

May 6, 2021 Dr. David Satcher Community Health Awards – Public Health Grand Rounds

E. South Q&A

**Question:** My understanding is that areas that are gentrified force out underserved communities and replace them with more privileged ones. In turn, those communities experience lower crime. What do you suspect the driving factors and mechanism of that crime reduction in gentrified areas?

**Answer:** I would not think of the neighborhood place-based interventions discussed as gentrified areas. Most of the places that these interventions take place are incredibly poor areas that are far from gentrifying. The academic literature on gentrification is limited, but what does exist suggests that large-scale urban redevelopment initiatives are more what spur gentrification, not smaller scale more individual efforts such as vacant lot greening or abandoned house remediation.

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**Question:** Thank you so much, Dr. South--this is tremendous work! How can this data be used to promote more public and private investors, especially those who have a commitment to the people in the community (as opposed to simply the profit)? Are there other types of "reimagined" low-cost models you advocate as solutions to addressing gun violence, mental health, etc.?

**Answer:** *The Washington Post* recently had an excellent editorial series called "Reimagine Safety" that laid out a lot of the data behind non-police interventions to reduce crime. I wrote an op-ed in that series and highly recommend the whole series to get more ideas along these lines.

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**Question:** Where there any improvements or community feedback recharging the education system as neighborhoods became more aesthetically pleasing? (How were schools and education affected by your research methods and implementation?)

**Answer:** We did not evaluate schools or education. This would certainly be an interesting line of inquiry.

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**Question:** I'm a Vision Keeper for a Faith-Based organization located in Zip Code 14605, Rochester, NY, where our life expectancy based on our Zip Code is 70.8 Years. Where would you recommend we start with a Greening Lots Program in order to directly impact the dramatic increase in violence in our neighborhood?

**Answer:** I would highly recommend connecting with the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society, as they have pioneered this work in Philadelphia, including navigating the legal channels needed to do work on privately owned vacant spaces.

