to emerge from the absence of property maintenance by John’s landlord. He explained “The fence fell down and they didn’t fix it for a few months. For several months straight I didn’t have a bedroom window. A tree fell down and a limb went through the window. I put a tarp up and made a maintenance request. They closed the request a few months later without fixing anything! They park their repair vehicles in my side yard and don’t repair anything!” Fortunately, John is a perfect example of how people can overcome this type of adversity and can turn the forced responsibility of property maintenance into an enjoyable, creative skill.

Figure 4-2 shows John’s following description of his alternative living space. “\textit{This is my tiny house. It’s been a slow project of mine. It’s got a little TV, it’s air-conditioned, and it’s my hangout spot. Everything has been found or given to me; all I bought was the trailer and the screws. It cost me about 500$ to build}.”

\textsuperscript{1} A house punk show refers to an unregulated musical performance in a residential unlicensed venue.

\textsuperscript{2} Air conditioner
Housing Problems

John’s story of absentee landlords letting the property degrade is fairly typical of property management in the student ghetto. When it comes to college housing, it is difficult to determine who is responsible for the rapid decay of the neighborhoods. Absentee landlords do little to improve the properties, providing transient tenants opportunity to take advantage of the lack of supervision so they can do as they choose to the property.

Sam is a property manager for a local company that sells and rents to college students. He estimated his company caters to a customer base comprising "at least 90% students. What we usually get are well-to-do, wealthier South Floridians.” He described the problems with renting to the students by explaining “they don’t have a sense of value for their surroundings. Maintenance is hard in general, but it feels like we’re fighting this constant state of decay. I think real estate in a college town is a lot different from places without universities.” Luxury student housing has its own set of problems, apart from those associated with studentification and student ghettos. When young college students are not renting residences with their own money, they have even less interest in preserving their space.

During the data analysis, the term “slumlord” emerged as an overarching theme of the interviews. Participants who were renters felt powerless to demand better maintenance. Beth has lived in Gainesville most of her life. She works downtown and does not drive, which has made the campus adjacent areas, near downtown, her home for the past decade. When asked if she’s had any negative landlord experiences, she recounted a time when she and her partner hasn’t been able to occupy their own space due to landlord negligence. “The people above us left their water on and there was water pouring through the ceiling. We came home one day and it was drenched. It was an old wooden two story house, it seemed like the appliances could have fallen through the floor. Even after we turned the water off we were worried stuff would come crashing
through the ceiling. We moved all our stuff away from where the water damage was. The landlord didn’t get back to us for days.” She described this landlord as a “slumlord,” but said that she ended up renting from him for a while following the incident, because he kept the rent low.

Amelia and David are a young couple living near campus while Amelia works on her degree at UF. They have been renting a small historic house for several years. When asked about their satisfaction with property maintenance, David replied, “it would be nice if the landlords took just a month out of the year to work a bit on the property. The windows are painted shut, they are single pane, there's no chance of energy conservation. They refuse to replace the doors, and it's impossible to seal the old broken doors. The lack of energy efficiency is just ridiculous, especially when compared to the price of utilities.” David and Amelia like their house and their location, and David's experience with property maintenance and landscaping have allowed them to do most of the work themselves to keep their residence in reasonable working condition. However, the state of their property is symptomatic of a larger housing issue. In the short period of time during which data was collected for this study, there was a drought in Florida, and many of these old wooden homes caught fire as shown in Figure 4-3.

Financial Stress

Most participants were less concerned with the dilapidated maintenance of their buildings and more anxious about rising rent costs. Gentrification looms over this town, and the residents feel its pressure.

Several participants indicated that utilities were their main financial concern. Many of the houses in this campus-adjacent neighborhood are old and poorly weatherized. Occupants install window air-conditioning units to reduce utility costs and neighborhood noise. Very few of the old houses have central heat, and if they do, it is likely too expensive for residents to use. In the
winter, people use space heaters, which can present a fire hazard, and thus are forbidden by most landlords within the rental leases.

A local landlord explained a problem affecting small-time landlords that contributes to the problem of property decay. “Out here everyone gives me ridiculous quotes. You can't get your roof repaired, you can get it replaced. You can't get your floor fixed, you can get it replaced. If you can't throw 7 or 8 thousand dollars at the problem in Gainesville, you're not able to deal with that problem. They are forcing us to become our own General Contractors or slumlords.”

For independent landlords, this is a problem. Bruce explained, “Getting into real estate here may have been the biggest mistake of my life. A first-time homeowner can't throw around 7 or 8 thousand dollars to get the floor fixed. We had 7 or 8 thousand just to get the house to be livable. In other cities, this would not be such a problem. Because of that, I've lost interest in working in real estate around here.” The participant perfectly explained a major problem with home ownership in a college town. With inflated property values and a lack of people skilled in technical trades, first-time homeowners do not stand much of a chance. The financial stress affects landlords and tenants alike.

This sentiment also was expressed by a young tradesman who specialized in heating and air repair. Brad has worked in HVAC\(^3\) both here and in his Midwestern hometown. During our interview, I asked him if it felt different working in a college town. He replied: “Oh my God, it’s night and day. Where I come from the average guy, he might have two ac systems in his house, that’s it. Most of the people I work for here have 5 to 500 [ac units]. Massive difference. Most of the people in our clientele now are millionaires. I’m used to working for farmers, this is very different. Pricing is totally different too.”

\(^3\) Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
For a skilled tradesman like Brad, Gainesville is an excellent place to make lots of money. The college town produces a huge number of professionals with advanced higher education and a much smaller number of people with trade experience. The price of skilled labor is much higher here.

I expected to find concerning housing suitability, but the more prevalent concern among residents was financial insecurity. Another commonly mentioned theme that emerged was crime. Financial duress is correlated with increased criminal activity as people strive to maintain their homes. Two of the participants interviewed in this study have had to move out of the neighborhood because of rising rent costs, since their initial interview.

Landlords and tenants both brought up the issue of drug use as it relates to property values. Residents can feel forced due to increasing rents and a lack of job opportunities to resort to illicit activities to afford to stay where they are. John explained "The good thing about (my landlord) is they don't raise your rent much after you've been there for a while. In a world where a one-bedroom shack is $650, and your working-class job pays $8 an hour, there's no way you can afford to stay in this area. There are about four crack houses in this neighborhood. People have to get creative to pay to live here."

There has been a rise in crime in this neighborhood during the period of this study. Bruce described his experience of living in the neighborhood during the first year. Regarding the house next door to his, he said "a baby got shot there, the guy holding it took 22 bullets, the baby took one in the arm. The man died but the baby was ok. It was during a house party, and a few other people took shots as well. It was crazy because me and my roommates were having a small party of our own that night, and we had just decided to walk downtown for some tacos. When we came back, the shooting was done, and the street was filled with cops. I had just started construction
and moved in. I already had tenants. Thankfully, we all walked downtown for burritos at that time. I think some force of God made us do that. Thirty-two bullets were shot next door that night."

The most consternating part of all these reports of shootings is that the UF Police Department did not send out electronic Campus Alerts to inform students, faculty, and staff about these events which occurred fewer than two blocks away from a UF building, yet it does so when someone is suspected of robbery five miles from campus. John also mentioned multiple other shootings, and his house has been shot at. John (and I) both live in houses less than 1 block from UF buildings.

**Relationships**

One surprising theme that began to emerge was the difficulties associated with having relationships in a college town. Several participants referenced residential issues specific to cohabitation with significant others. When asked about community problems affecting campus-adjacent neighborhoods, one participant said: "While there's a never-ending stream of young people, the rape culture is much more prevalent. Anywhere there's huge parties, it's a bigger issue. There's also a time component. If you start dating while getting your degree, it feels like there's an expiration date."

A property manager also expressed frustration with this phenomenon "I'm freshly single from a long-term relationship, and I can clearly tell it would be way harder to meet someone here at my age. People who are my age have usually settled down. Alternatively, their working on a graduate degree and they plan on moving."

One participant felt particularly angry about this concept "For men, there's a constant supply of 18-year-old beauties. For women, there's a constant supply of 18-year-old idiots."
**Redevelopment**

The third research question addressed by this study was concerned with how residents felt their community values were being represented by the redevelopment process. In terms of residents’ opinions of redevelopment, they vary widely. When asked about his opinions regarding the state of Gainesville’s development, a local property manager replied “from the standpoint of an investor, it’s amazing. From the standpoint of existing residents, it feels a lot like gentrification…it leads to a lot of congestion--lots of crowding. They do a ton of construction over the summer, while the students are out of town, which makes it worse for the people who stay. Being a local in a college town can be very frustrating.”

The construction traffic issue was addressed by a half-dozen participants. Amelia said “I don’t like going anywhere because the traffic is so bad. It’s such a small city, but the traffic is always insane! Our roads weren’t designed to handle this much traffic.” A local business owner echoed the same sentiment “The construction is a huge pain. Half the roads around here are usually shut down. It seems like they are building more than they need. We’ve lost a lot of cool local businesses for this crap. All the old buildings are getting bought up by corporations. Mostly I’m annoyed by the traffic.”

**Commercial Real Estate Issues**

Several local business owners were interviewed to see if they experienced similar problems as residents when it came to renting property in a college town. One participant owns a local bar business and has been renting from the same landlord for nearly a decade. His bar has become a safe haven for locals and students looking for something slightly off the beaten path. The place has become known for being accepting of liberal ideas. They host a myriad of events in conjunction with community leaders.
“It recently sold to a new company who wants to tear this down and build an Applebee’s. It’s a classic struggle of small local bar …You lose your local spots to bigger corporations. Their maintenance has been terrible. They don’t maintain the roof or the ventilation. We’ve done most of our work ourselves.”

Since the landlords of the property where this Gainesville institution has existed for seven years, decided to sell the property, they have done virtually no maintenance to the building. One participant recounted a visit to the bar where the ceiling fell in and water flooded the building on a sunny day. They discovered that the decaying roof has not been patched or repaired, but a tarp had been placed over the largest hole, which led to a collection of water. Because the business owners were terrified of rent increasing beyond their financial abilities, they did not report the landlord or the incident.

Another participant told a similar story. “I ran a business for many years, near campus, and the landlords did the absolute bare minimum for maintenance. They recently sold all their property for 22 million dollars to a Miami developer, who has a plan to completely redo the area. A lot of local businesses who have been here for years are going to be shut down.”
Table 4-1. Participants interviewed, their occupations, and residential vs commercial experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Residential Experience</th>
<th>Commercial Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chef at UF</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Works at UF</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ph.D Student</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M.S. Student</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bar Owner</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Landscaper</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Landlord</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Property Manager</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>HVAC Technician</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Tree Surgeon</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Finance Student</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Law Student</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Warehouse Manager</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>EMT Student</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Computer Scientist</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4-2. Pictures of the exterior and interior sections of the resident’s tiny house, built in his backyard out of scrap materials. The exterior A) is on the left and the interior B) is displayed on the right. (Photos by author)
Figure 4-3. One of the most obvious problems affecting this community is the lack of housing regulations regarding maintenance. There were a number of house fires during the period of data collection. (Photos by author)
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The intent of this study was to conduct a 50-year follow up of William Partridge’s initial investigation into the “Hippie Ghetto.” Despite the hippies of the 60s being replaced with millennial hipsters, many of the subcultural values and alternative ways of living have persisted.

The purpose of this study was to compare the current state of the Hippie Ghetto to the data collected on it fifty years ago. However a secondary and more universal goal is the continuation of studentification research. Gainesville is most well-known for being a college town. The college-related housing issues experienced here are similar of issues happening in campus-adjacent areas everywhere. Because universities possess the labor and brain-power to address the issues of communities in which they reside, it seems intriguing that studentification research has not been a higher priority.

Richard Florida is one of the primary influential geographical scholars and urban studies theorists. His latest book and recent articles describe a “New Urban Crisis.” In a summary article he released in 2017, Florida describes this issue. “If the old urban crisis was defined by the flight of business, jobs, and the middle class to the suburbs, the New Urban Crisis is defined by the back-to-the-city movement of the affluent and the educated—accompanied by rising inequality, deepening economic segregation, and increasingly unaffordable housing” (Florida, 2017, para. 1).

Florida explains how his team came up with a measure for urban crisis index. “It accounts for measures of wage inequality and income inequality; overall economic segregation along income, educational, and occupational lines; and the unaffordability of housing” (Florida, 2017, para. 2). He ranks the top-20 small-to-medium-sized metros that scored highest on this index. The town that was the subject of this present study, Gainesville, Florida, was ranked
number 2. It ranked number 4 among all metros, regardless of size. Figure 5-1, shows the top-20 small-and-medium-size metros on the index. As seen in the list of rankings, the top metros experiencing urban crisis are college towns. Florida explains “this is not just because of the town/gown divide between well-paid professors and lower-paid service workers, but also because college towns have large concentrations of students, who are often temporarily low-income residents while they’re working toward their degree” (Florida, 2017, para. 8).

The results of this follow up study, of the historic Hippie Ghetto, were surprising for several reasons. Most striking was the similarity of subcultures displayed in the data from 1968 and 2018. The community values observed by Partridge have adapted and evolved yet remain quite visible. Even the themes of symbolic graffiti have somehow endured. Anthropologically, this seems fascinating.

Also surprising was the suitability of the housing observed in relation to rental prices. I approached this study expecting the results to demonstrate that housing suitability is the primary concern of the residents. However, the primary concern among all participants was increasing rents and being financially forced out of the neighborhood.

Nearly every participant mentioned that they were having financial problems. Students are becoming increasingly financially stressed. Student ghettos and the idea of “starving students” have been long accepted stereotypes of college life. However, at the time of the data collection (spring 2018) the economy remained challenging, jobs were difficult to find, and student enrollment at colleges were at record high levels.

Recently, a study was published in which 30,000 student responses were analyzed to assess the rates of food and housing insecurity among undergraduate college students. The authors concluded that “the most recent estimates indicate that one in two community college
students has experienced housing insecurity challenges during the past year. Among four-year college students, at least 1 in 10 and as many as 1 in 5 indicated that they were housing insecure. Housing insecure students most commonly report affordability challenges related to an inability to pay their rent and/or utilities” (Broton & Goldrick-Rab, 2016, PP. 128).

There have also been recent articles released by NPR¹ and the New York Times addressing student housing insecurity. In 2017 the New York Times published an article, “Behind the Problem of Student Homelessness,” which also explored the topic of increasing numbers of housing insecure college students. “When a student ends up homeless, it can be exceedingly difficult to stay in school and thus break the cycle of poverty. There are practical problems — where to do your homework, for example — and, of course, there is the emotional toll. If you are worried about finding a place to sleep, how are you ever going to focus on schoolwork?” (Harris, 2017)

NPR released an article describing a study in which the results showed “36 percent of college students say they are food insecure. Another 36 percent say they are housing insecure while 9 percent report being homeless. The results are largely the same as the previous year’s survey, which included fewer students” (Romo, 2018). It seems overdue for this topic to be in the media spotlight.

Conclusion

Based on interviews conducted in this qualitative research, residents of the area studied highly value their place in the neighborhood, and fear losing it. Though the initial observation was that the neighborhood is home to a consistently transient population, residents’ transiency does not seem to be totally of their own volition.

¹ National Public Radio
The literature on studentification tends to ascribe much “agency”\textsuperscript{2} to the students occupying campus-adjacent neighborhoods, assuming they choose to temporarily occupy decaying dwellings. The observations of this study would indicate that residents end up in these situations through a series of unfortunate events. The landlord who participated in this study listed his property for sale in the neighborhood after data collection was concluded.

Acquiring low-income housing in a college town is rarely a matter of choice as much as a matter of necessity. This particular neighborhood has maintained a unique culture despite constant transience of residents, for at least 50 years. The issues affecting young people, and the creative ways they try to deal with their issues, have remained fairly consistent. The fight against poverty, politics and the status quo continues on.

**Limitations and Future Directions**

This study, as with all studies, has its limitations. As a researcher and a resident, I am not without my own biases. My unique position within the community served as an asset but also a weakness. It was an asset in that I was able to connect with key informants through my neighborhood connections. However, as a homeowner and a student resident, my perception of these issues is inherently biased. If someone else were to conduct a similar study in Gainesville, it would be quite unlikely that they would find the exact same results as I.

As a landlord, I am not free from bias because of my involvement in the study of the sciences. I have collected data during my time living here, and have adapted my methods as I learned from mistakes. For example, I accidentally disproved one of my initial null hypotheses that good friends would make good tenants--multiple times.

\textsuperscript{2} Taking action to produce a specific result
As a researcher, I am not free of bias because of my position as a landlord. I have devoted the past five years of my life to the neighborhood that is the subject of this research. Due to fact that I reside in the area of study, I have assumptions and values that relate to the neighborhood. It is important to be aware of one’s bias in all aspects of life.

This study illuminated many future directions that hopefully will be investigated to improve the research on this town, studentification and housing in general. This includes conducting qualitative as well and quantitative analysis on this particular subject. In the future, residents could be asked if they would be willing to complete a survey regarding their costs and perceptions of rent and utilities. Because that was not the goal of this study, I did not address those two concepts.

As previously stated in the introduction to this study, there is an international trend of increased university enrollment numbers, without increased density of affordable student housing. The implications of this trend were explored in this research. Several participants expressed concern about online university student populations and their associated housing issues. One suggested a possible consideration for future research directions could address the impact that online university programs have on student housing. Online education is becoming more common, and universities are now enrolling thousands of virtual students who rarely, if ever, are actually required to come to the physical location of the main campus. The university does not have any physical interaction with these students, which must have implications for the physical spaces online students occupy. Further, though it is immeasurably beyond the scope of this study, there are potential social/emotional considerations for certain types of online college-student personalities that are not fully prepared for the reality of never or rarely physically interfacing with the student body.
## Top 20 Small and Medium Size Metros

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Large Metro</th>
<th>New Urban Crisis Index</th>
<th>Rank Among All Metros</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk, CT</td>
<td>0.978</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gainesville, FL</td>
<td>0.952</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>College Station-Bryan, TX</td>
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<td>Santa Barbara, CA</td>
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<td>Tallahassee, Fl</td>
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<td>Athens, GA</td>
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LIST OF REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jane L. Wilson is a landlord and a student of social science. This research was conducted as part of her completion of a Master of Science degree in the department of Family, Youth and Community Science. Her passions include construction, dogs and Indian food.