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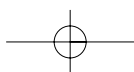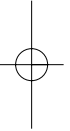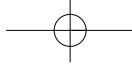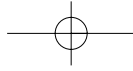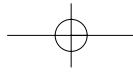# Global black ghetto emergence

1 Introduction

THE FRAME

Today, in the shadows of gleaming downtown skyscrapers and showy gentrified neighborhoods, many impoverished black ghettos in America's Rust Belt have substantially worsened (Wacquant 2002, 2002a).[1] These ghettos, frequently found within five to ten minutes drive of investment-energized downtowns, might as well be in another universe.[2] Leaders and residents struggle to acquire the resources to upgrade their communities, but face a formidable obstacle: the accelerated push to make and protect downtown revitalized landscapes of consumption, pleasure, and affluent residency. New redevelopment zones (e.g. the Loop-Gentrification Complex (Chicago), the Circle Centre Mall Axis (Indianapolis), Soulard-Gentry Boulevard (St. Louis), and Public Square-Historic Gateway Cluster (Cleveland)), have emerged as hyped revitalization icons for what their cities ostensibly can and need to become. In this context, black ghettos, from the gaze of many planners and growth-advocates, simply do not rate.

The thesis of this book clarifies this new black ghetto reality: that these areas more deeply bleed with a bolstered functional logic ascribed to them, to warehouse "contaminants" in the "global-compelled" city restructuring. While these ghettos in Cleveland, Detroit, St. Louis, Chicago, and the like have always warehoused the racial poor and been seared by negative representations, these aspects have accelerated since 1990. As this book documents, deepened neoliberal physical and social restructuring in these cities has created a startlingly new black ghetto entity.[3] Now, a more pronounced material and symbolic deprivation marks these areas under a post-war "third-wave" of black ghetto marginalization. These residents, in expedient processes, are both materially battered and symbolized – understood around a new debilitating theme of hopelessly pathological and destructively "consumptive." Black ghettos, once again but in a new way, are built into the ground, embedded in social relations, and plugged into circuitries of economy and politics.

But what is the third wave of ghetto marginalization that is central to this exploration? This wave, a post-1990 phenomenon, socially and spatially isolates these spaces (via discourses and practices) to make profitable

"global-competitive" economic spaces for real-estate capital (a post-war privileged coalition of prominent builders, developers, and Realtors in city policy that has always been entangled with local elite dreams for profit, prestige, and civic improvement). The previous wave, the second, was an early and mid 1980s activating of Reagan's "welfare-ghetto" rhetoric by local growth machines (striking out to assist real-estate capital) to fortify and expand the newest accumulation apparatus: frontier gentrification (Wilson 2005). Yet both have roots in a 1950s and 1960s first wave of black ghetto marginalization whose central analytical object, "the negro slum," purportedly needed isolating or eradicating to economically galvanize cities (Tabb 1974). Whereas the second wave pivoted around nurturing incipient revitalization spaces, the first wave centered upon the use of the urban renewal bulldozer to boldly re-make downtowns. In each case, these black ghettos have felt the wrath of something powerful: punitive, perpetually faltering city economies.

It follows that these ghettos today, despite other assertions, are anything but absent from capital's thoughts and mainstream discourse. In a widespread myth, the ascendant neoliberal 1980s (fueled by Reagan's "Welfare Queen" oratory) powerfully marginalized these spaces and populations, and now erases them from the public mind. In common discourse and daily thought, it is said, they are now forgotten and left to rot.

This book paints a different portrait: that these populations and spaces are still painstakingly managed, particularly by growth machines (amalgams of builders, developers, Realtors, the local state, and the media that push a unified vision of city growth) and the police apparatus. While national rhetoric has lessoned this demonizing, widely substituting "commonsense" neoliberal oratory for raw portrayals of atavistic people and spaces, local rhetoric seamlessly deepens this. The sources of this demonizing today, thus begins less with oratory from familiar voices – presidents, think-tank hotheads, and incendiary national columnists – than with local politicians, planning reports, mayoral utterances, and real-estate moguls.

In elaborating this thesis, the book chronicles a crucial catalyst to this third-wave of ghetto ravaging: the recent fear of and obsession with a supposed new era – globalization. This elaborate rhetoric, served up heavily now in local settings, has been a key trigger to mobilize and put into play crucial ghetto-destroying forces (targeting of government resources to cultivate a robust entrepreneurial city, retrenching the local welfare apparatus, rhetorically attacking these populations and spaces). This rhetoric, which I call "the global trope," is framed by and extends neoliberal principles and designs (especially the notions of the private-market as determinant of social and land-use outcomes and the retrenchment of social welfare) to systematically re-make these cities. The global trope, in this frame, is served up as a frank and blunt package of truths about city realities and needs that can no longer be suppressed. In assertion, its pleas correspond to core truths; deft interpreters read and respond to clear truths as a policy prescriptive, progressive human intervention onto a turbulent and fragile city.
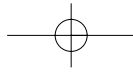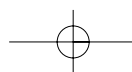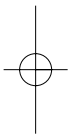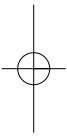
The rhetoric of the global trope has thus been a perceptual apparatus with profound material effects. It has served up a digestible reality that, following Robin Wagner-Pacifici (1994), guides construction of programs and policies by making certain actions thinkable and rational and others not. Imposed webs of meanings, like symbolic cages, build bars around senses of reality that place gazes within discrete and confining visions. One reality is ultimately advanced while alternatives are purged. Here is Mikhael Bakhtin's (1981) implicit dialogue with other points of view, the simultaneity of asserting one vision and annihilating others. This strategic affirmation and rebuke, forwarding what exists and what does not, continues to make this rhetorical formation a fundamental instrument of power. As this apparatus has resisted and beaten back competitive visions of city and societal realities, even as it is contested and struggled against, it grows stronger in numerous rust belt cities.

At this rhetoric's core, a supposed new hyper-competitive reality makes rust belt cities easily discardable as places of investment, production, and business. These once enclosed and confident containers of the economic, in the rhetoric, have recently become porous and leaky landscapes rife with a potential for dramatic economic hemorrhaging. Against this supposed reality, cities are portrayed as beset by a kind of accumulation disorder and uncertainty that now haunts them. The city, as a place of becoming, is a threatened but historically resilient locale that once again must act ingenuously to survive. The offered signs of this ominous potentiality – municipal fiscal depletion, an aging physical infrastructure, the "reality" of decayed residential, commercial, and production spaces dotting the city – are deployed as disciplining signifiers of what the future can bring. Through this rhetoric, a proposed shock treatment of re-regulation and privatization is grounded and rationalized.

In a second part of the rhetoric, city survival supposedly depends upon following two imperatives: strengthening the city as a taut entrepreneurial space and meticulously containing black ghettos and their populations. In the first imperative, the assertion is forceful: Now cities must push to build attractive consumptive complexes, upper-income aesthetic residential spaces, efficient labor pools, and healthy business climates. This post-1990 rhetoric has been at the heart of what Kevin Cox (1993) earlier identified as the supplanting of a "politics of redistribution" by a "politics of resource attraction." Entertainment, culture, sports, and leisure now become civic business. To fail to commodify these, borrowing from Milwaukee Mayor J. Norquist (1998), is to miss the reality of the new stepped-up inter-city competition. An intensified fragmenting and balkanizing of city space by class and race is not merely normalized, it becomes celebrated as utilitarian and in the service of city survivability.

In the second imperative, the assertion is sometimes explicit but often implicit: that poor black neighborhoods and populations need to be systematically isolated and managed as tainted and civic-damaging outcasts. These

are cast as not merely culturally problematic but things to be feared, reviled, and cordoned off. At work is William Wimsatt's (1998) notion of the mobilized fear economy, a general trepidation that now expands to more deeply include black ghettos. As Wimsatt notes, since 1980 we have increasingly had government by fear, foreign policy by fear, and landscapes of fear, all of which are expediently peddled by all scales of media. Now, we also have a heightened fear of the sinister black-ghetto in these cities that is manifested in a discursive fright about crime, black men, black youth, streets, and ghettos. A spiral of fear, peddled through rich images, now sells black bodies and spaces as potential violators of the collectivity's socio-moral and economic integrity. As is revealed in the analysis of contemporary ghetto changes (chapter 4), the unhidden hand of the global trope that sells this can be found in city policy, planning discourse, and normative politics.

The global trope is in this sense two-pronged. It offers the complementary "truths" of what circumstances these cities now face and also what they must do to survive. These two supportive formations seamlessly connect to form a coherent and resilient rhetoric. This whole, borrowing from Wendy Hollway (1984), offers purportedly progressive positions for subjects to adopt that legitimates potentially contentious actions (e.g. requiring poor people to work at sub-minimum wages, cutting food stamps to the needy, using public funds to subsidize gentrification). Yet use of such discourse by growth elites is anything but surprising. These formations, following Norman Fairclaugh (1992), are the modern alternative to flagrant violence and oppression. The now established rule in complex societies, to Fairclaugh, is to make and manage rather than to nakedly repress. To Fairclaugh, seizing and extending the terrain of logical and progressive through discourse, is potent politics.

The end result, I chronicle, has been the formation of a new kind of ghetto, what I term the "glocal black ghetto," which has become more impoverished and more impugned as the now crystallized zone of human discard in "the global era." These ghettos, simply put, have become one-dimensional apparatuses for the naked isolating and warehousing of those deemed cancerous to real-estate submarkets and downtown transformation. In the process, dominant changes in these ghettos (deepened deprivation, more health fatalities, new forms of stigma and marginalization) reflect this ghetto and inner city isolating imperative put into play. The facilitating rhetoric, the global trope, proves functional by communicating the need to re-entrepreneurialize city form and life and deepen ghetto isolation. Ultimately, it normalizes both an intensified splintering of city space and the sense of tainted and civic-damaging black outcast bodies that need assiduous regulating and management.

But use of this ghetto-devastating global trope in the third-wave is rooted in a deeper force that has so far been merely hinted at: the production of a strategic uneven development. This differentiation of city form has fluctuated over time in response to a central process: local and societal regimes

of accumulation. This cultivating of uneven development, Neil Smith's (1984) lifeblood for making the city an instrument for accumulation, produces an economically-taut landscape that can efficiently service the interests of local growth machines and the broader society. Thus, during the golden age of the Fordist societal growth dynamic, rust belt cities like Chicago, Cleveland, St. Louis, and Detroit took on and progressively embellished their trademark feature: large factory districts dominating downtowns ringed by tiers of worker districts (Judd 1979; Teaford 1990). Black ghettos immediately arose to aid a small real-estate capital but most fundamentally to assist the Fordist industrial economy's need for cheap and plentiful low-wage workers.

But local and societal circumstances were changing in the 1970s with the collapse of Fordist economics and the Keynesian-welfarist complex. As flexible production systems, labor-market deregulation, and a retrenched welfare state became the societal adjustment, rust belt cities especially were battered. These cities, desperate to revitalize moribund economies, rallied around an "opportunity structure" provided by the structural economy, potentially lucrative real-estate (see Smith 2002), to drive the second-wave of black ghetto marginalization. Fluctuations in land and property value, as before, persisted, but cultivating an ascendant gentrification could generate substantial revenues for real-estate capital and local government (see Weber 2002; Smith 2002). In this context, the institutional stimulants to revalorize land in key districts – tourism, historic preservation, cultural upscaling – arose as city redevelopment mechanisms. Desires of growth machines to cultivate this new city-wide differentiation, steeped in isolating "contaminating" black bodies and building expansive (but fortressed) posh spaces, spurred the creation of the new glocal black ghetto.

AN UNEASY GLOBAL TROPE

Yet it is important to distinguish between the appearance and reality of these growth machines and their usage of the global trope. At a superficial level, they appear as blunt neoliberal operatives, flagrantly offering a kind of new shock treatment (e.g. necessity of concentrating public and private resources in select spaces, demanding the racial poor to be productive and civically contributory or pay the price). But things are more complex at a deeper level. These machines elaborately stage their power and acuity to appear as inevitable and irreversible forces (Pulido 2000). This "theater of self-aggrandizement" bolsters the machine's political standing and conceals the difficulties of its reality: it must continuously struggle to negotiate shifting political ground, engage new possibilities and constraints, and grapple with new forms of contestation (Ward 2000). If successful on these fronts, the myth of naturalness and inevitability is hardened and dogmatic and strident neoliberal rhetoric can proceed full force.

In this setting, the global trope is always multi-textured and elaborately staged to be effective and solvent. It "speaks" directly to specific issues (the

reality of globalization and city need to appropriately respond) but fabricates elaborate worlds of people, places, and processes that foundationalize and organize these themes (see Wagner-Pacifici 1994; Castells 2004). This provision of "support worlds," a crucial analytic ingredient in the rhetoric, functions to stage these "themes of truth" as they connect to the lifeline of "truths" in other rhetorical formations. These support worlds, in other words, are necessary inclusions in the rhetoric that authenticate dominant, addressed issues. Mapping reality ultimately involves staging the mapping replete with providing a supportive cast of characters and processes. Thus, as we discover, the global trope's ability to persuade (i.e. create perceptions that make certain actions practical and others not) lies in a discursive framing of its dominant themes, which cultivates and manages the sense of one objective reality.

It follows that the global trope which drives this new uneven development is complex and tension-ridden. Contradictions and discontinuities characterize the formation – its themes, images, and general coherence – that need continuous management and refinement. This formation's complexity is tied to a straightforward reality: it is a strategy of power that is never complete or fully determinative. The global trope is thus always in a process of becoming, as something partial, contingent, and developing, to render it malleable, fluid, and hybridized. At the heart of this, the trope is always subjected to a "double-gaze," a two-sided observation and interpretation, which continuously opens it up for scrutiny and interrogation (see B. Wilson 2000). Young and old, the poor and non-poor, and everyone else take their turn at reading this formation. To dull or taint this gaze, the search for a consensus and the production of a democratic veneer is constant. Contestation and resistance, as we learn in chapters six and seven, is forever there or on the horizon, making the creation and reproduction of this global trope an ongoing human accomplishment.

What are the specifics of these difficulties? Most generally, a surprisingly elusive abstraction – new global times – is always being simplistically grounded and empiricized. The global trope is an elusive abstraction in a fundamental way. A sense of new global times is an absent reality, an empirical ambiguity (see Dear 2000; Cameron and Palan 2003). It is not visible to people in space, and is said to lie way beyond the domain of states and regions. It is also absent temporally, with globalization widely invoking the sense of an inexorable, futuristic unfolding as "the telos of capitalism." In this context, growth machines continuously toil to "proof" globalization as something observable, legible, and on the move. In this process, a sense of easy-to-understand local ills is widely served up as irrefutable evidence. Manifestations of globalization are projected to be all around the city: in people (e.g. the black poor), places (e.g. industrial districts), and processes (e.g. city crime, declining public revenues). The public is to see the city and quickly grasp this proof: the city is to be read in only one way.
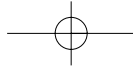
The struggle is also to reinforce something else: the local state as leader of the new restructuring. To push this, growth machines extol the state's

supposed reason for existence, to form and execute collective goals, even as prevailing neoliberal sensibilities also necessitate anti-statist rhetoric (see Ward 2000; Weber 2002). Direct pronouncements (government as facilitator of civic livability and civic progress) and subtle insinuation (government as preserver of status quo class and race relations) help these growth machines: they prop up this offering. In short, the push of a proactive government belies neoliberal orthodoxy. The drive to front a smart and adroit local state is a non-stop rhetorical project. Ultimately, these local states, in the growth realm, do not abandon (in action and discourse) sense of themselves as mechanical bearers of public desires that transform cities for public gain, even as they struggle with the new reality of having also to demonize themselves.

Moreover, these growth machines struggle with something else: they communicate the contradictory notions of democratic ideals and the need to isolate the black poor. While the principles of freedom and self-determination are extolled, policies blatantly isolate "a people." Rationalizing this confining, an ongoing project, involves a two-pronged process: bringing supportive, paralleling narratives into the global trope (e.g. the black crime question, the erosion of public schools issue) by referencing and illuminating; and allowing these narratives to function and influence on their own (see Pulido 2000). In theme, both offer a doctrine of liberty that is tied to a notion of deservedness to be measured by two supposed time-tested ideas: levels of civic conformity and civic contribution. In this context, poor African Americans are cast as a least deserving lot: they are widely demonized as threats to public safety, security, and civility (Hooks 1993; Collins 1996). Diverse discourses in the spheres of crime, public education, city growth, community development, and housing policy are critical. I discuss this more fully later.

At the same time, the agenda to isolate the black poor must be complete and total. This key part to creating the entrepreneurial-competitive city involves triple goals: the raw act of cordoning off "a people," rendering them accepting of this and non-incendiary; and removing totally their presence from the civic gaze onto privileged micro-spaces. Creating this new city becomes a delicate, ongoing human endeavor that involves deft discursive and material management. The final goal of these three (managing the civic gaze onto select micro-spaces) is perhaps most vexing; it necessitates a non-stop management of the black poor's activity spaces and routine paths. The growth machine's realization is stark: the images that these "cathedrals of consumption and production" emit need to be elaborately choreographed and controlled. It follows that such commodifying of space, goes hand-in-hand with a key maneuver, entrepreneurializing the visual and banishing "visual trash."

But who offers this global rhetoric in rust belt cities? The leaders are diverse "talking heads" within growth machines: planners, mayors, City Council people, newspaper writers, developers, Realtors, editorial pundits, and corporate CEOs. This is the nexus of enablers, funders, planners, writers, and direct builders of urban space who aspire to create a new, profit-propulsive

capitalist city. They unify around a central goal: to produce maximum urban rent and to cash in on the produced revalorization of land. This means, of course, encouraging multiple city changes: attracting more business and industry; building more conspicuous consumption neighborhoods; crafting vibrant, lavish downtowns; re-entrepreneurializing local business climates, and isolating the racialized poor. These actors frequently differ in the desired timing and pattern of restructuring, but this fails to blunt the drive to restructure. All desire in general principle a coherent nexus of spaces that yields the prize: investment-attractive micro-terrains (e.g. gentrified neighborhoods, historic districts, high-tech production zones).

This combination speak their truths through multiple sources: speeches, public oratory, newspaper editorials and stories, planning documents, and informal everyday conversations with colleagues and others. All help constitute a circuit of knowledge that permeates the urban everyday to populate the local with anointed facts and realisms designated as irrefutable (hence this book's empirical focus on all of these sources). One key point is the "regime of truth", which is dependent upon a crucial but often overlooked source – the mundane everyday conversations of growth machine actors, as bold declarative statements in public forums. It continuously replenishes as a foundational source of global-speak, the content and legitimacy of the discursive formation as neoliberal infused ideas seamlessly pass from one actor (growth machine voices) to others (both growth machine actors and others), albeit in informal settings. Such everyday conversations, ultimately key builders of truth for growth machine members and residents alike, are active at every moment in the circuit's life.

In this context, these renditions, as meticulously set-up and ensnaring worlds, feature seductive, prominently haunting images, which draw people into its stocks of truths. One prime image, for example, conveys an entrepreneurially robust, aesthetically and culturally dreamy city easily made with strong public support. People, through this, are taken along imagined paths resonating with adroit symbols and indicators of civic prospects and potentialities. Another common image, its relational other, presents something very different, a currently threatened, de-stabilized city in new global times. The proof is stamped into the entirety of the image in the form of boarded-up storefronts, sinking shops and retail zones, crumbling neighborhoods, malaised downtowns, failing schools and rising crime. Wherever one looks in these staged images, self-fulfilling signs of an uncompromising and harsh global economy lurk. Not surprisingly, any potential evidence that contradicts the offered "reality" is purged from the images.

A key implication arises from recognizing the reality of this deployed global trope: it refutes the near mantra-like belief that city growth machines and "globalization" are inherently oppositional forces. This recognition thus suggests that it is false to automatically counterpose city growth machines and "globalization" as antithetical. Globalization, many analysts declare, is a mobility-enabling force for capital that necessarily runs counter to

city health and growth machine designs. A process termed globalization, at every second, is seen to assault the desperate growth machine imperative to keep cities robust and vibrant. Holston and Apparurai (2003) capture this thematic, noting, for example, that "recent developments in the globalization of capital . . . drive a deeper wedge between national space and its urban centers."

This study suggests something different: that these machines, as centers of rhetorical production and power, can seize the day's concerns and constitute and reconstitute a sense of powerful globalization, which help their restructuring ambitions. Globalization, as a served-up construction, bolsters a fervent desire of growth machines: to ensnare "trophy investments" and restructure cities to their specifications (Zukin 1995). An invoked reality of globalization, in this sense, helps foundationalize and expand a neoliberal social and physical restructuring that is at the core of current growth machine aspirations. To be sure, these coalitions have not invented this global concept, and it does exist in reality as an elusive, highly uneven process, but they continue to draw on it, magnify it, and caricature it as they take advantage of this ambiguous notion in common thought.

In this context, diverse cities in America's rust belt are examined: Chicago, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Cleveland, Detroit, Pittsburgh, New York, Philadelphia, and others. These rust belt cities cover a vast stretch of terrain that runs from Minnesota on the north, Missouri on the south, the northeastern seaboard on the east, and the Mississippi River on the west. These cities and their ghettos share the legacy of having economic and political bases rooted in smokestack manufacturing that dominated America's nineteenth and twentieth century industrial might. Chicago's rootedness in meatpacking and steel production, Detroit in automotive manufacturing, Pittsburgh in steel production, and Philadelphia in metals were but the leading edge of a once massive complex of heavy-duty production that structured the organization of neighborhoods, industrial districts, social spaces, and social relations.

Today, amid all the tumultuousness and change, these cities, following Amin (2002), are still not places that are "nested in simple territorial or geometric space." They are, rather, "nodes in relational settings . . . locations of situated practice[s] . . . a place of engagement" where history, power, and practices collide to forge distinctive arenas for human action. These black ghettos, like their encompassing cities, are thus different: Cleveland's Hough is not Philadelphia's Fairhill, Chicago's Wentworth differs from Indianapolis's Eastside. Forces that affect them are rooted in place-specific cultural histories, political cultures, and complex institutional climates. In this sense, these ghettos are constituted through different place-based institutions, social fabrics, and political-regulative formations. But these ghettos, I argue, share the key commonality of being historic storehouses for the poorest African Americans. Currently, they are all profoundly affected by the latest broad-sweeping assertions of the new global era in deepened conservative times.

12 *Global black ghetto emergence*

PERSPECTIVE AND DEFINITIONS

This work uses what I call a racial economy perspective to deepen under-standing of these ghettos. It draws on the now well-known schools of urban political economy and racial-cultural studies to understand the evolution of these spaces and their current dimensions (see Lott 1999; Pulido 2000). The goal, as in so many post-structuralist studies, is to recognize the importance of three analytic spheres as they condition life and are lived through – race, economy, and culture. Yet these "spheres" are seen to have anything but clear and easily delineated boundaries. I thus suggest that "race," "culture," and "economy" exist in rust belt cities not as empirically separate things, but as inseparable, nested elements in power-laden social formations. These nesting constructions, as lived arenas for people, are meaningful to growth machines: they can be constructed and drawn on to wield power and influence as inputs into regulatory formations.

The core of the racial economy perspective is a belief that a humanly produced element, race, has intimate ties to politically-infused economies in places. Producing and working through race – "racializing" the everyday – is a practical and technical accomplishment that helps fix and maintain social relations to the material and symbolic benefit of some. Production of race is ultimately compelled more by real interests and discursive strategies than by attempts at factual, real-world reportage. Race, in this sense, is not only a social construction, but also a key cog in an elaborate circuitry of power. Its construction, seizure, and usage lubricates the economic machinery of daily life. Yet race is more than simple ascription: it is a constitution of regimes of images and relations of meaning that help colonize the common vision about places, people, and processes. Through producing race, then, power is provided a "realness" and legitimacy that links racialization to everyday thought, social practice, and common conduct.

Space is also important in this racial economy perspective. Space, borrowing from Brenner and Theodore (2002), is now one privileged instrument through which racial economy operates. Most immediately, processes framed at meshing spatial scales – the local, the regional, and the national – enable racial economies to forge the likes of this study's central analytic object: black ghettos. Scale, here, discursively stages the world that, in offering one expanse of reality, imbues presentations of forces and processes with credibility. One discrete "visual" of the world is set out and sedimented to privilege the existence of certain forces and processes. Banished to oblivion, in the pro-cess, are the referent of other scales and their power to lend credence to the realness of other processes. To dictate scale, following Livingstone (1992), is to wield cultural power. Scale, then, can fruitfully be seen as a kind of resource, albeit a human made one, whose strategic usage propels racial economies forward.

But what is meant by black ghetto in this study? I mean to identify a socially isolated, segregated class-race space that today more staunchly isolates poor

African Americans as growth machines struggle to make a differentiated city space. I thus refer to a terrain of neglect and ethno-confinement that is put in the service of a dominant status group. Extending the view of Wacquant (2002), this ghetto is a socio-spatial device that enables a dominant social group in cities to ostracize and exploit a subordinate group endowed with negative symbolic capital. This relation of ethno-racial management and closure involves four aspects: stigma, constraint, territorial confinement, and institutional encasement. This ghetto's daily rhythms, as a distinctive entity, follow from the four African-American ghetto stages in America (slavery, Jim Crow, the incipient ghetto, the hyperghetto) identified by Wacquant (2002) (Table 1). More than before, in this black ghetto, "a people" are socially and spatially cordoned off from the mainstream as supposed contaminants to the public good.

These ghettos are defined, for operational purposes, as spaces with more than 95 percent of residents African American and with 35 percent or more of households living below the poverty level. These communities also had to be within the city's political boundaries and not be a separate, incorporated municipality. These numbers, adopted to capture critical assemblages of this local racializing and impoverishment, allow us to include many of the classic black ghettos studied by others (e.g. Hough in Cleveland, Bedford-Stuyvesant and the South Bronx in New York, Wentworth and Woodlawn in Chicago, and Allegheny West and Hartranft in Philadelphia). Recent definitions by Jargowsky (1997, 2002) and Petit and Kingsley (2003) are similar (in studies of "extreme-poverty neighborhoods"), but set this poverty figure at the slightly higher rate of 40 percent.

What proof is there that these black ghettos have recently worsened and been functionally re-cast since 1990? Most immediately, the data that is difficult

Table 1 The nature of the now five black poor "peculiar institutions"

Institution	location	form of labor	core of economy
Slavery 1619–1865	regional south	unfree fixed labor	plantation
Jim Crow (1865–1965)	regional south	free fixed labor	agrarian and extractive
ghetto (1880–1968)	U.S. cities	low-wage industrial	menial worker
hyperghetto and prison (1968–1990)	U.S. inner cities	residual postindustrial services	marginal, service-oriented
glocal ghetto (1990–)	U.S. inner cities	underground fixed, forced statist	underground, shadow and marginal, service-oriented

Source: derived partially from Wacquant (2002)

Table 2 Changes in black ghetto neighborhoods[1]

	% Population Change, 1990–2000	% Below Poverty Level, 2000	% Below Poverty Level Change 1990–	% of Housing Units Vacant, 2000	% Change In Housing Units Vacant, 1990–2000	% Change Ratio of High to Low Poverty 1990–2000[2]
Cleveland						
Fairfax	−13.1	35.7	−0.9	21.0	+3.6	+24.2
Hough	−19.2	41.3	−2.3	20.9	+0.6	+41.3
Philadelphia						
Fairhill	−22.8	57.1	+2.0	22.0	+5.8	+31.3
Hartranft	−7.0	33.9	+1.4	21.8	+7.8	+18.7
Chicago						
Englewood Woodlawn	−16.8	43.8	+2.9	23.7	+8.7	+22.9
Baltimore						
Boyd Booth	−7.6	38.3	+1.2	26.7	+9.0	+21.2
Broadway East	−11.2	39.0	+2.4	17.4	+11.7	+12.6
Detroit						
Planning Cluster I	−30.3	38.0	+0.5	13.1	+2.8	+27.5
Planning Cluster II	−20.0	36.3	−1.1	16.7	+5.1	+31.3
Washington						
Trinidad	−7.1	41.3	+1.8	18.8	+11.1	+19.7
Bellevue	−6.8	40.9	+0.3	17.6	+14.7	+23.9

[1] Unit of analysis for computation: census tract
[2] high poverty measured by people with incomes two times or greater below the poverty level. Low poverty measured by people with incomes .50 or less below the poverty level.

to refute. First, material worsening is shown by data from a sample of these ghettos across the rust belt (Table 2). Eight of the eleven neighborhoods explored in the six cities experienced increases in families living below the poverty level (an average increase of 0.8 percent), the percentage of housing units vacant (an average increase of 5.5 percent), and poverty populations that were "high poverty" between 1990 and 2000 (an average increase of 24.9 percent). All eleven neighborhoods also experienced substantial losses in population, with two areas, Planning Cluster I and Fairhill in Detroit and Cleveland, losing more than 20 percent of their populations. In sum, all eleven randomly selected poverty neighborhoods fared worse in 2000 than in 1990 on all four variables.

With further review, some of the numbers are frightful. Cleveland's Hough and Fairfax experienced increases of 41.3 percent and 24.2 percent in their ratios of high poverty to low poverty residents. This index is especially revealing, measuring change in the intensity of deprivation within

poverty populations over time. Philadelphia's Fairhill and Hartranft had, respectively, 57.1 percent and 33.9 percent of their populations officially living below the poverty level, a 2.0 percent and 1.4 percent increase, respectively, from ten years earlier. Chicago's Englewood similarly had an official poverty rate above 43 percent. Planning Clusters I and II in Detroit suffered equally experiencing growth in high poverty residents as a ratio of low poverty residents of 27.5 percent and 31.3 percent, respectively. The data is unequivocal: in poverty-afflicted and dilapidated inner cities that were battered in the 1990s, these areas suffered the worst.

To be sure, some of the forces that assault these ghettos also afflict other working-class populations in the rust belt and beyond. Thus, this ghetto population anchors the newest grim statistics about growing despair and poverty in America. For example, the number of Americans living below the poverty line increased by more than 3.5 million from 2000 to 2002 (to 34.6 million) (*Chicago Tribune* 2004). In a similar statistic, those who are unclear where their next meal will come from, termed "food insecure" by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, grew from 31 million to 35 million between 1999 and 2002 (*Chicago Tribune* 2004). In 1970, 4 million people sought food assistance through food stamps; in 2003, the figure was 23.5 million people. But this poverty has been concentrated in an anything-but-surprising place – these ghettos, where residents are largely low-income, struggle to negotiate the new urban service economy, and are powerfully stigmatized. Most vulnerable economically, a tripartite of race, class, and stigmatized setting entraps and punishes a population.

Descriptive accounts of living conditions in these rust belt ghettos from writers across the political spectrum bolster this notion of deepened deprivation. To *Detroit Free Press* columnist Fred Payne (2002), Detroit's poorest black neighborhoods seem more ravaged and neglected than ever. To Payne, this "zone" now has but one movie theater and a few retail stores. To find a Sears or a Marshall's, these residents have to travel to neighboring Dearborn. The nearest fast food places, Popeye's and McDonalds on the main drag Woodward Avenue, serve food from behind bulletproof glass. The city's unbroken rows of abandoned buildings, an estimated 10,700, cluster in these ghettos. Nearly 1,200 of them are found within one block of inner city public schools (*Detroit Evening News* 2001). The Riverside neighborhood, one of the city's most impoverished, had one-fourth of its housing stock (222 buildings) ravaged by abandonment in 2001 (*Detroit Evening News* 2001).

Chicago's black ghettos are similarly described. Urban League writer Paul Street (2003) finds despair in six Chicago neighborhoods where more than 40 percent of kids are "deeply poor" – Oakland, North Lawndale, Washington Park, Grand Boulevard, Douglas, and Riverdale. Unrelenting hunger, homelessness, and drug abuse, Street reports, punctuate the streets and parks of these communities. As noted by W. J. Wilson (1996), vacant land and abandoned buildings from general institutional withdrawal punctuate this physical fabric. To exacerbate the community's stigma, roughly 60 of the city's

80 recently installed surveillance cameras now dot community "hot spots" (Clarke 2004). Operation Disruption Surveillance, initiated in 2003, has spent $3.5 million to detect street crime and monitor the activities of Chicago residents (see *Chicago Tribune* 2004). Now, these kids and adults are constantly watched in the city's proclaimed "blue-light districts" (Chicago Planner D. Roe 2004). This "soft" use of electronic surveillance, imperceptible and harmless to outsiders, reinforces the criminalizing of a population.

Evidence also suggests that these black neighborhoods have been representationally re-cast as more culturally and civically problematic spaces since 1990. First, proof comes from the media with the range of its reportage-types about ghettos considered (i.e. editorials, community exposés, crime reporting). Data from a sample of four daily newspapers in rust belt cities, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, *Indianapolis Star*, and *Detroit Free Press*, shows a more frequent reporting of black ghettos via use of a negative metaphoricalizing, as pathologically consumptive, after 1990 compared to the mid 1980s (Table 3). This differed from the common media and city rhetoric in the previous period, 1980s Reagan era, that emphasized something equally inciting but less "complete:" a dramatically falling-into-pathology population in these spaces (Wilson 2005). Whereas articles in the 1980s widely reported an incendiary process, reports in the 1990s often chronicled the reality of a complete downward spiral. The most flagrant example of the latter, from the *Indianapolis Star*, had a reportage increase from 6 percent in 1985–99 to 14 and 12 percent in 1992–97 and 1998–2003, respectively.

Second, discussions with local planners and politicians in the cities underscored this representational re-casting of black ghettos. These people, also, frequently referenced or discussed their city from the position of these residents and spaces as civically non-contributory and unproductive. The dynamic at work was a kind of "deeper slide into normalcy" (in planner and politician common thought and practice) of warehousing poor black families, an okaying and sanctioning of segregation. Two kinds of response reflected this. First, discussions of ideal residential structure across these cities produced little commentary on the reality and ills of segregating the racialized poor. This was all-but-off the planning agenda, supplanted by such concerns as "Smart Growth" and "the New Urbanism." Second, those that discussed poor black neighborhoods often centered their function within the notion

Table 3 Percent of stories presenting black ghettos as pathologically consumptive and obstacles to city growth

	1985–1991	*1992–1997*	*1998–2003*
Cleveland Plain Dealer	1 (2%)	5 (10%)	6 (12%)
St. Louis Post Dispatch	1 (2%)	6 (12%)	7 (14%)
Indianapolis Star	3 (6%)	7 (14%)	6 (12%)
Detroit Free Press	2 (4%)	5 (10%)	6 (12%)
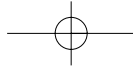
of needing to cultivate the broader city (as a supposed a fragile economic and social landscape in a new global era). To many of these planners and politicians, who spoke of themselves as civic servants, this was the public's purported central concern, not poverty, deprivation, or anything else. Two quotes capture the essence of these two responses:

> What the public wants in Chicago is livable, usable spaces. That is why the new urbanism has a large following here. The unit of importance is the neighborhood, and Chicago is a city of neighborhoods. Our planning goal . . . is to make this a reality, build a city that the people want and can thrive in.
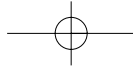>
> (Chicago Planner B. Walters 2004)

> Black poverty still plagues the city, it's found too frequently . . . It's admittedly a tough situation, welfare doesn't meet their needs and desires . . . the workfare experiment seems to be working . . . St. Louis is becoming a national symbol of urban recovery and progress, these neighborhoods at best don't help the process . . . at the worst, they hinder it . . . They need to play a more productive role in the St. Louis economy.
>
> (St. Louis Planner M. Wilks 2005)

A note on the methods used in this study might be useful. Textual analysis, open-ended discussions, and content analysis of a radio talk show were the data sources. Textual analysis deconstructed stories about city growth and redevelopment in seven local dailies (e.g. *Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times, Cleveland Plain-Dealer, Detroit News, Indianapolis Star, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, New York Times*) and on the web. Stories and articles using the terms growth, redevelopment, globalization, or ghetto were identified for review. Open-ended discussions were also conducted in six rust belt cities in 2004 and 2005 – Chicago, Indianapolis, Cleveland, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and New York. I conversed with local planners, city officials, city program heads and representatives, community activists, residents, and youth in person or by telephone. To obtain credible responses, all interviewees were initially asked if they preferred to have their names withheld from future write-ups of the data. Nearly 90 percent of the 130 interviewees opted for this. For this reason, comments by discussants in the book frequently fail to carry a name or simply provide a pseudonym.

A final source of data was a content analysis of the nationally syndicated Mancow Muller radio talk show. This text was ideal for capturing the pulse of current political thought in the neoliberal-infused rust belt. His frequent diatribes about the black poor, black ghettos, the welfare state, new global times, and the politics of racism were resonant and revealing, reflecting the ascendancy of the deepened post-1980 conservatism. His oratory, often deliberately invoking incendiary images, nevertheless spoke about deeply felt beliefs. It is no accident that Muller is now carried on over 25 radio stations

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across America and his ratings are booming (he was *Billboard Magazine*'s Radio Personality of the Year Award in 1995, 1996, and 1997). Muller, now established at the center of America's growing list of neo-conservative talking heads on T.V. and radio, reflects and fashions mainstream political beliefs.

A final brief comment of self-reflection. Is this book an unequivocal presentation of truth? – I believe yes and no. I borrow Michael Keith's (1993) pronouncement that any academic work is unavoidably a relativist human-made product, a kind of situated, cerebral output that we affix as a thing called knowledge. This product is socially constructed through discursive formations that arrive at truths through the unavoidable use of language, political perspective, and cultural meanings. Keith terms this producing of knowledge "hard labour at the coalface." This book thus speaks its truths through this degree of relativism, but I believe these truths to be ultimately valuable as a kind of contextually-specific set of facts. Thus, this work is seen to open up a kind of aperture to see rust belt cities and their black ghettos in a distinctive way: through a racial economy perspective. In this work's inevitable imposition of cultural meanings and obliterations, ontological presences and absences, and linguistic tropes, one important reality is promulgated for others to see and reflect on.