

“To them, we're just kids from the hood”: Citizen-based policing of youth of color, “white space,” and environmental gentrification

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ABSTRACT

In gentrifying communities, youth of color are often the subject of citizen-based policing by white residents, who use nonemergency 311 calls to police unwanted behaviors, eliminate incumbent symbols of ownership (e.g., graffiti), and gain control of the space. To date, little research has examined such policing efforts in neighborhoods experiencing environmental gentrification. In these neighborhoods, parks and greenways are often established to attract white newcomers, and thus citizen-based policing to ensure that parks remain “white spaces” might be particularly strong. Using a mixed-method design, we examined the citizen-based policing of youth proximate to Chicago’s 606, an urban greenway connected to environmental gentrification. Interviews revealed that white residents frequently and increasingly used citizen-based policing to monitor and control youth of color’s behaviors on The 606. In response, youth avoided greenway segments in white-majority neighborhoods, used the greenway when less populated, or avoided it altogether. A mixed-effects quasi-Poisson model supported these findings, showing that the number of graffiti-related 311 calls significantly increased in the years preceding and following the greenway’s opening, particularly in areas closest to The 606. Planners and policymakers need to recognize these issues and work to ensure park spaces in gentrifying areas promote inclusion and diversity.

1. Introduction

Many urban areas around the world are experiencing significant population growth, including an influx of new residents who previously lived in suburban and rural areas (United Nations, 2018). Known as the back-to-the-city movement (Hyra, 2015), this trend has been marshaled by white Millennials (individuals born between 1982 and 2004) who are more likely to live in urban settings than previous generations (Okulicz-Kozaryn & Valente, 2019). These new residents, who are generally college-educated and middle or upper class, often move to previously disinvested areas that were mostly inhabited by low-income people of color. This process, known as gentrification, has become commonplace in cities across the globe (Freeman, 2011; Lees et al., 2013). As wealthier newcomers move to previously disinvested areas, they contribute to rising rents and property values, which, over time, can lead to the displacement of longtime low-income residents of color (Rigolon & Németh, 2019).

Although gentrification can be “triggered” by several mechanisms, scholars and activists have noted that public investments (e.g., parks and bike lanes) to foster environmental sustainability and livability in low-income neighborhoods have made those neighborhoods increasingly desirable, leading to the influx of new wealthier (and often white) residents (Gould & Lewis, 2017; Rigolon & Németh, 2020). This process is known as environmental gentrification (Checker, 2011; Curran &

Hamilton, 2012; Rigolon & Németh, 2018). Occurring in several cities in North America, Europe, and Asia, environmental gentrification has been linked to the construction of new parks and greenways (Anguelovski, Connolly, Masip, Pearsall, 2018; Haase et al., 2017; Immergluck & Balan, 2018; Kwon et al., 2017; Rigolon & Németh, 2020), the introduction of new bike lanes (Hyra, 2015; Lubitow & Miller, 2013), brownfield cleanup and redevelopment (Checker, 2011; Curran & Hamilton, 2017; Gould & Lewis, 2017; Pearsall, 2010), and climate change adaptation interventions (Anguelovski, Connolly, Brand, 2018).

The process of gentrification occurs over several years and involves white newcomers gradually “taking over” the neighborhood’s public space through mechanisms of settler colonialism and whitewashing (Addie & Frasier, 2019; Davidson, 2012). Parks can play a role in this “take over” process, as research shows that these urban green spaces are often designed and managed with aesthetic features that conform to white ideologies and norms, perpetuating Anglo-normativity and unequal power dynamics (Byrne & Wolch, 2009). Especially in the context of gentrifying communities, parks and other public spaces are designed and managed in ways that lead them to become what Anderson (2015) refers to as “white space[s]”. Specifically, a “white space” fails to accommodate the needs of residents of color, and their presence is either questioned, denigrated, or forbidden (Anderson, 2015). In this context, people of color who seek to use parks and other public spaces must

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continually prove their credibility and right to belong through a performance (Helmuth, 2019). This performance, or the alignment of behavior with that of white newcomers, provides residents of color with “provisional acceptance” into the increasingly white public spaces of gentrifying areas (Anderson, 2015, p. 13; Helmuth, 2019). Failure to engage in such performance may result in the use of latent (e.g., avoidance) and overt (e.g., racial profiling) tactics by white individuals to make residents of color feel unwelcome in their neighborhood (Helmuth, 2019).

In many circumstances, white newcomers exclude longtime residents of color from the public spaces of gentrifying neighborhoods through citizen-based policing (Laniyonu, 2018). A form of order-maintenance policing, citizen-based policing describes the monitoring of a space by citizens or residents of a community, who utilize law enforcement and 311 calls (i.e., non-emergency calls to report complaints) to inform law enforcement of behaviors they deem unfit, such as spraying graffiti (Checker, 2011; Laniyonu, 2018). Citizen-based policing a popular tool in post-industrial cities, where efforts to spur economic growth through residential development for the creative class often rely on initiatives to “take control” of gentrifying neighborhoods (Sharp, 2014). Specifically, in white or gentrifying neighborhoods citizen-based policing can also be discriminatory (Sampson & Raudenbush, 2004). Here, behaviors that white resident label as deviant become automatically ascribed to residents of color (Sampson & Raudenbush, 2004), which leads to increased monitoring and policing of minority populations (Helmuth, 2019; Moskowitz, 2017) and to reinforcing long-standing inequalities (Sharp, 2014). Youth of color are often the main target of citizen-based policing, stereotyped as embodying disorder and serving as evidence that low-income neighborhoods need a physical and social makeover (Laniyonu, 2018; Moskowitz, 2017). Because youth of color are seen as the ultimate threat to the white space, citizen-based policing gradually extinguishes the practices, processes, and memories central to their personal and community identity (Addie & Frasier, 2019). Finally, the sense of exclusion felt by youth of color as a result of community-based policing can be considered as a form of environmental injustice, and specifically an interactional injustice, which describes unwelcoming or discriminatory experiences in public space for marginalized people (Low, 2013).

1.1. The present study

Although research on white spaces and citizen-based policing has focused on gentrifying neighborhoods (e.g., Anderson, 2015; Helmuth, 2019), to our knowledge no study has specifically examined these issues in areas experiencing environmental gentrification. To address this gap, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between youth of color's discrimination and citizen-based policing in the context of neighborhoods experiencing environmental gentrification.

Focusing on The 606, an urban greenway in Chicago, we conduct a mixed methods study that integrates an investigation of perceptions of citizen-based policing (qualitative) and an analysis of what predicts the number of graffiti-related 311 calls (quantitative), which are a form of citizen-based policing targeting youth of color. Two questions guide the qualitative strand of our study: *How do white residents perceive youth disorder in neighborhoods along The 606 that are experiencing environmental gentrification? And how do youth of color perceive being the target of policing efforts?* The quantitative strand of the study builds on the qualitative analysis to answer the following questions: *To what extent do 311 calls increase during the process of environmental gentrification? And what demographic and environmental characteristics are associated with higher numbers of 311 calls?*

This study makes three main contributions to the growing interdisciplinary literature on environmental gentrification that spans across urban planning, geography, and urban sociology (see Anguelovski et al., 2018; Gould & Lewis, 2017; Rigolon & Németh, 2018). First, we

analyze citizen-based policing of youth of color in places undergoing environmental gentrification where new parks are the main drivers of gentrification (Anguelovski et al., 2018; Rigolon & Németh, 2020). And as such, parks are increasingly becoming visible symbols, or physical manifestations, of gentrification in those places. Because parks increasingly embody gentrification processes and because they are often established to attract wealthier white newcomers (see Rigolon & Németh, 2018), we expect citizen-based policing of youth of color to be particularly prominent in parks to ensure parks remain white spaces. Second, our focus on parks as drivers of gentrification also calls attention to the policing of leisure behaviors, including graffiti, which are central to youth of color's cultural identity (Gans, 1979; Ross, 2016). In particular, the iconography of graffiti is important to produce and reinforce cultural identity, particularly for youth of color (Gans, 1979; Ross, 2016), and our work sheds light on how the stripping away of culturally-relevant artworks in communities of color undergoing environmental gentrification may be a form of discrimination. The third contribution of our study is to shed light on interactional justice issues in the context of environmental gentrification. Most environmental gentrification studies to date have focused on distributional justice – whether greening fostered gentrification (e.g., Anguelovski et al., 2018; Immergluck & Balan, 2018; Rigolon & Németh, 2020) – or procedural injustice – whether greening was *deliberately* intended to foster gentrification (e.g., Checker, 2011; Gould & Lewis, 2017; Rigolon & Németh, 2018). Only a few examined interactional injustice (e.g., Harris et al., 2019).

Also, understanding how citizen-based policing may serve to create white spaces in places experiencing environmental gentrification can inform the work of policymakers and urban planners. As more urban neighborhoods experience racial mixing through gentrification, planners and policymakers are increasingly looking for strategies to bring diverse residents together through inclusive public spaces (Helmuth, 2019). When designed and managed with social equity in mind, parks have shown the ability to help create community, maintain culture, and promote understanding between diverse residents (Langeegger, 2013). The citizen-based policing of youth in parks may not only thwart these benefits but create exclusionary places that marginalize youth (Anderson, 2015).

2. White space, urban redevelopment, and gentrification in Chicago

Chicago, Illinois, is a particularly relevant setting to study the connections between environmental gentrification and white space. In Chicago, the creation and reproduction of white space can be seen as the product of a dynamic intersection between the city's history of discriminatory urban housing policies, mass segregation of residents of color, and more recent neoliberal politics that aim to generate economic growth through gentrification and redevelopment (Bennett et al., 2017; Wilson, 2018). Like other U.S. cities, racial discrimination in housing policies, white flight, and unequal development resulted in the segregation and concentrated disadvantage of racially and ethnically marginalized people in Chicago (Bennett et al., 2017). Thus, many of Chicago's communities of color (particularly on the South and West sides) became marred by unemployment, generational poverty, low property values, and pervasive crime and disorder (Bennett et al., 2017; Wilson, 2018). With no new investments or capital streams for continued maintenance, the physical infrastructure of the housing stock in many of these communities was allowed to deteriorate over decades (Wilson, 2018). In other words, many of these communities were intentionally left to decline by the city and developers alike.

Today, however, the ushering in of a neoliberal approach to urban development has made some minority neighborhoods the target of redevelopment and gentrification efforts, as municipal governments and local developers seek to attract new white newcomers (Bennett et al., 2017). Here, capital production and accumulation are predicated on

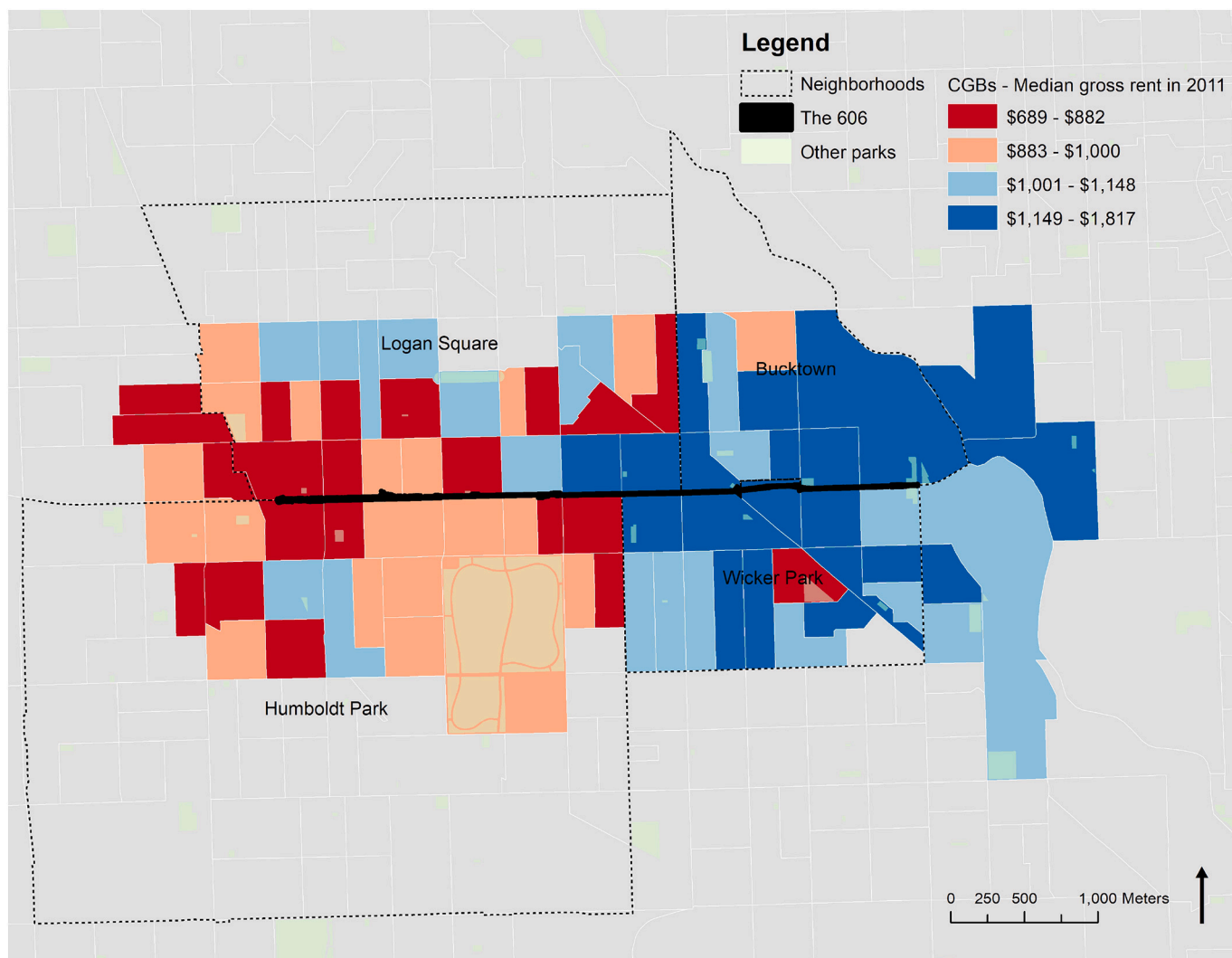


Fig. 1. The 606 and surrounding neighborhoods.

dynamic partnerships between the private and public sector where tax monies are used to attract business and drive real-estate development. In this context, municipal governments serve as entrepreneurial actors working to ensure that profit and property tax revenues are maximized and that city spaces are and remain attractive to affluent urban white consumers – i.e., white spaces (Wilson, 2018). In what Wilson (2018) terms the “racial development machine,” gentrification in once low-income communities of color becomes an intentional strategy to create capital accumulation as low-value properties are replaced by infrastructure valued by white newcomers. As gentrification turns these communities into revenue yielding white space, long-time residents are deemed as disposable and a direct threat to the safety and growth potential of the city (Wilson, 2018).

Within these racialized white spaces, symbols of the bourgeois whiteness communicate who these new spaces are for and who is not allowed or welcome (Wilson, 2018). For instance, in Chicago's communities of color, street-art is often used to display symbolic ethnicity (Gans, 1979; Lloyd, 2002). In these communities, symbols and images are used to connect the physical space with what Lefebvre (1974) refers to as *representational space* that is imbued with cultural meaning and lived through by residents. During gentrification, these symbols become denigrated and policed by white residents and newcomers, serving to decrease residents of color's visibility, feelings of inclusion in public space (i.e., interactional injustice), and signify a transition of community control (Harris et al., 2019). Here, the racial redevelopment

machine uses order maintenance policing efforts to instill social order and hierarchy in the community, producing privatized public spaces, including park spaces, where white individuals can “appropriately consume urban lifestyles” (Shah & McQuade, 2017, p. 247).

2.1. Case study: The 606

The 606 (also known as the Bloomingdale Trail) is emblematic of Chicago's “racial development machine” (see Wilson, 2018). Located on Chicago's Northwest side, The 606 has been linked to environmental gentrification by numerous studies (Harris et al., 2019; Rigolon & Németh, 2018; Smith et al., 2016). Constructed on an abandoned rail line, The 606 transverses four distinct neighborhood areas (Rigolon & Németh, 2018; see Fig. 1). On the east side of the greenway are the neighborhoods of Bucktown and Wicker Park. Gentrified before the construction of The 606, these communities are occupied by an affluent white population (66% and 73% Non-Hispanic White). On the western side of the greenway are the neighborhoods of Logan Square and Humboldt Park, which are characterized by a higher share of Latinx residents (43.5% and 56%, respectively; U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.).

Although the construction of The 606 has impacted each of these four neighborhoods, the greenway has exacerbated gentrification in the western communities (Rigolon & Németh, 2018; Smith et al., 2016). In Logan Square, the arrival of newcomers fueled by The 606 and other investments has reshaped the neighborhood into a popular destination



Fig. 2. Rule sign showing English-only text located in Humboldt Park.

for young, white “creatives” (Perry, 2018). Humboldt Park has been a working-class Puerto Rican neighborhood since the 1960s, but real estate developers began the neighborhood in the early 2000s, seeking to take advantage of gentrification occurring in nearby communities (Wilson, 2018). In Humboldt Park, new condominiums appealing to affluent newcomers have started to replace older multi-family apartments (Latrace, 2018). Also, based on narratives that neighborhood redevelopment would serve the community and greater Chicago, Puerto Rican cultural symbols became the subject of targeted elimination (Wilson, 2018). Although longtime residents have fought to quell environmental gentrification (Rúa, 2012), it remains to be seen if Humboldt Park will be able to maintain its current identity in the long term (Mumm, 2016).

The 606 design might provide implicit cues that the greenway is more directly intended to meet the needs of white residents than of Latinx residents. Although the community engagement process for its design was robust, members of local nonprofits complained that, because the design of the greenway privileged cycling over spaces for congregation, Latinx families often felt uncomfortable spending time on the trail with children due to the fear of being hit by cyclists, who were most often white (Rigolon & Németh, 2018). Further, our observations on the greenway and conversations with community leaders showed that The 606 did not have signage in Spanish despite the longtime Latinx history of its western neighborhoods, and it did not include bathrooms despite multiple requests by Latinx residents during the community engagement process (see Fig. 2). Given the varying stages of environmental gentrification in the neighborhoods surrounding The 606 (Rigolon & Németh, 2018), youth of color and more affluent white residents are often forced to coexist and interact in these communities. This site allows for an examination of how the marginalization of youth of color influences their behavior in neighborhoods that are undergoing gentrification and becoming white space, and specifically in a park that seems more directly designed to appease the needs of white residents. Concomitantly, the setting provides a unique opportunity to understand how newcomers and more affluent residents might use citizen-based policing to both gain control over transitioning spaces (i.e., Logan Square and Humboldt Park) and govern youth of color's behaviors in

white spaces (Anderson, 2015; Helmuth, 2019).

3. Methods

We used an exploratory mixed method design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) to examine how perceptions of deviance attached to youth of color may lead white residents to use citizen-based policing and youth criminalization in the context of environmental gentrification. Our rationale for mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches derived directly from the nature of the questions we asked: Perceptions of deviance and citizen-based policing (qualitative) and records of citizen-based policing such as graffiti-related 311 calls (quantitative). This design allowed for corroboration between the data types and for the use of qualitative data to interpret the quantitative findings (Morgan, 2019).

3.1. Qualitative methods

The lead author conducted semi-structured interviews with white residents and youth of color living in neighborhoods traversed by The 606 in the summer and fall of 2016. The sample size was determined following Creswell (2013), who stated that 20–30 interviews are generally needed to reach theoretical saturation. Participants were recruited through purposive and snowball sampling techniques, also using the assistance of a local organization that provides recreational services for youth in Logan Square and Humboldt Park. In total, the lead author conducted 46 interviews. Among the participants, 20 (43.5%) were white residents of Wicker Park or Bucktown, nine (19.5%) were white newcomers to Logan Square and Humboldt Park (i.e., people who have lived in these neighborhoods for less than 5 years), and 17 (37%) were youth of color (which we defined as younger than 26 years of age). Among youth of color, three identified as Black and 14 identified as Latinx (12 as Puerto Rican, and two as Mexican American). Pseudonyms were assigned to all participants.

Nineteen central, identical questions about users' experience on The 606, uses of the greenway, perceptions and observations of crime and deviance, and youth tenancy of the space helped guide the interviews

Table 1
Variable description, data sources, and descriptive statistics.

Variable	Description	Data source	Mean	Range
311count	Count of 311 calls per census block group per year	Chi	126.54	13–921
Year	Year when the count of 311 calls was measured: 1 for 2011 ... 8 for 2018	Chi	4.5	1–8
Income2011	Median household income in 2011 (in \$10,000)	ACS	1.93	0.40–5.94
PctWhite2011	Percent of non-Hispanic white residents in 2011	ACS	0.38	0.004–0.93
PctCollege2011	Percent of people aged 25 or older with a bachelor's degree or more (hence, college graduates) in 2011	ACS	0.40	0.015–0.91
PctRent2011	Percentage of renter-occupied housing units in 2011	ACS	0.61	0.18–0.91
MGRent2011	Median gross rent in 2011 (in \$1000)	ACS	1.05	0.69–1.81
IncomeCh ^a	Percent change in median household income between 2011 and 2017	ACS	1.39	0.18–4.65
PctWhiteCh ^a	Percent change in median household income between 2011 and 2017	ACS	1.98	0.23–37.90
PctCollegeCh ^a	Percent change in percent college graduates between 2011 and 2017	ACS	1.64	0.55–6.73
PctMGRentCh ^a	Percent change in median gross rent between 2011 and 2017	ACS	1.21	0.73–1.83
EastDummy	The CBG is Bucktown or Wicker Park	Chi	0.33	0–1
Acres	Surface of the CBG in acres	ACS	0.44	0.17–2.79
Dist606	Distance between The 606's boundary and the CBG's centroid (in miles)	ACS	0.39	0.07–0.78
ParkAcres	Acres of parks included in the CBG	ACS	2.95	0–175.81

Notes: “ACS” is the American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). “Chi” is the City of Chicago. The units of measurement of the variables were chosen to obtain regression coefficients with comparable orders of magnitude.

^a Denotes a variable describing gentrification.

(see Appendix A). The researcher then asked follow-up questions based on each participant's responses to attain a deeper level of understanding of existing social dynamics. These questions varied by the interviewee. For example, if a white user mentioned youth of color in connection to initial questions related to feelings of safety on The 606, the researcher asked follow-up questions about the resident's previous experiences with local youth of color, how they perceived crime on the greenway, and whether and how they had taken steps to mitigate crime or behaviors they perceived as undesirable. For interviews with youth of color, when their responses to initial questions related included indications of exclusion, discrimination, and displacement from the greenway, the researcher asked follow-up questions to obtain a richer understanding of the experiences of these participants.

To ensure that participants felt comfortable, the lead researcher did not use a recording device for interviews and took written notes instead (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). The absence of a recording device is particularly important when status differences, such as the one between the researcher and youth of color, are present (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). Also, because the lead author conducted all interviews, the trustworthiness of the data was established through onsite member checks following each interview (Erlandson, 1993). During this process, the researcher allowed each participant to review the interview notes and correct any errors or change how the researcher interpreted their answer. For example, during an interview with a forty-something resident from Bucktown, the lead researcher was informed how “youth activities” were causing problems and should be removed from the trail. While previous interviews led the research to interpret this as activities such as socializing and bicycle racing, during member check, the participant corrected the statement, explaining that they only believed the augmented reality platform Pokémon Go should be removed from the trail, not youth activities collectively. Previous work has shown this to be an effective technique to establish the trustworthiness and validity of qualitative data (Erlandson, 1993).

We analyzed all interview notes using thematic analysis consisting of open and axial coding (Miles et al., 2014). We began the process with an open coding structure allowing us to categorize broad concepts that emerged throughout data collection (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). During this process, we analyzed the data line-by-line and formed the initial codes. Then, an independent set of researchers checked the initial codes against the data, helping to ensure the robustness of the codes. Any lines that did not match were reexamined until an agreement was reached. Following the open-coding phase, we used axial coding to reduce and combine broad categories, establishing content-driven themes based on the created codes. Finally, we reassessed all themes, categorizing them into major themes (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Miles

et al., 2014). All researchers involved in the study reviewed final themes.

3.2. Quantitative methods

We then analyzed whether the number of graffiti-related 311 calls increased over the years, as the neighborhoods near The 606 underwent environmental gentrification, and what demographic and environmental characteristics were associated with the number of such 311 calls. A few hypotheses drive this analysis. First, we hypothesized that the number of graffiti-related 311 calls increased over time (Hypothesis 1). Second, we expected the number of 311 calls to be higher in census block groups (CBGs) with more college-educated people, higher housing prices, and higher household income before construction of The 606 began (Hypothesis 2.1) because residents in such CBGs might have perceived graffiti as a threat to their white space more than residents in less well-off places (Austin & Sanders, 2007; Wallace et al., 2019). We also hypothesized the number of 311 calls to be higher in CBGs around the greenway that gentrified more rapidly in recent years (Hypothesis 2.2) because residents in such areas might want to assert their control over public space more than residents in areas experiencing slower rates of gentrification (Laniyonu, 2018). Third, we expected that the number of graffiti-related 311 calls was higher in CBGs located closer to The 606 (Hypothesis 3) because the construction of the greenway was directly intended to attract wealthier newcomers to the area (see Rigolon & Németh, 2018), and therefore such newcomers might seek to more actively establish and maintain white space near the greenway.

3.2.1. Data and measures

We focused on the 81 CBGs with boundaries located within a half-mile of The 606, including CBGs in the Wicker Park and Bucktown neighborhoods (hence, 606 East) and in the Logan Square and Humboldt Park neighborhoods (hence, 606 West). We chose a half-mile as a threshold because that is considered a walking distance to parks in the U.S. (Rigolon, 2016) and because a study on The 606 showed that the impact of The 606 on increased housing prices (a symptom of gentrification) was felt up to a half-mile from the greenway (Smith et al., 2016).

We collected georeferenced data at the census block group level from the U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.) for 2011 (American Community Survey, ACS, 2007–2011, 5-year estimates) and 2017 (2013–2017, 5-year estimates) describing race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, housing prices, and housing tenure. We also collected geospatial data from the City of Chicago (n.d.) characterizing parks, the City's

neighborhoods, and graffiti-related 311 calls that the City received between 2011 and 2018.

The dependent variable describes the count of graffiti-related 311 calls per CBG per year. We focus on graffiti-related 311 calls among other 311 calls because graffiti have been directly linked to youth behavior (see Lanijonu, 2018), whereas other types of 311 calls available in Chicago expressed environmental degradation (e.g., potholes, street lights out) not associated with youth behavior. The independent variables include time, describing each year between 2011 and 2018, and a series of CBG-level measures describing demographic characteristics (e.g., median household income) and environmental characteristics (e.g., proximity to The 606; see Table 1). More specifically, we model demographic and housing variables in 2011, which describe the beginning of the period for which 311 calls data were available from the City of Chicago (n.d.) and also depict a time before gentrification related to The 606 started (see Smith et al., 2016). We also include variables describing gentrification (see Rigolon & Németh, 2019 for similar metrics), which we measure between 2011 and 2017, where 2017 represents the latest year for which ACS data are available. Because the two neighborhoods on the East side of The 606 have started to gentrify earlier than those on the West side (Smith et al., 2016), we also include an East side dummy variable. Finally, we include three environmental variables describing the area of each CBG (larger areas might have more calls), the distance from The 606 (CBG closer to the trail might have more graffiti), and the acres of parks included in each CBG (parks are a target of graffiti; Ross, 2016).

3.2.2. Analysis and modeling

To select the variables to include in the multivariate model, we ran two sets of preliminary tests. First, we ran paired-sample *t*-tests to generate preliminary evidence on whether the number of 311 graffiti-related calls per year after The 606 opened (2015) was higher than the average number of such calls per year before The 606 opened. We found that, on average, the number of graffiti-related 311 calls significantly increased across the entire trail (81 GBGs, +11%, $p = 0.08$), on the 606 East (27 GBGs, +25%, $p = 0.04$), but not on the 606 West. Thus, we included the variable *Year* in the multilevel model. Second, we ran Pearson's bivariate correlations between the other independent variables and *311count*. We included all independent variables that had significant associations with *311count* at the 0.10 level, as well as any other independent variables that previous literature suggest could be related to the citizen-based policing (see Lanijonu, 2018; Moskowitz, 2017). We also ran multicollinearity tests to eliminate independent variables showing high correlations with other ones, using a threshold of 4 for the Variance Inflation Factors (Field, 2013). Our multivariate model includes all variables represented in Table 1 except *PctWhite2011*, *EastDummy* (both highly collinear with *PctCollege2011*), *PctWhiteCh*, and *PctMGRentCh* (none were associated with *311count* in Pearson correlations).

Because our dependent variable describes counts of 311 calls and those counts are repeated over 8 years in the same CBG, we first ran a mixed-effects Poisson model where CBGs are the grouping factors. Yet the model diagnostics showed over-dispersion (i.e., the variance greatly exceeded the mean). We then considered running quasi-Poisson and negative binomial models, which are both suitable over-dispersed data (Ver Hoef & Boveng, 2007). To choose between these options, we plotted the relationship between the variance and the mean, which showed an approximately linear relationship. This suggests that a quasi-Poisson model is a better fit to our data than a negative binomial model, which would have shown a quadratic relationship (see Ver Hoef & Boveng, 2007). Thus, we ran a mixed-effects quasi-Poisson model with *Year*, demographic variables, and environmental variables as fixed effects, and CBGs as a grouping factor (random effect). This led to 648 observations nested in 81 CBGs. We ran all tests in R-Studio (R Core Team, 2013), using the package MASS to fit the mixed-effect quasi-Poisson model and the package MuMIn to estimate the model's pseudo-

R-square. Before running the model, we checked for possible spatial autocorrelation for the 311 calls by calculating Moran's *I* with a distance-based spatial weights matrix (776 m threshold) and found that there were no spatial dependence issues (Moran's $I = -0.017$, $p = 0.92$). All other assumptions for quasi-Poisson models were tested and met.

4. Results

4.1. Qualitative results: perceived youth disorder and policing

We identified three major themes describing how (1) white residents fear youth and perceive disorder, (2) white residents' policing strategies to deal with such disorder, and (3) youth of color's strategies to cope with policing.

4.1.1. Fear of youth and perceptions of disorder

Interviews with both white residents and youth of color revealed that white residents often perceived youth of color on The 606 as disorderly. From the perspective of youth, white residents' fear was related to several factors, including the overall perception of majority-minority neighborhoods in Chicago. When asked about interactions on the trail with white people, Robert, a Black youth living in Humboldt Park explained that white people often avoided him and his friends. He noted, "to them, we're just kids from the hood...we're criminals to them [white residents], doesn't matter what we do...They will [white residents] go out of their way to avoid us". This sentiment was echoed by numerous youth of color, who perceived that their presence on the greenway or surrounding areas induced fear among white residents. When asked about avoidance behaviors of some white users, Chris, a Puerto Rican teen from Humboldt Park, believed white fear could be attributed to a lack of knowledge and previous interactions with youth of color. Chris noted, "[White residents] see us on here every day, and they don't know how to handle it. For them it's like a revelation, like who are these kids and why are they in my neighborhood? It's like we didn't exist before." Other youth of color suggested that white individuals associated youth of color with gangs and violence in the area. Alan, a Puerto Rican teenager from Humboldt Park, noted, "[White residents] are scared of us. They think we're trying to start [something], or we're in a gang. It's like, I am not trying to [mess] with you, please leave me alone." Following up on feelings of exclusion and inclusion in certain areas of the trail, Garrett, a twenty-something resident of Humboldt Park, explained that the media has helped create a negative image of his neighborhood and its youth, leading to eastern neighborhoods feeling more exclusive. He noted, "[White residents] see the videos online of the shooting and the faces of the bangers, or see the news, and they think it's all hood here." Further, Garrett suggested that youth in the area felt the pressures of gentrification and were willing to confront newcomers who they believed wanted to change the community. He explained, "People [in Humboldt Park] are welcoming...[but] if they think you are here to change their community or cause trouble, of course they will challenge you. No one wants to feel like they are being pushed out of their home."

Interviews with white residents, including white newcomers, revealed similar explanations to those offered by youth of color. Speaking to her trepidation to enter Humboldt Park due to her fear of youth of color, Grace, a thirty-something white newcomer to Humboldt Park explained, "More than anything else, the kids [youth of color] up here [on The 606] scare me, especially at night! I know they shouldn't make me nervous, but when I see a group of them just hanging out on a bench or sitting on the grass at night, I can't help but to think about gangs." Grace's sentiments were echoed across numerous interviews, as the perception of youth as disorderly members of local gangs was the most cited reason for white residents' fear of local youth of color. Fear of youth of color escalated at night and when groups of youth congregated either on The 606 or in pocket parks located off the greenway access points. Teresa, a white resident of Bucktown, noted that she wished police did a better



Fig. 3. Graffiti on a building located along The 606 in Wicker Park neighborhood.

job “breaking them [youth of color] up, so we [Bucktown residents] can use [The 606] in peace.” Teresa further explained that she believed the greenway should be used for exercise and relaxing, but that youth often disrupted these recreational endeavors by occupying benches and being “rowdy.”

Another factor of disorder many white residents attributed to youth of color and gangs was the presence of graffiti on both the greenway and on the buildings and signage surrounding it (see Fig. 3). When asked about why they avoided Humboldt Park or perceived the neighborhood to be occupied by gangs, white residents often spoke of the graffiti both on the trail itself and in the surrounding areas. Here, white residents perceived graffiti and “tagging” not only as a symbol of crime and deviance, but also as a territory marker. For example, Teresa, a white resident of Bucktown, noted, “A lot of them [youth gang members] live in [Humboldt Park] or close by. This [The 606] can't really change that. All you have to do is take a step off the trail, and you can see their markings [graffiti] so you know they are still around.” Julia, a white resident of Wicker Park, shared similar thoughts: “You can see these poor areas away from the trail [in Humboldt Park]. Places where the houses aren't very nice. There are bars on the windows and graffiti.” The presence of graffiti and other signs considered unpleasant by some white residents led them to forgo greenway use in segments traversing Humboldt Park or avoid the neighborhood altogether.

4.1.2. Policing youth

In response to perceptions of disorder attributed to youth of color, white residents attempted to control The 606, other public spaces, and the behavior of youth of color through racial profiling and citizen-based policing. Interviews with white residents revealed that calls to law enforcement were often made about youth loitering on the greenway. This was particularly true in eastern neighborhoods, where the socializing behaviors of youth of color were seen as disruptive and fostering an environment unfavorable for white residents. When asked about areas of the trail in which she may feel unsafe, Caroline, a white Bucktown resident noted that she used all areas of the trail, but felt unsafe when a large group of youth congregated on the greenway. As she explained:

I don't have a problem with them [youth of color] running or biking on here, but a lot of time I seem them just sitting around taking up space.

That is when they become a nuisance. There is always a group of them at the [art] installation [at Damon Avenue], saying things to people or yelling at each other so I started calling the police or getting the cops on here to make them move... People won't stop and sit there because they are afraid of them... We didn't move into this neighborhood to be around a bunch of teenagers and their drama. They need to take that somewhere else.

Although white newcomers residing in Logan Square and Humboldt Park also expressed nervousness around youth of color, they did not seem to be policing youth as frequently as the residents of the more established eastern neighborhoods. Also, most white residents of western neighborhoods shared feelings of acceptance for the presence of local youth of color. Some white newcomers even acknowledged their status as an outsider and referred to Humboldt Park as “their [Latinx residents] neighborhood.” For instance, when Michelle, a white newcomer in Humboldt Park, was asked why she chose to live in the neighborhood, she noted, “I like seeing the diversity... I just don't know why some [white residents] have to act like they own this [The 606] and ruin it for other people.”

Interviews with youth confirmed the frequent policing of their activities on The 606, particularly their congregation in large groups. According to Luis, a teenager of Mexican descent from Humboldt Park, “[White residents] don't treat us with respect. All they want is get rid of us, so they call the police... White people are quick to get nervous when there's a group of us. You can just tell they [don't like us]... You see what we're doing [Luis made a gesture indicating he and the researcher were just speaking]?! We can't do that without getting reported.” Kyle, a Puerto Rican teenager from Humboldt Park, also noted the heightened policing on the greenway's eastern end: “I'm not saying this about all white people, but some of you don't like to hang around a bunch of Puerto Ricans. Even if aren't doing anything, they just call the police.” Youth also indicated that white residents policed their bicycle use on the greenway. Bicycle racing was common among groups of youth at night when greenway use decreased.¹ Here, youth would meet and race one another for “bragging rights”. Yet youth recognized the invisible demarcations on the eastern

¹ Youth often raced on the greenway after The 606's official designated close at 11:00 pm.

end of the greenway and the increased risk of racing in the Wicker Park and Bucktown neighborhoods, even when few pedestrians are present. Speaking about the eastern neighborhoods, one youth noted, “*We don't go down there at night...If someone saw us down there racing, they'd call the police. I'm not trying to get locked up.*”

Lastly, youth perceived to be policed directly through the denigration and potential elimination of local area murals that decorated the walls of the underside of The 606 in parts of Logan Square and Humboldt Park. Despite being unrelated to gang activity, many white residents perceived murals as a form of graffiti, an “eye-sore” to the trail, and disorderly. They also feared that if allowed to remain, the murals would become omnipresent on all parts of the greenway, including areas of Bucktown. Caroline, a Bucktown resident, explained this when asked about the murals: “*It's not that I have a problem with them [the murals], I just don't want them in my neighborhood... what happens when they start painting them over here [Bucktown]?*” As a result, a petition was started to remove the artwork from the greenway entirely, replacing it with a discrete solid color. Alice, a Humboldt Park resident and member of a youth-serving community organization, explained that the murals, which often featured iconography central to Latinx (specifically Puerto Rican) culture, were painted by local youth and were critical landscapes for displaying youth identity and creativity.

The [606] is the largest wall we have in Humboldt [Park] and most of the murals were done by teens and kids in the neighborhood.... It's not gang tagging decorating the wall it's meaningful pieces of art, that represent these guys' culture and identity as Puerto Ricans.

4.1.3. Youth response to policing and The 606 as a “safe space”

The constant policing by white residents led many youth of color to either avoid areas located on the eastern side of the greenway or avoid the greenway entirely, returning to spaces they could occupy without discrimination. Specifically, some youth started to avoid The 606 because the greenway has become a contentious space where they were under constant “surveillance”. Franco, a twenty-something Puerto Rican youth from Humboldt Park, explained “*we don't go up there to chill anymore. [white residents] ain't that welcoming, you know?*” Franco explained that, in addition to white residents, law enforcement officers also acted in a discriminatory manner toward youth of color. He noted, “*Just yesterday [my friend] was stopped [on The 606] by some cop, who ask him for identification. What kind of shit is that? My man was just trying to go to work.*”

Although some youth of color chose not to stop using the greenway, others kept visiting the segments of The 606 and the pocket parks located in the western neighborhoods. When asked why they chose to only use the western segments of the trail, many youth indicated that avoiding the eastern segments allowed them to engage in recreation, including socialization and bicycle racing, without fear of profiling, policing, or displacement. Although these youth of color indicated that they still had contact with white residents in western segments, particularly newcomers, these interactions were negligible, and they perceived that these segments belonged to them and other residents of color living in the community.

Finally, although citizen-based policing often displaced groups of youth of color, there was a sense that the constant surveillance of The 606 helped mitigate gang presence on and around the greenway. In doing so, many youth indicated that The 606, particularly its western segments, served as a haven or “safe space” where they could recreate without the threat of violence or recruitment. When asked about his use of the trail, Luis, a teenage resident of Humboldt Park, referred to The 606 as “*an escape*” and a place he could frequent “*without have to worry about gangs*” or other issues that often take place in his neighborhood. Even for those youth of color living farther from the greenway, The 606 was a welcomed amenity to the Chicago landscape. Tucker, a Black teenager from North Lawndale, indicated, “*People are up here, running or*

biking or chillin. There's no drama. Everyone seems good.” He explained that his neighborhood had many gangs, and although he was not involved in a gang, gang members frequently engaged him. Alice acknowledged the utility of The 606 in providing youth with a much-needed space away from negative influences:

I know that a lot of people get angry about them up here, but at least when they are out racing or whatever they aren't involved in activities that could get them in trouble. There is still that pressure around here for a lot of them to join gangs. I don't know many of these kids who aren't related to or know someone who is in a gang, living a street life. This trail really belongs to them. They are the future.

4.2. Quantitative results: what predicts the number of 311 calls?

We then analyzed records of citizen-based policing related to graffiti to uncover whether such records reflected the increased pressure perceived by youth of color. To do so, we fitted a mixed-effects quasi-Poisson model to estimate what predicts the number of graffiti-related 311 calls (see Table 2). Several independent variables (IVs) have statistically significant relationships with the number of graffiti-related 311 calls in the study area, and the fixed effects of the model explain 35.3% of the variance, as expressed by the marginal R^2 . Among the variables in the model, *Year* ($p < 0.001$) and *Acres* ($p = 0.005$) have the strongest associations with the number of graffiti-related 311 calls in the areas surrounding The 606 (see t-values in Table 2). For each of the fixed-effects IVs represented in Table 2, a one-unit change results in a change in the log of counts for 311 calls (dependent variable) by the respective regression coefficient (Cohen et al., 2014).

Looking specifically at *Year*, we found that the number of graffiti-related calls increased over time, confirming Hypothesis 1. For every year since 2011, the predicted log count of 311 calls increased by 0.024. The incidence rate ratio (Exp(coeff.)) reveals that the number of incidents, or 311 calls, increased by a factor of 1.024 or 2.4% each year. In other words, starting in 2011, the rate of graffiti-related 311 calls in the area measured has increased by 2.4% per year. This suggests that graffiti-related 311 calls have increased as the areas near The 606 experienced gentrification (see Smith et al., 2016).

Among the demographic variables we examined, we found that the number of graffiti-related 311 calls in CBGs is significantly and positively associated with the percentage of renters in 2011 (*PctRent2011*, $p = 0.019$) and median gross rent in 2011 (*MGRent2011*, $p = 0.03$), whereas it is negatively associated with median household income in 2011 (*Income2011*, $p = 0.019$). For example, for every \$1000 increase in rent, the rate of graffiti-related 311 calls increased by 226% – that is, if a CBG with median rent of \$1000 has 100 calls, a CBG with median rent of \$2000 has 326 calls. Also, the number of 311 calls is positively and marginally associated with the percentage of college graduates in 2011 (*PctCollege2011*, $p = 0.076$). Finally, none of the two included variables describing change in demographics between 2011 and 2017 (*IncomeCh* and *PctCollegeCh*) show significant association with the number of 311 calls. Taken together, these findings suggest that the number of 311 calls was higher in CBGs that in 2011 had some traits of affluence or privilege within the study area (higher rent, larger shares of college graduates but lower income), providing partial support to Hypothesis 2.1. Yet the number of 311 calls was not higher in CBGs that gentrified more rapidly between 2011 and 2017 (e.g., Humboldt Park and Logan Square), which does not provide support to Hypothesis 2.2. In some ways, this finding corroborates youth of color's impressions of Humboldt Park remaining a “safe space” for them.

Regarding environmental variables, we found a negative association between *Dist606* and the number of 311 calls ($p = 0.014$), which confirms Hypothesis 3. Our model shows that the rate of 311 calls is higher in CBGs located closer to The 606 than in those located farther away from the greenway. This finding provides evidence that areas near The 606 may be the most policed by residents, who may see the trail as a

Table 2
Mixed-effects quasi-Poisson regression of counts of graffiti-related 311 calls per year per census block group.

Variable	Coeff.	95% Conf. Int.	Exp (Coeff.)	Std. error	t-Value	p-Value
Fixed effects						
Intercept	2.802	1.574–4.031	16.478	0.631	4.443	0.000
Year	0.024	0.014–0.033	1.024	0.005	4.736	0.000
Income2011	–0.178	–0.325 to –0.031	0.867	0.074	–2.403	0.019
PctCollege2011	0.760	–0.076–1.597	2.138	0.432	1.796	0.076
PctRent2011	1.182	0.205–2.158	3.261	0.494	2.392	0.019
MGRent2011	1.010	0.108–1.912	2.746	0.456	2.214	0.030
IncomeCh	–0.077	–0.230–0.077	0.926	0.078	–0.988	0.326
PctCollegeCh	0.074	–0.053–0.203	1.077	0.065	1.150	0.254
Acres	0.562	0.176–0.947	1.754	0.195	2.878	0.005
Dist606	–0.852	–1.523 to –0.181	0.427	0.339	–2.512	0.014
ParkAcres	–0.005	–0.013–0.002	0.995	0.004	–1.429	0.157
Random effects						
Intercept st. dev.	0.550	0.468–0.646				

Notes: $n = 81$ (repeated 8 years). Marginal $R^2 = 0.353$. Coefficients in bold are significant at the 0.05 level or better.

symbol of gentrification and therefore pay particular attention to graffiti in its surroundings. These higher levels of policing around the trail may make these areas at greater risk for becoming exclusionary spaces. This finding also corroborates some of the qualitative results, where youth of color expressed concern over the policing actions of white residents and users on The 606, particularly the Bucktown and Wicker Park neighborhoods.

5. Conclusion

This study highlighted the use of citizen-based policing to limit the presence and activities of youth of color in neighborhoods undergoing environmental gentrification in Chicago. Findings from the qualitative and quantitative analyses revealed that white residents might use citizen-based policing to monitor and displace behaviors they associate with disorder. Also, when white residents share a space with youth of color (The 606), white residents living in predominantly white neighborhoods (i.e., Bucktown and Wicker Park) may use non-emergency 311 calls to implicitly tell youth that such space is and will remain white space. For youth of color, citizen-based policing results in an unwelcoming public space that they negotiate through self-segregation, avoidance, or abandonment. These phenomena are part of broader trends of urban redevelopment that, in Chicago and other U.S. cities, have involved the gradual decline of minority neighborhoods and subsequent reinvestment to make such neighborhoods more attractive to the white creative class (Wilson, 2018).

On The 606, youth of color are frequently monitored by white people, who use both latent (i.e. avoidance, profiling) and overt (i.e. calling law enforcement) mechanisms to control their behavior. Citizen-based policing has been used for crime prevention and intervention throughout the world (Gill et al., 2017). But our findings confirm that the use of such form of policing to create white space by targeting youth of color is particularly strong in the U.S. due to its history of racial discrimination (Sanders, 2004), its “racial development machine” active in Chicago and elsewhere (Wilson, 2018), and the white aesthetics embedded in its parks (Byrne & Wolch, 2009).

As noted, our study makes three main contributions to the interdisciplinary literature on environmental gentrification. First, we studied the creation of white space through citizen-based policing in neighborhoods experiencing environmental gentrification, where parks become the physical symbols of gentrification. As we expected, we found that graffiti-related 311 calls increased since 2011, particularly in areas most proximate to The 606. This evidence suggests that white residents might attempt to “defend” their prized new park and surrounding areas from the perceived threat of graffiti and act to address such issue. In these “gilded ghettos”, white residents seek to live in what they perceive to be “authentic” urban settings, but under the condition

that it remains completely segregated life from communities of color (Helmuth, 2019, p. 748). Further, citizen-based policing of youth color seems more frequent and fastidious in Bucktown and Wicker Park, which are the wealthiest and whitest communities along the greenway. The construction of The 606 violated this idyllic setting by allowing fluid movement by youth (and residents) of color into white neighborhoods, resulting in a “us” versus “them” social dichotomy (Addie & Frasier, 2019; Moskowitz, 2017).

Second, our study brings attention to the policing of leisure behaviors, which results in the erasure of youth of color’s cultural identities through virtually banning their leisure activities and forms of expression such as graffiti and murals. Indeed, our findings suggest that white residents might police youth of color most often when youth congregate in groups and engage in other leisure activities. The targeting of youth congregation might be linked to implicit bias of many white residents, who tend to unconsciously associate youth of color with disorderly behavior and gang activity (Dovidio et al., 2002). In Chicago, these biases can be seen today in some city policies (Newman & Baim, 2018) and local media coverage (Esbensen & Tusinski, 2007). Further, our findings show that citizen-based policing along The 606 also targets other leisure behaviors, as we have seen an increase in 311 calls to remove graffiti, successful efforts to erase murals representing Latinx identity, and calls to stop bicycle racing. Similarly, Checker (2011) found that gentrifiers called the police on black residents playing drums in a New York City park. These examples of white “settler colonialism” (Addie & Frasier, 2019) that police leisure behaviors and culturally-relevant artifacts such as murals might result in the erasure of people of color’s cultural identity from the neighborhood (Gans, 1979; Ross, 2016) and the loss of place attachment (Shaw & Hagemans, 2015), helping the “racial redevelopment machine” (Wilson, 2018) create bulletproof white space.

Third, we studied interactional injustice in neighborhoods experiencing environmental gentrification. Combined with previous literature, our findings show that environmental gentrification raises significant issues along all dimensions of environmental justice. From the literature, we knew that greening fosters gentrification, leading to distributional injustice (e.g., Anguelovski et al., 2018; Immergluck & Balan, 2018; Rigolon & Németh, 2020), and that green space is often intended to promote gentrification, leading to procedural injustice (e.g., Checker, 2011; Gould & Lewis, 2017; Rigolon & Németh, 2018). In this study, we found that citizen-based policing helps white residents take control of The 606, which makes youth of color feel unwelcome, marginalized, and even excluded from this public space. Thus, citizen-based policing in places undergoing environmental gentrification is an interactional injustice (Low, 2013) that transforms what should be inclusive parks into “white spaces” (Anderson, 2015). Further, if the current gentrification trends continue, The 606 might eventually become white

space from end-to-end, forcing youth of color to conform to the expectations or white residents or avoid the greenway altogether (Anderson, 2015). Such avoidance would effectively erase youth of color's "safe space", where they can engage in positive recreation activities and avoid gangs.

Although our study is the first to examine citizen-based policing of youth of color in the context of environmental gentrification, we recognize some limitations that warrant further research. To start, although we took numerous steps to ensure data trustworthiness, including on-site member-checking and universal question design, the existing power dynamics between the lead researcher (a white male) and youth of color may have led to some bias in the participants' responses. Future studies could utilize community-based participatory research to help mitigate these potential effects (Floyd, 2014). Further, the 311 call data we used did not provide the race or ethnicity of individuals who reported graffiti. Although our interviews suggested that white individuals most often engage in citizen-based policing, future studies could use on-site surveys with residents and interviews with law-enforcement officers to more clearly describe the demographics of people engaging in different kinds of policing. Also, graffiti-related 311 calls provide a good foundation for understanding citizen-based policing of youth, but future research could expand on our work and use surveys to examine citizen-based policing of other types of youth behaviors in gentrifying areas (e.g., loitering). Our findings also raise additional questions regarding both racial and generational perceptions of mural-type graffiti in public spaces, including whether these pieces embed political and economic goals and whether they actually represent the culture of longtime neighborhood residents (Luckerson, 2018). Finally, our study did not capture the experiences of white youth, who seem to be absent from on The 606. Future studies could examine the experiences of white adolescents who reside in a neighborhood undergoing environmental gentrification, which would help clarify how racial stereotypes include citizen-based policing in public parks.

5.1. Implications

The findings of our study suggest important lines of work for policymakers, urban planners, and community-based organizations who are interested in creating more inclusive communities. These actors should seek to contrast recent market forces that seek to reshape urban communities into homogenous suburban-like neighborhoods, where citizen-based policing helps create these monotonous "white spaces" (Anderson, 2015; Helmuth, 2019). Indeed, "extraordinary amounts of money, forethought, and policy are required to make a place [i.e., a gentrifying community] feel so monotonous, sterile, and vulgar" (Moskowitz, 2017, p. 170). Policymakers, planners, and community-based organizations can help contrast these trends in at least three ways. They can design public spaces that, unlike The 606, embody elements of the cultures, histories, and struggles of longtime residents of color. They can incentivize the preservation and construction of a broad range of housing types that cater to diverse households, including multigenerational households. And they can implement programs to preserve and grow minority-owned businesses, which can help maintain a variety of commercial options and affordability levels in gentrifying neighborhoods (see Rigolon & Christensen, 2019).

Policymakers and planners should also take advantage of the power of parks to bring together diverse communities. Especially in the U.S., white people's racial bias will likely continue to drive citizen-based policing. But parks and recreation programs that promote positive interactions between people of different races/ethnicities might help reduce discriminatory policing in the medium and long term. Moreover, well-designed parks and recreation programs may help prevent similar patterns of discrimination as heightened xenophobia and biases toward immigrants have emerged in countries across Europe (Taras, 2009). Although the results of our study depict a grim picture of citizen-based

policing, Langegger's work (2013) in Denver, Colorado, showed that even in gentrifying neighborhoods, parks can be inclusive spaces where local knowledge is shared among diverse residents and where youth of color and white residents have opportunities to find common ground. These positive outcomes can be achieved through culturally-inclusive programming and the shared maintenance of community spaces (Langegger, 2013; Shinew et al., 2004). One way to accomplish this may be organizing graffiti education events, such as the "how to read graffiti" walk staged for The 606 and surrounding areas (Biasco, 2015), which may help white residents develop a better understanding of their importance to Latinx youth. Finally, law enforcement should incentivize and welcome the collaboration of longtime residents of gentrifying communities to ensure that public spaces like The 606 can be "safe spaces" for youth of color. Overall, policymakers, planners, and community-based organizations have some tools to avoid environmental gentrification that results in "white space" and to create more inclusive communities.

Author statement

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Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Appendix A. Interview questions

1. What is your ethnicity of origin?
2. What is your age?
3. Do you live in close proximity to the 606?
 - If yes, proceed to Question 4a.
 - If no, why have you chosen to come to The 606 today and proceed to 4b?
- 4a. (If live in close proximity) Why did you choose to move live in this neighborhood?
 - What does this neighborhood mean to you?
 - Can you explain the influence that you believe The 606 has had on your neighborhood?
 - What are your thoughts regarding the other neighborhoods along the trail route?
 - Do you find all of the neighborhoods to be welcoming?
 - Does this influence how you use the trail?
 - Do you use the trail to access these neighborhoods? Why or Why not?
 - Has the trail impacted to way that you see these neighborhoods?
- 4b. (If do not live around trail), What are your thoughts on the neighborhoods that the 606 passes through?
 - Did you have any thoughts, positive or otherwise, about these neighborhoods before coming to The 606?
 - When was the last time you were in these areas?
 - What is your general perception of these neighborhoods now that you have been on The 606?
5. Describe how you use the trail (transportation, recreation, socialization)?
6. Do you frequently interact with others along the trail not in your party?

- Do you feel the trail has helped in bringing people from the different neighborhoods together?
7. When using the trail, do you typically travel from end-to-end? Why or why not?
- Are there certain markers for you that signify the place where you turn around?
- If no, why have you chosen to avoid these areas of the trail?
8. Have you noticed other individuals turn around at certain trail points?
9. Do you follow this same activity patterns at all times of the day?
- Are you comfortable on the trail at night? Why or Why not?
10. Are there any areas of The 606 in which you feel unsafe? Can you describe these areas for me?
11. While using the trail have you ever experienced any type of crime or delinquent conduct along the trail? Can you please describe these for me?
12. What are your general impressions of the following neighborhoods?
- Humboldt Park
 - Wicker Park
 - Bucktown
13. Do you ever feel unwelcomed in any of these neighborhoods? Why? How so?
14. Tell me how the new construction is changing your neighborhood (this is really aimed at Humboldt Park residents)? Other neighborhoods?
- Property Cost?
- Neighborhood Composition?
15. So, The 606 is a beautiful amenity that currently serves a variety of individuals, moving forward how do you believe the mix of trail users will change or will it change at all?
16. What would you like to see added to the trail that is not currently present?
17. Do you take advantage of current programs and events that take place on The 606? Why or Why not?
- Do you believe increases in trail programming would enhance the trail experience for all neighborhood residents? Why or why not?
- What types of programs would you like to see added?
18. Overall, why do you believe this trail was constructed?
19. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me today?

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