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British Black Women and their relationship with gentrification: How do Black women's relationships with Deptford/New Cross influence their experience of gentrification?

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This dissertation is submitted as an Independent Geographical Study as partial fulfilment of an undergraduate BA degree in Geography at King's College London. Supervised by Dr Ruth Craggs.

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DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

INDEPENDENT GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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Hereby declare (a) that this dissertation is my own original work and
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(c) that it does not contain any material that has been or will be
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Abstract

Deptford/New Cross has been gentrifying over the past 10 years. The structure and demographic of the area is changing, disrupting the place attachments and place identities of the inhabitants. This study analyses Black British women's experience of place in a historical and social context. This is linked to how they experience gentrification resulting in a black feminist analysis of urban change. Twelve interviewees, recruited via snowball and opportunity sampling, spoke about their place identity, place attachment and sense of belonging. Findings were that historical racialisation of space and negative representations in media-space, meant gentrification exacerbates already tentative place attachments, affecting the strength of the Black British female community and decreasing gentrification resistance.

Key words: *Black women, Place, Gentrification, Place attachment, Place identity*

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<u>Chapter 1</u>

<u>Introduction</u>

As a British Black woman living in a white, patriarchal society, I found myself struggling with concepts of place attachment. This increased when my area began to gentrify, as place attachment and gentrification are often linked together (Corcoran 2002; Relph 1976). Both are relevant in urban literature and are connected to racial and class politics (Albright 2017; Lartey 2018; Hengels 2017). Place has been very influential in urban literature (Tuan 1974, 1977, 1979) and when used to evaluate gentrification, it gives a new dimension to the understanding of urban phenomena (Walker and Ryan 2008) because gentrification influences place attachment and place identity (Watt 2013; Watt 2006; Alfonso 2016) and for Black British women it can weaken those attachments.

In London, gentrification occurs in previously impoverished inner-city areas that are typically majority populated by ethnic minorities. Examples are Peckham, Brixton and Hackney. Lewisham is experiencing similar urban change, particularly in Deptford and New Cross (Hancill 2017).

Gentrification research has explored marginalised communities of different races (Hwang 2015; Dillon 2013) and gender (Bondi 1999) respectively, however, how the interweaving of various forms of social stratification affects ones relationship with place and thus gentrification, is yet to be thoroughly explored. Urban literature has notoriously been dominated by a white (often middle-class) male perspective.

Furthermore, the power to influence urban reform tends to lie with white men, especially in England, where only 33% of councillors and 17% of council leaders are women (Doward 2017). This lack of diversity, in academia and politics, has resulted in the overlooking of how Black British women experience place and gentrification. This is problematic because Black British women from working-class communities exist in several marginalised groups, meaning their relationship with the city is unique and possibly substantially different from what has hither to been researched. For this reason, the inclusion of a Black British female perspective on place and gentrification is imperative for broadening urban literature.

Gentrification is "when higher income households displace lower income residents, changing the essential character and flavour of the neighbourhood" (Kennedy and Paul 2001 p15). Tinkler *et al* (2017) emphasises this must not be confused with revitalization. Revitalization concentrates on equity, something gentrification fails in as its benefits are often unevenly distributed (Atkinson 2000). These uneven distributions can be linked to racial, class and gender inequalities that are embedded in British society and deeply affect the British Black woman's existence.

Historically, discrimination has made the advancement of Black people in Britain difficult (Perlmann 1987) especially for Black women (Crawley 2006). A Black British identity has constantly been refuted since the late 1900's where politicians like Enoch Powell challenged the idea of a Black and British existence (Barker 2002, Olusoga 2016, Alexander 1996). Subsequently, British Black women are rarely

included in discussions on British urban form (as researchers or as the researched). This has led to the overlooking of their relationships to British place and urban change. Despite this lack of inclusion, Black feminist literature highlights the difficulties black women experience living and sharing place in white societies (Hill Collins 1990; Cannon 1985). Analysing place from this perspective is important for widening the understanding of place attachment and gentrification in Britain.

Place attachment derives from people giving places meaning (Humberger 2018). Through symbolic interactionism, people relate to places depending on assigned meanings, which come to fruition after the development of social interactions and experiences (Blumer 1962). Therefore, exploring place meanings from a Black woman's perspective includes examining their Black British histories. After WWII and The British Nationality Act of 1948, the British government encouraged people from the Commonwealth to migrate to Britain (Peach 1968; Howe 2013). During the 1950s to 1990s, the prevalence of racism made it difficult for Black people to find safe spaces to live and they often settled in temporary and/or poor quality homes in impoverished areas, forming ethnic enclaves (Childs and Storry 2002).

Winston (1992) voiced that through the struggles they experienced (for example, continuously having their place identity undermined (Solomos 1993)), Black communities developed unique forms of identity and place attachment to affirm their British Black identities. This highlights the importance of place attachment and place

identity in British Black communities underlining why they should be explored, especially in relation to gentrification, a process which threatens those identities.

Without acknowledging Black British history and Black British feminism, proper analysis of the Black woman's intersectional experience of gentrification cannot take place. There will be a persistent lacuna in gentrification literature as it does not fully assess how gendered and racial politics influence urban development in London. It also means Black British women will stay invisible in literature that concerns their city.

This paper explores British Black women's experiences of place and urban change including sense of belonging, feelings of discomfort and ambivalence towards gentrification. The changes occurring in Deptford and New Cross are supposed to improve amenities and attract new home-owners, however, the population of Black female inhabitants have attachments to the pre-redeveloped Deptford/New Cross. I examine the strength of these attachments and how they are articulated in relation to racial and gender politics. Then I explore how gentrification and resistance to gentrification, is perceived in regards to these attachments.

Furthermore, I look at Black feminist discourse (including representations in media space) and whether this negates a Black woman's' right to British space and decreases their confidence in resisting gentrification.

Key issues:

• *Urban geographical knowledge and scholarship*: Being a Black woman myself, this research will diversify the material on urban regeneration by giving a further perspective on London dynamics.

• *British Black women's place attachment and place identity*: It's important to explore whether being of a minority race, gender and social class influences the ability to form place attachments as this encourages a more holistic understanding of how place attachment is formed and maintained.

• *Agency of Black women and perceptions of gentrification*: Including the history of Black women in British space, racial stereotypes in media-space and other topics of Black British feminist discourse means further diversifying gentrification research. For example, negative media representation has not hither to been related to a lack of resistance against gentrification.

To explore these key issues my research questions were:

1. How do British Black women in Lewisham articulate their sense of local belonging and place attachment?

2. What are British Black women's views on urban change?

3. Do Black women have the agency to voice these opinions in debates on gentrification and in forms of resistance?

The paper aims to also identify a solution. By diversifying the study of gentrification, I hope to improve the understanding of the Black British female experience of London through creating space for Black feminist discourse in urban literature.

<u>Chapter 2</u>

<u>Literature Review</u>

<u>Place – What is it exactly?</u>

Place as a concept influences many disciplines from city planning (Manzo and Perkins 2006) to community dynamics (Devine-Wright 2010) to gentrification (Dickens and Butcher 2016). Places are units which fill space (Tuan 1975) and are given meaning from social interactions and life experiences (Tuan 1979). They hold the histories and memories of people and communities and are assigned identity and value (Gieryn 2000). Massey (1994) emphasises people's need to have a secure sense of place, place attachment and place identity, each of which can be understood by the following quote:

"an authentic sense of place is being inside and belonging to your place both as an individual and as a member of a community, and know this without reflecting upon it" (Relph 1976 p65).

The emotional connection between a physical place and the individual/group is place attachment (Florek 2011) and its strength depends on memories (as aforementioned), making it a subjective (Lewicka 2011) but also a collective experience.

<u>Black women in British place</u>

- Can one be Black and belong to British place?

Despite the presence of Black people in Britain, their rights to British space have often been contested (Olusoga 2016). Fryer (1984) discussed the struggle Black British citizens had in forming place in Britain. Black places of worship, shops and centres suffered racist violence for years, undermining a sense of belonging and this highlights the difficulty the Black community has had in securing place attachment in British cities. It further highlights why this communities sense of belonging and place attachment under gentrification should be explored.

Fryer also discusses the denial of Black Britishness. In response to the "fear" of ethnic minorities claiming Britishness, the idea that Black people were intimidating and dangerous was propagated through media-space. This is corroborated by Entman (1994) who notes similar discrimination in American media-space. In Britain, a denial of Black Britishness was seen in policies that controlled Black immigration (Carter *et al* 1987) and only 50 years ago, conservative propaganda material such as "If you want a n***** for a neighbour, vote Labour" was used in West Midlands (Jeffries 2014). This has continued into present day where British media continues to reinforce negative Black stereotypes that challenge a Black British identity (Malik and Nwonka 2017). Malik (2002) also voiced how matters of race and ethnicity are continuously contested in British media causing British people to struggle with the meaning of 'Blackness'.

This negative depiction of Black people in Britain has included presenting the Black woman as lesser than women from other races and perpetuating the "angry black woman" trope, present in numerous British spaces from schools to working environments (Uviebinene and Adegoke 2018). The stereotype insinuates that black women are hysterical, volatile and aggressive and this has affected how Black women identify with themselves and their British identities and thus British place.

This historical context is important for illustrating what memories and experiences have gone into forming the place attachments of Black British women as it helps to understand how they view gentrification; a process that threatens their already tentative place attachments.

- The city is a man's playground

It is well known that in the professional and social realm women suffer gender inequality (Solnit 2014; Savigny 2013; Acker 2006; Brooks 1997) and urban literature suggests women are disillusioned with city planning (Pojani *et al* 2018;Kalms 2017; Kalms and Korsmeyer 2017). For example Greed (2006) discussed how policy-makers place women's social and economic needs as secondary to men's and Bondi (1999) argues this has decreased the inclusion of women's experiences of gentrification.

Furthermore, there are debates on whether place attachment varies between genders (Brown *et al* 2003) and studies suggest women possess greater ability to

form place attachments (Hidalgo and Hernandez 2001;Mesch and Manor 1998). This infers a woman's experiences of the city needs more research.

Additionally, feminist literature highlights the sexism experienced when women stand up for themselves. Solnit (2014) coined the phrase 'mansplaining' which is: *"the presumption…that keeps women from speaking up and from being heard when they dare; that crushes young women into silence by indicating … that this is not their world. It trains us in self-doubt and self-limitation …"* (p 4). This explains why women's voices concerning urban planning are less acknowledged than men's.

British Black women face the same sexism combined with racism when entering white spaces (Patton 2010; Crawley 2006). This has made it difficult for them to create a deep sense of attachment and belonging to British space. For example, this quote shows the lack of acceptance of Black, British women in the work place suggesting they do not belong in British space.

> *"Coloured women are said to be slow mentally, and the speed of work in modern factories is said to be quite beyond their capacity"* (Conservative party report 1953 Carter *et al* 1987).

This was the same in education (Perlmann 1987) and Black women's efforts to form place identities in their home areas, for example, Figure 1 shows how racist propaganda contests Black women's right to British space.

Figure 1: Barbara Grey stands next to racist graffiti outside a training centre for Black women. (Kenlock 2018)

This further demonstrates how alongside the sexism in city planning (questioning a woman's right to space) Black women face racism in Britain (questioning a black persons right to space) which further threatens their sense of belonging to British space. Gentrification viewed from this perspective would give a new insight into understanding urban change.

Despite the dominance of a male perspective from urban literature to planning, there is a strong feminist discourse that acts against the gender imbalance. The problem is

feminist urban researchers write from a white (often middle-class) woman's perspective. This type of feminism has been critiqued for its lack of inclusion of diversity (Francois-Cerrah 2015; Crawley 2006; Afshar and Maynard 1994; Spelman 1988) where gender is the main focus and racial and class politics are overlooked, creating a space that ignores Black women's discourse (Breines 2007; Carby 1997).

Furthermore, feminist literature tends to concern American cities (Patch 2008; DeSena 1994) and the literature on Black feminist urban research mostly originates from America. This shows there is an extensive lack of British Black feminist literature that discusses the intersectional experience of place and gentrification.

The history of racism in Britain combined with the sexist shaping of London (Agnew and Jenkins 2015; Greed *et al* 2016) firmly suggests that Black women experience space, connect with community and thus form place attachment in a unique way (Breines 2007). Cannon (1985) even stated "the interrelationship of white supremacy and male superiority has characterized the Black woman's reality as a situation of struggle" (p30). This shows, the Black woman's' experience of place and gentrification must be analysed subjectively.

- What is gentrification?

To understand Black British women's experience of gentrification, an understanding of the process must be obtained. To define gentrification an amalgamation of the definition aforementioned, one from Phillips *et al* (2014) and one by Slater (2011) is used.

Gentrification is the renovation of lower income areas by typically white, middle-class professionals to attract wealthier individuals, encouraging the segregation of communities of colour due to processes of capitalism. (Henderson and Phillips 2014; Slater 2011;Kennedy and Paul 2001).

This highlights that gentrification emanates from capitalism's need to make profit (Slater 2011) however, profitable populations (the gentrifying force) are very different from the inhabitants of impoverished areas (Harriet 2017; Schlichtman 2017). Due to historical distributions of power and wealth in Britain, they tend to be majority white middle-class and this can cause cultural and racial clashes as the services and physical aspects of the area change for the incoming demographic (Atkinson 2000).

It is important to note, gentrification is not primarily driven by race or cultural politics. Middle-class lifestyle changes and autonomy has been linked to gentrification (Ley 1980; Couture and Handbury 2015; Edlund *et al* 2015) but Smith (1979) emphasises that a capitalist economy is a larger instigator of the process compared to the choices of white professionals. This underlines that gentrification is not inherently a 'race issue' however, gentrification interplays with race, gender and cultural politics in a way that cannot be ignored (Tinkler *et al* 2017).

It has been thought that urban regeneration is good for London communities as benefits 'trickle down' from the middle-class to the rest of society (Altshuler 1969; Lowry 1960). This is corroborated by Freeman (2006) who concluded:

'[gentrification] provides the opportunity to improve the quality of life of deteriorated

neighbourhoods and benefits both the indigenous residents and the larger society'
(p. 169).

However, this is not always the case. Freeman (2006) acknowledged that residents
have pessimistic and distrustful views on gentrification. Due to histories of
discrimination, black communities expressed cynicism towards gentrification as they
realised improvements only came when middle-class whites moved in. Additionally,
Tinkler *et al* (2017) suggests that systemic racism and gender inequalities in society
result in gentrification disproportionately burdening working-class women of colour.

Unfortunately, gentrification can be an unpleasant and overall harmful experience for
certain groups of people (Gordon 2017; Bowler and McBurney 1991; Dickens and
Butcher 2016; Watts 2013; Humberger 2018; Zietz 1979). This is not to argue that
gentrification is an intentionally odious process however, it must be acknowledged
that frequently the negatives outweigh the positives, especially for those who have
marginalized due to gender and race.

- "Up and coming" - Deptford/New Cross

Deptford and New Cross are two intertwined residential areas in Lewisham, London
(Potts 2008). Figure 2 is a map of Lewisham showing the two areas.
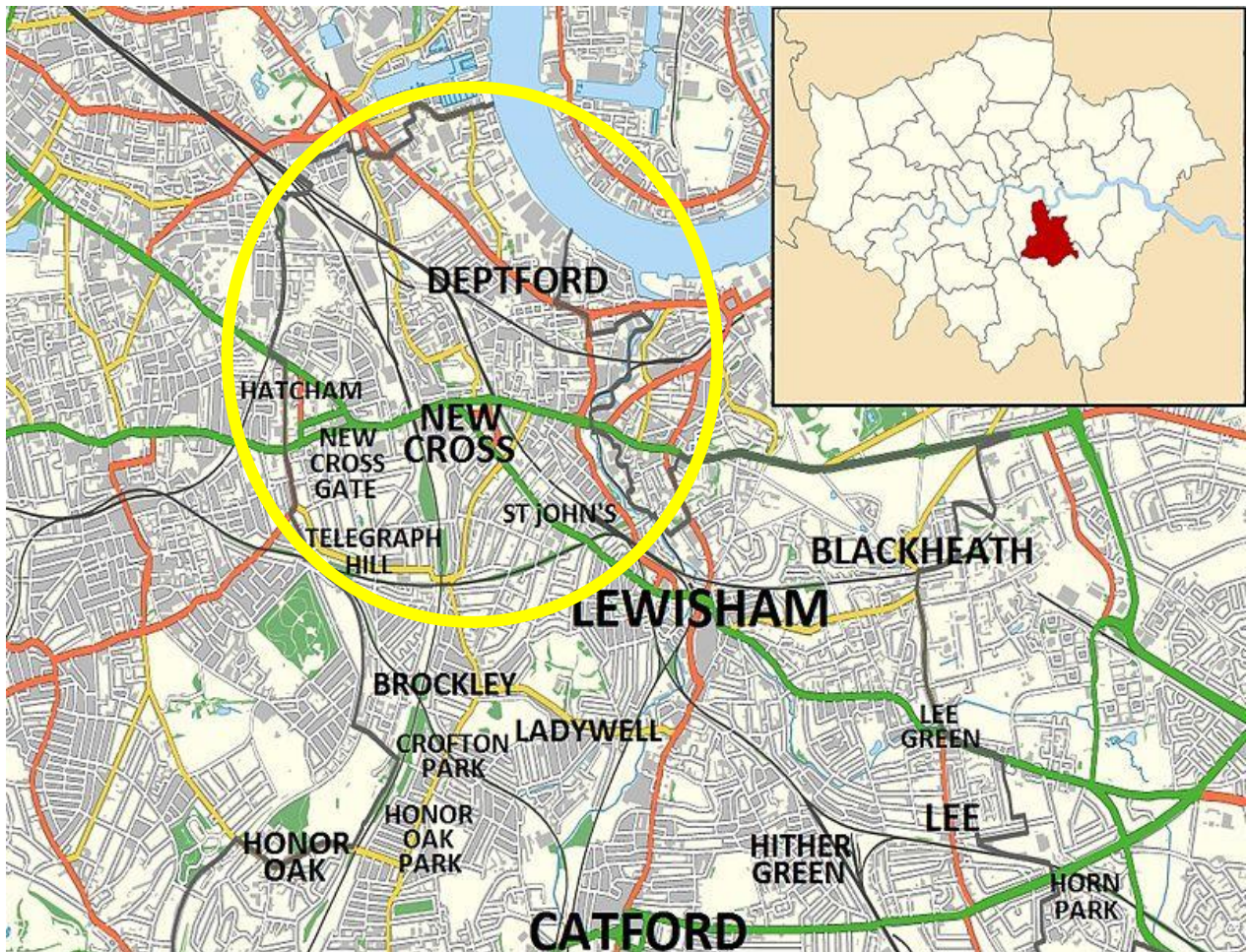
Figure 2: Map of Lewisham Borough Anon (2011)

Post-war Britain has continuously been rebuilding and regaining capital (Glass

1964). Now, in the lead up to "Brexit" it is essential Britain demonstrates strength and

stability in its capital and thus London's inner-city areas have undergone extensive

urban regeneration (Mayor of London and London Assembly 2018a). Figure 3 below

is a "gentrification map" of London in 2011 that reveals how areas of inner-city

London are receiving more investment. Lewisham is in the early stages of

redevelopment however, the map is 8 years old. Since then, The Mayor's Outer

London Fund (launched in June 2011) has given £1.5m and the council has given

£732,000 for a series of works to take place within Deptford (Mayor of London and

London Assembly 2018b).
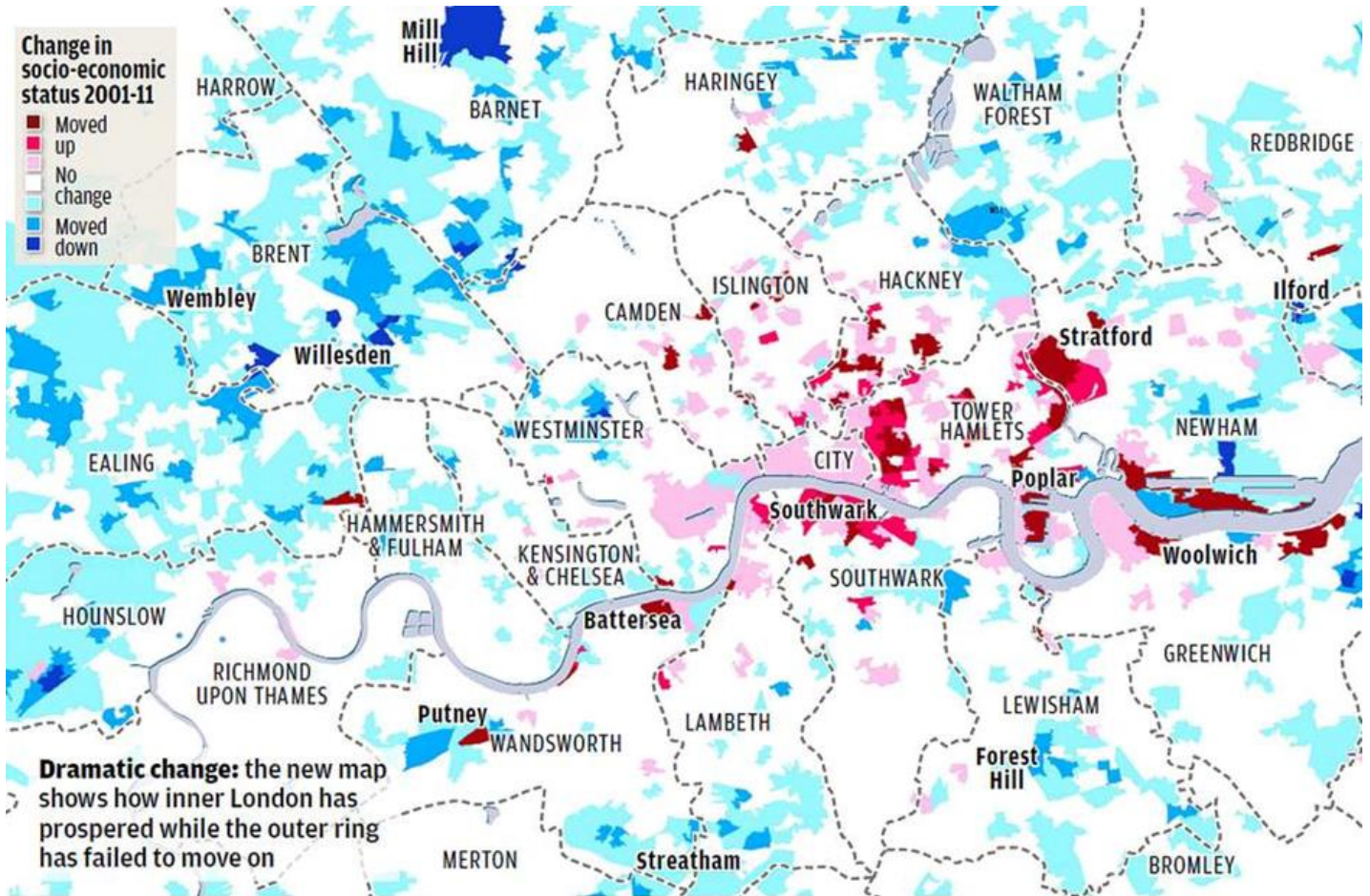
Figure 3: "Gentrification map" of London 2011 (Hudson 2013)

This shows that New Cross and Deptford are great examples of gentrification,

however, this has not received support from the entire community. Not-for-profit co-

operative's such as Corporate Watch have documented the communities negative

response to Deptford's' gentrification. Furthermore, they have highlighted how the

process is mainly supported by white, middle-class, male council leaders (Corporate

Watch 2018).

- <u>Race in Deptford/New Cross</u>

Lewisham has 46% of residents belonging to Black or minority ethnic heritage (Corporate Watch 2018) and the largest group of ethnic minorities are of Black African and Black Caribbean decent, which comprises nearly 30% of Lewisham's population (GLA Round 2011).

In New Cross and Deptford, the Black community is well-established and there are more citizens of Black decent in New Cross/Deptford than white British decent (Willey 2019). This includes Black women who have created a home and community for themselves; despite initially struggling to establish a right to London (Bowcott 2004; Akwagyiram 2011).

Deptford has seen many racial clashes throughout history. For example, The Battle of Lewisham in 1977 that took place on New Cross Road where hundreds of right-wing, white nationalists took to the streets (Townsend 2017). Furthermore, there was the New Cross fire where 13 Black people died in a racist attack (Akwagyiram 2011) and not to mention the years of police brutality (Lahiri 2001). Husbands (2013) discussed the level of hostility whites had towards blacks in Deptford during the late 90's where political parties such as the British National Party targeted the Black communities. This shows how Black women in Deptford have had their Britishness and right to British space questioned for decades and this may have affected their place attachment and thus how they view gentrification.

This dissertation explores how gentrification is experienced by a group with a unique relationship with place. This includes analysing place identity, sense of belonging and place attachment in relation to gentrification from a Black British Feminist perspective.

Chapter 3

Methodology

- Research design

This study aimed to obtain valid but subjective perspectives of place and link them to gentrification. The best method would allow participants to openly discuss place identity, place attachment and sense of belonging.

Qualitative methods were most appropriate because quantitative methods produce statistically significant data however qualitative methods give "descriptions of complex phenomena; illuminating the experience and interpretation of events; giving voice to those rarely heard" (Sofaer 1999 p1101). Furthermore, gentrification research often uses qualitative techniques like Watt (2013) who conducted in-depth interviews with residents in East London discussing gentrification following the 2012 Olympics.

- Philosophical approach

Social constructivism suggests knowledge of ones surroundings is gained through the accumulation of experiences forming schemas. Thus human development is socially situated and constructed by our experiences (Schwandt 2000). This implies that people's schemas on belonging, identity, place and community are comprised of complex layers of experience. These layers must be deconstructed to understand what it means to be a British Black woman in a place of gentrification. To deconstruct

schemas, the women needed to openly express their viewpoints and reflect on their histories of Deptford/New Cross.

- Data collection

The table below highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the qualitative methods most appropriate.

Table 1. Interview methods

Sources: Britten (1995); Richardson *et al* (1965); Smith (1975); Leech (2002); Galletta (2013); Creswell (2003)

	Definition	Weaknesses	Strengths
Semi Structured	Interviews follow a loose structure. Questions are open-ended and diversions from the interview structure are welcomed.	Interviewing experience is preferred when discussing personal topics like identity. Time consuming as interviews provided a lot of data to analyse. Participants can "over share", with such a	Views on place attachment, belonging, Deptford identity and a Black female identity could be explored in depth. Women were comfortable as interviews flowed like a conversations. Most appropriate for exploring experiences of

		sensitive topic, reducing anonymity.	living in Deptford.

I conducted 12 semi-structured interviews (between 4/09/2019 until 10/11/2019), all of which were face to face and held wherever the participants' chose. Face to face interviews meant I could note gesticulation and body language and having the participant choose the location evened out the power imbalance, ensuring they were comfortable.

I constructed 27 questions which prompted interviewees to draw on emotions, thoughts and feelings they had for Deptford. However, participants were free to deviate so feelings towards Deptford and attitudes on gentrification could arise naturally, increasing validity.

Examples of questions are listed below, please see appendix 4 for the full list.

- What does sense of belonging mean to you?

- How do you feel about the changes you have witnessed?

- What do you know about the history of the area?

- <u>Sampling</u>

Sampling was a mixture of two techniques. The strengths and weaknesses of each are listed below.

<u>Table 2. Sampling techniques</u>

Sources: McLeod (2014); Scottsdale (2017); Saunders *et al* (2012)

	Definition	Weaknesses	Strengths
Snowball	Participants ask other people in the target population to participate.	Relatives of participants were often used (sisters and mothers), which increased bias.	Asking Black women to discuss sensitive topics such as race, place identity and belonging was easier when they had been referred. The snowball method meant I could reach a variety of Black women easily and quickly.
Opportunity	Interviewees are people who are part of the target population and are conveniently	Generalisability is decreased due to selective bias; it was easier to ask people I	It was more economically viable and practical for this line of research

ready and willing to participate.	knew would be interested. The sample has low representativeness	This method ensured participants were available for interview despite their busy schedules (many worked or had children).

I asked participants who I meet in places I frequent regularly (like the local library, the gym or work) and those interviewees referred friends or family. This meant initial participants were already comfortable with me and then further participants had someone they knew to explain the process. The combination also allowed me to reach a variety of ages and professions, increasing generalisability. Please see Appendix 3 for an overview of participants.

- Positionality

Being Black, a woman and British meant I had a special connection to the research. When researchers share commonalities with participants it's difficult to manage bias and the interviewer's influence on the results (Kezar 2002;Roller and Lavrakas 2015). To counter-act bias, I included "bracketing," where I acknowledged my personal assumptions (Miles and Huberman 1994). I also focused on reflexivity which is "the thoughtful self-awareness of researchers' experiences and impact on the research" (Raheim *et al* 2016 p1). This entailed a detailed understanding of my position, openness with myself and a focus on the situation of knowledge I possess.

As Malterud (2001) writes: "Preconceptions are not bias, unless the researcher fails to mention them" (p. 484).

Being of this demographic was advantageous as I had better access to the population. I was able to connect with participants, encouraging them to feel relaxed and share their perspectives. Holstein and Gubrium (2003) emphasise that feminist consciousness encourages interviewing women and people of colour as "special subjects, distinct from the population" p132 as they have a unique experience of society. Being of the same gender and race meant I had a level of solidarity with the interviewees, allowing me to apply this approach and gain more valid data.

- Research limitations

With more time and resources I would have applied a more varied approach to the methodology. For example, Checker (2011) researched resistance to gentrification using qualitative methods (observations and interviews) and secondary sources (archival data). This holistic approach meant she gained valid perspectives from her participants and placed them within historical contexts given by the archives. Furthermore, the 'triangulation' of both quantitative and qualitative data increases validity of results (Yeasmin and Rahman 2012).

Sampling was difficult as I only received 12 interviews which decreased generalisability. I wanted to interview Council members and influential Black women in Deptford however, they didn't respond to my emails. In a way this was advantageous as I was able to focus on a specific group (working-class, every day

Black British women) thus creating a more focused sample to analyse, increasing validity for that group.

My nervousness in interviews may have affected the responses, decreasing validity and reliability. Interview skills are vitally important (Barriball and While 1994) and with more training, I could have collected more valid responses. To overcome this I watched tutorials on how to conduct interviews, read articles on interviewer body language and practiced on family.

Another limitation was interviewees giving responses they thought I wanted. I overcome this by saying data collected was anonymous and by expressing my opinions freely through discussion, encouraging them to do the same.

- Data analysis methods

I completed a verbatim transcription of the 12 interviews, which were proofread for veracity. These were analysed, colour-coded and aggregated into 12 themes (listen below in Table 3) that were central to the objective questions (see introduction).

Table 3. Themes

Ambivalence
Sense of belonging/identity and loss
Gender`/racial stereotypes
Not having a voice/Not feeling confident in resistance
Racial of Class factor of gentrification
Animosity of groups
Sense of Deptford/New Cross community
Sense of community amongst black women
21st century city and society
Sense of Deptford/New Cross identity
Loss of community
Black community

This technique is used in grounded theory methodology and is supported by Gorra *et al* (2011) who states colour coding simplifies categorizing text as it easily and effectively identifies the significant parts, allowing for more focused analysis. It's conducive for a more abductive (rather than inductive) approach which is more appropriate for qualitative data.

<u>Chapter 4</u>

<u>Analysis</u>

- <u>Deptford: Is it still our home?</u>

When discussing place attachment in Deptford/New Cross, there was a connection between the themes sense of belonging, place attachment, community and loss. Through explaining their sense of belonging, the participants' connection to their area based on memories was evident. This connection, when threatened by gentrification, caused them to worry about change.

"…the school and the local park are places I remember going to growing up so I have this sense of nostalgia, like I belong here." – Participant 1

(The new flats) "… it looks nice but it's strange because it's different…I don't like it because that's where I grew up and it's like oh… all my memories have gone." – Participant 2

"It's the same with Deptford market yard, that area next to the Albany, I have great memories chilling there as a child, now it's full of hipsters and gin and beer people *hahaha* - Participant 6

These quotes show how participants base their secure attachment to Deptford through the layering of experiences over their lifetime. This is corroborated by Tuan (1977) and (Gieryn 2000) who emphasise the importance of experience and embedded memories in the formation of place and place attachment. This has

helped solidify how the participants see themselves and understand who they are in relation to Deptford.

Furthermore, participants mention 'fitting into' vs 'being out' of place to articulated their sense of belonging. The freedom to publicly be themselves through sharing an identity with the community (meaning they were not out of place) is what many participants voiced gentrification threatens.

(Working in Deptford) "I remember I'd just done the big chop and one of my white colleagues… he started stroking my head like… dude, personal space. It makes me feel like I stand out, like I'm something to be marvelled at" – Participant 2

"I feel like my area has been lost *pause*… that my Deptford is being taken away. I fear soon Deptford will not be a place where I belong." – Participant 4

"To me community is feeling welcome in an area and not feeling like you don't belong somewhere. I can let my hair down here" – Participant 7

"The problem with the new places is as I walk in as a Black woman people are looking me…*hahaha* and I think hold on (…) You shouldn't be looking at me like I'm out of place here – you're out of place here." – Participant 9

This suggests that the women view belonging as an ability to not stand out and gentrification reduces this ability. As the structure, urban form and demographics of Deptford change, the feel and culture shifts away from the identity the Black women

call home. This is corroborated by Manzo and Perkins (2006) who found community planning overlooks emotional place attachments and sense of belonging and so has a tendency to make inhabitants stand out against the changes, resulting in alienation.

Sadness and worry were evident in nervous laughter and pauses in responses and participants would often change their body language, suggesting they felt discomfort, when discussing gentrification and place attachment. This further suggests they are worried about how they will exist in Deptford after gentrification.

"Deptford is a place for everyone … well it used to be *haha*. I think certain types of people want Deptford to be more "exclusive", more preppy and trendy, not for commoners" – Participant 3

"Unfortunately, it (gentrification) seems like it's designed (…) to **push out** *the people who live here"* – Participant 5

These quotes highlight the participants do not see themselves in Deptford's gentrified future. Gentrification is thus perceived as a negative process that doesn't coincide with their place identity. Instead, it's discussed as if it were an uncontrollable outside force acting upon them, threatening their place attachment and identity as it erases place memories and causes them to stand out. This shows how little Black women see gentrification as a process for them or a process that they can influence.

It was also evident that belonging was understood through services offered in the area.

"*There's shops that sell our food and that's where we go to get that stuff. The people behind the counter are the same skin tone as me and have the same background you know so you don't feel out of place.*" – Participant 1

(Changes to Deptford high street) "The high street having swanky cafes and Zara's and stuff and me and you will be like… where are we going to buy plantain?" – Participant 2

(Services in Deptford) "They provide things I need as a Black person that I can't get anywhere else." – Participant 4

(Gentrification) "it's changing the type of businesses… so there's less places within Deptford that I can go and feel at one with my blackness" – Participant 6

Participants are concerned about where they will go to meet their needs as black women. For example, plantain (mentioned in the quote) is a typical part of a Caribbean and African diet and linked to a Black identity. Having stores that embrace this identity, facilitate the existence of Black women in Deptford and encourage them to view Deptford as a "Black" space. Even participant 6 referred to Deptford as a Black space.

"There are fewer black vendors and that's really changed it's not all white but it's different, I think we're still here because those spaces are still black…." - Participant 6

The quotes suggest that Black services and Black people are present because there is a black place identity but the loss of these services exacerbates the loss of a sense of belonging, causing a negative experience of gentrification. This can be understood as 'displacement pressure' (Marcuse 1986) where the loss of familiar businesses makes the area more difficult to live in. This highlights the importance of British Black women having places that identify with their ethnic background in order to form secure place attachment.

Not only were the services important but so was living with those of the same ethnicity.

"When you have more people around you of the same cultural background it makes a strong connection to the area …we know fellow people of colour without having to know them… there's just a feeling of understanding …" – Participant 1

"We are surrounded by Black Caribbean and African families and it's so much easier to connect with them" – Participant 2

"The Black community here…it's a sanctuary of sorts… it's just a feeling of home ... I look at my neighbours and I know I belong here." – Participant 3

"I always felt at home as there were lots of ethnic minorities, lots of Caribbean's, um… when I think there's organic hipster second hand stores I think that is not for my people not for the community that I have grown up with, I find it quite sad…" -

Participant 10

This suggested that for Black British women, being surrounded by people with the same racial identity facilitates the formation of place attachment and strengthens their sense of belonging. The notion of an unspoken bond (voiced by participant 2 and 1) supports their right to exist Deptford as a space and allows them to feel comfortable to form place attachment.

- <u>Does it matter if you're Black or White?</u>

The participants' reference to race was more evident in describing those who did not "belong" Deptford/New Cross. There was a connection between gentrification, race/class politics and animosity between groups that surfaced when participants described the new changes and new inhabitants of Deptford, as different from the area.

(Gentrification) "It makes it nicer it's just that when you're forgetting the people… *whispers* white washing the area." - Participant 6

(Incoming gentrifiers) "A lot of them are White British or European, so no this doesn't match the main ethnicity of African and Caribbean" - Participant 7

"Deptford is changing with the change in demographic and type of person moving to the area. There are a lot more white people …" - Participant 8

This suggested that when defining place and who belongs; race matters, which further suggests participants view gentrification as a "white, middle-class" process and that Deptford did not originally hold a white, middle-class place identity. It also shows how Black women, albeit maybe subconsciously, tie race into their perceptions of place and belonging.

This can be linked to the history of urban space in Britain. As aforementioned, high rates of racism and tension with white groups encouraged enclaves to form as intermixing was difficult (Cloake and Tudor 2001; Phillips and Karn 1991). This helps us identify how Black British women, due to historical racialisation of British places have grown accustomed to viewing urban change through a racial lens. This is evident in other quotes.

"I can't help but feel coloniser movements … like they've "discovered" a new untouched resource and the locals are too primitive to live here properly, so they come and reap real profit" – Participant 3

"…this is so deeply entrenched in our history. As a Black woman and an immigrant I have never felt like I really belong here. I have always been seen as the other." - Participant 9

(New Cross/Deptford) "it used to be very racist which I find shocking because growing up here it's hard to believe this area was like that" - Participant 6

Participant 9 explains that her experience of London as a Black woman has reduced her ability to form secure attachment in Deptford, suggesting there are underlying weaknesses in the place attachment of British Black women due to the history of race in London. It also shows why, for Black British women, gentrification is not perceived to be in their favour. For this reason, race must be acknowledged when discussing gentrification of areas like Deptford, as it plays a huge part in how gentrification is received.

Racial factors were linked to animosity through an underlying distrust of the incoming population partly due to their demographic composition (a combination of race, wealth and class) and bad experiences of sharing Deptford as a place.

"… it makes me feel uncomfortable when I see privileged white people in my area. It's kinda like… what more do you want?" - Participant 1

"They (incoming population) like the idea of diversity but can't live it. They want to sanitize Deptford, cleanse it. They don't mix into the community here. (...) I wouldn't feel comfortable using one of those cafes" - Participant 3

"These new people don't acknowledge there'll be a lack of understanding… they disregard this and occupy our area, like it had no meaning before." – Participant 4

(In the local market) "I was treated differently and spoken to differently, served in a horrible manner, it was full of white middle-class, now isn't that interesting it was something made for the community of Deptford but I was made to feel so uncomfortable now I don't want to go" - Participant 8

"My problem is they don't integrate. I feel safe going into Deptford or Peckham because in terms of shopping there are still Black people there but the people who have moved in they don't want to use those businesses…" - Participant 10

Here the motives of gentrifiers are questioned and race is included again as part of their description. Participant 8 and 3 voice difficulties in intermixing with new inhabitants, which impeach on their ability to experience community and have a strong sense of belonging in Deptford. The quotes suggest that securing place attachment and a sense of belonging, is disrupted by how the women are treated and how they perceive the white middle-class. These race politics can again be placed in the historical context of what it meant to be a Black woman in British urban spaces. It seems participants are concerned for their place attachment and their worries are confirmed by past and current experiences of social exclusion. This further demonstrates how fragile and uncertain a Black British woman's' place attachment can be, especially in the face of gentrification.

However, it was interesting to note the body language and tone when some of the interviewees contradicted themselves or became uncomfortable when describing the area as 'Black' and the incoming population as "White".

"Being Black I feel it strengthens my tie to Deptford because these are people like me that have gone through similar experiences …But… I mean…It doesn't have to be particularly my race. If you're born and bred in Lewisham you're going to understand me." - Participant 4

"I frequent the market often and it's just fellow working-class people serving there… that's a huge part of it, more so than race." - Participant 3

"It's always been a heavy afro Caribbean area but …but... it's very well mixed as well." - Participant 10

These quotes show how participants attempted to reaffirm the idea that gentrification was not connected to race as they did not view the process as an inherently white movement, as Smith (1979) supported. It also highlighted a difficulty participants had with comfortably voicing their initial feelings of Deptford possessing a Black identity – as if it was not meant to be. This was interesting as it showed instinctual feelings concerning gentrification prompted notions of race based place attachment but after self-rationalisation, race as a factor was down-played. It infers Black British women experience an internal conflict on whether or not their attachment to British place can/should resound with their racial identity.

However, when specifically discussing the incoming population this uncertainty was less apparent.

(Describing the incoming population) "White – pause *hahaha*… in one word and not just racially white… it's they're behaviour and the way they use Deptford… they don't want to really be here" – Participant 3

"There's so many white people that now I feel like I am sticking out again, I have found a place where I feel less conspicuous, that is partly why I came to New Cross and now it's happening again…" - Participant 9

The increase in white middle-class inhabitants as a result of gentrification means Deptford is being used and represented in different ways so as not to support Deptford's original identity. The changes have caused a loss of secure place attachment in participant 9, due to her increased conspicuity, suggesting again gentrification causes her to stand out. There is also a suggestion that these feelings in place are repetitive. She has been trying to get away from not belonging and find places where as a Black woman she can belong but results in alternating between states of belonging and not belonging. In the light of Carby (1997) who states "Black women are subject to the simultaneous oppression of patriarchy, class, and "race" which renders their position and experience not only marginal but also invisible" (p111), it's clear how a lack of place attachment like this could persist. If their experience is invisible than their place attachment would be as well. Another interesting point is this creates the unique situation where British Black women simultaneously stand out whilst being invisible.

- <u>What's the point?</u>

Following on from this invisibility other themes emerged: ambivalence and internal conflict. Despite the positive language used to describe Deptford, the level of ambivalence the Black women had towards their areas was high.

(In response to gentrifiers) "Generally, I get on with my day, I don't really care. Sometimes, I find it funny… I think it's cyclical; it's an everlasting kind of thing. Maybe I'll be here maybe I won't…" - Participant 6

"…I don't have that strong of an attachment despite living here for 20 years…Well … it's easier to be a Back woman in Deptford compared to elsewhere" - Participant 8

"It was as a Black woman that I made the decision to live here. I can get the ingredients for my hair, the food - I need my yam and plantain and it's just a stone's throw from my house. But this was about convenience not joining my local community" - Participant 9

(Do you feel you are a part of a Black female community?) "Um.. here no… no not at all and I wonder why. Um… I have no idea why. It's very odd." – Participant 11

These quotes suggest that place attachment was not essential to the participants but more convenience and safety, which was contradictory to previous comments where they voiced the importance of community and belonging in Deptford. This

suggested that place attachment is important to Black women but maybe so difficult to establish and maintain in Britain, that ease and security becomes the next most important things. If Black women are pushed to deprioritize place attachment, this highlights why there is a lack of Black British women speaking out against gentrification in their areas.

Internal conflict was evident in participants' indecisiveness on whether to enjoy the products of gentrification or not. Participants responded positively to some new services whilst acknowledging the changes affected their sense of belonging.

> *"..it's great because it looks nice but I remember walking around there with my friends and stuff and that's gone now. It's sad." –* Participant 2

> *"It's a bit more cleaned up and there's more open spaces which are nice. But I think there's been too much change not gonna lie…"* - Participant 3

> *"I do complain about gentrification but at the same time I am enjoy the products of it like the weird qwerky pubs"* - Participant 10

This was interesting as it presented another internal conflict regarding place identity and belonging. It suggested that it was difficult for participants to positively articulate their sense of belonging to a Deptford that didn't hold the original place identity. Especially as they acknowledged the changes were not for them. It shows that when preservation of the existing inhabitants place attachment is not taken into account,

the inhabitants will feel uncertain on whether the changing area is a place they can identify with. Even if they enjoy some of the changes, attaching themselves to a new place identity is difficult as it conflicts with the one they know; creating a conflict between a 'Black' and a British identity of place. This can lead to a state of ambivalence where they side with neither place identity and result in being separate from them both.

- Black woman = Drama?

The ambivalence detected could be due to another theme: racial and gender stereotypes. The women felt estranged from their space and many interviewees mentioned they felt they had to adapt how they interacted with space because of prejudice experienced not just from gentrifiers but from society as well.

"… you wouldn't believe down here you still get stared at. Living here all my life being, being in the 21st century, in 2018 *haha* they (white people) still stare at you and I'm like OMG" – Participant 3

(Frequenting new white cafes and markets) "I have to move in a certain way that will make them comfortable. Me on my own is okay … if we went as a group we might experience more problems. If I went more as a "black person" *haha* I think I would have a different experience." - Participant 9

"It used to be easier to be a black woman in Deptford compared to elsewhere. I didn't have to constantly watch what I'm saying and how I'm acting." - Participant 8

(When frequenting new cafes) "I always think to myself am I being too black?

hahaha" – Participant 12

What is evident is how participants felt that as black women they were judged and stereotyped by gentrifiers which caused them to doubt their identity in relation to gentrified Deptford. Participants also discussed stereotypes in mainstream media increasing the potential to be misunderstood and seen as ignorant or argumentative, making it difficult for them to feel confident in their place-attachment whilst being true to their personal identities. In an attempt to avoid negative stereotypes, the women felt when they were not in "black" space they needed to adopt a different identity in order to belong or at least not be out of place.

This suggests the problem with gentrification is it creates spaces where Black British women cannot comfortably express their Black identity for fear of being stereotyped and not belonging to the gentrified place.

"…It's a stereotype that we aren't innocent or vulnerable or that we are argumentative. That's why when I'm in a store and the service is bad, I don't tend to complain…you know the whole angry black girl stereotype." - Participant 2

"You can't say anything as a black woman, especially not in England. The stereotype of being loud, obnoxious and ignorant is too strong for anyone to listen" - Participant

3

"…the people coming here are privileged and don't see any need to acknowledge our existence … if I stand up, as a black woman, I have no faith I would be listened to" – Participant 4

"I am treated differently being a person of colour. Whilst there aren't written rules about what shops I can and can't go in you can definitely feel a negative energy towards you" – Participant 7

"Urgh… well everyone knows that Black women are associated with having an attitude, umm… you know anger issues… so I always feel like a lot of people just switch themselves off to Black women" – Participant 10

The "angry Black girl" is a stereotype is often discussed in American literature (Ashley 2014; Prasad 2018; Kelley 2014) however, it is still present in British society (Uviebinene and Adegoke 2018) and still effects how British Black women feel about their identity. This stereotype impeaches on the black women's ability to be themselves without doubting their personal identities, negatively affecting their place attachment. In the light of gentrification, this stereotype discourages Black women from fully participating in urban change. The women feel their Black woman identity (and its associated stereotypes) are seen first and used more readily to assess their belonging to British space, instead of being seen as equally British and having equal right to the space. This decreases the Black British woman's' agency to inhabit space, form place attachment and influence gentrification.

The effects of this stereotype were also present in discussions of upbringing in relation to place attachment.

"… us who had British rule in our countries back home we were taught to not rock the boat, we were taught just to follow and not fight against the white British rule…"

Participant 6

"As Black mothers we think we are empowering our child by teaching them the reality of life. But from a young age we are teaching them that they are different they are "other" you're saying this isn't your space… this isn't about you…." Participant 9

Parental upbringing that teaches young Black girls to "behave" in British space is to counter-act the stereotypes and prejudice present in mainstream media as well as other societal pressures. However, this may encourage Black women to feel discomfort with their identities in British spaces and decrease their ability to form deep place attachments. This form of upbringing indirectly negates a Black woman's right to British space and thus renders them passive to gentrification and encourages them to regard it with ambivalence. This was an interesting part of the data, as it suggested the strength of one's place attachment can be passed down to children. It further suggested that because Black women experience societal pressures, they prepare their children for prejudice and "not belonging", young Black women then grow accustomed to not defending their place identities or attachments in fear of "stirring up trouble" in a place they do not really belong to.

In an attempt to combat against incorrect stereotypes, participants voiced they would rather stay silent on issues instead of speak out.

"I wouldn't say anything on my own generally whenever you're a woman, let alone a woman of colour, your opinion is belittled - Participant 1

"Not only am I female, and it's hard enough for people to listen to women, but I'm black as well… I don't have much confidence that I would be heard." – Participant 3

"We don't want to rock the boat…as vocal as Black families are I think we are less inclined to do that. It back to the angry Black person stereotype. There'll be a Black woman at a meeting or something she'll stand up and get passionate and then you see the white people in power viewing her, are they really listening or are they seeing her as aggressive?" – Participant 6

"I would be wary because of the perception that I'm angry because I'm Black and I'm just "complaining" – as all women do *rolls eyes*. Before I open my mouth I am on - 10." – Participant 11

It is interesting how participants highlight the intersection of their gender and their race affecting their right to resist changes to their place. This shows how negative representations of women in general and Black women specifically decrease the Black women's level of attachment and this is then exacerbated by gentrification.

The theme of racial and gender stereotypes further raises the question can one really be attached to place if they cannot be themselves in that place, and if one does not feel attached can they really influence place change?

- Protesting in silence

The majority of interviewees were apprehensive about protesting against gentrification but not because they lacked ideas but more because they lacked confidence. Even though participants expressed concerns and voiced ideas for how they would manage gentrification, the following quotes highlighted why they are hesitant.

"…being young and female, they might be more like just leave it *haha* write a letter to shut them up." - Participant 1

"I never complain; I never want to look like the angry black girl. I'd prefer to work around it or avoid it. That's sad isn't it…" – Participant 2

"I hear white Dulwich mums writing to the council all the time at work and I think where do they get their confidence?" – Participant 3

"Other demographics have an inherent sense of entitlement, they're less inclined to feel distant from the powers that can change things. There isn't a discussion of don't stir up trouble or else *haha* as much as black girls need that, it places a ceiling on them. – Participant 9

What is suggested is that Black women sense an unspoken reassurance of a "right to space" exists in the white community but not in theirs. This lack of entitlement may come from a combination of being Black and being women in British society, where both demographics find having a right to the city difficult. This makes it even more difficult for Black women to secure place attachment as they must rise above racial and gender stereotypes in order to defend it.

- Soon enough I won't have anywhere to do my hair… and that is a big deal!

One aspect of Deptford that the Black women were less inclined to stay silent about were the hair shops. Many participants mentioned hair at least once in relation to what it meant to be a Black woman in Deptford and what they would lose to gentrification.

"The hair shops. They are something I really value in Deptford."…"It's a cultural thing, even when I looked for uni's, I sought ones close to black hair dressers *haha*. It's difficult explaining how important black hair is to white people *haha*. It's embedded in the culture" - Participant 2

"There's definitely a strong black community in Deptford, from the black barbers and hairdressers"… "Food and hair *haha* They are two important things in a black girls life whether your Black British, Black Caribbean or Black African it covers all diasporas." – Participant 3

"Certain places tie me to Lewisham. Like the hair shops *haha*. Those places especially being black female are places my mother took me and all the black girls I know know those stores" … *"they support my needs and all black women know we prioritize the care of our hair"* – Participant 4

(Can you rely on Deptford for service your black female identity?) "I don't think I can. In Lewisham now there's only one black run hair shop… in terms of going to places that are specifically for my culture, I've got my one black owned hair shop…" –

Participant 6

"Of course for us it's got to include our hair *hahaha* but the shops and hairdressers are under threat" – Participant 10

When discussing hair, participants voiced the black hair services were a strong determining factor in their place attachment, place identity and connection to the black female community. They represented acceptance of a Black female identity exactly like how the services mentioned before facilitate a black existence in British space. However, the loss of these businesses caused 'displacement pressure' (Marcuse 1986). As aforementioned this occurs when the familiar services begin to disappear, weakening the place attachments of residents. What was interesting was when the women connected to Deptford through the hair shops, they had more confidence in their sense of belonging and community and they spoke more positively on their right to resist 'displacement pressures' and gentrification as a whole.

But some of the women did not agree, and mentioned feelings of disconnection from black female community and 'black' place prior to the influence of gentrification.

"... if you use the black services for hair then you'd get involved but I don't " ... "The hair shops don't resonate with me. Often I've felt different from the black people in these shops. I feel they have a stronger sense of their identity." – Participant 8

Quotes such as this indicated that not all black women experience Deptford in the same way and that there are differences within the black community on what is important to a black identity. These differences could be a reason why Black British women struggle to fine secure place individually and collectively.

"...I don't feel comfortable with black activities. I mean I don't feel a sense of black community amongst other black women in Deptford." – Participant 8

"... it depends on your background for me it's nice being African and having things in common with other Africans... if you're a westernized black girl you won't have that." – Participant 10

"Gentrification puts pressure on us... it fragments the small sense of community there is. Even though the black community is here we're not engaged with each other, then we have this force called 'gentrification' thrust upon us. It makes us more alienated." – Participant 11

What this means is that the connection between Black British women (and subsequently their connection to Deptford) is in some cases weak and uncertain

prior to the influence of gentrification. How individually Black British women manage the unification of their Black female and British identities in place determine how they relate to each other in the community. Gentrification exacerbates these uncertainties and makes it harder for them to share place attachment, as businesses that could bring the women together (such as hair shops) become under threat and new businesses that are perceived as not being 'black places', create more alienation. This infers that instead of gentrification creating more places for different black female identities to attach to, they threaten the few that already exist. Hill Collins (1990) states there is no general black woman's experience and to be so reductionist would suppress the diversity within the black female community. This shows the importance in embracing and reflecting all British black female differences in urban change.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

To conclude, this paper has explored concepts of place and how they intersect with gentrification through a racial and gendered lens. It has examined what it means to be attached to a place and whether Black British women experience it, can articulate it and maintain it under gentrification.

To answer the first research question, it's clear there is a place attachment and place identity amongst the black women of Deptford, that has developed from memories/experiences (supported by Tuan 1977 and Gieryn 2000). They articulate this through being inconspicuous, surrounded by the same ethnicity and having easy access to services that affirm their identity. Essentially, having the ability to be themselves. However, this is challenged by Britain's racial history, the persistent poor portrayal of Black people in the British media and negative gender and racial stereotypes, causing its instability.

There is also the point of the complexities of British Black female existence causing differences within the black female community, further questioning their collective place identities and posing the question: What should Deptford (and British space) mean to Black British women?

To answer the second question, the racialisation of space encourages Black women to view gentrification as a "white" force that they have little power over. This

combined with bad encounters with gentrifiers, increased conspicuity and social exclusion causes the women to feel negatively about the changes "white" gentrification brings as it renders them simultaneously conspicuous and invisible. However, it also causes an internal conflict as they attempt to rationalise gentrification in relation to their identity. The result is Black British women worrying about what gentrification entails, as it exacerbates their struggle for a right to attach themselves to British place as Black, British and female.

In answer to the third question, it is difficult to resist change when the foundations of what you are defending are insecure, uncertain and are under threat. The stereotypes of being a woman and being black deters Black women from resisting gentrification out of fear of being received as the "angry, black girl" (Ashley 2014; Prasad 2018; Kelley 2014) encouraging a more passive response.

This paper has explored how gentrification in London exacerbates challenges to attachment already made by existent racial and gendered factors. I have further developed place attachment and gentrification research by focusing on this exacerbation which has hither to been overlooked. There is little research on the experiences of black, working-class women in impoverished areas of London that undergo rapid spatial change and this paper contributes to the growing discourse on the intersectional experience of gentrification in Britain.

I have highlighted a new way of evaluating gentrification, one that will hopefully induce a sea change in how future gentrification projects in ethnic-minority areas of

Britain are conducted and perceived. This can better how London's politicians and decision-makers manage gentrification. Therefore, city policies for urban development can be assessed more holistically resulting in a more effective process. Whether gentrification is positive or negative is continuously debated by scholars (Lees and Davidson 2005; Lees 2003) however this research leads the discussion closer to an answer, one which acknowledges the intersectional experience of British space, place formation, place attachment and gentrification.

Further research is needed to fully understand how British Black women join their female identity, 'Blackness' and their 'Britishness' together harmoniously in place. It is the struggle for these three identities to find place in British space that complicates place attachment, place identity and finally being able to confidently participate in gentrification and influence it when needs be.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

17/05/2018

Naimah Quamie-Muhammad

Dear Naimah,

Are the voices of black women heard in discussions on gentrification and urban regeneration? A case study of Deptford, Lewisham, South-East London

Thank you for submitting your Research Ethics Minimal Risk Registration Form. This letter acknowledges confirmation of your registration; your registration confirmation reference number is MRS-17/18-6733. You may begin collecting data immediately.

Be sure to keep a record your registration number and include it in any materials associated with this research. Registration is valid for **one year** from today's date. Please note it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that any other permissions or approvals (i.e. R&D, gatekeepers, etc.) relevant to their research are in place, prior to conducting the research.

Record Keeping:

In addition, you are expected to keep records of your process of informed consent and the dates and relevant details of research covered by this application. For example, depending on the type of research that you are doing, you might keep:

- A record of the relevant details for public talks that you attend, the websites that visit, the interviews that you conduct
- The 'script' that you use to inform possible participants about what your research involves. This may include written information sheets, or the generic information you include in the emails you write to possible participants, or what you say to people when you approach them on the street for a survey, or the introductory material stated at the top of your on-line survey.
- Where appropriate, records of consent, e.g. copies of signed consent forms or emails where participants agree to be interviewed.

Audit:

You may be selected for an audit, to see how researchers are implementing this process. If audited, you will be expected to explain how your research abides by the general principles of ethical research. In particular, you will be expected to provide a general summary of your review of the possible risks involved in your research, as well as to provide basic research records (as above in Record Keeping) and to describe the process by which participants agreed to participate in your research.

Remember that if you have any questions about the ethical conduct of your research at any point, you should contact your supervisor (where applicable) or the Research Ethics office.

Feedback:

If you wish to provide any feedback on the process you may do so by emailing rec@kcl.ac.uk.

We wish you every success with this work.

With best wishes

Research Ethics Office

Appendix 2

5SSG2063: BA Geography Research Tutorials
CW2: IGS Proposal
Due date: 23/03/2018
Word count: 1999
Student number: 1522523

Are the voices of women of colour heard in discussions on gentrification and urban regeneration? A case study of Deptford

Introduction

Cities make for fascinating grounds for study because they reflect the desires and dreams of the people who built them – how they wish to live and how they see themselves (Harvey 2008). The study of cities therefore, is also the study of human nature, as people constantly remake themselves through projecting their desires onto the landscape and living within their creation (Park 1967). The problem however is whose dreams are made into a reality. Typically the ideas of and study of cities have been centred on a white, male, middle-class perspective (Beebeejean 2016; Rose 1993). Even within the field of human geography, "masculinist" geography dominates research and literature (Rose 1993). Despite years of feminist scholarship, literature on "the right to the city" often fails to recognise that those rights are skewed unfavourably due to the lack of representation of women in geography (Brinegar 2001; McDowell 1979). Feminist geographies, such as Massey (2007), Lees (2008), Bondi (1991) and Rose (1993), are now increasingly being heard in the study of urban landscapes. Yet within this minority another minority remains unheard – working class, black women.

Working class, black women are almost unheard of within the field of geography, as academics or as research groups. The little literature that does exist concerning their city experience is mainly written in America and Canada. For example, Richie (2012) highlighted the difficulties poor, black women face in American cities due to their social stigmatization and Pitter (2008) profiled six female, black, city builders from Canada who shape their urban landscape. However, little is written about black

women in British cities. This makes it difficult for the voices of black women in London to be heard and shows more research is needed to understand why this is and how working class, black women experience city issues such as gentrification. This Independent Geographical Study will focus on the lived experiences of working class, black women in Deptford (a district of Lewisham in South-East London) and their views on gentrification in their area. By focusing on these minority perspectives the study will further aid understanding of London as a city and offer a more holistic view of city life and gentrification resistance.

Research questions include:

1.   Are black female voices present in debates on gentrification and urban regeneration?

2.   Do black women feel able to express a strong sense of belonging in their urban environment?

3.   Are black women able to protest and resist against gentrification in their urban areas?

Literature Review

Gentrification in Urban Geography

Gentrification is most common in western cities and can seriously undermine ones sense of belonging and place-identity (Dickens and Butcher 2016; Butler 2007). It is understood as the renovation of lower income, ethnic minority areas by white, middle-class professionals (Ley 2009).

Gentrification studies are often written by white, male academics, from a focuses on public policy and the private market (Smith 1996) to how gentrification is needed to support capitalist expansion (Slater 2011). According to Palen and London (1984) there are five catalysts behind gentrification: analysis of demographics, sociocultural value changes, political-economic factors, the strengthening of community networks and support from influential political leaders. Aside from this, identity and a sense of belonging are also key themes (Watt 2013; Schill and Nathan 1983), particularly how communities show resistance to gentrifying pressures (Howell 2015).

Lewisham

Despite this plethora of work, little has been written on gentrification in South-East London boroughs such as Lewisham. Anglesey (2016) wrote how the disposable incomes of Lewisham's' residents are the fastest rising in the UK. However, this is not because the inhabitants are benefitting from gentrification, it is due to the huge increase in wealthier professionals moving to Lewisham. This has caused longstanding residents to suffer from higher rents (Baber 2016) and lose local businesses as new builds have taken place in Lewisham's centre. Examples are, Glassmill Leisure Centre and the construction of new hotels and expensive apartments near the DLR line.

Figure 1 shows a map of Lewisham and where Deptford is located. Deptford specifically has experienced numerous new businesses arriving, particularly along Deptford High Street. Deptford is known for its hub of ethnic culture and diversity but several gentrified businesses have appeared within the last 5 years. Examples of these businesses are shown in Figure 2.
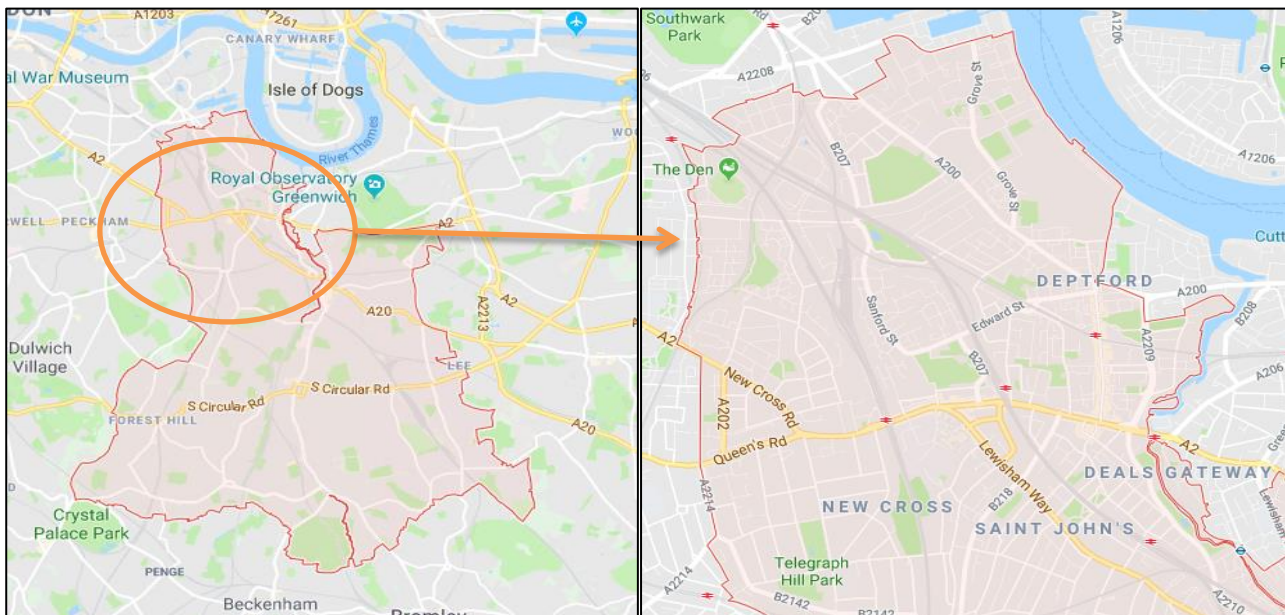

Figure 1. Map of Deptford in the London Borough of Lewisham. Googlemaps

Figure 2. Four new gentrified cafes in Deptford that service the new incoming clientele. SouthLondonClub.co.uk (2018)

According to the 2011 census, Lewishams' population is 53% white and 22% Black Caribbean/African/Other. Despite having a majority white population, certain areas within Lewisham have been known as ethnic enclaves. For example Deptford has been a home for black people for over four centuries. Cheap housing made it one of the settling destination for West Indian immigrants in the 1950s and 60s (Potts 2008). The current increases in house prices across London has encouraged the migration of wealthier white people into lower income areas such as Deptford for cheaper housing. The "urban", "cultural" atmosphere also acts as a pull factor. This influx of white gentrifiers has been a catalyst for the change in services, shops and businesses within Deptford.

Women, race and gentrification
Several studies show that women are underrepresented in geographical scholarship (McDowell 1979). Female geographical scholarship on gentrification includes Ruth Glass, an anthropologist who coined the phrase "gentrification" in 1964 to describe the creation of middle-class areas after decanting poorer peoples. She also analysed

statistical material on the demographics and geographical distribution of West Indians in London (Glass 1960). This is one of the few female contributions to urban geography within London.

Another key study is Zietz (1979) that focused on the racial aspect of gentrification and displacement in four District of Columbia neighbourhoods. Zietz identified a relationship between the segregation of black inhabitants and the influx of white middle-class gentrifiers and noted a subsequent decrease in a sense of belonging amongst the black community. Even though this research gives deep insight into the racial politics gentrification is fraught with, it still does not identify if black women in particular experience gentrification different as they reside in three minority and disenfranchised groups – being working class, black and female.

Studies on how women react to gentrification have been conducted, however these are primarily focused on America. For example, Patch (2008) studied the formation of new interpersonal dynamics between black women in New York and highlighted how they play a significant role in the gentrification of their neighbourhood as female entrepreneurs. This further highlights the need for similar research in London boroughs.

In Hackney, London, Dickens and Butcher (2016) concluded that gentrification brings negative experiences for inhabitants. Youth in particular experience feelings of ambivalence and disorientation towards gentrification, as well as a loss of place identity. In addition, Brown (2016) examined how ethnic minority youth demonstrate their sense of place and attachment despite current gentrification in Hackney. She concluded that as they form an ostracized group their voices are unheard in urban planning and place making discourse. This supports the argument that being a person of colour in South-East London boroughs decreases one's ability to properly resist gentrification or affirm their place attachment. Yet what is lacking from this discourse is a focus on black women.

There is yet to be a study that focuses on working-class black women and gentrification in a capital city. The importance of this work is to include the black female city perspective in the discourse on gentrification. Studying attitudes towards

gentrification, resistance and place attachment whilst being female and from an ethnic minority, will help create new insights to explain the effects of urban regeneration that are currently missing in the literature.

Methodology

This study seeks a new understanding of how gentrification affects working-class, black women. This includes their positionality in society and whether that affects their ability to resist gentrification and urban renewal. Qualitative and quantitative methods will be used to collect primary data. Secondary data in the forms of archives, census data and discourse analysis of news and media will also be used to provide a greater context.

Qualitative methods that will be used are semi-structured interviews. An advantage of semi-structured interview is questions can be prepared ahead of time allowing the interviewer to be fully prepared for the interview and keep conversation on topic. They also allow participants to freely express their own beliefs on the subject which creates high validity in the data collected (Cohen 2006). A disadvantage is the interviewer effect. How the interviewer conducts themselves can influence the participants answers causing bias in the results and reducing the generalisability of the results (McLoed 2014). To ensure information is collected in time for analysis, some interviews will be conducted over the telephone. This decreases interviewer bias and ensures information is collected in a timely fashion.

A form of secondary data that will be collected is a Web of Science search of gentrification studies published in 2017. The results from the search will be sorted to establish the weight of influence white, middle-class men have in written literature compared to black women. This will help give context to the study and highlight the importance of this study's contribution to gentrification literature. Further quantitative, secondary census data from UK government websites will be used to analyse the demographic of black women in Deptford.

Media information in the form of local newspapers/magazines concerning planning projects will also be analysed. This is supported by Carvalho (2008) who suggests a more extensive approach to discourse analysis should be taken to ensure positionality of the subjects of the study is understood.

As a black, working class, woman I will be able to gain a level of acceptance amongst respondents that otherwise compromise the credibility and quality of the data collected. Despite my positionality, there may still be practical difficulties. A language barrier could be encountered as some participants are likely to be immigrants and not all immigrants speak English. To minimise this, the study will be focus on English speaking participants. In turn, to ensure those interviewed have some level of place-attachment, only women who have lived in Deptford for at least 10 years will be sampled.
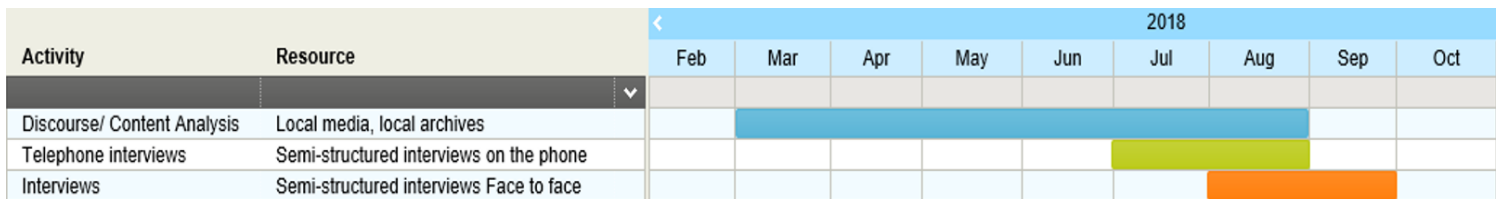
<u>Schedule and methodological approach</u>

Figure 3: Schedule of research

Table 1. Methodological approach

	Discourse/Content Analysis (Secondary data)	Interviews (Primary Data)	Interviews (Primary Data)
Participants	Urban planners, government officials and council members. Local newspaper companies etc.	Urban planning groups, local council and local community groups within Deptford	Working class black women from the Deptford community
Sampling method	Google search documents/government	Quota sampling	Opportunity sampling/Quota sampling

	archives		

Limitations and ethics

The main limitations of interviews are that respondents may only say what they think I want to hear or assume a politically correct stance to avoid criticism. To overcome this all information will be anonymised so people can voice their opinions freely. Another difficulty is time constraints. It may be difficult in the given time to obtain a representative dataset. Volunteer recruitment will be started as early as possible and phone conversations will be used to start interviewing quickly.

Ethical concerns will be considered in how people are approached to be a part of the target population as positive discrimination will be used on the basis of race and class. This may offend some participants. A way to resolve this is to fully debrief participants before and after the interviews. Another ethical consideration is how to identify working class participants. This would require asking them about their household incomes, which can be a sensitive subject. Participants will be reassured that all information disclosed is kept anonymous and consent forms will be provided when needed.

Expected Findings

Black women in Deptford may feel they have little influence over their urban landscape. This may be due to lack of outreach to those groups and encouragement of women of colour to engage in urban discourse and the renewal of their own urban areas. It is also expected that they are heavily attached and socially invested in their urban community despite having little say in decision making. This research contributes conceptually to gentrification studies by showcasing how marginalized groups are affected and how the black, female perspective on city regeneration fits into the stability and equality of future cities.

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Appendix 3

Interview 1
20 year old, University student
Costa Café, Greenwich
04/09/2018
49mins

Interview 2
21 year old, Graduate
Costa Café, Peckham
06/09/2018
58mins

Interview 3
25 year old, Receptionist
Costa Café, New Cross
06/09/2018
1hour 5mins

Interview 4
29 year old, Teaching Assistant
Costa Café, New Cross
06/09/2018
49mins

Interview 5
30 year old, Fitness instructor
Pizza Express, Greenwich
18/10/2018
39mins

Interview 6

26 year old, Musician

In participants home

24/10/2018

57mins

Interview 7

21 year old, Sales assistant

Peckham Pulse meeting room

25/10/2018

45mins

Interview 8

49 year old, Nursery Room Leader

In participants home

30/10/2018

35mins

Interview 9

30 year old, I.C.T. manager

Glassmill Leisure Centre

05/11/2018

1hour 15mins

Interview 10

20 year old, University student

In participants home

10/11/2018

33mins

Interview 11

36 year old, N/A

In participants home

10/11/2018

40mins

Interview 12

50 year old, Community worker

In The Lewington Community Centre

10/11/2018

45mins

Appendix 4

Interview questions

Introduction: Hello my name is Naimah Quamie. I am a student at Kings College University reading BA geography. I am conducting research on long-standing, Black British female inhabitants of Deptford and documenting how they connect to Deptford and New Cross and how they feel about gentrification in the area.

All information collected remains anonymous and if you would like to find out what happened to your contribution you can contact me N.QM@outlook.com

Deptford

Please tell me what you know about the history of Deptford?

How would you describe the Deptford you know to an outsider?

Do you feel the Deptford you live in now is the same as when you were younger? If not can you explain these differences?

In your opinion, how has Deptford changed over time?

How would you describe Deptford to an alien?

Could you describe any changes to the community that you have noticed over the last few years?

Are there any specific changes you want to add?

How do you as a black female experience Deptford?

Community

What do you feel community means to you?

How would you describe your sense of belonging?

How would you describe the latest new inhabitants of Deptford?

Do you feel they are a part of the Deptford community? Why or why not?

Can you describe the black community in Deptford/ Lewisham if there is one.

How does Deptford supports its black community?

How do you feel about any changes you have seen in Deptford?

How do you feel these changes affect the black community in Deptford?

Gentrifying population

Can you describe a time where you mixed/got to know the people from the gentrifying community?

Do you feel welcome in their presence/ in their businesses? Y/N

Would you feel comfortable voicing these discomforts to the council, participating in petitions or other forms of resistance?

Do you frequent the new cafes businesses that have appeared in New Cross and Deptford? (Examples are the new cafes along Deptford market and new cross road, the new restaurants at Deptford Market Yard or the new Yoga retreat at Marquis of Granby) Y/N

Identity/ Sense of belonging

Does being black and/or female influence your feeling of belonging in Deptford?

Can you describe what ties you to Lewisham and gives you a Lewisham identity?

Resistance and/or improvement

Would you feel comfortable voicing any of the discomforts you have said today to the council or write to a local mp?

Do you feel you racial background and heritage has an effect on your ability to protest?

Do you feel that being female affects how you're able to protest?

If you had to improve Deptford, what would you choose to change?

Have you heard of any schemes that resist gentrification in Deptford?