Street Art Stress:
The Effects of Art Development on Bushwick, Brooklyn

Courtney Zirkel
Geography Graduate Student at Binghamton University

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Introduction

Background and Purpose

- During the 1950's there was a high amount of middle class families moving out of New York City to the suburbs taking their income with them. As a result, the inner cities were left with low income families that were unable to maintain city value.

- Creative Classes have created a new urban atmosphere around the world that has changed the way urban policy is created and maintained in a variety of ways.

- The term "creative class" refers to pioneers of the artist gentrification movement, the starving artists that focus on a bohemian lifestyle. This should not be confused with "hipsters", who are essentially the "piggybackers" of artist movement gentrification. Typically this group moves into the gentrified neighborhood after changes are made and popularity spikes. While the artists came into any area with little money, this group has a cushion of money.

- As the artist movement grows, the communities become popular and well known, typically with those of a different class than the neighborhood.

- The Bushwick Collective is committed to showcasing art on the buildings in Brooklyn, creating a more hip environment. Artists create pieces, potentially tag their information, and leave for others to enjoy/expand.

- While this new concept of design is shaping a sense of place in area, there are some critiques of it such as, is this neighborhood idea sustainable?

- It is also raises the question of how does this affect the existing community?

Study Area and Context

Figure 1. Study Area Map

- The Study area is Brooklyn, specifically looking at the neighborhood of Bushwick.

- Many different forms of gentrification have occurred in the boroughs including but not limited to race, age(college students) and immigrant gentrification

- Creative class gentrification is a newer form that originated in Greenwich Village, however most people see SoHo as the start of creative class gentrification

- There are many reasons why these people choose to live in the selected neighborhoods:
  - -cheap rent
  - -high loft ceilings
  - -bright lights
  - -"industrial chic" scene

- Bushwick is an area that has been known to be poverty stricken with an "intense" background.

- Historically it has been known to be a more Hispanic neighborhood.

- The neighborhood has suffered and been destroyed.

- Now various pieces have shown up in select area combating the graffiti
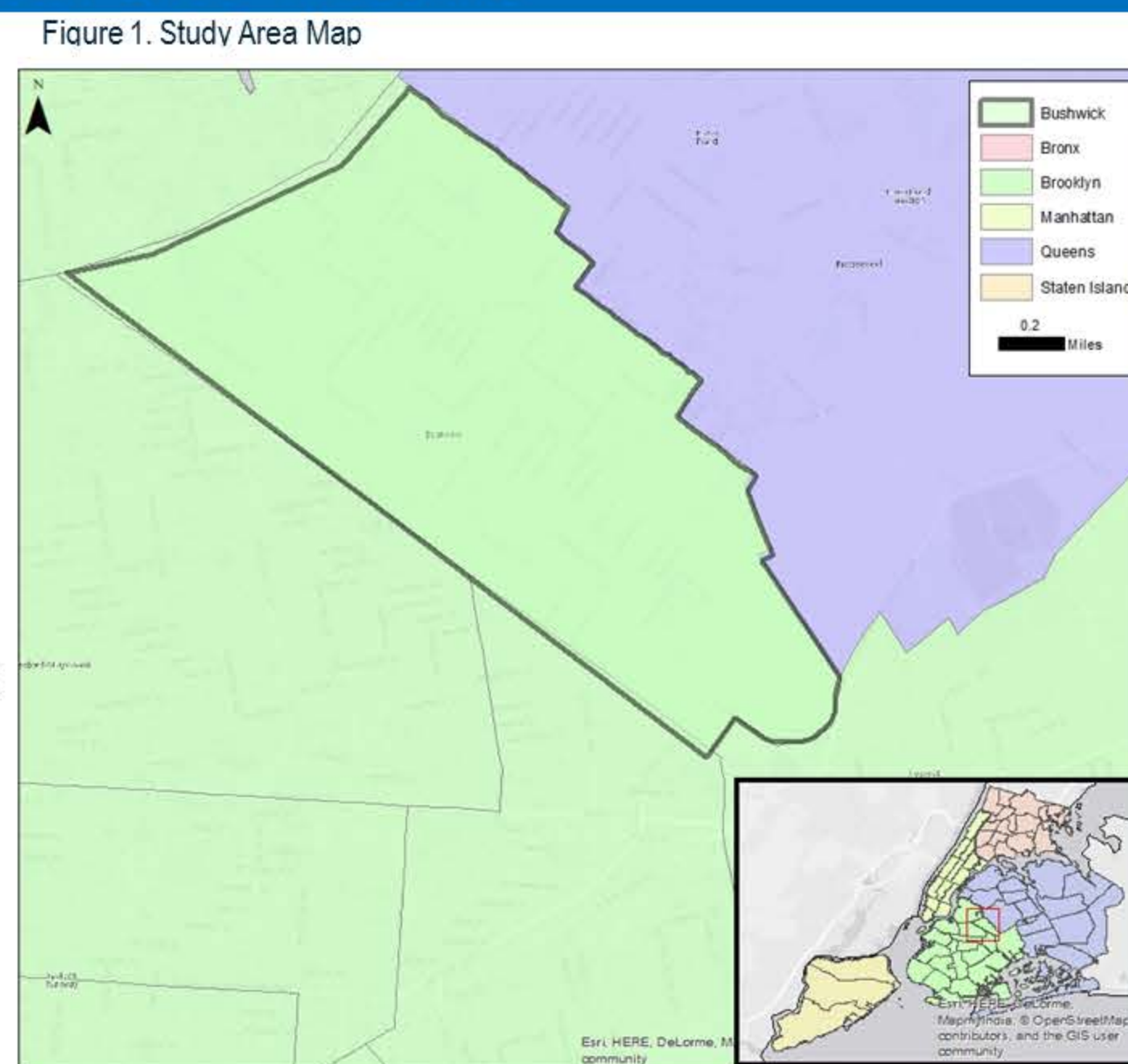
The study area is Bushwick This map has been divided up the location into it's five different boroughs. While all boroughs are going through changes, the artist movement is more commonly seen in Manhattan and Brooklyn

Hypothesis

H1 - Street art and art galleries locations can influence the changes in poverty, rental rates, and demographics.
H01 – Street art an art galleries locations cannot influence the changes in poverty, rental rates, and demographics.
H2 – Social media can act as an indicator of gentrifying neighborhoods
H02 – Social media cannot act as an indicator of gentrifying neighborhoods.
H3 – Street art creates stressors for original inhabitants affecting their future well-being
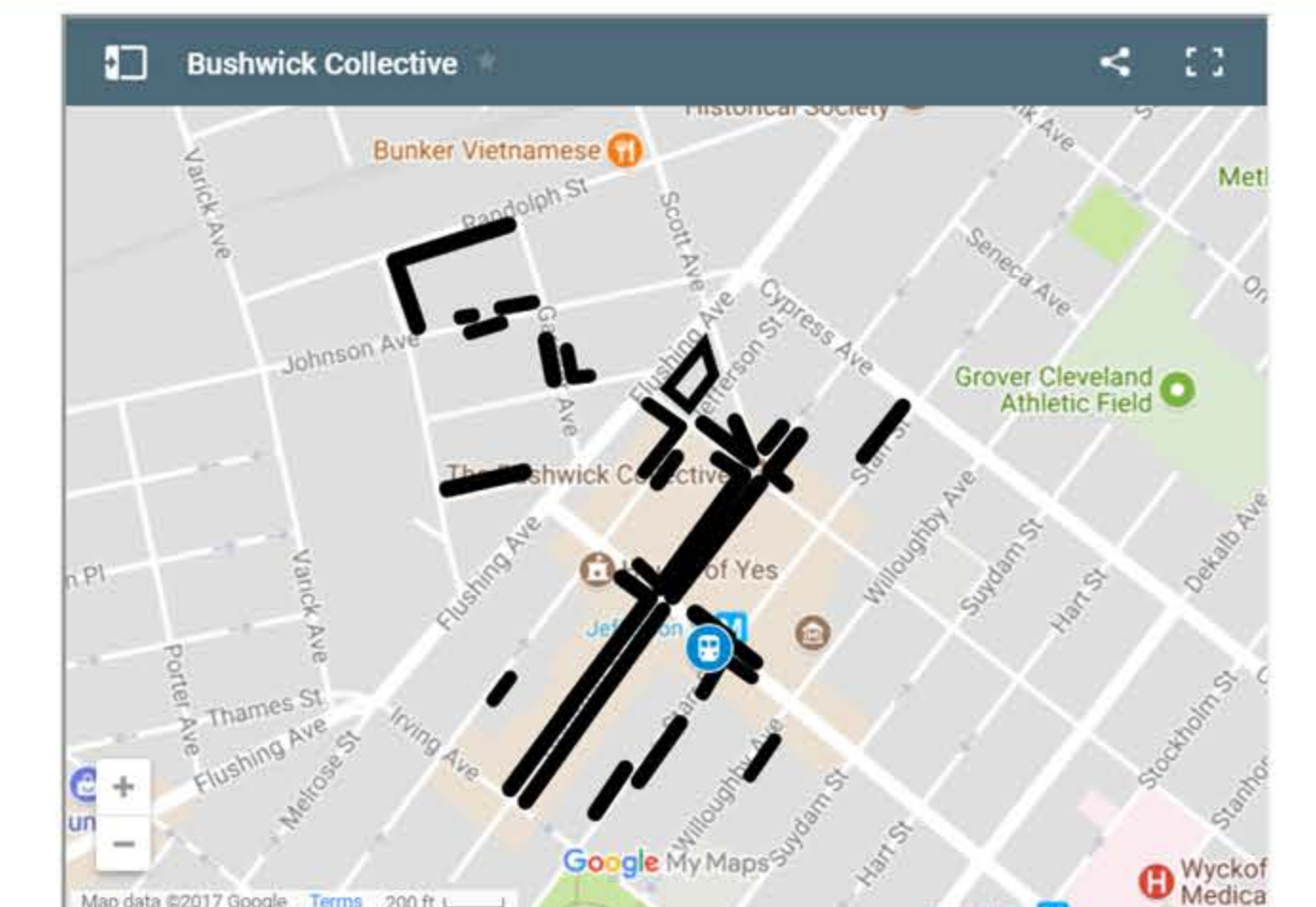H03 – Street art does not create stressors for original inhabitants.

Background Maps

Figure 2. Artist Path Map
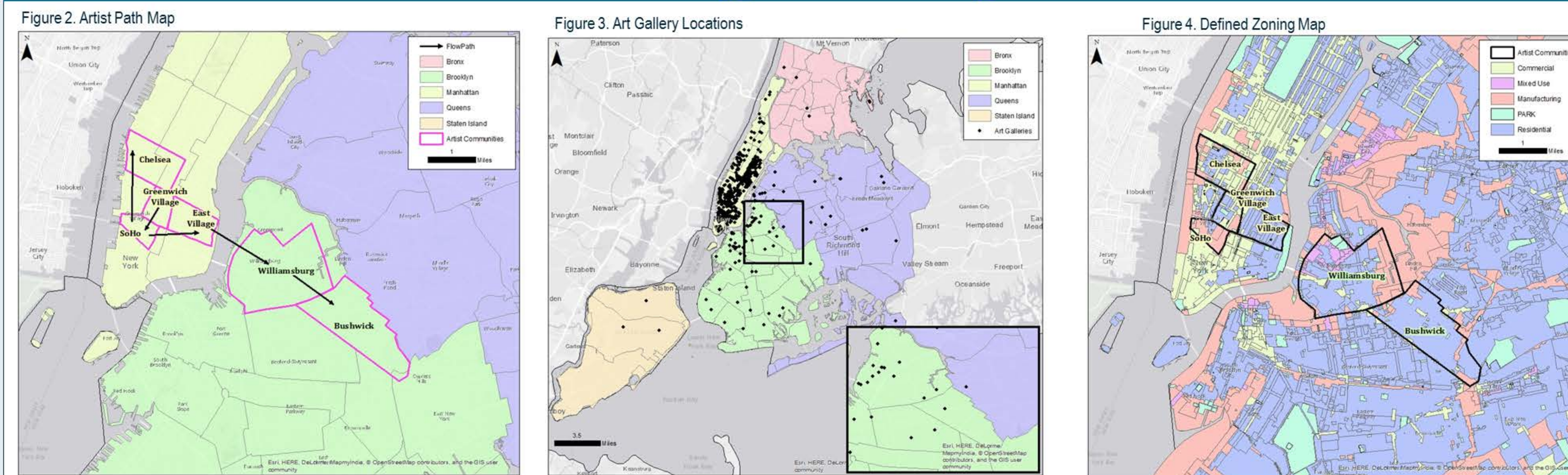
This is the path of artists since the 1950s. Starting from Greenwich Village, artists moved onto SoHo during the 1960s/1970s. Then were pushed out to the East Village due to increasing rent rates in the 1970s/1980s. People from SoHo also moved to West Chelsea in the 1980s/1990s. People from the East Village moved out to Williamsburg in the 1990s and then to Bushwick in the 2000s.

Figure 3. Art Gallery Locations

Art galleries are very popular throughout Manhattan but are condensed to various neighborhoods. This map is able to show that there is a high number of galleries in the neighborhoods being studied.

Figure 4. Defined Zoning Map

The data here defines specified zones all over New York City. Note that "Mixed Use" refers to an area that is both Residential and Manufacturing.

Results

Figure 5: White Population Coverage 2010

Figure 6: White Population Coverage 2015

Figure 7: Percent Below Poverty 2010

Figure 9: Percent Below Poverty 2015

Figure 10: Median Gross Rent 2010

Figure 11: Median Gross Rent 2015

Figure 12: Median Gross Rent Change

The Bushwick Collective has been a major contributor to art in Bushwick. The map above shows a map a walking tour around the neighborhood bringing tourists from all over to Bushwick. Along the trail you can see a collection of different pieces whether it being a political message or just aesthetically pleasing. Artists are not just Bushwick based, some come from different countries just to create a piece in Bushwick. The art, while at some points amazing, do not show the full spirit and culture of the people of Bushwick.

Methodology

- Gather hot spot zones
- Show clusters of street art
- Show locations of art galleries
- Show the different zoning areas of NYC in terms of relative expansion and zone designation
- Calculate poverty level of census block groups based of New York City standards
- Calculate the differences between rental rates
- Gather gentrifying data
- Determine what factors are considered to be a stressor
- Use Google Earth and CANVS app to identify street art locations with historical data
- Locate movement amongst a demographic

Conclusions

While stressors to individuals are subjective, I believe that my results of a group demographic, poverty changes, and rental rate changes in specified areas can contribute to a stressful environment. Undergoing dramatic change is not easy especially with a quick turnover. Bushwick itself is still fighting, graffiti versus street art. The results show that it is possible to have concentrations around street art and art galleries. The question is how much impact. Additionally, it is interesting to note that you can see changes along the subway lines as well, something that I was not testing for. Overall these detections although a small analysis, it can definitely that this neighborhood is going through transition. Just like Williamsburg before it, people are now getting drawn into these once crime ridden neighborhoods for the hip, art, bohemian culture. People do forget however how neighborhoods shaped their culture to begin with. I'd like to develop further on this topic by adding in more material as listed below.

Recommendations

- Go through art galleries file to redetect accuracy
- Get more in-person data such as GPS coordinates of different art
- Interview artists and residents to find out their perspectives
- Account for other factors in the analysis
- Try to contact CANVS again for their copy of street art data
- Get graffiti/tag locations to compare to street art
- Photograph street art pieces and graffiti
- Extract data from Instagram about these art pieces