Gentrification in Northern Queens?

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A New Report from the Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies at The Graduate Center, CUNY Studies How Jackson Heights and Corona Have Changed

NEW YORK, February 11, 2019—The Graduate Center of The City University of New York’s Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies (CLACLS) has released a report on New York City’s Jackson Heights and Corona neighborhoods. Among the waves of gentrification and neighborhood change experienced by the city, these two neighborhoods present a gentrification pattern unlike others.

The report, titled “Gentrification in Northern Queens? Demographic and Socioeconomic Transformations in Queens Community District 3: Jackson Heights and Corona, 1990-2016” examines key socioeconomic and demographic trends in that period, specifically on the transformations on topics such as sex, race/ethnicity, age, employment, income, poverty rates, and educational attainment.

The findings may come as a surprise to some. In short, the Latino community of Jackson Heights/Corona is not being displaced in any meaningful way. On the contrary, while there has certainly been an increase in the income of non-Hispanic whites living in the district over the last decade, the non-Hispanic white population has decreased sharply between 1990 and 2016, while the Latino community has grown considerably. But that is not to say that the area has not gone through important transformations. The total number of Latinos in Jackson Heights/Corona has almost doubled since 1990, and the ethnic makeup of the neighborhood’s Latino community has changed significantly.

Other key findings:

- While the majority of Jackson Heights/Corona residents are foreign-born, the number of domestic-born persons moving into the neighborhood has increased steadily over the last two decades.

- The median household income of Latino residents is lower than it was in 2010 (when adjusted for inflation in 2016 dollars), and Latino poverty rates have risen steadily since 1990. Almost half of the community’s Mexican population lived in poverty in 2016.

- The neighborhood’s citizenship rates are also up since 1990, especially among the Dominican and Colombian populations, as are the percentage of Latinos who speak English “well or very well.”
Educational attainment rates have shown consistent improvement among all race/ethnic groups and all Latino national subgroups. Despite this improvement, the 2016 data indicate that Latinos had the lowest levels of educational attainment in Jackson Heights/Corona, particularly the Mexican population (almost half of whom have not graduated high school).

Complete and detailed data for non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, Asians, and Latinos are presented throughout the report. These data may be used as basic reference materials for researchers, journalists, students, and information seekers.

Contact Sebastián Villamizar-Santamaría, Director of Quantitative Research, for a PDF of the report at svillamizarsantamaria@gradcenter.cuny.edu.

About The Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies
The core mission of CLACLS is to actively support and advance the study of Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latinos in the U.S. in the doctoral programs of The Graduate Center, and to provide opportunities for Latino students at the Ph.D. level. CLACLS’s flagship program is the Latino Data Project, established in 2003 by Laird W. Bergad founding and current CLACLS director. Bergad is a distinguished professor in the Department of Latin American, Puerto Rican, and Latino Studies at Lehman College and with the Ph.D. Program in History at The Graduate Center. The Latino Data Project conducts detailed quantitative research on the Latino population of the United States and New York City metropolitan region, analyzing raw data files produced by the U.S. Census Bureau and other government agencies.

About The Graduate Center, CUNY
The Graduate Center of The City University of New York (CUNY) is a leader in public graduate education devoted to enhancing the public good through pioneering research, serious learning, and reasoned debate. The Graduate Center offers ambitious students more than 40 doctoral and master’s programs of the highest caliber, taught by top faculty from throughout CUNY — the nation’s largest public urban university. Through its nearly 40 centers, institutes, and initiatives, including its Advanced Science Research Center (ASRC), The Graduate Center influences public policy and discourse and shapes innovation. The Graduate Center’s extensive public programs make it a home for culture and conversation.