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## Fit to Print: Hudson's Gentrification in the New York Times, 1985-2016

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**Fit to Print: Hudson's Gentrification in the New York Times, 1985-2016**

**Senior Project Submitted to  
The Division of Social Studies  
of Bard College**

**by  
Nora Cady**

**Annandale-on-Hudson, New York  
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**Abstract:**

*“Fit to Print: Hudson’s Gentrification in the New York Times, 1985-2016”* is a content analysis of 80 *New York Times* articles that investigates the way that the City of Hudson N.Y. has been covered by the paper between 1985 and 2016. Findings from this content analysis are presented in 10 year increments. In the first phase of coverage, *New York Times* reporting primed Hudson for gentrification by depicting it as a site of urban decay hoping to revitalize. In the second phase (1997-2006) *New York Times* coverage promoted growth regime activities and minimized social problems in the city. In the last phase (2007-2016) the paper framed Hudson as a gentrified city now taken over by a creative class who see Hudson as an alternative to a larger urban center. Together, these findings show how a pro-gentrification narrative has been constructed by *The Times* and encourages further gentrification in the future.



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## Introduction

1985: Hudson is trying to revive its downtown, which has lost much of its business to outlying shopping centers. There are vacant stores on Warren Street, the main street, which runs down to the river

1989: Hudson is also one of the few places in the Hudson Valley that can be reached by train.

1994: Hudson is focusing on self-guided tours of a street once lined with houses of ill repute.

1997: Hudson is encouraging artists to settle, as a way of revitalizing a community that always seems to be in peril.

2002: Hudson is a diamond in the rough that's midway through polishing.

2002: Hudson is a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Manhattan.

2003: Hudson is now home to more than 50 antiques shops and has gained a reputation for being the antique maven's equivalent of nirvana.

2005: Hudson is reinventing itself -- again.

2005: Hudson is known for its encyclopedic array of American architectural styles.

2006: Hudson is about a two-hour drive north of New York City, 50 minutes south of Albany and three hours west of Boston.

2008: Hudson is a half-hour or so north of Rhinebeck or, straight from Manhattan, a two-hour drive on the Thruway and the Taconic State Parkway.

2008: Hudson is rich in charming bed-and-breakfasts.

2011: Hudson is a hospitable town with stately churches and overgrown gardens, and more than its fair share of good places to eat.

2014: Hudson is already home to many well-known artists, such as Brice Marden and David Hammons.

2014: "Hudson is evolving," he added. "It's always on the verge of something, but now it does seem like there's a lot of momentum being built. There's this great urban vibe you don't find in other rural towns."

Between 1985 and 2016 *The New York Times* published 75 articles about Hudson, New York. The timeline above was constructed using quotations from these articles. During this time, the city was changing and parts of the city were experiencing rapid gentrification. This timeline highlights the way that the gentrification of Hudson was framed by *New York Times* coverage during various moments in the city's development.

The city of Hudson is the subject of these articles and these articles are the subject of this project. Together, the articles construct a narrative about the gentrification of Hudson which, when published, informs the public's imagination about that city and aligns with several conceptions of gentrification and city growth posited by scholars. In this project, I have

conducted a content analysis of these articles. In the following chapters, findings are presented from this content analysis as they appear throughout time. The project focuses particularly on how the themes of crime and poverty, social actors, gentrification and the history of Hudson are framed by *New York Times* reporting and how this framing evolves. My project also addresses what representations are missing from the narrative. At a time when trust in the media is at an all time low, and when wealth and spatial disparities are especially apparent in this country, this paper will examine how change has been reflected in the media. Given this context my project attempts to answer the question: how does *New York Times* coverage portray the state of Hudson throughout its gentrification? It is my hope that a critical analysis of this portrayal can inform us about the framing of the process of gentrification in Hudson and cities similar to Hudson. In this chapter I will present findings from other scholars who have already found that the media is critically important in the process of gentrification. I will review literature from the fields of urban studies, sociology and media studies as my project speaks to all three of these fields and contributes to them by providing an in-depth analysis of one media narrative which is often duplicated by *The Times* and other newspapers in other places. I will also provide context for the findings I present in subsequent chapters by explaining the history of Hudson, the importance of media attention on Hudson, and the course of gentrification in Hudson itself.

### **Literature Review**

My findings address the intersection between newspaper coverage and gentrification. The purpose of this paper is not to characterize the type of gentrification which has occurred in that city but rather to explore how *The New York Times*' coverage of the city has characterized its gentrification.

My project engages with and, I hope, adds to the literature that investigates the role the media has played in the gentrification process. The project does not answer the question: “How has media coverage affected gentrification in Hudson?” because, as I will explain below, this question has already been answered by many scholars. Instead, my project turns to the media itself and attempts to answer “How has the media portrayed gentrification in Hudson?” because it already asserts that these portrayals are important to the process of gentrification.

To understand how media production fits into the process of gentrification, it is important to explain some of the models which take media coverage into account as a variable within this process. Gentrification was a term first coined by Ruth Glass in her analysis of the changing character of neighborhoods in London. Glass defined gentrification as a process in which high income residents move into and displace lower income working class people in urban areas. Glass does not mention how the media plays into this process in her findings, but later investigations of gentrification do cite the way that media functions in the process.<sup>1</sup>

Gentrification may be explained as either a consumption-side process or a production-side process, and, in these conceptions, the media plays differing roles.<sup>2</sup> Production-side gentrification is centered around the idea that gentrification is produced by economic conditions, policy and city officials. Neil Smith defines gentrification as “the reinvestment of capital at the urban center, which is designed to produce space for a more affluent class of people than currently occupies that space.”<sup>3</sup> Smith also coined the term “rent gap” which refers to the disinvestment in and revitalization of urban centers. Within this understanding of gentrification,

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<sup>1</sup> Ruth Glass, *London : aspects of change* (London, England: MacGibbon & Kee, 1964).

<sup>2</sup> Mary Donoghue, ““Ready for Renewal”: A Content Analysis of Washington Post Coverage of Gentrification in Petworth, Washington, DC” (doctoral thesis), 9, accessed April 3, 2017, <http://islandora.wrlc.org/islandora/object/1112capstones%3A200/datastream/PDF/view>. The framework of my literature review was based on the structure delineated in this thesis.

<sup>3</sup> *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, 2009, 9.

the media are important because they often play a role in framing the image of disinvestment to an audience of potential gentrifiers. Many scholars have also cited the business interests of mass media corporations in pushing forward production-based models of gentrification. In their book *Urban Fortunes*, John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch point out that newspapers profit from increasing circulation and “. . . therefore have a direct interest in growth” of subscribers from a class of people able to boost the circulation of and/or advertise in newspapers.<sup>4</sup> Other theorists like David Croteau and William Hoynes argue that the media “tends to reflect the views and interests of those with wealth and power.”<sup>5</sup> In her book *Branding New York: How a City in Crisis was Sold to the World* Miriam Greenberg points out that the media legitimizes dominant groups which in turn impose certain visions of a city onto the public.,<sup>6</sup> Japonica Brown-Saracino, and Cesarea Rumpf contend that the media contributes to gentrification by “promoting a vision of a city that appeals to tourists and investors or by disparaging the poor and the spaces in which they live.”<sup>7</sup>

Gentrification can also be a result of policy shifts. Daniel J. Hammel and Elvin K. Wyly argue that gentrification is now synonymous with housing policy. In their 1999 study of gentrified US cities, the scholars note the importance of housing policies, like Section 8 or voucher programs in the process of gentrification.<sup>8</sup> They find that the construction of these policies can catalyze or stagnate gentrification in a certain area. The media is connected to this

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<sup>4</sup> John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*, 20th ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 70-71.

<sup>5</sup> David Croteau and William Hoynes, *Media/society: Industries, Images, and Audiences*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014)

<sup>6</sup> Miriam Greenberg, *Branding New York: How a City in Crisis Was Sold to the World* (New York: Routledge, 2008)

<sup>7</sup> Japonica Brown-Saracino and Cesarea Rumpf, "Diverse Imageries of Gentrification: Evidence from Newspaper Coverage in Seven U.S. Cities 1986-2006," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 33, no. 3 (2011):290.

<sup>8</sup> Elvin K. Wyly and Daniel J. Hammel, "Islands of decay in seas of renewal: Housing policy and the resurgence of gentrification," *Housing Policy Debate* 10, no. 4 (1999)  
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10511482.1999.9521348?journalCode=rhpd20>.

process when it functions as the fourth estate, an unofficial branch of government.<sup>9</sup> There is considerable evidence that newspapers may support the interests of the elite but there is also evidence to support the claim that newspapers actually protect the interests of the public and that they are a democratic tool. Although much of the literature examining relations between the media and its public focuses on the ways that the media influences its audiences the reverse is also true. Scholarship on the media as the fourth estate counters the notion that the media solely serves the interests of the elite.<sup>10</sup> In this depiction of the media, it is a “branch” of government which checks the other branches and social institutions and exposes corruption, crime and political misdeeds. We see evidence of this throughout our history. From the tenement photographs of Jacob Riis in *The New York Tribune* to *The Washington Post*'s investigation into the Nixon administration's involvement in the Watergate scandal, to *The Boston Globe*'s Spotlight series exposing the Roman Catholic Church's complicity in widespread child abuse, “The Media” has been shedding light on societal wrongs and representing the interests of the public. Here the media plays a role in the development of public policy by advocating for, exposing or amplifying the narrative of political life such as the construction of housing policy.

Consumption-side gentrification approaches the issue of gentrification from the opposite side. In this model, gentrification comes from the gentrifiers rather than the producer of the space, policy makers and city governments. The first scholar to frame gentrification in this way was David Ley who argues in his book *The New Middle Class and the Remaking of the Central City* that a shift toward a more liberal ideology in the 60s created a “leisure class” who were more interested in what they defined as an authentic city experience. In this model of gentrification, gentrifiers choose the space they gentrify. Sharon Zukin builds on this idea in her book *Loft*

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<sup>9</sup> Matthew Gentzkow, Edward L. Glaeser, and Claudia Goldin, "The Rise Of The Fourth Estate: How Newspapers Became Informative And Why It Mattered," *National Bureau of Economic Research*, September 2004.

<sup>10</sup> Gentzkow, Glaeser, and Goldin, "The Rise".

*Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change*. Here, Zukin explains that the lives of first wave gentrifiers, often artists and other members of the creative class, create a model of living for second wave gentrifiers who are members of the middle class. In consumption-side understandings of gentrification, the media is a powerful descriptive tool. As many scholars contend, the media is an important tool in guiding perception. In his article about inner city divestment, David Wilson argues that the media, particularly newspapers, create “everyday discourses” which shape social life through “. . . an embodiment of meanings, values, and symbolism.”<sup>11</sup>

Outside the scope of gentrification specifically, there is a body of literature addressing media influence on society more broadly. These findings are important to note as they speak to some of the ways that *The New York Times*’ narrative studied in this project might be influencing its audience. Based on extensive literature revealing the varying ways that the media influences its audience and its audience influences the media, this project assumes that findings from a content analysis of *The New York Times* are important because they affect the way people think about Hudson and act in terms of the city.

This assumption is made based on the findings of several media scholars.<sup>12</sup> Robert Merton and Paul Lazarsfeld, two foundational media effects scholars, explain that mass media confers status upon public issues. The authors even address the media influence of *The New York Times* directly. They write that, “for some, the editorial views of *The Times* represent a considered judgement of a group of experts”<sup>13</sup> Jennings Bryant<sup>14</sup> and Silvia Knobloch-

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<sup>11</sup> David Wilson, "Everyday Life, Spatiality and Inner City Disinvestment in a US City," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 17, no. 4 (December 1993): 579, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2427.1993.tb00242.x.

<sup>12</sup> W. James Potter, *Media Effects* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications, 2012), 38

<sup>13</sup> Bernard Berelson, "The State of Communication Research," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 23, no. 1 (1959):6-7.

<sup>14</sup> Jennings Bryant and Mary Beth Oliver, *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2009)

Westerwick<sup>15</sup> point out that people are only influenced by that which they select for and that in making a selection a person is bestowing authority upon that “thing,” or, in the case of Hudson, upon a newspaper article which they have decided to read. Merton and Lazarsfeld also theorize that another social function of the media is its ability to enforce social norms. Here, the authors are careful to note that mass media reinforces social norms but does not instill them. Michael Warren writes extensively on this subject. Warren and many other more current media theorists note that to understand media’s effect you must see the media source and its audience as a system which continuously creates and re-creates itself.<sup>16</sup>

A final important point about the way that the media, specifically newspapers, affect society is in their function is as part of history. Articles published about Hudson over the last twenty years will construct some kind of history of the city. Therefore, some of this project will be about unpacking how the city will be remembered. An important part of the media’s effect is exerted long after something is published. The media, in particular print media which has a long history of being preserved and archived, becomes the way that our historical memory is constructed. In thinking about the way media coverage influences individuals it is possibly most important to consider how articles about Hudson will serve as artifacts of history.

Especially in the last 30 years, writing about Hudson has created a narrative for the city’s development. When “Hudson New York” is searched on Google, two of the top hits include articles from *The Times* with titles like “Hudson: An Elegant Transformation”<sup>17</sup> or “Cultivating Hudson: Enter the Tastemakers.”<sup>18</sup> Both pieces outline Hudson’s rise as a place and paint the city

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<sup>15</sup> Silvia Knobloch-Westerwick, *Choice and Preference in Media Use: Advances in Selective Exposure Theory and Research* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015)

<sup>16</sup> Michael Warren, “Publics and Counterpublics,” *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (2002)

<sup>17</sup> Thomas, “Hudson, N.Y.”

<sup>18</sup> Green, “Cultivating Hudson: Enter the Tastemakers,” *New York Times*, January 15, 2014, accessed April 30, 2017.



as one which has been “saved” from economic decline. Given the extensive and easily accessed *New York Times* archive it is important to point out that articles published about Hudson will be the sources of historical understanding in the future.

The film *Manufacturing Consent* samples an early documentary on *The Times* archive, which now exists in its entirety freely available to the public online. The narrator of the clip triumphantly claims that “. . . what happened years ago may have a bearing on what happens tomorrow.” he continues “. . . millions of clippings are preserved in *The Times* library all indexed for immediate use. A priceless archive of events and the men who make them.”<sup>19</sup> Chomsky reiterates that:

The place where people will go to find out what happened is *The New York Times*. Therefore it is extremely important if history is going to be shaped in a certain way, that certain things appear and certain things do not appear, certain questions be asked and other questions be ignored and that certain issues be framed in a particular fashion. Now in whose interests is history being shaped? Well, I think that that is not so difficult a question to answer.”<sup>20</sup>

Seventy-five articles about Hudson have been published by *The Times* in the last twenty years. These articles ask certain questions while excluding others. In the future they will be used as a way to understand how gentrification in Hudson has unfolded. For this reason, an analysis of this narrative seems especially important.

### **Similar Case Studies**

A few studies have addressed the issue of media framing of gentrification directly. In a large content analysis, “Diverse Imageries of Gentrification: Evidence from Newspaper Coverage in Seven U.S. Cities 1986-2006,” Japonica Brown-Saracino and Cesarea Rumpf analyzed 4,445 newspaper articles which all contained the actual term “gentrification.” Contrary

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<sup>19</sup> "Manufacturing Consent," video file, Youtube, posted by Noam Chomsky, October 15, 2015, accessed November 15, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTBWfkE7BXU>. 5:02.

<sup>20</sup> "Manufacturing Consent," video file, Youtube, posted by Noam Chomsky, October 15, 2015, accessed November 15, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTBWfkE7BXU>. 5:00.

to their hypothesis, the analysis pointed to varied frames of the gentrification process by the media. Most notably, their study found that news media sources were more critical of gentrification as time went on and, possibly, as gentrification became a more “loaded” term. Brown-Saracino and Rumpf note that just as positive images of gentrification encourage gentrifiers to adopt a frontier and salvation ideology, negative connotations may heighten gentrifiers’ implicit self-consciousness about their participation in the process.”<sup>21</sup> The greatest take away from their study is the change in the framing of gentrification over time from positive to more critical. One limitation to their study is that their sample was collected from articles which contained the term “gentrification.” If gentrification is in fact being discussed more critically it is possible that the term itself could be implied in many articles without being overtly stated so their sample size may be lacking key discussions of gentrification. Since many of the articles in my analysis address development and at times overtly state the presence of gentrification, this study was quite helpful in framing my own thinking about the ways in which gentrification and urban development are discussed throughout time. Additionally, the literature review from this study directed much of my thinking about how newspapers function in the process of gentrification and led me to much of the literature I used to frame this topic.

A more recent study published in 2016 addresses this possibility. Authors Brendan Lavy, Erin D. Dascher and Ronald R. Hagelman developed a contextual narrative of urban change in the Rainey Street neighborhood of Austin, Texas.<sup>22</sup> The authors analyzed 48 articles from local, regional, and statewide newspapers. Because their location was more site specific, Lavy, Dascher and Hagelman were able to pick their sample by looking through articles in which the Rainey

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<sup>21</sup> Japonica Brown-Saracino and Cesraea Rumpf, "Diverse Imageries of Gentrification: Evidence from Newspaper Coverage in Seven U.S. Cities 1986-2006," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 33, no. 3 (2011):292.

<sup>22</sup> Brendan L. Lavy, Erin D. Dascher, and Ronald R. Hagelman, "Media portrayal of gentrification and redevelopment on Rainey Street in Austin, Texas (USA), 2000-2014," *City, Culture and Society*, 2016.

Street neighborhood was discussed, and then narrowing their results by only analyzing articles where the “state” of Rainey Street was written about. Some of these articles contained the word “gentrification” while others did not and their study focused more on the narrative of the gentrification of a specific place. Their research design guided me towards organizing my articles by time period and also inspired some of my first level coding.

The final study comes from what, given greater time to execute this study, I would do following my analysis of newspaper studies. In *The Philadelphia Barrio*<sup>23</sup> author Frederick F. Wherry tracks the process of “rebranding” and subsequent gentrification occurring in a Puerto Rican neighborhood in Philadelphia over fifteen years. A large portion of the book looks at newspaper coverage of the Puerto Rican Pride Festival over that time period and finds that when the event was framed negatively by local media, residents of the Barrio reported feeling less pride in their neighborhood and that general perception of the neighborhood changed. Interestingly, in his interviews with these residents, Wherry notes that many residents “remember hearing” that the parade went badly rather than seeing or knowing this for a fact. Wherry’s book really represents the kind of holistic approach which needs to be taken when thinking about the way places develop and gentrify. He approaches the re-branding studies of this barrio in Philadelphia through a number of different avenues. By using both interview and content analysis Wherry was able to think about the development and re-branding of the barrio from a number of different perspectives: first, through the people experiencing this development and then through the media representing that part of the city and guiding the course of its development as a place.

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<sup>23</sup> Frederick F. Wherry and Tony Rocco, *The Philadelphia Barrio: The Arts, Branding, and Neighborhood Transformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011) Chapters 6-7.

## The Case of Hudson

### **Hudson and the Mass Media:**

Given the city's context, Hudson is an anomaly. I grew up in a neighboring town and was always struck by the racial and socioeconomic diversity of the city. Hudson feels like a city in the middle of the huge farm that is Columbia County. Adding to its strangeness was the incredible amount of attention Hudson got from "the media." Mentions of Hudson are interspersed throughout many forms of media. In *Gossip Girl*, a popular show from the early 2000s, a character moves to Hudson from New York City after divorcing her husband.<sup>24</sup> In the movie *27 Dresses* the two main characters take a trip upstate to shop for antiques in Hudson.<sup>25</sup>

Print media publications have paid even more attention over the last 30 years. Consistent reporting on the city can be found in *Vogue*<sup>26</sup>, *New York Magazine*<sup>27</sup> and *The New Yorker*<sup>28</sup> to name a few, although coverage in *The New York Times* greatly outnumbers these publications in the frequency with which they write about Hudson. As a publication based in New York City *The New York Times*' audience is also extremely relevant to the case of Hudson which has been largely gentrified by New Yorkers.

Media interest in Hudson has long fascinated and perplexed me. It was not until I interviewed a shop owner on Warren Street for an article in 2015 that I fully understood the kind of importance this interest has had on the gentrification of Hudson. The shop owner explained that after a landmark *New York Magazine* article was published on Hudson in 1988, things

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<sup>24</sup> *Gossip Girl*, "Last Tango, Then Paris," CW, May 17, 2010, written by Joshua Safran and Stephanie Savage.

<sup>25</sup> *27 Dresses*, screenplay by Aline Brosh McKenna, 2008.

<sup>26</sup> Jennifer Conrad, "Vogue's Weekend Guide to Upstate New York," *Vogue*, August 29, 2014, accessed April 19, 2017, <http://www.vogue.com/article/vogue-weekend-guide-upstate-new-york>.

<sup>27</sup> Sierra Tishgart, "The Five-Point Weekend Escape Plan: Chow Down in Hudson," *New York Magazine*, January 9, 2015, <http://nymag.com/travel/weekends/udsonnew/>.

<sup>28</sup> Benjamin Shapiro, "Into the Woods," *The New Yorker*, September 14, 2015, accessed April 17, 2017, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/09/14/into-the-woods-night-life-benjamin-shapiro>.

started changing ever more rapidly in the city. As he put it, “you would see people driving around Hudson and you could just tell they were like “what’s going on here?”<sup>29</sup>

### **“Hudson has had Enough Ups and Downs to Make a Sailor Sick”: A Short History of Hudson, N.Y.**

To understand findings from this content analysis, a bit of context about the city of Hudson is important. As one *New York Times* article puts it, “Hudson has had enough ups and downs to make a sailor sick.”<sup>30</sup> The land where Hudson now sits was first owned by Dutch colonists but Hudson was not settled until the Revolutionary War when a group of whalers from Nantucket purchased his land and created a harbor to dock whaling ships and facilities with which to process whale oil. The riverbank in Hudson is marked by a high bluff, Mount Merino, which creates a natural harbor for ships. This, and its close proximity to New York City helped Hudson develop quickly as a successful port town. According to an article from *The New York Journal* nearly 1500 people were living in Hudson in 1765<sup>31</sup>. Hudson was so successful that it almost became the state capitol 1779 and, by 1820, Hudson was the fourth largest city in New York state<sup>32</sup>.

But the city’s population, reputation, and notoriety quickly declined quickly with the demise of the whaling industry. This decline was only made worse when a railroad was constructed from New York City to Albany in 1850. The railroad cut off Hudson’s south bay and made it impossible for ships to easily come in and out of Hudson. By 1867, a local newspaper

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<sup>29</sup> Interview by the author, Hudson, NY, March 2015.

<sup>30</sup> Amy Thomas, "Hudson, N.Y.: An Elegant Transformation," *New York Times*, July 27, 2016.

<sup>31</sup> Carole Osterink, "History of Hudson," Barlow Hotel, accessed April 20, 2017, <http://thebarlowhotel.com/the-hotel/history-of-hudson/>.

<sup>32</sup> "Table 2. Population of the 24 Urban Places: 1790," census.gov, accessed September 27, 2015, <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027/tab02.txt>.

declared that Hudson was “finished” and that the city should be “fenced in”<sup>33</sup>. As is the pattern in Hudson, following this period of bust was a boom.

By the 20th century Hudson reinvented itself as a center for industry and along with it, vice. In a historical overview of Hudson, Claire Osterneck, a local historian and writer, noted that during this time there were “...ironworks, brickworks, foundries producing parlor stoves and ice harvesting tools, factories making fire engines and railroad car wheels, knitting mills, and two large cement plants just over the border in Greenport.”<sup>34</sup> She explains that industry in Hudson transformed the city and writes that “the bustling seaport that emerged at the end of the 18th century roared into the 20th century a rumbling, smoke belching, gritty city.” The vice industry also flourished in this period and brothels opened up along Diamond Street.<sup>35</sup> For many years city officials turned a blind eye to these activities. It was not until the 1950s that prostitution was driven out of Hudson following a raid by State Police.

In tandem with Hudson’s boom in industry was the emergence a particular artistic attention on the Hudson Valley. In 1825, painter Thomas Cole took a steamboat up the Hudson River. He stopped at Catskill Landing, which at the time, sat directly across from the city of Hudson. Cole next hiked into the Catskills. The result of his trip was a collection of paintings which, for the first time, depicted romanticized and dramatic landscapes of the Hudson Valley to the world. His work incited one of the first American art movements now known as The Hudson River School. Cole later built a house in Catskill across the river from Hudson and continued to paint landscapes of the Hudson Valley until his death in 1848.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Osterink, "History of Hudson," Barlow Hotel.

<sup>34</sup> Osterink, "History of Hudson," Barlow Hotel.

<sup>35</sup> Diamond Street is now called Columbia Street and runs one block north of Warren Street.

<sup>36</sup> Kevin Avery, *American Paradise: The World of Hudson River School* : [publ. in Conjunction with an Exhibition "American Paradise" ... Held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, from 4 Oct. 1987 until 3 Jan. 1988], 2nd ed. (New York: Abrams, 1988), 3-4.

His interest in the Hudson Valley sparked the curiosity of other artists who visited and often moved to the area. Frederick Edwin Church, a pupil of Cole's, built a house on the outskirts of Hudson which featured an impressive view of the Hudson Valley. The house itself was a work of art, with Persian style architecture inspired by Church's travels in the Middle East. Church called the estate Olana and it was completed by 1872. In 1965, Olana was declared a historic landmark, restored, and opened to the public in 1970. Although the Hudson River School was virtually forgotten by 1902<sup>37</sup> Olana has long served as a symbol of the Hudson Valley's close relationship with the arts and is now an important tourist destination.

For many years, industry and the arts existed side-by-side in Hudson. This co-existence fostered differing ways of thinking about the history of the city which will become more apparent in following chapters. It is clear from *New York Times* articles that Hudson's history is written about differently at various moments of the city's development. Although at the time of Frederic Edwin Church and industrialization disparities between the artistic and economic elite and the working class may have been the norm, in more recent years, coverage of Hudson by *The New York Times* makes use of economic disparity as a way to elevate and justify certain visions of the city of Hudson over others.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, industry drove everyday life in Hudson. Its success drove the economy and enabled residents to build up the city. But the presence of artists in the Hudson Valley, and the representations these artists created of this area are also an important part of the history of Hudson. The work of these painters often excluded industry from its portrayals of the Hudson Valley and created an idyllic representation of the area which then

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<sup>37</sup> Kevin J. Avery, "The Hudson River School," Met Museum, last modified October 2004, accessed April 18, 2017, [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/hurs/hd\\_hurs.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/hurs/hd_hurs.htm).

and now is widely circulated.<sup>38</sup> Following the end of the Hudson River School was another period of hardship for the city of Hudson. Deindustrialization hit Hudson hard in the latter half of the 20th century as factories and jobs moved out of cities in the Northeast and into newly industrialized countries. In 1975, the last cement plant closed in Hudson and for the next decade the city experienced an extreme decline.

In the 1980s, antiques dealers started to move extra stock into stores along Warren Street. At that time, rent was so low that the buildings could be used for extra storage or private showrooms since many of these dealers had stores in astronomically priced spaces in New York City. These shop owners laid the foundation for a thriving weekend and seasonal population. The accumulation of dealers made Hudson a “destination for collectors and decorators” which, along with a number of other pull factors, including Olana, and the city’s untouched architecture, brought more and more people to Hudson.

### **Hudson’s Gentrification**

In the last 30 years, parts of Hudson have rapidly transformed. The epicenter of change is Warren Street, the avenue which runs the entire length of the city and divides Hudson in half. Antiques dealers filled vacant storefronts on Warren Street in the early 1980s. Throughout the 1980s, Warren Street boasted a variety of shops. At this time, stores catered to both visitors interested in antiques and the needs of local residents. Antiques stores filled vacancies on the street but no traditional displacement occurred during this time. Instead, more vacancies were created when a Wal-Mart opened in the neighboring town of Greenport. Wal-Mart deeply diminished the customer base of many local businesses on Warren Street. The eventual shut-down of these stores made it possible for new businesses, catering to an entirely different

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<sup>38</sup> Avery, *American Paradise*.



clientele, to take their place. These store owners bought old buildings on Warren Street, many of which were vacant, for very low prices and poured money into restoration. One long-time store owner whom I interviewed for an article on Hudson two years ago has owned, restored, and re-sold five buildings in Hudson over the last 30 years.<sup>39</sup> From this point on it is nearly impossible to create an exact path of changes in Hudson

Some people first came for the antiques. Then, or perhaps concurrently, for the cheap housing prices. In the 1990s and 2000s more people bought second homes in Columbia County, Greene, and Dutchess Counties. These second home owners fed the burgeoning economy on Warren Street. Also during this time artists and members of the creative class moved to Hudson. Eventually, Hudson became well-known as a vacation destination and is known as “upstate’s downtown.”<sup>40</sup>

### **Present Day Hudson:**

Gentrification is an ongoing process in Hudson today. Although the majority of stores along Warren Street still sell home goods, there are also music venues, bars, hotels, high end grocery stores, galleries, and many other types of retailers in the city. Today, development extends far beyond Warren Street. At the waterfront, behind an abandoned cement plants is Basilica Hudson, a reclaimed factory now used as an art space. Two blocks off Warren, in a renovated garage, is OR. This space functions as a coffee shop, restaurant, leather workshop and bar. In 2016, an artist-owned restaurant, Lil’ Deb’s Oasis,<sup>41</sup> opened near the tip of Columbia Street on a block which before had been virtually untouched by changes in Hudson.

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<sup>39</sup> Interview by the author. Hudson, NY. March 2015.

<sup>40</sup> Hudson, N.Y.: Upstate's Downtown, last modified 2010, accessed February 10, 2017, <http://gotohudson.net/>.

<sup>41</sup> Alice Newell-Hanson, "Why New York's Young Artists are Leaving the City and Moving Upstate," *Vice*, December 6, 2016, accessed April 22, 2017, [https://i-d.vice.com/en\\_us/article/why-new-yorks-young-artists-are-leaving-the-city-and-moving-upstate](https://i-d.vice.com/en_us/article/why-new-yorks-young-artists-are-leaving-the-city-and-moving-upstate).

What has changed about Hudson is less important than what has stayed the same. Unlike other cases of gentrification, where one group of people with a high socioeconomic standing moves into a location and changes the area entirely, many problems continue to persist in Hudson. Crime and poverty rates have been consistently high in the city throughout its “revival”. The mean crime index for Hudson over the last nine years is 296, this number is slightly above the national average of 274. This is a surprising statistic given the size and relative isolation of Hudson. Additionally, poverty rates have actually risen in Hudson since 1980 from 21.4% to 25.10%.<sup>42</sup> Hudson School district has a low graduation rate that dropped from 75% in 2015 to 69% in 2016. This falls well below the state average of 78% in 2015. The hospital in Hudson is also poorly rated and has faced several malpractice and fraud suits.<sup>43</sup>

Parts of Hudson have changed dramatically and many have reaped the benefits of these changes, but the persistence of crime and the heightened rates of poverty indicate that inequality exists in Hudson and that many in the city are not receiving the benefits of gentrification. For a city so small, there are large socioeconomic gaps between residents and strict geographic divides. Hudson is the size of a neighborhood in New York City yet economic stratification can be as extreme as that of someone living on Central Park West versus a resident of Brownsville. The class divide in Hudson is evidenced by the presence of eleven low income housing complexes in Hudson. Of these eleven complexes, eight of them are Section 8 subsidized housing. Three of these eight sit in a corner of Hudson not far from Warren Street. Here, public housing is extremely concentrated. This neighborhood looks very different from the rest of the city. Houses are newer, but in worse condition. Many of the historic homes in Hudson

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<sup>42</sup> *1980 Census of Population: General Social and Economic Characteristics*, report no. 34 (n.p.: Department of Commerce, 1980), [https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1980/1980censusofpopu80134un\\_bw.pdf](https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1980/1980censusofpopu80134un_bw.pdf).

<sup>43</sup> John Mason, "Hospital accused of Medicaid fraud," *Register-Star* (Hudson, NY), January 5, 2009, accessed April 1, 2017, [http://www.registerstar.com/news/article\\_feec5c16-0e70-5811-a236-1717632cefe2.html](http://www.registerstar.com/news/article_feec5c16-0e70-5811-a236-1717632cefe2.html).

have now been restored to their former glory, but because this area has no historic housing stock, it is of less interest to potential gentrifiers.

Divisions in Hudson are rooted the history of the city. People were initially drawn to Hudson for two reasons. The first, was industrialization. At Hudson's peak of industrialization in the early 20th century, factories provided stable employment. Those individuals opened shops along Warren Street and built homes in the city. Industry attracted skilled laborers who relied on factory jobs for employment. When factories closed in Hudson many working class people suffered. Industrialization once built up Hudson and then, more recently, caused its decline. The decline of industries in the city and the ensuing poverty protected the architectural character of Hudson. A failing economy made Hudson a bad candidate for new construction in the city and this kept many of the homes and stores along Warren Street abandoned, but still standing. As a result, Hudson is one of the best preserved cities in the country. A pattern in the process gentrification is conversion of unused or abandoned industrial buildings from commercial to residential space.<sup>44</sup> This conversion has taken place both in commercial spaces on Warren Street and in residential renovations throughout the city. The existence of this housing stock and its vacancy is a result of the boom and bust of the industrial economy in Hudson.

The second reason people are drawn to Hudson is connected to its history as a place of artistic exploration and inspiration. Today, people are drawn to Hudson for many of the same reasons Thomas Cole and other artists painted and lived in the area so many years ago. The pastoral landscape of the Hudson Valley mixed with the beauty of the River and views of the Catskill Mountains make Hudson itself a viable candidate for a country home or a trip out of the

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<sup>44</sup> Ruth Glass, *London : Aspects of Change* (London, England: MacGibbon & Kee, 1964).

city. The beauty of the area has attracted many artists who often cite that Hudson serves as an inspiration for their work.

Many of the people who have gentrified Hudson are connected to the arts. This is evidenced by the abundance of galleries on Warren Street. It is seen in the development of organizations like the Hudson Arts Council and in the programming of places like The Hudson Opera House and Time and Space Limited. Additionally, Hudson has long been economically viable for members of the creative class. When people first started moving to Hudson in the 80s, home prices were extremely low. Although some buildings on Warren Street can now sell for upwards of a million dollars, low rents can consistently be found in the city and cost of living is relatively low.<sup>45</sup> Historian and writer Claire Osterneck asserts that, demographically, “Hudson has the highest percentage of self-employed people—entrepreneurs—of any city in all of New York State.”<sup>46</sup> Although she does not provide sources for this claim it is certainly evidenced in the number of small businesses in Hudson.

Economic prosperity of permanent residents is now largely based on tourism. Shops along Warren Street are mostly owned by newcomers to Hudson. These shops serve the newly cultivated population as well as the visitors who flood into the city in warmer months. This reflects the stark socioeconomic divisions of the city, between newcomers and longer-term residents.

These two groups in Hudson do not engage in the same social institutions most notably, the school. Hudson City School District is well known in the area as an underperforming school. The school receives a five out of ten rating on two school review websites, dropout rates are high

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<sup>45</sup> Onboard Informatics, "Hudson, N.Y.," City-Data, accessed March 2, 2017, <http://www.city-data.com/city/Hudson-New-York.html>.

<sup>46</sup> Osterink, "History of Hudson," Barlow Hotel.

and test scores are low.<sup>47</sup> Many newcomers to Hudson are young or do not have children. These individuals are able to move to Hudson despite its failing schools because they do not have to engage in the school system. Since both populations in Hudson do not meet in the same social institutions, the groups do not have similar vested interests in making Hudson's failing institutions better.

At the same time, in Hudson's current state of gentrification, there is not much evidence of displacement, so these two populations live next to each other. They occupy the same two-square miles yet lead lives which are largely isolated from one another.

Hudson is a case that has received much attention from an important newspaper. Much can be learned from an examination of the coverage of Hudson's evolution.

### **Methodology:**

In the following chapters I will present findings from a content analysis on 86 *New York Times* articles. The sample size for this analysis is large in part because to answer the question of "how does *New York Times* coverage portray Hudson during the period of its gentrification?" all articles written on Hudson needed to be analyzed.

This sample has been selected through *The Times* archive rather than LexisNexis Academic or ProQuest's Historical *New York Times*. One limitation of the search for articles was the actual name of "Hudson." The city of Hudson is located on the Hudson River and in the Hudson Valley. This makes searching articles even more tedious and it also eliminates the ability to use the LexisNexis Academic database for national articles. Articles within the sample from *The New York Times* were searched by the terms "Hudson New York Warren Street." This search yielded nearly 700 results which were then double-checked for relevance. Of this result

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<sup>47</sup> "Hudson City School District Report Card 2010-11 and 2011-12 Testing Results," Hudson City School District Report Card, <http://www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com/pdf/2010-11-hcsd-report-card.pdf>.

about 86 articles were relevant to the city of Hudson, New York. The only criteria for relevance was whether articles discussed Hudson, New York. If they did, they were included in the sample.

To perform the content analysis, I used software called MAX-QDA. This software was extremely helpful in keeping the coding system organized and visualizing my coding as I went along. First, all articles were ordered by date. Next the articles were loaded into MAX-QDA by order of date.

### **Theoretical Frames for this Project**

Findings from this project are aligned with four theoretical frames. In subsequent chapters' findings will be compared to these frames.

### **Phase model of Gentrification**

The first was posited by Phillip Clay in the early 60s. He believed that gentrification followed a specific four-stage model. Clay's model has been widely criticized by more recent scholars as it splits the process of gentrification into distinct phases and does not account for the endless number intervening variables that make each case of gentrification different and distinct. Still, findings from this content analysis show that a phase model maps on almost exactly to the way that Hudson is depicted in the first and second phase of coverage. Clay describes first phase gentrification as a time when the city is still in a phase of urban decay. Second phase gentrification is marked by an increased interest. More and more people migrate to the place undergoing gentrification at a faster pace and changes begin to garner media attention.<sup>48</sup>

### **The Growth Machine**

The second theoretical framing comes from the Growth Machine model of urban growth. This term was first conceived of by John R. Logan and Harvey Molotch in their book *Urban*

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<sup>48</sup>Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin K. Wyly, *The Gentrification Reader* (London: Routledge, 2010), 7.

*Fortunes: The Political Economy of a Place*. Drawing on production-side models of growth. Molotch and Harvey see growth as the result of growth-regime actions made by the media and policy makers in a defined place. In this model, growth machines made one “place” into a desirable product.<sup>49</sup> As a result, other spaces close to that place become desirable and growth radiates out from there. In the following chapters I will present findings which show how the media supports growth machine interests through varying depictions of certain parts of Hudson and Warren Street.

### **The Creative Class**

In latter half of this content analysis, findings from articles written between 1997 and 2016 provide detailed characterizations of the people who inhabit Hudson. Characterizations of these individuals map quite closely to those described by Richard Florida in his book, *The Rise of the Creative Class*.<sup>50</sup> Florida proposes that development cannot happen without a creative class of people pushing the development forward. In my project, Florida is used because his descriptions of the creative class, who they are and how they function in the narrative of development, line up exactly with findings presented in the second and third chapters of this project. A critique of Florida written by Melinda Milligan will also be utilized in pointing out how Florida’s argument is flawed in that it assumes development by the creative class is positive for many groups and does not ask the important question: for whom is this development?

### **Imagined Communities**

Benedict Anderson's concept of imagined communities is extremely important in thinking about how this media narrative functions. Anderson believes that media construct a

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<sup>49</sup> John R. Logan and Harvey Luskin Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*, 20th ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007)

<sup>50</sup> Richard Florida, *Rise of the Creative Class--Revisited: Revised and Expanded*, 2nd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2014)

reality and “collective consciousness. Anderson argues that nationalism rose after the Industrial Revolution when language and literacy increased along with the rise of new technologies and the mass media. These developments helped people to take part in imagined communities. He explains that a community “is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”<sup>51</sup> What the image of our community looks like is guided by the media’s accounts of that “place.” This will be a significant media effect when thinking about Hudson. Findings from this content analysis are related to the ideas of what kind of “imagined communities” they enforce. In subsequent chapters I will return to Anderson and discuss the way that certain portrayals of Hudson might function in building certain images (some perhaps imagined) about the place.

### **Project Outline**

Findings from this content analysis are presented in 10 year increments. The first chapter presents findings from 1985 to 1996. I argue that, in this period, *New York Times* coverage primed Hudson for gentrification by depicting it as a site of urban decay and subtly promoting/utilizing its history through growth regime practices. The second chapter presents findings from 1997 to 2006. In this chapter, I argue that the framing of growth regime activities and second phase gentrification of Hudson promote pro-gentrification framing of the city while also minimizing problems in Hudson. In the last chapter, findings are presented from articles written between 2007 and 2016. These findings depict a city that has gone through gentrification and is now taken over by a creative class of individuals. I maintain that coverage during this time highlights characteristics of the city which will only further pull creative individuals to Hudson

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<sup>51</sup> Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (Pasig City: Anvil, 2003), 6-7.



and continue its gentrification. I show the specific themes in which *The New York Times* promotes gentrification. Overall, my project argues that the media narrative of Hudson during this time promotes gentrification in the city and could possibly encourage further gentrification in future.

### **Coding Methodology**

#### **Hudson is /was**

Since I was dealing with a huge amount of text I focused my first level of coding on characterizations of Hudson throughout time. I first pulled out all characterizations of what I titled as “Hudson is” coding. This code was a jumping off point in developing other codes based on themes I saw in the texts. MAX-QDA allows for codings to be exported to an Excel spreadsheet. I exported this first level of coding and looked at my coded segments in order from 1985 to 2016. From this sample I developed other codes based on themes in coverage. These codes were:

#### **Social Problems**

This group of segments consisted of mentioned of poverty, crime, or social problems in the city.

#### **Actors**

This code consisted of segments where people were mentioned in articles. This was my largest group of coded segments because the code itself was very broad. These people were then divided into “newcomer”, “visitor” or “longtime resident.”

#### **Gentrification**

This code was used anytime gentrification, change, or development was mentioned, I coded that segment under “gentrification.”

**History**

This code was used anytime Hudson's history was mentioned.

# 1

## **“Hudson is Trying to Revive its Downtown:” Early Depictions of Hudson, New York**

The media is a critically important player in the construction of its audience's engagement with a place. As Anderson notes, newspapers guide their readers' understanding about a place as they mass-produce a common language and address an anonymous audience. Newspapers assume that their audience holds a collective consciousness and a common vocabulary. They inform this consciousness by addressing their audience regularly as a voice of authority telling these anonymous members of the community about each other and about the community in which they take part. Anderson believes that communities are defined by the “...style in which they are imagined” and that newspapers, along with other forms of media, create and perpetuate this style of imagination.<sup>52</sup>

Media coverage surrounding the gentrification of a city frames this process to its audience, and shapes their opinions and actions about the place. In their study of newspaper coverage of Rainey Street in San Antonio, Texas, Lavy, Dascher and Hagelman found that narratives of production-side gentrification were reinforced through the media narrative surrounding Rainey Street during its gentrification. They explain that city officials received heavy coverage in articles addressing gentrification on Rainey Street. As a result, “city officials and residents played a prominent role in shaping the discourse” of this gentrification. Other studies have looked more specifically at the way that *The New York Times* shapes understandings about gentrification. Japonica-Saracino and Rumpf note that *The Times* often relies on supportive frames of gentrification when depicting first phase gentrification. Neil Smith discusses the role

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<sup>52</sup> Benedict R. O'G Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (Pasig City: Anvil, 2003), 6.

of *The Times* in conflicts over Tomkins Square Park during gentrification of the East Village. He argues that *The Times* created a narrative and script about the conflict which was then followed by local politicians fighting to block homeless people from the park.<sup>53</sup>

In the case of Hudson, this chapter presents findings from a content analysis of nineteen *New York Times* articles published between 1985 and 1996. Two additional media sources will be mentioned as they are related to *The Times*' coverage and are extremely important in the media ecology surrounding Hudson. The framing of Hudson during this period primes the city for further gentrification. These framings paint Hudson as a candidate for gentrification by depicting the city as a site of urban decay while at the same time subtly highlighting various pull factors in and around the city. This reveals how *The New York Times* functions as an agent for growth machine expansion in Hudson.

Coverage about urban decay in Hudson aligns with depictions of places in their first phase of gentrification. In the second half of this chapter I will discuss the ways that *The New York Times* functions as an agent for the growth machine on Warren Street. Findings from this chapter illuminate the ways that Hudson is framed during a moment when gentrification is only beginning in the city. In most articles, drugs, crime and corruption are all linked to Hudson which I argue primes the city as a candidate for gentrification. These articles frame Hudson as a struggling city although this chapter finds that other descriptions of Hudson's history, the historical home of Frederic Edwin Church and the arrival of a Wal-Mart support functions of *New York Times* coverage as an agent of the growth machine and also begin to develop interest in the city. Findings from this article show the emergence of a new image of Hudson which

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<sup>53</sup> Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, *The Blackwell City Reader*, 4th ed. (Chichester, West Sussex, United Kingdom: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 282.

eventually metamorphoses into more cohesive representations of the city in later phases of its gentrification.

### **Priming Hudson as a Candidate for Change: Depictions of Urban Decline in Hudson NY**

"My theory is that the city of Hudson has an institutional corruption history," he said. "In the old days, it was gambling and prostitution, today it is gambling and drugs. The biggest crime problem in the city arises from drugs."<sup>54</sup>

The findings presented below discuss how crime/corruption/social problems, and the opening of a Wal-Mart in the nearby town of Greenport all support images of Hudson's decline and thus inadvertently advertise and prime Hudson for its subsequent gentrification. These findings tell us about the style in which Hudson is imagined by *The Times* during this time. This chapter highlights the ways in which this image aligns with depictions of first phase gentrification by Clay. Twelve of the nineteen articles in this set mention problems in Hudson which range from drug dealing to corruption to poor infrastructure systems.

The downfall of Hudson's police chief is characterized in a three-part series by *The Times*. The articles follow the prosecution of former Chief of Police James R. Dolan who, during his eleven years as a police officer, was the subject of three separate grand jury investigations. The first article describes Dolan's convictions and the mess of local politics from which they arose. The prosecution of Dolan was led by district attorney Paul Czajka. Dolan was eventually convicted of interfering in an ongoing criminal investigation after he reportedly obstructed the investigation of a state run drug task force. He was removed from office, fined, and sentenced to 350 hours of community service. The story of Dolan's trial and subsequent conviction are important because of the way that these events reflect back onto perceptions about the city. The series gives the following impression of Hudson: first, drug problems are so severe in Hudson

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<sup>54</sup> Harold Faber, "Hudson Casts a New Light on Its Red-Light Past," *New York Times*, October 21, 1994.

that a special task force needed to be assembled to combat this problem, and, second, the police force in Hudson is corrupt which suggests a broader web of corruption within city government. One article draws this line quite clearly and implies that Dolan's conviction is part of a greater problem in Hudson which dates back long into its history. Under the subheading "Renown for Bumptious Behavior" *Times* reporter Nick Ravo explains that:

The charges against Chief Dolan do not come as a surprise in Hudson, an economically struggling town of 8,000. One hundred miles north of New York City, Hudson was the region's bordello capital in the 1920's and 30's. And in the 1950's, 21 local officials and residents were indicted on charges ranging from vote-buying to taking payoffs from the operators of floating craps games.<sup>55</sup>

Negative characterizations of Hudson continue in later articles about the city. One piece tells of two churches in the city which have closed due to a shrinking population. It describes Hudson as a "declining industrial center" where people are moving out, and churches are shutting down.<sup>56</sup> Another describes the problems with county/city emergency infrastructure systems.<sup>57</sup> The last article of this type is written towards the end of this phase. It is the last piece which centers around crime in the city. Entitled "Crack Makes its Way Up the Hudson," this piece, for the first time notes the tourist population in Hudson "...the spring tourist season begins here [Hudson] after Easter" and that this means "...people from New York City and thereabouts start coming up to make a day of the 36 antique stores along Warren Street" but the article quickly shifts to focus on another migration made in the spring "...when the youths commute 120 miles from the city on Amtrak to sell pocketfuls of crack"<sup>58</sup> to Hudson residents.

Reporting on problems within the city to an audience who may eventually become those who gentrify the area certainly primes Hudson as a candidate for gentrification.

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<sup>55</sup> Lisa W. Foderaro, "Police Interference in Drug Enforcement Charged in Hudson, N.Y," *New York Times*, May 27, 1990.

<sup>56</sup> Lisa W. Foderaro, "An Uphill Fight to Reopen 2 Churches," *New York Times*, June 12, 1990.

<sup>57</sup> "Rescuing County From Road Mix-Ups," *New York Times*, November 26, 1993.

<sup>58</sup> Evelyn Nieves, "Crack Makes Its Spring Trip Up the Hudson," *New York Times*, March 31, 1996.

It is important to think about who consumes media coverage of Hudson. A series of this type is informative to Hudson residents but also to a larger audience of New Yorkers whose attention and subsequent interest may initiate gentrification. As noted in the first chapter *Times* readers are generally upper class liberal individuals who live in urban centers, particularly New York City. Gentrification in Hudson and the development of the city as a tourist destination has been closely tied to the migration of New Yorkers from the City to upstate New York and the “rediscovery” of the Hudson Valley.

### **Wal-Mart**

Only adding to problematic characterizations of Hudson was coverage of opening of a Wal-Mart in the neighboring town of Greenport. Like similar developments in other places across the country the mega-store benefited some social groups, while hurting others. *The Times* covered Wal-Mart’s opening in Greenport with detail between 1993 and 1994. Three articles were published on the topic.

In thinking about how this event was framed by *The Times* it is important to examine why this topic was covered in the first place. The articles appear in the N.Y/Regional section of the paper. This section highlights stories which connect to broader issues but are happening in places close to, or within *The Times* epicenter, New York City. The expansion of Wal-Mart in the mid-1990s was already a hot-button political issue. During this time, Wal-Mart was taking over rural and suburban parts of the country. A Wal-Mart opening near Hudson threatened the traditional local economy of Columbia County and was emblematic of broader trends in the country<sup>59</sup>. It could therefore be claimed as “newsworthy” and “relevant” to the *The Times*’ liberal audience.

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<sup>59</sup> Jacques Steinberg, "One Town's Stores Plot Survival As Wal-Mart Grows in Northeast," *New York Times*, November 28, 1993

In doing this, it added to the coverage and awareness of Hudson in general to a population of readers who would soon become a significant part of the city.

All three articles examine the possible effects Wal-Mart would have on shops along Warren Street. The first article comes from a more political angle. Author Jacques Steinberg tells the story of shop owners on Warren Street but rather than using this article as way to characterize Hudson he instead uses Hudson as an example to illustrate a broader problem threatening other areas of the United States. In this way, Hudson becomes the quaint small town, where small business will soon be crushed by a large box store. Steinberg notes that shop owners banded together in an effort to “fight” Wal-Mart by bettering their sales and marketing practices rather than opposing the actual building of the mega-store. In the wake of news that the store was going to be built, Steinberg makes note of how shop owners on Warren Street formed coalitions like the Local Business Organization to prepare for Wal-Mart. Pamela Taylor-Farrell, the head of one such coalition in Hudson, is described as a “one-women wake up call, brashly upbraiding store owners for such lapses as parking their cars in choice spaces in front of their businesses and arranging seminars for them with business people who have jousting with Wal-Mart elsewhere.”<sup>60</sup> The piece highlights the way the city of Hudson responded to Wal-Mart as a community by working together. It also draws portraits to some of the shop owners along Warren Street, many of whom sell products which serve the needs of middle class residents in Hudson. The community worked hard to insure their businesses would not be affected by Wal-Mart, although no mention is given to the role antiques shop owners played in this process.

In fact, there is no mention of antiques dealers along Warren Street in these articles even though it is estimated that nearly 36 antiques shops were open on Warren Street during this time.

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<sup>60</sup> Steinberg, "One Town's Stores."



In a rare moment of Hudson's coverage, focus is placed on the middle class permanent, full-time resident. Here, stories are told of shop owners who know their businesses will be hurt but also understand how beneficial a store that brings nearly 250 jobs to the area will be for struggling residents. Attention on the middle class is important when compared with the ways that coverage changes in the next chapter, as Hudson faces another threat to its economy, the St. Lawrence Cement plant.

Two of the articles in 1994 come after Wal-Mart has opened its doors. The characterizations of Warren Street in these articles is especially important because of the way they advertise space on Warren Street. One piece follows up with local business association leader Pamela Taylor-Ferrell eight months after Wal-Mart opened its doors. Now Taylor-Ferrell is a self-described "Wal-Mart groupie, she roams the gleaming aisles of the store after work on each payday."<sup>61</sup> The Local Business Association has broken up and Warren Street is described as "decidedly somber." Steinberg notes that "empty parking spaces in front of some of Warren Street's shops [stand] in stark contrast to the carnival-like atmosphere that reigned two miles away at Wal-Mart"<sup>62</sup>.

Today, many of the businesses mentioned in the series have closed or moved. Although this may not have been overt displacement, shops owned by local business owners were soon replaced by antiques stores and restaurants that attracted and served tourists and weekenders.

The opening of Wal-Mart may have proven crucial to the gentrification of Hudson as an antiques capital because it drew long-time residents away from Warren Street while at the same time characterized Hudson as a small town where Main Street was being threatened by a big

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<sup>61</sup> Jacques Steinberg, "Hair Spray, Rifles, Toys (and Jobs); A Discount Megastore Wins Friends and Influences Rivals," *New York Times*, November 21, 1994.

<sup>62</sup> Harold Faber, "Fears and Fanfare for the New Store in Town; A Giant Retailer Opens Its Door, and Main Street Will Never Be the Same," *New York Times*, March 31, 1994

corporation. The next chapter will discuss the way that Hudson is further characterized as a small town that has been “discovered” by pioneers from New York City.

### **Placing Problematic Characterizations of Hudson within the Framework of Phase-Model**

Problematic depictions of Hudson also line up with many scholarly descriptions of cities in the first phase of gentrification. Parallels between *New York Times* coverage and phase models of gentrification are most clearly seen in Phillip L. Clay’s depictions of first phase gentrification. These parallels are important because they place coverage of this type within the larger frame of the gentrification process. These parallels also show how coverage of shrinking populations, empty stores, and crime might actually act as a catalyst for further phases of gentrification.

For many individuals, coverage of crime, corruption and drugs would act as a deterrent to move to Hudson, but, when we consider the gentrifier in the city of Hudson, this type of coverage is not as dissuasive. According to Clay, a city in its first phase of gentrification is developed by “risk-oblivious” individuals, who do not mind crime and other social problems in the city. These “risk-oblivious people move in and renovate properties for their own use.”<sup>63</sup> In the case of Hudson, first phase gentrifiers can certainly be considered risk-oblivious. For many antiques dealers, their shops along Warren Street were supplementary to stores in New York City and did not represent a huge financial risk. This meant that these store owners were not living or working in Hudson full time and thus had less of a stake in the city and were not as sensitive to the risks associated with living there. Individuals like the shop owner I interviewed who moved to Hudson full time often did not have families and therefore had little stake in the quality of the schools. For the same reasons, depictions of failing shops on Warren Street, vacant homes, shrinking populations represent the exact kinds of images risk-oblivious gentrifiers respond to.

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<sup>63</sup> Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin K. Wyly, *The Gentrification Reader* (London: Routledge, 2010), 37.

Clay also notes that during this first phase, little media attention is given to changes in the city. This is certainly the case of newspaper articles in this phase. In later phases much of the coverage on Hudson is actually about its development but in this phase there is no coverage which overtly draws attention to development.

### **The Beginnings of Growth Regimes in Hudson**

“Chartered as a city by the State Legislature in 1785, Hudson is celebrating its bicentennial starting this week. On Saturday, a sailboat will arrive in a re-enactment of the delivery of the city's charter, opening a series of celebrations that will last for months. The program will include a religious service on Sunday, the same day as the opening of a history fair with projects by school children; a concert featuring the music of George Gershwin on May 12; a parade on May 18, and guided walking and bus tours of the city in July and August...“It's going to bring a lot of new people into Hudson for the first time,” said the Mayor of Hudson, Michael Yusko Jr. “We know they're going to like it because we have a nickname, 'The Friendly City.' Like many older cities, Hudson is trying to revive its downtown, which has lost much of its business to outlying shopping centers. There are vacant stores on Warren Street, the main street, which runs down to the river. Mayor Yusko said he saw signs of a revival in downtown Hudson. “I'm going to cut the ribbon on two new stores on Warren Street next week, a jewelry shop and an ice cream store,” he said. “And next month we expect to start a \$2 million project for rehabilitating commercial and residential buildings on Warren Street.”<sup>64</sup>

Although the majority of articles between 1985 and 1997 cover “problems” in the city of Hudson, also present is the foundation of a depiction of Hudson’s growth machine. In their book *Urban Fortunes*, John Logan and Harvey Molotch argue land is a commodity and that to understand urban growth we must see land as providing a use value (home/shelter) and an exchange value (home price/rent value). The growth machine is a collection of individuals and social institutions which drive the exchange value of land and seek to profit from this value. This group includes place entrepreneurs like politicians and local elite. It also includes the media. The media, specifically newspapers, have a direct interest in growth. When a city grows, the audience and revenue streams of newspapers also grow. This increases ad revenue and interest in the paper itself. Logan and Molotch point to several examples of the role metropolitan newspapers have

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<sup>64</sup> Harold Faber, "A Former Hudson River Port to Celebrate Its Bicentennial," *New York Times*, April 29, 1985.

played in urban growth and even provide several examples of *The New York Times*' role in growth. They explain:

“The *New York Times* likes office towers and additional industrial installations in the city even more than it loves “the environment.” Even when historically significant districts are threatened, the *Times* editorialized in favor of intensification. Thus, the *Times* recently admonished opponents to “get out of the way” of the Times Square renewal, which would replace landmark structures (including its own former headquarters at 1 Times Square) with huge office structures.”<sup>65</sup>

It is a stretch to say that coverage of Hudson has specifically grown the audience of *The Times* and boosted its revenue streams. But articles about Hudson are part of a larger project of growth espoused by *The Times* and many other newspapers. As many scholars note, newspapers create content they believe will interest their audience. In this section, this means writing about the Olana historic site and advertisements of cultural events in Hudson. This is a foundational moment in coverage where growth regime activities begin. In subsequent chapters' examination of these activities will continue in greater depth. Here, the media acts as part of the growth machine by advertising growth regime activities but also by creating desirability around Hudson.

### **Olana**

As noted in the first chapter, there are two threads to Hudson's history -- the city as an industrial town with cycles of boom and bust and the city as an artistic and cultural center with lineage dating to the Hudson River School. In service of the second thread, the historic site Olana has played a role in the narrative of Hudson's development as recorded by *The New York Times*.

In the early 1980s, before homes were renovated on Warren Street and antiques stores brought tourism to Hudson, tourists came to Columbia County to see the historic home of Frederic Edwin Church one of the most important and successful 19th century American painters. The house sits three miles south of the city of Hudson on a hill with panoramic and

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<sup>65</sup> John R. Logan and Harvey Luskin Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*, 20th ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 72.

stunning views of the Hudson Valley. The house is unique in that it does not follow the architectural style of other Hudson Valley estates. Designed by Calvert Vaux, a preeminent nineteenth-century American architect, the estate is styled in the tradition of a Middle Eastern home. It served as Church's studio and home. The estate boasts one of the most impressive views in the Hudson River Valley and draws in nearly 250,000 visitors per year.<sup>66</sup>

Church's home is an important theme in *The Times*' coverage and has been consistently used as a commodity of the growth machine in Hudson. In early coverage we see that Olana and its history are often the centerpieces of articles about Hudson. In this phase, when antiques store and restaurants are just opening on Warren Street, Olana is really the main attraction of the area. As time goes on, Olana is mentioned less and less and in subsequent articles other attractions receive more space.

In *The New York Times* Olana is mentioned 32 times between 1985 and 1995 in articles such as "Inspiration on the Hudson" which details the home's rich history and ties this history to Hudson itself. Another article exoticizes Hudson and Olana by opening with the lines like: "Is it Persia? No, It's Hudson, New York" in reference to the Persian-style architecture of Church's estate.

In a growth machine model of urban expansion a location becomes desirable, often through practices employed by the growth regime like media advertisement, and by proxy, other locations near it also become desirable.<sup>67</sup> Olana is monumental and certainly drew people to Columbia County but it was articles which advertised Olana and Hudson as one in the same that brought people to Hudson specifically.

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<sup>66</sup> "Olana," The Olana Partnership, accessed March 10, 2017, <http://www.olana.org/explore/>.

<sup>67</sup> "The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place," *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 2 (September 1976): <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2777096>.

Beyond that, the view *is* one of the best in the Hudson Valley. Olana was “newsworthy” before other parts of Hudson. In the first stage of coverage, Olana becomes the symbol (and economic boon) of Hudson in the way that the Statue of Liberty is the symbol of New York. People come to see it and feed the economy of New York by staying in hotels and eating in restaurants during their stay. Although not actually in the city of Hudson, Olana was one of the first attractions Columbia County boasted for the summer tourist season. With the help of “advertisements” in articles by *The New York Times* run consistently over the years, it is reasonable to assume that Olana was one of the first pull factors in the growth machine that has become Hudson.

**Diamond Street:**

In 1994, a book was published exposing a different side of Hudson's history. The book entitled, *Diamond Street*, a chronicle of Hudson’s 200 year history with prostitution and gambling, was written by Bruce Edward Hall, a writer and actor who lived in Manhattan and owned a home in Hudson.<sup>68</sup> *Diamond Street* was an important moment in the media narrative around Hudson’s development. In the early 1990s Warren Street was already benefiting from an influx of antiques dealers and the tourists who came to shop in their stores. People were additionally attracted to the Hudson area by Olana. The publishing of *Diamond Street* brought increased publicity (and infamy) to the city and shaped the way that residents thought about Hudson.

*Diamond Street* told the story of vice in Hudson to both longtime residents and newcomers to the city. Unlike the history of the Hudson River School or wealthy family estates along the River, this was a past which was directly tied to the city of Hudson and was recent

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<sup>68</sup> Bruce Edward Hall, *Diamond Street: The Story of the Little Town with the Big Red Light District* (Hensonville, NY: Black Dome Press, 1994).

enough that long-time residents may have had grandparents who remembered the brothels along Columbia Street. Part of its inclusivity came from the fact that the center for vice in Hudson was not on Warren Street. Rather, Diamond Street brothels were located on what is now Columbia Street, which runs parallel to Warren and is an area with low income housing and much racial diversity.

The book itself was important in the media ecosystem surrounding Hudson over the last 30 years but possibly more important than the book itself was the way that information from *Diamond Street* was disseminated through other media. Even today, more than twenty years after its publication, it remains an important theme in the discussion about Hudson.

*Diamond Street* chronicled the prostitution industry which flourished in Hudson for years before the 1970s. To celebrate and promote the book Hall held a release party where homeowners along Columbia Street, formerly Diamond Street, opened their homes to attendees who were interested in setting foot in the renovated brothels. Harold Faber covered the book's release in a 1994 article entitled "Hudson Casts New Light on Its Red-Light Past". He wrote that Hudson was "casting a nostalgic eye back to its bawdy history, when it was widely known as "the little town with the big red-light district."<sup>69</sup> He went on to detail the book's release party and next contrasted Hudson's history with views of the city today. In keeping with articles from this time period, Faber quotes city officials who explain Hudson still has problems with crime. District attorney, Paul Czajka, believes "...Hudson has an institutional corruption history." He continues, "In the old days, it was gambling and prostitution, today it is gambling and drugs."<sup>70</sup> This joining together of Hudson's history as a center of the vice industry to its current problems

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<sup>69</sup> Harold Faber, "Hudson Casts a New Light on Its Red-Light Past," *New York Times*, October 21, 1994.

<sup>70</sup> Faber, "Hudson Casts a New Light."

becomes a pattern in *The Times*' coverage. In Chapter 2, I will discuss the ways that this history is used to justify and fetishize problems within the city of Hudson.

The article "Hudson Casts a New Light on Its Red-Light Past" also signals a shift in the coverage of Hudson by *The Times*. For the first time, the growing tourist and weekender population in Hudson is described in reference to the city. Nearly five years after the publication of Sam Pratt's landmark article in *New York Magazine*, Faber characterizes Hudson as a "divided city" with "...wealthy weekenders from New York City, 120 miles to the south, and a permanent local population of working men and women and merchants."<sup>71</sup> He points out that both groups hold very different conceptions of the city's history. He explains this by quoting *Diamond Street*'s author who explains that weekenders are "huffy" about Diamond Street and that these residents feel threatened by this kind of portrayal. He believes that these weekenders "...don't want anybody to touch their image of Hudson as a Currier and Ives village, which it is not. They want Hudson to be known for its antique shops and boutiques." Hall continues, explaining that the book does not "...down Hudson; rather, it enriches its history."<sup>72</sup> and points out that local residents think the book is "a riot". These locals, explain that prostitution in Hudson was a "lovely little cottage industry" and say they remember the brothels "with fondness."

Hall's book explains the way that prostitution fit into and strengthened the economy in Hudson but he emphasizes that this industry developed out of desperation. Prostitution was a direct result of a wealth divide within the city. Women could not find consistent work in Hudson while several cycles of industry brought a more and more working class men to Hudson. In his interview with Faber, Hall recognizes the kind of economic desperation that created this industry. He explains that *Diamond Street* is "...the story of desperate women who had to

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<sup>71</sup> Faber, "Hudson Casts a New Light."

<sup>72</sup> Faber, "Hudson Casts a New Light."



survive, who had no other way of making a living. Those were the days before welfare and unemployment insurance. Some of those women got offers of money for sex and they decided that shoes for their children were more important than virtue."<sup>73</sup> Now, the vice industry only adds to Hudson's "brand." In many cities across America, red-light districts and prostitution now feed tourism. An article published by Christina E. Dando examines the way that Omaha, Nebraska has embraced and utilized its red-light past by creating a museum in an old brothel. She points out that Omaha uses heritage tourism as a way to attract visitors to the city and that, in this way, "...history is a commodity that a community can mine, mold and market (Hodgins 2004, 100)"<sup>74</sup>

She writes that

Sites must conform to tourists' expectations, while the myth is manipulated to be used as a tourism marketing image (Wilson 1997, 9; Wood 2000, 34). The repression or distortion of history is intensified by tourism, in what Wilson (and others) refer to as 'historical amnesia' (Wilson 1997, 311 and 313; Hodgins 2004, 104). Historical amnesia creates a rosy nostalgic image of the past, glossing over the messiness of the history of the American West, over complex race, ethnicity, gender and/or environmental issues.<sup>75</sup>

Because the media ties the present state of Hudson so closely with certain histories of the city it is interesting to think about the way that this history has factored into narratives about the development of Hudson. The historical amnesia described by Dando, Wilson and Hodgins certainly exists in the coverage of Hudson. It is seen in the manipulation and selectivity of certain historical facts about Hudson over others as well as in the ways historical narrative was manipulated to tie Hudson to Olana. In the next chapter we will see the way that history of industrialism and culture in Hudson are utilized on both sides of the "Stop the Plant" conflicts of the early 2000s.

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<sup>73</sup> Faber, "Hudson Casts a New Light."

<sup>74</sup> Christina E. Dando, "'Whore-friendly people': heritage tourism, the media and the place of sex work in Butte, Montana," *Geography and Geology Faculty Publications*.

<sup>75</sup> Dando, "'Whore-friendly people.'"

Today, Hudson's red-light past is sensationalized by many of its residents. Possibly the most blatant example of this sensationalism can be seen in the popular *Diamond Street Dames* group who perform regularly in Hudson. According to a 2013 article in the arts and culture magazine *Chronogram*, this group

takes us back to that bawdy vaudeville era, where bodacious beauties in fishnet stockings flirt and tease to vampy music...the "Diamond Street Dames" (named as an homage to Hudson's Diamond Street, a vibrant center of adult entertainment in the late 19th century)...gather in the lofty dance-hall-like space for their weekly burlesque exercise class.<sup>76</sup>

The article notes that the group performs regularly at Club Helsinki where their shows often sold out. Possibly the most ironic aspect of this is the location in which they perform. Helsinki stands as one of the first extensions of gentrification in Hudson past Warren Street. The restored industrial space on Columbia Street (formerly Diamond Street) is only a block away from Hudson's nineteenth century brothels.

### **Conclusion**

Coverage from this time depicts Hudson before *The New York Times* started to push the gentrification narrative, but in which the reader can see the seeds of this narrative. We see how these depictions line up with phase models and prime the city for gentrification while, at the same time, we also see how *The Times* can function as a catalyst for change.

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<sup>76</sup> Holly Tarson, "The Diamond Street Dames at Club Helsinki," *Chronogram*, December 1, 2013, <http://www.chronogram.com/hudsonvalley/the-diamond-street-dames-at-club-helsinki/Content?oid=2214794>.

## 2

### **“Hudson is a diamond in the rough that's midway through polishing”**

Articles from 1985 to 1996 prime Hudson for gentrification by depicting Hudson as a sight of urban decay which is ready to be revitalized. Advertisements for Olana and the book *Diamond Street* begin to draw people to the city during this time and articles about the opening of a Wal-Mart in a neighboring town further advertise vacancies on Warren Street. Coverage from this period lays the groundwork for the following ten years of reporting. As Anderson notes, media guides “...the style in which they [places] are imagined”<sup>77</sup>. In this chapter, the narrative of Hudson is extremely pro-gentrification. Depictions of Hudson during this time fit with models of second phase gentrification. Here, the pro-gentrification narrative intensifies and *The New York Times* coverage pushes growth regime objectives. According to *The Times*, Hudson undergoes its second phase of gentrification during this time and the formation of a creative class begins.

### **Flocking to Hudson: Depictions of Social Actors as Gentrification Intensifies**

Writing during this time, lines up with second phase descriptions of gentrification. Here, *The Times* coverage paints Hudson as a place undergoing rapid development. The people mentioned in these articles are all somehow related to this development. Business owners, artists and community leaders often appear in articles during this time. Additionally, articles show how community and social groups are starting to form in Hudson among newcomers and how these individuals think of themselves within the process of gentrification.

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<sup>77</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

### **Pioneers and Refugees: Valorizing Gentrifiers in Hudson**

The pioneer gentrifier is a term often utilized by scholars to characterize the type of gentrifier who moves into a given area in the first stages of gentrification. Before conducting this content analysis, I did not expect the term “pioneer gentrifier,” or simply “pioneer,” to be used so often in reference to newcomers in Hudson. My assumption was that these “loaded” terms were not neutral enough to be used in articles about changes in a city. Findings of Brown-Saracino and Rumpf affirmed this assumption as their study concluded that “gentrification” and terms surrounding this process were used less by national newspapers and that when they were used to describe negative aspects of gentrification.<sup>78</sup>

This was not the case. In this phase, two instances of the term “pioneer” show the colloquial nature with which the term is used to describe gentrifiers in Hudson. Pioneers are first mentioned in 2002 in an article entitled “In Upstate Hills, Modish Replaces Moo.”<sup>79</sup> The article reads like a piece which might appear in the society pages of the Sunday *New York Times* Style section. Rather than narrating the experiences of New York City elite at whatever party was thrown that weekend, this article tells of a party thrown in Columbia County to benefit the Hudson Opera House’s restoration and gives a detailed account of the individuals who attended this event. The overall focus of the piece is on the party itself and how an event of this type is indicative of changes in Columbia County and Hudson. The term “pioneer” was used when a party goer described how odd it was that an event this extravagant would be thrown in Columbia County. He explains that:

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<sup>78</sup> Japonica Brown-Saracino and Cesraea Rumpf, "Diverse Imageries of Gentrification: Evidence from Newspaper Coverage in Seven U.S. Cities 1986-2006," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 33, no. 3 (2011)

<sup>79</sup> Julie V. Iovine, "In Upstate Hills, Modish Replaces Moo," *New York Times*, August 22, 2002.

“This is a turning point. Columbia County has always been for people who didn't really love the whole Hamptons concept. It was more for pioneers, people who don't mind it a little rough. It's not pitch perfect like Connecticut. There are mobile homes.”<sup>80</sup>

The sentiments of this partygoer sum up the pioneer mentality as conveyed by *New York Times* coverage perfectly. To this individual, pioneers recognize that they are moving to a place which might be “undesirable” to many. They are going where no one has gone before. According to Clay, pioneers are defined by the obliviousness to “risk.” In this case the pioneer is risk oblivious in the sense they are unafraid to buy a second home in a location with socioeconomic diversity and homes in need of restoration. But their obliviousness only goes so far. This pioneer overtly recognizes the action of moving to Hudson as a pioneering act in the sense that they did not pick or could not afford country homes in the more polished Connecticut countryside or the Hamptons, instead these individuals rough it in the Hudson Valley. Hudson becomes an alternative to these locations. In the next chapter we will see how this assertion is continued by characterizations of Hudson as an “Upstate Brooklyn”.

This pioneer characterization valorizes these newcomers and also implies that their presence exists to make the place they have moved, “better”. In his description of second phase gentrification Clay explains that media attention often validates the “risks” taken by pioneer gentrifiers. The explosion of media coverage during this time and the particular focus of this coverage on individuals who are making changes in Hudson certainly functions in this manner.

Another striking characterization of newcomers in Hudson is the use of the term “refugee” as a way of describing people who have come to Hudson in the last 30 years. It is certainly interesting to find that this term is used in four different articles describing second home owners, or artists who have recently discovered Hudson. Using the term “refugee” not only

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<sup>80</sup> Iovine, "In Upstate Hills"

valorizes newcomers to Hudson but it also implies that Hudson is a haven for these individuals to escape to. Interestingly “who” these refugees are seems to vary. One article claims that refugees are artists, stating that “...artists are returning to the Hudson Valley, many of them refugees from New York City. They are attracted by the landscape and the pink light and by the lower rents fostered by community leaders seeking to revitalize the area as a cultural showplace.” But in another piece refugees are second home buyers:

“The new breed of buyer -- refugees from over-the-top prices in the Hamptons and Wall Streeters looking for a solid investment -- are snatching up large parcels. Who needs privet hedges when you can buy 60 acres of natural insulation for \$160,000, the price of a pool house in the Hamptons?”<sup>81</sup>

In this case, people who have been priced out of other second home markets come to Hudson as refugees. Although difficult to know for certain, the word appears to be used satirically, although this satire also functions in the same way the unabashed overt use of “pioneers” does. These terms become normalized and the identities of people are shaped around them.

### **Newcomers Form Organizations**

“Ten years ago, most socializing was done over quiet dinners at home. Now, Martha McMaster, a psychotherapist who spends weekends in Ghent, said she receives six to eight invitations for competing weekend events each month. “We never had to be selective before.” She added that this year, the shad bake sponsored by the Columbia Land Conservancy attracted 600 people at \$65 a plate, more than ever before. The social scene has been galvanized as well by two years of fund-raisers sponsored to stop the St. Lawrence Cement company from building a plant with a 40-story smokestack at the edge of Hudson.”<sup>82</sup>

*New York Times* coverage between 1997 and 2010 shows reveals the kind of social infrastructure forming among newcomers to Hudson and the surrounding county.

In tandem with characterizations of pioneers is the increased mention of organizations these individuals are starting to form. Clay and many other gentrification scholars discuss the

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<sup>81</sup> Iovine, “In Upstate Hills.”

<sup>82</sup> Iovine, “In Upstate Hills.”

development of nonprofit and community-minded organizations during second stage gentrification. In this phase of coverage, many more organizations are mentioned by reporters than in the first phase. These groups are often written about in relation to the events they put on as well as the people and causes they represent. The organizations hold additional importance in that they are evidence of a community of people willing to fund, create, and work for certain causes which they believe will improve life in Hudson. In a city with high poverty and failing social institutions, non-profits have long existed. These groups often serve at-risk populations within the city and the county. The appearance of non-profit organizations in *The Times*' coverage does not imply that not-for-profit groups are just now forming in the city. Rather, it indicates that a different type of organization is forming that will support the views and interests of the new population within the city.

Not-for-profit organizations like Scenic Hudson, the "Stop the Plant" coalition, the BeLo 3rd organization (the spelling itself is reminiscent of SoHo or TriBeCa) and the Hudson Opera House Development Project, Columbia Land Conservancy, Friends of Hudson, The Olana Partnership and the Hudson Arts Council and are all mentioned by *The New York Times*. These groups are framed in a number of ways. When they are mentioned off-handedly, like in the quote from a society piece, they help the reader imagine the sort of social infrastructure in place in Hudson. This implies that there are organizations deserving of support in Hudson and that these organizations provide "things to do" for people who might be able to pay \$65 per table at a benefit. Other mentions of these organizations evidence the kinds of changes which they create. For instance, during a fight to stop the St. Lawrence Cement plant from building a factory in Hudson, many organizations mobilized their resources and audiences to join in the resistance to the plant. They are mentioned in one article written about the defeat of the plant:

"It's the right decision for the Hudson Valley," said Alix Gerosa, the director of environmental quality at Scenic Hudson, an environmental group that joined with others, including Friends of Hudson and the Olana Partnership, to fight the plant. "This should be a strong message to St. Lawrence Cement that they should call it quits."<sup>83</sup>

In this example, another key theme emerges in the coverage of these organizations. When an organization is mentioned it is often because a member of that group is quoted for the story. By attaching the individual's identity to the group, that individual gains a certain authority. It also increases awareness of the group itself and places this group in the audience's imagination about Hudson.

All of the organizations mentioned in this section work to better life in Hudson and its surrounding areas. Ironically, none of these organizations work to better economic conditions for a large group of residents in the city. Rather, these organizations support the development of arts programming like The Hudson Arts Council, The Olana Partnership and The Opera House Development Project, or focus on environmental preservation and activism in Hudson. The purpose of these groups is often to combat damage done to the Hudson River by industry in the Hudson Valley and to preserve the natural beauty of the Hudson Valley. These groups are not mentioned in reference to Hudson's coverage by *The Times* because they are not relevant to its readers.

### **Hudson Begins to Attract the Creative Class**

In his book *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Richard Florida defines a group of individuals who, he believes, drive growth in a city. The creative class drives innovation and progress in a place and are drawn to that place based on their perception that the place will provide: high quality experiences, opportunities to validate their identities and openness to

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<sup>83</sup> Michael Cooper, "Cement Plant Along Hudson Is Rejected as Unsightly," *New York Times*, April 20, 2005.



diversity<sup>84</sup>. In the following chapter, I will discuss with greater detail how these aspects of life in Hudson are promoted by *The Times*. It is important to note that these activities begin in the second phase as gentrification ramps up. In this phase of coverage it is clear that Hudson is starting to attract members of the creative class and validates this group within the changing demographics of Hudson.

*The New York Times* coverage functions as advertisements for places in Hudson which fit the interests of the creative class. One such event is Hudson's annual Arts Walk. The walk is in recognition of Hudson's "growing stature as an artistic center."<sup>85</sup> During the walk, "Hudson will put its artists and their work on display."<sup>86</sup> *The Times* also reports on "painters and sculptors [who]...have begun to rent studio space in Hudson's fine old crumbling buildings alongside the antiques dealers who have taken root there in recent years."<sup>87</sup>

The "advertising" of these promotional events is also coupled with a slew of "place advertisements." These articles focus on a certain place in Hudson, either a restaurant, gallery or new store. Often, they advertise the opening of the business and give a bit of information about its owners. Articles that publicize Arts Walk, restaurants and other community events promote places and experiences which often draw the creative class. Additionally, these findings align with a characteristic Clay identified as beginning of the second phase of gentrification.

Clay also argues that during this period "Subtle promotional activities begin."<sup>88</sup> In the case of the *The New York Times* coverage, these "subtle" promotional activities are quite overt. For example, in 2001, six small article-like advertisements appear in one edition of *The Times*.

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<sup>84</sup> Richard Florida, "Cities and the Creative Class," *City & Community* 2, no. 1 (2003): 10.

<sup>85</sup> Dinitia Smith, "Beside the Hudson The Lure of Art," *New York Times*, October 10, 1997

<sup>86</sup> Smith, "Beside the Hudson."

<sup>87</sup> Smith, "Beside the Hudson."

<sup>88</sup> Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin K. Wyly, *The Gentrification Reader* (London: Routledge, 2010), 37.

Although some seem anecdotal they all advertise the opening of new stores along Warren Street and are coincidentally written by the same woman. In this case the coverage itself functions as a promotion for the city. Other promotional activities, like Winter Walk, a large winter festival where people wander up and down Warren Street in the evening and stores put on holiday decorations and events, are mentioned in *The Times*' coverage during this phase indicating that certain groups in the city are organizing in an effort to promote the city.

### **Stop the Plant: New Triumphs over the Old**

From the early 1980s to 2001 a new group of people migrated to Hudson. Wealthy liberal weekenders, shop owners, and artists moved to the city drawn by the beauty of the Hudson Valley and its inexpensive real estate. Unlike other cases of gentrification, early and mid phases of development in Hudson were not characterized by displacement. Many storefronts and homes along Warren Street were empty when people first began gentrifying the city. This new group was able to live in relative isolation from existing residents in the city. These people did not always live in Hudson full time and were often single and young. As a result, newcomers could reap certain benefits of the city without needing to interact with failing social institutions and high poverty rates. Both groups, the newcomers and the long-time residents, experienced and thought about the place they lived, a city of only two-square miles, completely differently.

In 2001, the St. Lawrence Cement Company submitted a proposal for a new cement plant to be built on Hudson's waterfront near Warren Street. Never before had the two "sides" of Hudson come into direct conflict with one another but, in this case, both populations in Hudson had stakes in the return of industry to the city. Older, middle- and working-class residents believed a plant would symbolize an industrial revival in Hudson and return the city to the familiar industrial center which once provided steady work for its people. At the root of this

conflict were two differing perceptions about progress in Hudson. To some residents, the cement plant promised progress for the city because it would bring steady work and the possibility for social mobility. This group did not think changes in Hudson were progressive because they had done little to improve those conditions in the city which mattered to them like poverty rates and institutional improvements. For other residents, the cement plant would be a step backward as it would slow tourism and change the new “brand” of the city. As one historian put it: “All the parties to this conflict saw the stakes so high that to lose was to see their local world destroyed.”<sup>89</sup>

Both conceptions of the city were deeply tied to and a product of desperate historical narratives around Hudson. Hudson was a city where industry had once long thrived. Industry was what built the “architectural gems” along Warren Street. The success of the city had long been contingent upon the presence of industry or the lack thereof. Hudson’s industrial past is written about consistently in *The Times* coverage. This view of history often existed in tandem with narratives about Hudson’s connection to the Hudson River School. Many of these representations imply that there is a quality of manifest destiny to the place Hudson has become, that it had somehow returned to a previous historical moment and that this current change was inevitable for the city. This set up the kind of tension which existed around the cement plant controversy and this tension was widely covered by the media. *The New York Times* published three articles about the conflict while it was going on. After St. Lawrence capitulated, a book was published examining dynamics of the resistance to the plant and a 2006 documentary about the conflict, *Two Square Miles*, aired on PBS.

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<sup>89</sup> Miriam Silverman, *Stopping the Plant: The St. Lawrence Cement Controversy and the Battle for Quality of Life in the Hudson Valley* (n.p.: SUNY Press, 2012), Foreword ix.

The plant is referenced in seven articles, it is the subject of two and the term “cement plant” appears 115 times through *The Times*’ coverage. “Cement plant” always refers to the St. Lawrence proposed plant and it is often referenced as either a victory, a threat, or point of conflict for “the city” and “its residents.”. The first article, is actually part of another series which is focused on art in the Hudson Valley. Entitled “A Town Immortalized by Art Is Divided Over Industry; Can Culture and Factories Coexist on the River?” This piece underscores the battle between art and industry in Hudson. In the view of its author, the construction of the cement plant would be a victory of one side over the other. The piece presents both sides of the argument. Johnson notes that the tourism industry

“...has worked hard in recent years to cast the Hudson River Valley as a ruddy-cheeked play land of nature, history, art and cute-as-a-button Victorian bed-and-breakfast hotels. But here in this old factory town 100 miles north of New York you see the grittier truth: The Hudson Valley was also the nation’s first industrial heartland.”<sup>90</sup>

The reporter details how Hudson's artistic and industrial histories have long co-existed but notes that at several moments artists have “erased” industrial realities from visual representations of the city. Johnson explains that:

“South Bay, once a languid curve of the Hudson that lapped up on the shores just below Mount Merino, was being filled in bit by bit in the 1800’s: by railroad lines and foundries, by dredging spoils from the river and by other long-defunct industries of various sorts. Many painters, however, simply left that development out of the picture. They painted South Bay as though it were still a pristine Arcadian sanctuary, where cows could drift down to the water to drink”<sup>91</sup>

By doing this, “the lush 19th-century landscape paintings of the Hudson River School and the clattering engines of the steam age grew up side by side”<sup>92</sup>. The article also discusses compromises made by the developers of the plant. These include changes to the infrastructure of

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<sup>90</sup> Kirk Johnson, "Town Immortalized by Art Is Divided Over Industry; Can Culture and Factories Coexist On the River?," *New York Times*, June 30, 2001.

<sup>91</sup> Johnson, "Town Immortalized."

<sup>92</sup> Johnson, "Town Immortalized."

the plant itself and aesthetic adjustments which will make the plant fit in more along the South Bay in Hudson. The article notes the divided roots upon which Hudson has grown, but a few key subtleties provide interesting insight into the article. This piece is the fourth in a ten-part series about the artists of the Hudson River School. This is important to note because it is likely much of the audience reading the piece will be more interested in the artistic history of Hudson rather than its industrial past. Additionally, it is important to point out how interviews are structured in the article. Of all the “actors” mentioned in the article, only four of them support the plant. Only one is quoted, and this person seems to be someone whom Johnson meets by chance on the street. In contrast, ten of the other people mentioned in the article are against the plant. Oppositional viewpoints are given much greater space within the article and the opposition to the plant is described in greater depth. There are rare moments where Johnson notes real problems in Hudson that infrequently receive space in *The Times*. Johnson writes, “But there are many places the new economy has not touched. On Columbia Street, one block away from the thriving galleries, many houses remain run-down. Drugs and prostitution remain a problem residents say.” When the cement plant was finally defeated in 2005 an article was published in the *The Times* entitled “*Cement Plant Along Hudson Is Rejected as Unsightly*.”<sup>93</sup> New York’s Secretary of State ruled the cement plant to be “inconsistent with coastal policies” because of its aesthetic characteristics. The piece points out that: “The decision noted the changing character of Hudson, a former industrial city that has seen a transformation, with antique stores, boutiques and bistros opening in the refurbished brick buildings that line Warren Street, its main street.”<sup>94</sup>

Coverage of this conflict is important because of whom it informs. Here, the victory to stop the plant signals that Hudson has now changed for good to a group of potential gentrifiers

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<sup>93</sup> Cooper, "Cement Plant."

<sup>94</sup> Cooper, "Cement Plant."

who might be interested in this change. The conflict itself only received coverage because it was connected to the interests of *The New York Times*' audience.

Now, we can only speculate about what the plant would have done for long-time residents in Hudson. The proposed plant would have only created one net job and probably would not have revived Hudson in the way that many of these residents had hoped. But the issue is more complicated than that. Those who were fighting to stop the plant did not hold the interests of the pro-plant community in mind. *The Times* articles reflected in the content of are supported by the book *Stop the Plant* and the documentary *Two Square Miles* in that all three media note the motivation of opposition groups to stop the plant. These groups fought St. Lawrence because they wanted to protect an image of Hudson which they had taken part in creating over the previous ten years, an image which this content analysis finds was reinforced and validated by *New York Times* coverage as part of the growth regime of Hudson.

### **The New Hudson: Changing Depictions of What “Hudson Is”**

Second phase coverage in Hudson is marked by two different characterizations of the city. While analyzing articles from this phase I found it necessary to create a “Hudson is...” code. This was in response to the fact that, from the second phase of coverage on, nearly every article contains a statement summing up the city. The articles often employ the rhetorical strategy used throughout all phases of coverage on Hudson, in which the authors tell of other times in Hudson’s history when the city has reinvented itself. They argue and use this as proof of or justification for Hudson’s recent transformation. For instance, one author asserts that Hudson “...has evolved before, from its founding by Revolutionary War refugees from Nantucket Island, Mass., as a center for processing whale blubber, to a busy shipping port, and later, to a

manufacturing center.”<sup>95</sup> The article uses this history to justify a new change and identity in the city asserting that now “Antiques dealers increasingly share turf with art galleries, hip new restaurants and shops selling a broad assortment of goods from home furnishings to funky apparel.”<sup>96</sup>

In this section “Hudson is” coding seems to be split by two characterizations of the city. Some authors assert that Hudson is “an antiques mecca” while others explain that “...visiting Hudson these days means more than picking apples and buying expensive antiques. It is now home to musicians, artists, performance groups”<sup>97</sup> One article is simply a list of the author's favorite antiques shops in Hudson<sup>98</sup> while another asserts that, later in 2001, “art galleries and antiques shops drive the new economy.”<sup>99</sup> Characterizations of Hudson are fascinating in that they are always describing Hudson as on the “verge” of a new change or currently undergoing a new transformation. Over the last thirty years *The Times* has always conveyed a sort of excitement associated with Hudson.

The article, “Weekend Excursion, Beside the Hudson, the Lure of Art” asserts that Hudson’s long history as a place for artists is once again being realized. This piece depicts and advertises a well-known characteristic in the process of gentrification. Artists moving into a place of “urban decline” to take advantage of low rents.<sup>100</sup>

Unlike articles from the first sample which describe Hudson as an impoverished and struggling city, “Weekend Excursion: Beside the Hudson, the Lure of Art” only mentions these difficulties and presents them in reference to Hudson’s history. Author Dinitia Smith explains

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<sup>95</sup> Michael Cooper, "An Antiques Haven Updates Itself," *New York Times*, April 20, 2005.

<sup>96</sup> Cooper, "An Antiques Haven."

<sup>97</sup> Donna Paul, "Heading North, and Losing Your Way Along the Way," *New York Times*, August 23, 2001.

<sup>98</sup> Amanda Hesser, "HAVENS; Drawn by the Siren Call of Antiquing," *New York Times*, April 4, 2003.

<sup>99</sup> Johnson, "Town Immortalized."

<sup>100</sup> Smith, "Beside the Hudson."

that “for years it [Hudson] seemed to cling to life on the edge of the river, buffeted by cycles of poverty and prosperity. Now, like Peekskill, 40 miles to the south, Hudson is encouraging artists to settle, as a way of revitalizing a community that always seems to be in peril.”<sup>101</sup> She goes on to mention that already “painters and sculptors have begun to rent studio space in Hudson’s fine old crumbling buildings alongside the antique dealers who have taken root there in recent years”. In this view, the “new” Hudson is not just an antiques destination, but also a burgeoning cultural hub for artists. Smith continues, reporting that Scenic Hudson, the dynamic Hudson Valley environmental non-profit organization, has received grants to “clean up” the city’s waterfront and implement the “The Hudson Vision Plan,” a revitalization plan which aims to encourage artists to move to the city.

Unlike other representations of Hudson which come and go throughout time, Hudson is consistently branded as a “cultural mecca” or “art city” by *The Times*. In constructing this brand, it is important to think about what parts of Hudson’s history are highlighted. By connecting Hudson to its history as an artistic destination, these articles essentially imply that it is natural for the city to return back to this “state.” Although the Hudson River School, the homes of Thomas Cole and Frederic Edwin Church imply that Hudson has a long history of drawing artists the city, it has always been a middle class industry town characterized by its vice industry and periods of economic turmoil and success.<sup>102</sup>

### **Crime, Corruption and Social Problems: Turning a Blind Eye to Hudson’ Problems**

In the first phase, most articles were published in the “NY/Region” section of the paper but in this phase articles on Hudson appear in the Travel, Food, and Home and Garden sections most frequently. The findings indicate that there is a shift in the type of content considered to be

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<sup>101</sup> Smith, “Beside the Hudson.”

<sup>102</sup> Hall, *Diamond Street*.



newsworthy by authors. In the previous sections, news stories about Hudson covered problems in the city. As time passes, news of drug dealing and city corruption is covered less frequently. *New York Times* articles in this section praise changes in Hudson and advertise the way that the city has rebranded. These articles are also “news” but all are concerned with the news of change in one way or another. The articles are relevant to a narrower audience. Rather than looking at social problems in Hudson, reporters were writing about new restaurants, Olana, and trips they had recently taken upstate.

In 2000s crime rates remained relatively high.<sup>103</sup> The shift away from coverage of problems in Hudson might have been a result of which population *Times* reporters were addressing. This shift in coverage did not mean social problems went completely unmentioned. Instead, the way that social problems were discussed changed.

When characterizing Hudson, *Times* writers were careful to mention “problems” in the city. Some reporters limit these problems to certain areas of Hudson. Kirk Johnson explains that “...On Columbia Street, one block away from the thriving galleries, many houses remain run-down. Drugs and prostitution remain a problem.”<sup>104</sup> By doing this, writers characterize “other” parts of the city as problematic while asserting that Warren Street, the area of Hudson with the most development, is free of these problems. Other reporters are more circumspect but again reference geography in relation to problems in Hudson. For example one article states that Hudson is “...gritty at the edges and hippie at its heart.”<sup>105</sup>

Other journalists address Hudson's drug and crime problems as part of the city as a whole, but that these problems are not serious. These authors minimize crime and social issues in

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<sup>103</sup> City-Data, <http://www.city-data.com/city/Hudson-New-York.html>.

<sup>104</sup> Johnson, “Town Immortalized.”

<sup>105</sup> Thomas, “Hudson, N.Y.”

the city by asserting things like: “Though crimes like robbery and assault, are not a major concern, there are some problems with drug dealing. Overall, weekenders and Manhattan transplants say they feel relatively safe.”<sup>106</sup> Their claims are not “untruthful” or incorrect but illustrate something about the social position from which they write. The people interviewed in these pieces represent a particular vantage point on the city. Weekenders in Hudson do feel relatively safe. According to crime statistics Hudson’s biggest problem is with drug dealing and consumption, crimes which would not necessarily affect weekend visitors. Sentiments like the one above work to subtly minimize the problems faced by residents of Hudson. Crime rates remain consistently high in Hudson and even spiked around 2005.<sup>107</sup> The statements of this reporter are not necessarily incorrect. Problems like drug dealing are rarely seen by these populations. These findings do not imply that problems in Hudson are intentionally actively being minimized by *The New York Times*. Rather, they are evidence of a divided city which knows little of its “other half”.

A third group of articles utilize crime as a way to argue for Hudson as a “complete” and authentic place. Small amounts of crime lend authenticity to the city. For example, one author writes:

There is a completeness to Hudson, a sense of a finite town, everything within reach: the grand courthouse, the post office, the library in the old city almshouse, which dates from 1818. There are drug dealers in Hudson, too. "But we don't have murders or violent crime," said [business owner and gallerist] Carrie Haddad.<sup>108</sup>

In this way crime is used to authenticate Hudson as a place and set it apart from other bourgeois second home destinations.

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<sup>106</sup> Kathryn Matthews, "HAVENS; Weekender: Hudson New York," *New York Times*, November 1, 2002.

<sup>107</sup> City-Data, <http://www.city-data.com/city/Hudson-New-York.html>.

<sup>108</sup> Smith, "Beside the Hudson."

**Conclusion:**

Between 1997 and 2006 *The New York Times* coverage depicts a city which is rapidly gentrifying. Reporting from this time pushes an extremely pro-gentrification view of the city. *The Times* promotes businesses that have just opened in Hudson, the paper frames newcomers to Hudson as “pioneers” and publishes several articles which publicize exciting “changes” in the city. At the same time, the paper minimizes crime, corruption and social problems in the city. In the conflict over the proposed St. Lawrence Cement plant, a strong growth regime, comprised mostly of newcomers to Hudson, successfully guides the outcomes of the city’s growth.

This set of coverage can be summarized by the following findings: 1. Second phase coverage lines up with characterization by Clay of second phase gentrification 2. This coverage also depicts a new creative class forming in Hudson who think of themselves as pioneers. 3. St. Lawrence Cement plant coverage marks an important moment for the city and provides insight in the type of audience *Times*’ readers consist of. 4. The emergence of place advertisements draw people to the city place and indicate a shift from previous coverage 5. Coverage of crime and social problems changes, these problems are minimized by the paper, but also interesting glamorized as evidence of Hudson’s “completeness” as a place. 6. Hudson seems to still be deciding “what” it is.

Descriptions of the city are mixed at some points. It is an “antiques mecca” while at other moments in coverage is a newly discovered artist’s haven. The rapid and distinct changes from the first period of coverage indicates to us that *New York Times* correspondents and readers certainly see change in Hudson and that this change further encourages coverage of this type. The findings from this section of analysis are a striking departure from the previous period. In the previous period Hudson could be imagined as a site of urban decay, in this phase,

representations of the city change entirely. It feels like *The New York Times* is writing about an entirely different place.

### 3

#### **“There is a Density of Creative People in the Area”**

Thus far, the story of gentrification in Hudson goes something like this: in the early 1980s *The New York Times* begins to take an interest in Hudson. Their coverage tells their audience that Hudson was a city with many problems, specifically, drugs, crime and corruption. Interviews with city officials indicate Hudson is looking to change and the more attractive aspects of Hudson, Olana, and architecture on Warren Street, receive increased media attention. By the early 1990s *New York Times* coverage advertises antiques stores and a few other businesses on Warren Street. By the end of the that decade, *The Times* published many descriptions of Hudson as a new destination for arts and culture. At the turn of the 21st century, Hudson was booming. Around this time, *The Times* covered a pivotal moment for Hudson. In the early 2000s the construction of a cement plant threatened new developments in the city but was poised to bring back industry. *The Times* covered the fight to “stop the plant” and the subsequent victory of symbolized “the new winning out over old” in the city. Following this victory, coverage of Hudson accelerated and diversified but was still all descriptive and largely positive. This is to say that coverage of Hudson always described the state of the city, as perceived by *The New York Times* and the exciting developments within the city.

This section of coverage begins nearly 30 years after gentrification first started in Hudson. Many of the articles during this period were are similar to those which appeared in the previous section. These pieces “advertise” new businesses opening in Hudson. This section is also marked by a new conception of Hudson’s current state of gentrification. Here, Hudson is described as a city that has gone through the process of gentrification and come out on the other

side “transformed.”<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, coverage from this period implies that changes in Hudson are permanent and that the city has gone from a place to visit, to a place where one can live and support oneself. Findings from this section indicate that Hudson has developed a diverse economy in which people can live and work full-time, shifted from a second home destination to an alternative small city and drawn a population of creative individuals. At this time, the paper also openly acknowledges that gentrification has occurred.

These articles reflect back on what “has happened” in Hudson. They place gentrification as part of the city's recent past and explain how this process has produced present day Hudson. The articles address the development of gentrification overtly but only as a process which has already occurred in the city. They describe the life of Hudson residents in greater detail than in previous phases and provide a snapshot of what Hudson “is like” during this moment in time.

In this chapter I will draw from descriptions of the creative class to explain the framing of Hudson by *The Times* between 2007 and 2016. This framing, is very similar to descriptions of the creative class proposed by Richard Florida in his book *The Rise of The Creative Class*. The thesis of Florida's book is that there is a class of people within the United States who have never really been studied until now. This creative class drives the development of a place. *The Rise of The Creative Class* has been widely critiqued as it asserts that cities which attract creative individuals grow and develop while places unable to attract the creative class will not succeed.

As Melinda Milligan notes, the creative class thesis is not critical about what kind of development the creative class creates<sup>110</sup>. In other words, *The Rise of the Creative Class* does not ask the key question, “for whom is development intended” when the creative class is involved.

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<sup>109</sup> Thomas, "Hudson, N.Y."

<sup>110</sup> Melinda J. Milligan, "The Individual and City Life: A Commentary on Richard Florida's “Cities and the Creative Class”," *City & Community* 2, no. 1 (2003).

Florida identifies a social group of people who he believes are the driving force of development in post-industrial cities. He maintains that these individuals move to certain cities which offer “abundant high quality experiences,” “openness to diversity of all kinds” and opportunities to validate their identities.”<sup>111</sup> In this chapter, I will show how findings from 29 articles written between 2007 and 2016 advertise these “pull” factors in the case of Hudson.

### **“Abundant High Quality Experiences”**

Florida believes that the creative class are drawn to “authentic high quality experiences.”<sup>112</sup> By this, he means that:

“physical attractions that most cities focus on—sports stadiums, freeways, urban malls, and tourism-and-entertainment districts that resemble theme parks—are irrelevant, insufficient, or actually unattractive to many creative-class people. What they look for in communities are abundant high-quality experiences”<sup>113</sup>

*The Times* identifies and narrates these high quality experiences at great length in the second phase of coverage, but in this phase more robust descriptions of the kinds of “high quality experiences” Hudson provides are developed. In previous sections, coverage about Hudson often portrayed the city as offering one “type” of experience. In the first chapter, Hudson was a struggling city. At that time, the only attraction to Hudson was Olana and the few antiques stores on Warren Street. This characterization continues into the first part of the second phase of coverage (between 1997 and the early 2000s). During this time a number of arts and cultural activities were also starting to be advertised by *The Times*. These expanded offerings indicated that a more diversified economy was developing in Hudson and that there were more people in Hudson to engage in this economy.

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<sup>111</sup> Richard Florida, “Cities and the Creative Class,” *City & Community* 2, no. 1 (2003): 7.

<sup>112</sup> Florida, “Cities and the Creative,” 9.

<sup>113</sup> Florida, “Cities and the Creative,” 9.

This finding only becomes more apparent in the third phase of Hudson's coverage. In this section, a diverse sampling of businesses is mentioned. Hotels, home goods store, antiques store, galleries and music venues are all covered in this section and at many moments these businesses are referred to as one of many of their kind. For instance, one article entitled, "An Upriver Current" explains that many "City Chefs Head to the Hudson Valley, Lured by Fresh Ingredients."<sup>114</sup> The article continues by detailing the various newly opened restaurants in Hudson and discusses the trend of high profile chefs moving upstate to make the area a "culinary destination." Two other articles function in the same way although here the focus is on various antiques stores<sup>115</sup> and arts along Warren Street.<sup>116</sup> One article claims that the city has "reinvented" itself to become "...the place to go for a rustic French country table, a pair of Swedish sirocco chairs or a quirky objet d'art."<sup>117</sup> It continues, explaining that Hudson has diversified. Hudson now boasts not only 50 antiques shops, but also galleries, restaurants and lively performance arts venues. Coupled with the diversification of Hudson's economy is the coverage of more experiential activities in Hudson. In this section several articles talk about Basilica Hudson, an art space opened by "musician Melissa Auf der Maur and the filmmaker Tony Stone...in a reclaimed 19th-century factory steps away from the town's train station."<sup>118</sup> Basilica is described as a place "where taste has become serious sport."<sup>119</sup> In another article, a newcomer to Hudson provides an anecdote about meeting a friend at a Pilates class they both

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<sup>114</sup> Julia Moskin, "An UpRiver Current: City Chefs Head to the Hudson Valley, Lured by Fresh Ingredients," *New York Times*, August 13, 2013.

<sup>115</sup> Anita Gates, "The Nuts and Bolts of an Antiquing Trip," *New York Times*, July 4, 2008.

<sup>116</sup> Kathryn Matthews, "Winter Weekends: Hudson's Art and Antiques," *New York Times*, December 31, 2008.

<sup>117</sup> Matthews, "Winter Weekends."

<sup>118</sup> Dawn Chan, "Art Matters: Two Downtown Manhattan Gallerists Join Forces Upstate," *New York Times*, January 14, 2014.

<sup>119</sup> Green, "Cultivating Hudson."



attended on Warren Street.<sup>120</sup> In this phase, *The New York Times* also advertises authentic experiences available in towns close to Hudson. *The Times* published a 36-Hours piece on the Hudson Valley which brands the area as abundant in high quality experiences. In an article entitled “Williamsburg on the Hudson,” a number of high quality experiences are described in various Hudson Valley towns which have now come to resemble those found in Brooklyn. The experiences in *The Times* coverage stand in stark contrast to those found in the sprawl of suburbia.

### **“Openness to Diversity of all Kinds”**

I had wandered around the town’s wide main drag, Warren Street, which had a CVS, two coffee shops, an apothecary, an animal shelter with kittens in the window, a farm-to-table diner (Grazin’) and an inordinate number of antique shops. Sure, stuffy weekenders clogged the sidewalks, but so did loud teenagers, groups of women in head scarves and young parents. And weirdos. So many weirdos, beardos, a guy on a unicycle. A woman in a motorized wheelchair clutching a small dog wearing sunglasses. “This” I told Patrick “is possible.”<sup>121</sup>

The excerpt above is from Reyhan Harmanci’s op-ed essay about moving to Hudson from San Francisco. As a member of the creative class -- Harmanci is a writer -- she explains being drawn to the urban “feel” of the city. As she explains in the excerpt above, this feeling was the result of diversity in the city.

The creative class is drawn to places which are diverse, although actual racial diversity is rarely mentioned in any of the articles. In this phase, Hudson is frequently described as an “urban” place. As a new economy grew and diversified in Hudson, characterizations of the city also changed. Between 1985 and 2006 Hudson was often equated with vacation destinations like the Hamptons or Connecticut but in this section, these comparisons change. Rather than the Hamptons, Hudson begins to be painted as a more manageable small city for drop-out New

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<sup>120</sup> Reyhan Harmanci, "Giving up my Small-Town Fantasy," *New York Times*, September 3, 2014.

<sup>121</sup> Harmanci, "Giving up my."

Yorkers. At first, a few articles make broad comparisons by describing the “urban feel” of Hudson. For instance, an author explains that “Hudson feels incongruously cosmopolitan” and another tells of Hudson's evolution into the “urban”:

“Hudson is evolving,” he added. “It’s always on the verge of something, but now it does seem like there’s a lot of momentum being built. There’s this great urban vibe you don’t find in other rural towns.”<sup>122</sup>

Another article explains that, as a result of Hudson’s gentrification, the city has become “...a slice of SoHo along the Hudson, with a new waterfront park that has a sense of vitality most small towns could only dream of.”<sup>123</sup> In another article, a business owner in Hudson explains that “Hudson...has the feel of SoHo decades” ago. He clarifies that “...it’s manageable, it’s beautiful, it has infrastructure that can inspire you and facilitate your needs and get you to feel like you’re part of a moment of discovery.”<sup>124</sup> These comparisons continue and become more specific as Hudson eventually becomes favorably compared with Brooklyn. One author calls gentrification in Hudson the “Brooklynization” of the Hudson Valley. In another article a new resident to Hudson explains that the city has a “patina of all things Brooklyn”<sup>125</sup>. Possibly the most vivid example of this comparison can be found within the article “Williamsburg On the Hudson” which narrates changes in many Hudson Valley towns as people are priced out of New York City and create “mini-Brooklyns” upstate. The author compares various towns in the Hudson Valley to neighborhoods in New York City.<sup>126</sup> This shift in comparison provides insight into another important finding from this section of coverage. Hudson was once compared to second home and vacation destinations but is now being framed as an alternative to New York City.

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<sup>122</sup> Penelope Green, "Cultivating Hudson: Enter the Tastemakers," *New York Times*, January 15, 2014

<sup>123</sup> Peter Applebome, "Two Rebirths, Miraculous but Unfinished," *New York Times*, June 14, 2009.

<sup>124</sup> Peter Applebome, "Williamsburg on the Hudson," *New York Times*, August 5, 2011.

<sup>125</sup> Reyhan Harmanci, "Giving up my."

<sup>126</sup> Applebome, "Williamsburg on ."

Reporting on Hudson has long followed a pattern of comparing the city to other places. In the previous section these comparisons were often made between Hudson and other second home locations like the Hamptons or Connecticut and asserted that Hudson was an alternative to these more “stuffy” locations because of its bohemian history and socioeconomic diversity. Now, Hudson is seen as an alternative to urban life. It is described as a small town with a distinctly urban feel. Hudson’s equation to New York is evidence of *The New York Times*’ perception of the course of its gentrification. There is a certain irony in the fact that Hudson was first “settled” by New Yorkers and that these New Yorkers have now created a place just like New York in Hudson.

**“Opportunities to Validate their Identities”: The Amassing of the Creative Class in Hudson**

Mr. [Drew] Lang [a Manhattan architect] is betting that “there is a density of creative people in the area,” he said, who will appreciate his flourishes and amenities. “Either directly creative people, like writers and artists, or people in other fields who are interested in things that are design-forward. Like people, of course, draw other like people.”<sup>127</sup>

Members of the creative class have been coming to Hudson for decades. Coverage of Hudson in the previous two phases has certainly indicated their existence in the city, although during this phase many articles provide specific details about life in Hudson as a member of the creative class. We see a shift in the way that this group thinks of themselves in the process of gentrification and additionally are able to understand what has drawn them to Hudson and what will keep them there. These findings provide insight into what life is like for creative individuals who live in Hudson or do business there. Findings from this section show how creative individuals are able to validate their identities in Hudson by living among other members of the creative class, and engaging in activities which validate their creative identities. These findings

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<sup>127</sup> Green, "Cultivating Hudson."

also indicate the kinds of community ties that the creative class prefers. These findings, show how *The Times*, a paper written by members of the creative class, advertises the ways that creative individuals validate their identities in Hudson. This creates a very pro-creative class narrative for the city that further draws these individuals to Hudson.

The creative class is broadly defined as a group who “creates meaningful new forms”<sup>128</sup> in their life practice. This group is divided into two broad categories. The first, is the “super creative core”. This new class includes:

“scientists and engineers, university professors, poets and novelists, artists, entertainers, actors, designers, and architects, as well as the “thought leadership” of modern society: nonfiction writers, editors, cultural figures, think-tank researchers, analysts, and other opinion-makers.”<sup>129</sup>

The other category of the creative class includes “creative professionals.”<sup>130</sup> These individuals:

“work in a wide range of knowledge-based occupations in high-tech sectors, financial services, the legal and health-care professions, and business management. These people engage in creative problem-solving, drawing on complex bodies of knowledge to solve specific problems. Doing so typically requires a high degree of formal education and thus a high level of human capital.”<sup>131</sup>

Based on census data, Florida finds nearly 38 million Americans belong to the creative class and that they make up 30% of the workforce in the United States.

### **The Creative Class in Hudson**

Descriptions of the creative class coming to Hudson have existed in all phases of *The Times*' coverage. But in this section these descriptions are more even more illustrative. In this third phase, a number of articles focus directly on the everyday lives of creative people in Hudson.

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<sup>128</sup> Richard Florida, "Cities and the Creative Class," *City & Community* 2, no. 1 (2003): 8.

<sup>129</sup> Florida, "Cities and the Creative," 8.

<sup>130</sup> Florida, "Cities and the Creative," 8.

<sup>131</sup> Florida, "Cities and the Creative," 8.

In 2008 an article entitled “Foodies on the Hudson” describes ten chefs who have moved to Hudson and the Hudson Valley to open restaurants. This piece focuses less on the restaurants and more on the aspects of the area that are drawing creative individuals to the Hudson Valley. The article also tells the story of many restaurant goers in the area, also creative individuals, who have been enjoying the “culinary explosion.” “Williamsburg on the Hudson,” another long article about the migration of creative individuals upstate, focuses on how people are moving out of Brooklyn and into the Hudson Valley. Here, nearly every paragraph opens with the name of one individual who has recently moved upstate. The story of Melissa Auf der Mauer, the former bassist of The Smashing Pumpkins, is featured. Zak Pelaccio receives an entire article about his experience moving to Hudson and opening two restaurants in “Hudson, N.Y.: An Elegant Transformation.” The writer describes visiting Hudson for the weekend and running into a bunch of friends from New York who are now living in Hudson.

One of the most illuminating of these articles is about the creative class is “Giving Up My Small Town Fantasy” by Reyhan Harmanci. She writes about her experience moving from San Francisco to Hudson with her husband. It was published as part of a series of op-eds which are described as “personal essays on the news of the world and the news of our lives.”<sup>132</sup> Harmanci moved to Hudson with her husband after being priced out of San Francisco and offered a job the Hudson-based magazine *Modern Farmer*. The piece gives us a sense of how developed the creative class is in Hudson. Harmanci opens the piece with an anecdote about a Pilates class on Warren Street and continues by saying that Hudson is “buoyed by an influx of city folk priced out or just tired of urban life”.<sup>133</sup> Both Harmanci and her husband moved to

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<sup>132</sup> Harmanci, "Giving up my."

<sup>133</sup> Harmanci, "Giving up my."

Hudson to enter creative fields, Harmanci at a magazine start up and her husband to write a novel. The couple notes that moving to Hudson was a risk but as Harmanci explains:

“We were betting on the fact that we wouldn’t be alone in fleeing the big city for a small town. Urban living has become unthinkably expensive for many middle-class creative types. A 2010 study from the *Journal of Economic Geography* found a trifecta of reasons some rural areas have grown instead of shrunk: the creative class, entrepreneurial activity and outdoor amenities. In 2012, a University of Minnesota research fellow called the influx of 30-to-40-somethings into rural Minnesota towns a “brain gain” — flipping the conventional wisdom on the exodus from the boonies to the big city.”<sup>134</sup>

Harmanci and her husband did find their people in Hudson, but the social networks Harmanci had built in other cities were much more robust and rewarding. She writes, “I had taken for granted the networks running beneath my life in San Francisco and New York, the former co-workers and college friends and ex-paramours.” Harmanci and her husband eventually gave up their small town fantasy proving that although creative people have amassed in Hudson, the networks in the city are still relatively weak. Although this article tells of a couple leaving Hudson, it still supports visions of the creative class in Hudson. The article addresses all three reasons that the creative class is drawn to a place. Harmanci describes diversity in the city, she and her husband have opportunities to validate their identities through social networks in the city, and the city is abundant in high quality experiences which Harmanci also describes. The recitation of these “pull factors” by *The New York Times* amplifies that narrative to a creative class audience.

### **The End of the Pioneer Mentality**

Another important finding from this article addresses the changing mentality of Hudson’s creative class. In moving to Hudson, Harmanci explains that “...we weren’t pioneering some crazy new way of life. Upstate New York has been attracting formerly urban folk for

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<sup>134</sup> Harmanci, "Giving up my."

decades.”<sup>135</sup> This is an important shift which is reflected in several other articles from this period. The creative class are no longer pioneering a life in Hudson because that way of life already exists. Rather, they are joining it.

Three articles during this period also mention pioneers in a similar fashion. In an article detailing the real estate market in Hudson the author explains that “...prices surprise some of the pioneers who were instrumental in Hudson's revival. Tom Noonan, one of the first dealers to move onto Warren Street, about 16 years ago, noted that “\$100,000 used to buy a big building; now they are \$375,000, \$450,000, or \$1 million.”<sup>136</sup> One such pioneer, Alana Hauptmann, is featured in a 2016 article about Hudson’s transformation. The reporter notes that in 1990 Hauptman and her husband “...moved up from the city and dedicated themselves to restoring the derelict space.”<sup>137</sup> When Hauptman is quoted as “a Hudson pioneer” she says that “....The town has changed dramatically over the years,” and tells *The Times*, “I am glad that my buildings have risen in value. But I do miss the old days.”<sup>138</sup>

When these statements are compared to previous articles about Hudson’s pioneering gentrifiers, it becomes clear that the days of the pioneer gentrifier are, supposedly, over and that this cycle of gentrification in Hudson is also over. In 2004, Jan Haavik of the Arts Council commended the couple who had just opened The Hudson River Theater by saying “They’re pioneers.” Here the pioneer gentrifier is taking on a different role and is moving to Hudson to make changes to the cultural landscape. In a 2002 article entitled “In Upstate Hills Modish Replaces Moo” one Hudson resident asserted that the city was more for “pioneers” and people who “did not mind it a little rough.” He continued by saying that “It's not picture perfect, there

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<sup>135</sup> Harmanci, "Giving up my."

<sup>136</sup> Cooper, "An Antiques."

<sup>137</sup> Thomas, "Hudson, N.Y."

<sup>138</sup> Thomas, "Hudson, N.Y."

are mobile homes.”<sup>139</sup> The shift indicates the present state of the city is all but “rough”. For someone to see themselves as a pioneer they understand that their way of life is not the social norm in a given space and that they are “pioneering” this way of life. This shift in mentality says something about the phase of gentrification Hudson perceived to be in. By 2007 *The Times* writes about Hudson as a place where gentrification has “happened.” As a result, people moving to Hudson are no longer pioneers. They are only members of the creative class drawn by the new place that pioneers have created in Hudson.

### **We Can Talk about it Now That it's Over: Acknowledgement of Gentrification in Hudson**

“Here in Hudson, off intensely gentrified Warren Street, Mr. Pelaccio and his wife, Jori Jayne Emde, have just opened Fish and Game, a restaurant that is also a fever dream of luxury and rural kitsch, blending elements of Chez Panisse, Trader Vic’s, Dwell magazine and a yard sale at an Italian hunting lodge.”<sup>140</sup>

In the last two phases, as Hudson gone through its most intense period of change, the process of gentrification was never overtly mentioned by in *The Times*’ coverage. In this phase, as coverage puts Hudson’s gentrification in its past, the term “gentrification” appears in several articles.

In this phase the word “gentrification” is used in five articles and the framing of the process in Hudson varies. In 2008 gentrification is first mentioned by *The Times* in an article entitled: “Learning from Tijuana: Hudson, N.Y., Considers Different Housing Model”. This article is an absolute anomaly in coverage and will be discussed in the next section of this chapter but it is important to note how in this article gentrification is considered a problematic process in Hudson that has had ramifications on Hudson’s poorer population. The article is about architect Teddy Cruz’s proposed affordable housing plan in the city of Hudson. Cruz first

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<sup>139</sup> Julie V. Iovine, "In Upstate Hills, Modish Replaces Moo," *New York Times*, August 22, 2002.

<sup>140</sup> Moskin, "An UpRiver."



developed this plan when he “...received an unexpected call from David Deutsch, an artist who runs a nonprofit foundation that sponsors arts programs in Hudson, N.Y.” Mr. Deutsch explained to Cruz that he “was worried about the effects of gentrification on the town’s poorest residents, many of whom live in decaying neighborhoods just out of view of the transplanted New Yorkers and weekend antique shoppers ambling down its main strip.<sup>141</sup> This excerpt seems odd and out of place given the findings from this content analysis which show how supportive coverage has been of developments in Hudson. But it is important to note that in this excerpt, Deutsch is expressing concern about the gentrification which has already taken place, again putting Hudson’s gentrification in the past. In another article, one Hudson resident expresses concern about gentrification which could occur if businesses expand up Warren Street:

Marie Balle, 47, is the proprietor of Look Hudson, a three-year-old vintage and contemporary clothing store on Warren Street and a member of the Hudson Antiques Dealers Association, which includes all manner of retailers and has just over 60 members. “How do you spread regeneration north of Warren Street?” asked Ms. Balle, who is also the secretary of the local Democratic committee. “How do you insure that regeneration doesn’t lead to gentrification that kicks everybody out?”<sup>142</sup>

Balle, a member of the creative class, here expresses consciousness about the process of gentrification which is typical of new liberal members of the community in Hudson. Her concerns coupled with Deutsch's provide a positive view of what further development might look like in Hudson. But these critical views of gentrification are coupled with more positive understandings of the process in Hudson. In the same article where Balle is quoted, a counterpoint to her concern is presented. The reporter quotes Sam Pratt, a community activist and influential blogger, who argues that “because it’s a small town populated with a lot of people with taste, there is a lot of griping about gentrification. Hudson has a lot of social issues, but the

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<sup>141</sup> Nicolai Ourourssoff, "Learning From Tijuana: Hudson, N.Y. Considers Different Housing Model," *New York Times*, February 19, 2008

<sup>142</sup> Green, "Cultivating Hudson."

alternative is going back to a lot of boarded-up storefronts.”<sup>143</sup> Here, Pratt seems to say that gentrification in Hudson, is better than the alternative. His argument is often echoed in literature that supports gentrification as a positive process. Again, it is important to note that Pratt speaks about gentrification as if it were a process which Hudson has already undergone rather than an on-going activity.

Possibly the most positive framing of gentrification is illustrated in an article on The Rivertown Lodge. One of the most ironic twists in the short history of Hudson's development is the story of the hotel. Even though the Lodge has only been open for a short time, Rivertown takes reservations five months in advance. Owned and operated by two New Yorkers, Rivertown gets a lot of press but no mention is made of the building's former use as a homeless shelter. The article praises the hotel and author John Wogan closes the piece:

Perhaps nothing symbolizes the gentrification of a town quite like a “cool” new hotel. And while Hudson’s rapid transformation brings about mixed feelings, when it looks (and tastes) as good as this, even cynics might admit that change isn’t always a bad thing.<sup>144</sup>

Framings of gentrification and the continued discussion of gentrification as something which Hudson has already undergone raise important questions about the thinking of Hudson residents and what future gentrification might look like in that city. It is important to note who speaks about gentrification and who does not. The process of gentrification is never discussed by members of the Hudson community who are themselves at risk of being negatively affected by gentrification. In these articles, we never hear from the 25% of people who live in poverty in Hudson. These findings also present two conflicting opinions about gentrification. Balle and Deutsch express concerns about gentrification while two others show support for the process.

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<sup>143</sup> Green, "Cultivating Hudson."

<sup>144</sup> John Wogan, "A Hudson Valley Hotel- With a Brooklyn Twist," New York Times, October 6, 2015.

These conflicting mentalities could have adverse effects in a city which is still gentrifying, especially as gentrification expands beyond Warren Street. Home prices and rents continue to rise all over Hudson and there have been more and more instances of displacement. All articles talk about gentrification as if it is an occurrence which has happened. To put the gentrification of Hudson in the past is to say that it has happened, and is now over.

### **Tolerance**

The concern some members of the community expressed over gentrification in Hudson is indicative of an important facet of the creative class. Florida notes that the creative class is drawn to areas which indicate a tolerance and awareness of inequality. This awareness is reflected in another thematic shift in coverage. In this section, segments coded under “crime, corruption and social problems” changed dramatically. As coverage shifts from attracting people to Hudson to covering people making lives in Hudson, divisions and social problems in the city are once again foregrounded.

Between 1985 and 1996 problems in Hudson were at the forefront of coverage on the city. Articles about drugs and corruption appeared frequently during this time. In the second phase of coverage between 1997 and 2006, articles minimized problems in Hudson often only vaguely mentioning these problems or relegating them to Hudson’s history. In this section, characterizations of social problems once again change. Between 2006 and 2016 problems in Hudson are discussed in four different articles. Two of these articles are about divisions in the city and the others consider problems in the city. Unlike the previous section where problems in Hudson were minimized or unmentioned, in this phase reporting on issues are critical and often prescriptive.

In 2009, one article describes Hudson as a “Once a raucous industrial city spewing pollutants into the river, then a boarded-up postindustrial corpse, now, like the river, it’s both a marvel of reclamation and a problematic unfinished story.”<sup>145</sup> The article continues to describe a population which has been left out of Hudson’s recent transformation. Writer Peter Applebome describes observing men in “Harley-Davidson jackets” and kids “in black do-rags” who, according to Applebome, have watched the Hudson that once supported them wither away. The piece is well-researched and points out that only two factories remain in the city. It also describes how the defeat of the St. Lawrence Cement plant was “a significant environmental victory and a blessing for the downtown, but not necessarily for those for whom the fancy galleries are way out of reach.”<sup>146</sup> Applebome also interviews a Hudson resident who explains that job prospects in Hudson are not what they used to be, “Everything’s closing or being downsized. It’s a great town in some ways, but I’m pretty disgusted. There’s no living here unless you’re rich.”<sup>147</sup> The article closes by looking towards Hudson’s future. It asserts that in order for the city to “finish its transformation” it must provide blue collar jobs to Hudson’s “other half.” The piece is interesting in that it addresses Hudson’s divisions and looks towards the future of the city. Rather than simply describing developments in the city Applebome prescribes a solution for the city’s problems which are, for the first time, addressed here as actual problems.

Another article mentions, for the first time in Hudson, the high poverty rates in the city. This passage is found in the article “Cultivating Hudson.” It seems to be the best summation of Hudson's current state.

“The city’s demographics tell a story of two or even three cities. With a population of just over 6,700, nearly unchanged since 2000, more than 25 percent of Hudson’s residents are

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<sup>145</sup> Peter Applebome, “Two Rebirths, Miraculous but Unfinished,” *New York Times*, June 14, 2009.

<sup>146</sup> Applebome, “Two Rebirths.”

<sup>147</sup> Applebome, “Two Rebirths.”

below the poverty line. Nearly 10 percent of its work force, however, is self-employed, as it is in San Francisco and Los Angeles. (The national average, according to the 2010 census, is 6.5 percent.) Small, one-man or one-woman businesses can be a boon to cities like Hudson, in that they revitalize once- derelict properties. But they don't directly help the job situation."<sup>148</sup>

This passage is a perfect summation of the inequality in Hudson. In 2008 *The New Times* architecture section published a piece entitled "Learning From Tijuana: Hudson, N.Y. Considers Different Housing Model" The article tells the story of Teddy Cruz an architect proposing a plan to redesign public housing in the Hudson. The plan would mix residents of many different economic backgrounds and help bridge divides in the city. Although nothing ever came of Cruz's plan, the fact that it existed and was publicized by *The Times* also stands in contrast to typical depictions of Hudson. *The Times* coverage addresses another first within the city. Here growth regime actors seem focused on developing Hudson for all of its residents.

The article was published in 2009. Since that time there has been no report of this plan moving forward. Although it is difficult to know what actually happened, the proposal coincided with the 2008 housing market crash. Since that time, no alternative plan has been proposed. As both of these passages come from articles written in the last five years, they raise important questions about whether the elite class in Hudson will address socioeconomic divisions in the city. Does the presence of these passages change the imaginations of Hudson residents? Does this mean that divisions in the city will be addressed or is this just an outlier to a dominant pro-gentrification narrative? Tolerance and sensitivity to inequality are two characteristics highly valued by the creative class but as Melinda Milligan cautions, this group of individuals often catalyzes development that is in their best interests. Thus far, this has certainly been the case in

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<sup>148</sup> Green, "Cultivating Hudson."

Hudson. Although going forward it is possible that *New York Times* coverage will function to bridge divisions and expose inequalities in the city.

### **Conclusion:**

My interest in this project was piqued because Hudson was, for many years, an oddity in the area I grew up in. It was a largely impoverished city with a racially diverse population sitting in the center of a county that is conservative, mostly working class, white and rural. Hudson had a small population of gay men and women who owned the types of establishments that most of the city was financially unable to patronize. The city felt misplaced, and even stranger was the notably large amount of attention paid by the media to the city during my childhood. Changes in Hudson over the span of my life have been radical and well-recorded by *The New York Times*.

Upon embarking on this project I realized that Hudson was not a singular case. Some literature hinted at this, for instance an article I read in the beginning stages of research noted that:

In the mid-1980s, the New York Times began hyping the neighborhood [Williamsburg] (Dorian 1986), although this was short-circuited by the 1987 recession (Hackworth and Smith 2001). In 1992, New York Magazine targeted Williamsburg as 'The New Bohemia', as an extension of Manhattan's underground hipness (Gooch 1992). A decade after its first promotional plug, the Times again extolled the area as a viable place to live (Cohen 1996). Only in the late 1990s did the physical reality of gentrification begin to match the contrivances of the media.<sup>149</sup>

More evidence that indicated that Hudson was not a singular case was found when I started working through *The Times* archive. Type in a city or neighborhood that has undergone gentrification in the last 50 years and up will come any number of articles about changes in that place. I found similar articles about many neighborhoods in New York City and about many Hudson Valley cities and towns.

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<sup>149</sup> Joe Schlichtman, John, and Jason Patch. "Contextualizing Impressions of Neighborhood Change: Linking Business Directories to Ethnography." *City & Community* 7, no. 3 (September 2008): 273-293. *SocINDEX with Full Text*, EBSCOhost (accessed April 30, 2017).

When a place changes, it is news. In the case of Hudson and possibly in other places which have received similar coverage, the reporting of change is not consciously slanted in the direction of certain actors in the gentrification process. But news is reported by a certain class for a certain class and so there is an inherent structural problem. In the case of Hudson, the news of a winebar opening receives coverage in *The Times*. But dropout rates in Hudson High School go unmentioned because they hold no relevance or interest to *The Times*' readership. So, a narrative is produced that affirms the values of a certain class of people, is widely disseminated and forms the collective imagination of that group. These narratives, among more diverse narratives, are imperative to the process and the study of gentrification. They show us the specifics of that process. In the case of Hudson, we see how aesthetic considerations and history are utilized to advertise the city, how actors are framed in a specific way and how even crime and corruption can be presented to affirm a particular reality. The gentrification process is different in every place that it occurs and this study shows that there needs to be a more far-reaching, holistic study of place and neighborhood change which includes the narratives of the elite and creative classes, the newcomers as well as the permanent, long-time residents.

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