

**Art museums and their connection to neighborhood change:  
A case study of the Portland Art Museum in Oregon**

**by**

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of the requirements for the degree of  
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# Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved grandfather, Dr. Duane G. Meyer, who had been a constant source of support up until his death, just before the completion of this document. He will forever be an inspiration to me: a successful academic scholar, a loving family man, and an exemplary human being.

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There are countless people who have been invaluable to the analysis and completion of this dissertation. In no particular order: Dr. Scott Campbell, Dr. Harley Etienne, Dr. Carla Sinopoli, Dr. Larissa Larsen, Kristin Bayans, Stephanie Parrish, Dr. Michael Murawski, Brian Ferriso, present and former docents of the Portland Art Museum, the Portland Art Museum education department, the Portland Art Museum security team, the Portland Art Museum library, residents of the South Park Blocks neighborhood, and the Oregon Historical Society.

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# Abstract

Art museums often occupy highly contested urban space. Following the successes of art museums like the Guggenheim Bilbao, economic development literature has conceptualized art museums as beneficial anchor institutions that stabilize neighborhoods economically and socially, and catalysts that attract new development. However, an art museum's ability to attract new development and its connection to more privileged groups likely implicate it in the negative processes of gentrification, which include displacement, socio-cultural isolation of, and/or higher housing costs for residents. While many studies have investigated the local economic impact of art museums, few have investigated how art museums might influence socio-economic change in neighborhoods. My dissertation investigates the role of art museums in neighborhood change, particularly socio-economic change, and in creating high quality, inclusive, and economically sustainable neighborhoods.

In my research, I use mixed methods in two distinct analyses to understand the relationship between large-scale art museums and socio-economic and physical change in their neighborhoods. Starting with a quantitative analysis of socio-economic change in 154 neighborhoods adjacent to 59 regional/national art museums in the largest 50 U.S. cities, my dissertation then turns to an in-depth case study of the Portland Art

Museum (Oregon) and its surrounding neighborhood between 1890 and 2014 to trace the linkages between the institution and change in its neighborhood.

My research demonstrates that urban economic trajectory and institutional dynamics influence what role an art museum has in neighborhood change. Art museums are more likely to bestow anchoring benefits to their neighborhoods in shrinking economies, as well as are more inclined to support bridging between diverse social groups. Art museums in growing economies, while not linked by the data to significant displacement or increased housing costs in their adjacent neighborhoods, are inclined toward fostering relationships with more privileged groups and improving their status among their institutional peers. Thus, for community groups and planners to realize the benefits of art museums as neighborhood anchors, more public financial and human resource investment should be made in art museum programming, especially in high-growth cities.

# CHAPTER

## 1. Introduction

Art museums, organizations and spaces found in virtually all of the world's large cities, elicit polarized reactions on how they impact people and place. Scholars have noted that many see art museums as beneficial amenities necessary for any city wanting to attain a civilized and egalitarian populace<sup>1</sup> (Abt, 2010; Wittlin 1949) or wanting to catalyze economic activity (Grodach, 2010; Plaza, 2006). Others, more critically, see them as spaces that the wealthy and powerful use for the purposes of increasing land value (Harvey, 2001, Chapter 18; Logan and Molotch, 2005) and/or maintaining a stratified urban social hierarchy (Castells, 2002, pp. 343-366; Zukin, 1995). And yet to others, including many in the urban planning discipline, art museums are an afterthought; they see art museums simply as old institutions, with a predefined and static set of users, that have little impact on people or place. This dissertation argues that art museums can have a strong say in the fate of their neighborhoods, because of their land holdings in highly contested city centers, their connection to wealthy and powerful city boosters, and their public service mission. For these reasons, art museums should be considered potentially valuable partners with which planners can

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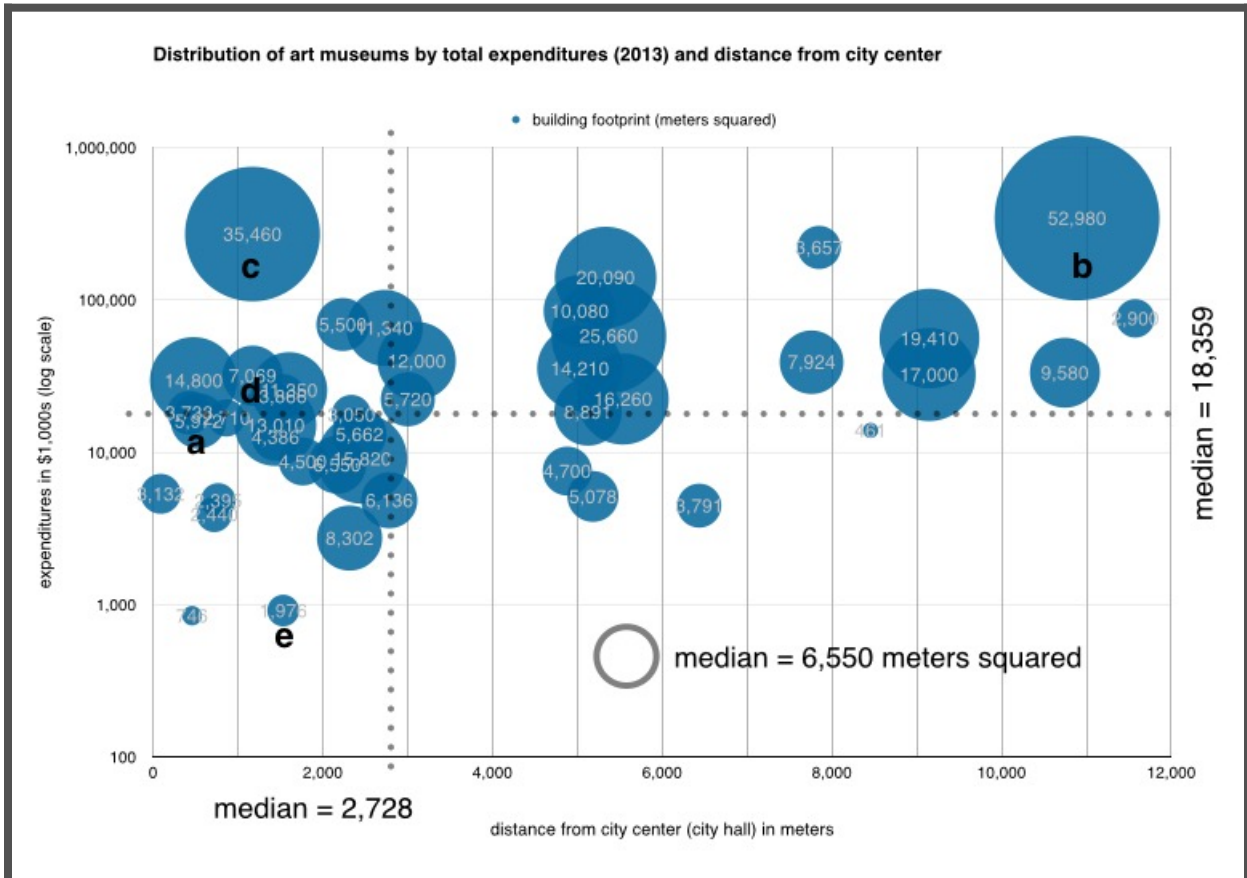
<sup>1</sup> As inspired by enlightenment philosophy during the 19th and early 20th centuries, in particular.

work to create high quality, diverse, and economically sustainable neighborhoods. The research contained in this dissertation analyzes how art museums affect neighborhood development and social space and under what circumstances that impact is good.

The question of whether or not art museums are good for neighborhoods engages two prominent debates among urban scholars, planners, and those affiliated with the arts. One debate, whether or not the arts and cultural industries lead to and are complicit in gentrification, defined as the displacement of vulnerable populations from neighborhoods, cultural exclusion, or cultural hegemony, has been discussed at least since these industries overtook manufacturing in prominence in the postindustrial global economy (Lees & Melhuish, 2015). This debate places cultural producers/artists on a continuum, as part of the dominant class of people who are knowing perpetrators of gentrification (Deutsche, 1984; Zukin, 1995), as the innocent pawns of a wealthy and dominant class of elite (Gadwa Nicodemus, 2013), or somewhere in-between (Ley, 2003). Government funded programs as early as the 1980s in the United Kingdom and the United States even espoused claims, despite the lack of sufficient evidence, that the arts would be an antidote to gentrification, a means for enabling social mixing and “urban renaissance” (Lees & Melhuish, 2015). Art museums, while certainly connected to the art/cultural industry implicated in this discussion, do not perfectly represent the actors personified in this debate. Thus, more clarity is required to properly position art museums in this debate, which is done in the literature review chapter of this dissertation.

The other debate this research engages is whether or not place-anchored organizations benefit their immediate surrounding social and economic environments. Some urban and economic scholars argue that for-profit corporations and non-profit organizations that are inextricably tied to a certain place (either because they have made too much financial investment to move or because their identity hinges on their location in a particular place) necessarily benefit their surrounding neighborhoods. The theoretical reasons these “anchor institutions” (as they are commonly referred to) benefit their geographical locations include their reliable purchasing and producing activities that keep a local economy going and their rational self-interest to ensure the well-being of local residents and their locales (Porter, 2010; Webber & Karlström, 2009). Critics of this anchor institution hypothesis argue that not everyone benefits from the economic activities of these institutions or their rational self-interest. Instead, other urban scholars suggest that financial motivations and/or social class identity, and not physical location, determine who benefits from these anchor institutions (Etienne, 2014; Zukin, 1995). Again, while there is some precedence for art museums being directly identified as anchor institutions (Birch, Griffin, Johnson, & Stover, 2014; Taylor & Luter, 2013), the literature review chapter of this dissertation more carefully positions art museums in this debate.

**FIGURE 1-1: SELECTED ART MUSEUM CHARACTERISTICS**

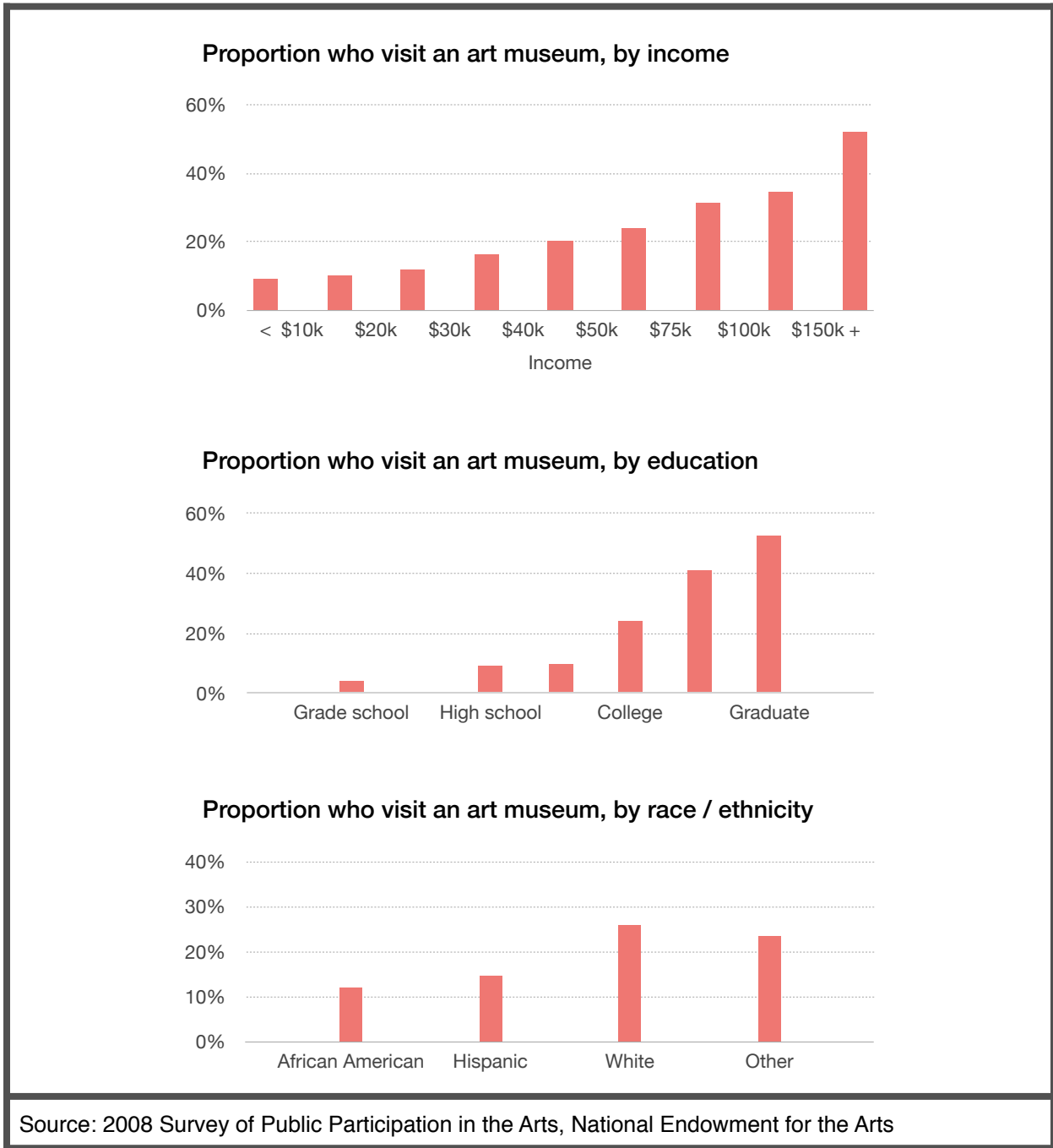


- key:
- a) Portland Art Museum
  - b) Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York City)
  - c) The Art Institute of Chicago
  - d) Seattle Art Museum
  - e) Utah Museum of Contemporary Art (Salt Lake City)

NB: These statistics are from a non-random sample of n=60 art museums selected from the 50 largest US cities by 2010 Census place population. Please see Figure A-1 in Appendix A for more information about the selection process.



**FIGURE 1-2: PROPORTION OF GROUPS WHO HAVE VISITED AN ART MUSEUM AT LEAST ONCE WITHIN ONE CALENDAR YEAR**



## Significance of this research

Many art museums, whether intended or not,<sup>2</sup> are now located in or near city centers (see Figure 1-1). These are highly contested spaces; they are places where ethnic groups, lower income groups, highly skilled and educated 'creative' people, the wealthy, the homeless, and real estate developers all vie for space to pursue their interests. In contrast with the emptying of city centers in the mid to late 20th century by middle-class and predominately white families looking to live in the greener pastures of suburbia, the 21st century has seen an opposite trend. Many middle-class whites, highly educated college graduates and creative types, and baby-boomers at retirement age are now moving back into city centers (Birch, 2002; Marcuse, 1985). This migration has been connected to the displacement of vulnerable groups (such as lower income groups and ethnic minority groups) through the gradual price increases of land (Deutsche, 1984; Harvey, 2001, Chapter 18; Marcuse, 1985). In addition, the aesthetic transformation of inner-city space to suit the dominant class' tastes is thought to alienate existing residents (Deutsche, 1984; Zukin, 1995).

Art museums, statistically more likely to be patronized by highly educated, wealthy, and white citizens (see Figure 1-2), might accentuate the gentrification process by attracting more privileged groups to live nearby, which may systematically displace existing residents who are vulnerable to dramatic rent / home value increases. Art museums might also decide to purchase and repurpose land nearby in the city center for

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<sup>2</sup> One trend of art museum building in the 19th Century established them just outside the bustle of downtowns, surrounded by or nearby parkspace. However, even many of these art museums now find themselves enveloped by their city's central business district.

investment purposes, or they might hold on to it for future expansion,<sup>3</sup> reducing the supply of land in an area of the city with growing demand for it. Museums' penchant for strong architectural statements that speak to a global community might also make art museums complicit in the aestheticization of urban space (Ley, 2005) that remakes inner city space to please the dominant class<sup>4</sup> (Deutsche, 1984; Lees & Melhuish, 2015; Ley, 2003), excluding groups who do not identify as part of the creative class (Ley, 2003).

On the other hand, art museums may benefit neighborhood communities by attracting the development of new neighborhood amenities and businesses. They may increase local business revenues by attracting wealthier residents. Or as part of their public service mission,<sup>5</sup> museums may (and often do) provide valued programs and spaces to their communities, such as free art classes, lectures, meeting space for local groups, jobs for local residents, places to escape extreme weather, public restrooms, or places to grab a bite to eat or read a newspaper, in addition to exhibiting art and safeguarding it for future generations. Art museums differentiate themselves from other anchor institutions like universities, hospitals, and sports stadia in their provision of space and amenities. Compared to these more traditional anchor institutions, art museums are

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<sup>3</sup> Art museums, given the right financial environment, appear to have expansionary tendencies. This will be analyzed in the following chapters of the dissertation.

<sup>4</sup> This is a prominent "Revanchist" critique, as mentioned in Lees & Melhuish (2015).

<sup>5</sup> See the work of Hilda Hein in her book, *The Museum in Transition* (2000). Elaine Gurian also devotes much of her scholarship to this issue. A more detailed exposition of this literature will take place in Chapter 2.

open to the general public for a longer period of time and provide a greater diversity of amenities.

To understand whether museums can be a positive force in neighborhoods, this dissertation examines not only the physical and socioeconomic environments of art museums, but also their internal dynamics, represented through a single case study. I will argue that art museums are spaces of conflict, where the interests of earning revenue, attaining prestige among the art community, and serving the public collide. It is this very conflict that make the art museum an important object of inquiry for those who study cities and care about the production of urban space. The relationships between art museum board members, art museum staff, and community members, as well as the economic health of their regions, have a great impact on how space in and around a museum is used, the programming the museum offers, and who benefits from that space and programming.

## Methodology

I approach the overarching dissertation question (*are art museums good for their surrounding neighborhoods?*) in three distinct ways, represented by three independent, but interrelated studies. The first uses a quantitative analysis of socioeconomic change in multiple art museum neighborhoods throughout the United States to identify whether art museums have anchored or gentrified their surroundings. This first study provides a generalized understanding of the socioeconomic context of neighborhoods near to major, national-scale, art museums, and changes in these neighborhoods. The last two

studies focus on a single case study of the Portland Art Museum in Oregon and its urban context.

I chose the single case study of the Portland Art Museum (Oregon) and its surrounding South Park Blocks neighborhood for the last two studies, and the bulk of this dissertation, for several reasons. First, the art museum has had a long history with its neighborhood and has experienced many regional economic and social changes, providing fertile ground for analyzing how these factors influenced the museum and neighborhood change. Second, the Portland Art Museum has given me wide-ranging access to its people, institutional culture and resources, except for a few select instances. This access could not be easily replicated with other institutions. Lastly, the Portland Art Museum's South Park Blocks neighborhood, today, contains an incredible socioeconomic diversity of people and spaces, from which I analyze the art museum's impact on different groups.

In the first study, I employ a broad, quantitative analysis of socioeconomic change between 1970 and 2010 in neighborhoods adjacent to 60 art museums located across the country. For this quantitative analysis, I use data from the Longitudinal Tract Data Base<sup>6</sup> to compare socioeconomic change in 156 art museum neighborhoods to 196 nearby (but not directly adjacent) neighborhoods, as well as to regional socioeconomic trends, measured at the county level. The results of this analysis suggest that art museum neighborhoods are associated mostly with evidence of anchoring (robust

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<sup>6</sup> Found at <http://www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/Researcher/Bridging.htm>.

increases in human capital) without the negative effects associated with gentrification, such as displacement or increases in housing price burdens.

In the second study, I use qualitative methods (30 interviews with neighborhood constituents<sup>7</sup> and museum employees; analyses of archived records and media, including an analysis of historical Sanborn insurance maps) to draw the connections between the Portland Art Museum in Oregon and the land use, real estate development, and changes in socioeconomic character of its surrounding neighborhood between 1890 and 2014. The results of these analyses describe a two-way causal relationship between the museum and its urban context (neighborhood, city, and region) that has created a socioeconomically diverse neighborhood and a culturally exclusive one, providing a complicated answer for whether or not the art museum has benefited its neighborhood.

The third and final study also draws on evidence from the single case study of the Portland Art Museum obtained with qualitative methods. Here, I use evidence from the Portland Art Museum to describe how the museum has changed internally as an organization between 1994 and 2014, how that change has affected the museum's provision of space and programming to its city and neighborhood, and whether that provision of space and programming has benefited its neighborhood. The period of 1994 to 2014 is significant for the museum, because it captures a drastic shift in museum management and philosophy before, during, and after the Great Recession.

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<sup>7</sup> These include neighborhood residents, people who work in the neighborhood, and people who visit the neighborhood.

For this study, I draw more heavily from my interviews with museum staff members and my observation of the operations of the museum as an intern between April and July, 2014. I conclude that the benefits and neighborhood receives from museum space and programming depend on the philosophies of museum staff and the autonomy they have within the non-profit management structure, given the ability of the institution to raise sufficient operating funds.

### Portland Art Museum in Oregon, its neighborhood, and its city

The Portland Art Museum (PAM) is one of the oldest art museums in the country and the oldest in the Pacific Northwest.<sup>8</sup> Founded originally as the Portland Art Association in 1892 by a group of Portland's wealthiest and most prominent citizens, the museum has evolved from a non-profit civic organization displaying casts (replicas) of Greek sculpture in the upper floor of the original Portland Library into an organization with its own extensive collection of original art works from around the world, located on two downtown Portland city blocks and inside its own dedicated building it has occupied since 1932 (ibid.).

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<sup>8</sup> See <http://portlandartmuseum.org/about/brief-history-museum/>.

**FIGURE 1-3: GOOGLE '3D' VIEW OF THE PORTLAND ART MUSEUM (LOOKING NORTHWEST)**



**Key:**

- 1) Portland Art Museum, Belluschi Building
- 2) Portland Art Museum, Sculpture court and public passage
- 3) Portland Art Museum, Mark Building (formerly Masonic Temple)
- 4) South Park Blocks
- 5) Northwest Film Center (incorporated by Portland Art Museum)
- 6) Young Women's Christian Association
- 7) Eliot Tower
- 8) St James Apartments (low income)
- 9) St James Lutheran Church
- 10) Safeway grocery store
- 11) Museum Place Apartments
- 12) The Jeffrey (housing for homeless population)
- 13) St Francis Apartments (low income)
- 14) First Congregational Church
- 15) Winningstad Theater
- 16) Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall
- 17) Roosevelt Hotel Apartments
- 18) Chaucer Court Apartments (low income seniors and disabled)
- 19) Oregon Historical Society

Source: Base map from Google Maps; annotations by author



Compared to the selection of art museums from the 50 most populous US cities (see Figure 1-1 and Appendix A), PAM ranks just above the median for the size of its building footprint (5,972 meters squared), just below the median for the amount of its expenses in 2013 (\$16 million), and exactly the median for the amount of its net assets as of 2013 (\$114 million).<sup>9</sup>

The neighborhood around PAM, named the South Park Blocks, is one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city. Named for the long, relatively narrow strip of parkspace dedicated as a public space by its earliest landowners, the South Park Blocks were where many prominent businessmen and early settlers of the city of Portland built homes and set up churches in the mid to late 1800s (more about the history of the neighborhood and the museum is discussed in Chapter 4). Many of these same churches have used their historical land holdings in the late twentieth century to build affordable apartment complexes in partnership with the city of Portland.<sup>10</sup> These historical churches have also helped to start charitable organizations that serve the homeless populations of the city, offering services such as hot meals, temporary accommodation, job training, and tattoo removal, all within a block or two of PAM.

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<sup>9</sup> Please see Figure 1-1 for a comparison of building footprints, annual expenses, and distance from the city center for a selection of art museums from the largest US cities.

<sup>10</sup> The state of Oregon forbids cities from requiring residential developers to include below-market rate housing with market-rate housing in the same building (also known as inclusionary zoning — see <http://housinglandadvocates.org/resources/land-use-and-housing/inclusionary-zoning-in-oregon/>). Affordable housing is more often than not built as stand-alone, dedicated buildings by non-profit organizations that partner with the city of Portland.

The South Park Blocks neighborhood surrounding PAM is filled with an incredible variety of social groups throughout the day; homeless populations lining up for a daily meal, students walking to class, retirees walking designer dogs in the adjacent park, skater punks practicing tricks along the sidewalk, and elementary school groups lining up for their excursion to the art museum.

The chapters following this one expand on the theoretical framework, methods, and data sources briefly introduced here, as well as present my findings and conclusions. Chapter 2 gives a more thorough account of the museological and urban theories that guide my inquiry of how PAM affects the use of space in and around the museum, as well as how my research engages debates about anchor institutions, the arts, and gentrification. Chapter 3 contains a longitudinal analysis of selected art museum neighborhoods around the country, tracking the socioeconomic change associated with proximity to an art museum. Chapter 4 analyzes the history of land use change in the Portland Art Museum's South Park Blocks neighborhood between 1890 and 2014 in the context of socioeconomic regional change. Chapter 5 presents an analysis of how internal institutional change and social dynamics between 1994 and 2014 have impacted who benefits from the museum's programming and space. Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation research with a summary of my research's findings and what they mean for the urban planning practice and cities. Appendices and field notes follow chapter six.

The results of my research suggest that the health of the regional economy, the philosophical dispositions of a museum's staff linked with an autonomy to pursue their own projects, and the availability of funding dedicated to specific museum operations (such as free Friday night admission) are the most important factors in whether or not an art museum benefits its diverse surrounding neighborhood. Results from my longitudinal, socioeconomic analysis of selected art museum neighborhoods suggest that art museum neighborhoods have been less likely than similarly located neighborhoods to experience the displacement of nonwhite populations, more likely to experience a large increase in wealth, and recently, more likely to experience an increase in population, especially in regions where population is in general decline. These results together suggest that art museums are valuable components to stabilizing neighborhood diversity and population, attracting human capital, and under the right conditions, providing accessible, valuable amenities for diverse neighborhood residents.

**FIGURE 1-4: MAP OF DOWNTOWN PORTLAND, OREGON; PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY AND PORTLAND ART MUSEUM NEIGHBORHOODS**



Source: Base map from Google Maps; annotations by author.  
Key is on following page.

**FIGURE 1-5: KEY FOR FIGURE 1-4**

<p>◆ museum, library, or performing arts building</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Portland Art Museum (Main building)</li> <li>2) Portland Art Museum (Mark building, formerly Masonic Temple)</li> <li>3) NW Film Center (owned by PAM)</li> <li>4) Schnitzer Concert Hall</li> <li>5) Winningstad Theatre / Portland 5 Centers for the Arts Headquarters</li> <li>6) Oregon Historical Society Museum</li> <li>7) Multnomah County Central Library</li> </ol>
<p>● charities that serve vulnerable populations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) YWCA (shelter and support services for battered women and their children)</li> <li>2) Outside In (needle exchange, tattoo removal, meals for the homeless)</li> <li>3) Julia West House (education, job training, community building for the homeless)</li> <li>4) The Jeffrey (housing for the homeless)</li> </ol>
<p>■ affordable housing (below median rate of \$1.5/sqft/month for rentals or \$260/sqft for condos)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) St. James Apartments (residents who earn 30-80% of area median income)</li> <li>2) Rose Schnitzer Tower (low income seniors and disabled)</li> <li>3) St Francis Apartments (residents who earn 30-80% of area median income)</li> <li>4) Chaucer Court (low income seniors)</li> <li>5) Fountain Place (residents who earn 30-80% of area median income)</li> <li>6) Park Tower (low income seniors and disabled)</li> <li>7) 1200 Building (low income seniors and disabled)</li> <li>8) Lexington Apartments (residents who earn 30-80% of area median income)</li> <li>9) Doricourt Apartments (residents who earn 30-80% of area median income)</li> </ol>
<p>■ luxury / above market housing (above median rate of \$1.5/sqft/month for rentals or \$260/sqft for condos)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Eliot Tower</li> <li>2) Museum Place</li> <li>3) Mosaic</li> <li>4) Benson Tower</li> <li>5) Ladd</li> <li>6) Gallery Park Apartments</li> <li>7) Vue Apartments</li> <li>8) University Park Condos</li> <li>9) Ambassador Condos</li> <li>10) Southpark Square</li> <li>11) Jeanne Manor</li> </ol>

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# CHAPTER

## 2. Literature review

Combining an understanding of museum theory and urban theory, my research looks at art museums as both organizations and physical spaces. As organizations, art museums like the Portland Art Museum are made up of diverse collections of actors who all have their own (and oftentimes conflicting) philosophical perspectives on the social roles of their institutions. Museum studies literature and theory provide the background necessary for understanding how museums are influenced by a long and evolving philosophical history of why they are important for society. As physical spaces, art museums like the Portland Art Museum are products of social and economic surplus, and are thus highly influenced by the social and economic systems of their urban environments. Urban economic and sociological theory, thus, describe why art museums exist and how they are affected by people and place. This chapter first provides an overview of museum studies literature, then economic and sociological literature to lay the theoretical foundation on which my research is built. Finally, this chapter discusses the anchor institution hypotheses and gentrification debates that my research engages, and more carefully places art museums in these debates.

## The art museum's role in society

Whom a museum serves, as well as how a museum serves them, is influenced by a notion that varies from individual to individual working in a museum: what *role* does the museum serve for its community? Three prominent roles emerge in museum literature that define what it means for a museum to be a 'good' for the community: 1) a custodian of culturally meaningful objects, stories, and experiences for future generations; 2) a place that facilitates learning; and 3) a place for building communities.

Perhaps the oldest role of the museum in society has been a custodian of culturally meaningful objects, stories, and experiences for future generations. Ever since the earliest public museums in Europe, museums have grounded their importance to society in the collections they preserve and keep (Abt, 2010; Duncan & Wallach, 1980; Wittlin, 1949). Rare objects tied to ethnic heritage, scientific natural discoveries, and artistic achievement are seen as vital components of identity and history for individuals and groups (Abt, 2010; Clifford, 1988; Hoelscher, 2010; Wittlin, 1949). Thus, there is value in guarding and taking care of objects and traditions in a way that they can live on for other generations to experience.<sup>11</sup> Museums have the resources, such as highly trained conservation staff and elaborately engineered storage facilities, to ensure the care of valuable community objects and experiences. Curators (whose job is to care for a museum's objects, to document the importance of the object for future generations, and to exhibit those objects) are most often proponents of museum policies and

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<sup>11</sup> There is much more that can be said about the ethical dilemmas that come with safekeeping cultural heritage. For brevity, I wish to acknowledge these as important issues to discuss in another context, if not in the context of this literature review.

decisions that further the museum's role as a custodian. This is especially the case for 'traditional museums' (a category defined by Gurian, 2010) who have large financial resources dedicated to collecting objects, caring for the objects, storing them, as well as for endowed curator positions.

Another prominent role of the museum in the community has been a place for learning. For the early public museums, being a 'good' for the community meant educating society using scientific and artistic objects and helping them, on the whole, achieve an enlightened and egalitarian state (Abt, 2010; Orosz, 1990; Wittlin, 1949). Later, through evolutions in educational theory, museums began to think of being 'good' for the community as sharing in the learning process and being a place where people of all walks of life and educational levels were bombarded with multiple types of ideas and experiences (Hein, 2006; Falk, Dierking, et al., 2006). Education staff, which are ubiquitous in 21st century museums, tend to promote programming that is more accessible and understandable to a lay audience, which often comes into conflict with the object-centered focus of curators. For instance, educators in a museum might prefer to create exhibits that are more driven by the experiences and learning styles of visitors, whereas curators might see such an endeavor as detracting from a more scholarly understanding of museum objects (Gurian, 2006).

The physical design and functions of a museum's grounds play an important part in defining a third theoretical museum role in society: a community space. Philanthropists and city builders influenced by Enlightenment philosophy and reformer tendencies

advocated for museums as “instruments capable of improving man’s inner life” (Bennet, 1995, p. 18). Museums were thought to be places where different classes could mingle, and thus learn about one another, creating a more enlightened and harmonious society (ibid.). Gurian (2001) has argued that museums of the twenty-first century should be places that build communities through mixed-use space with a variety of functions. A museum with only one spatial use available to visitors (exhibit space) has a limited ability to serve the needs that a diverse constituency might have. This is a moment where the revenue generating strategies of museums and the goal of serving a variety of visitors’ needs, align; providing multiple types of spaces, and hence experiences, will attract a larger and broader audience, which will in turn increase revenues. Museums have increasingly devoted more space for activities like eating, drinking, shopping, and holding gatherings, and less for displaying objects. This evolution in spatial use follows the general evolution of a museum function/role, from custodian to place for enriching experiences and social gathering. Such changes in museum spatial programming might fulfill the goals of education staff, who are interested in reaching a broader public by making the museum a place more comfortable and recognizable to them.

Curators and museum traditionalists often oppose such moves because they take away space that could be serving custodian roles for objects (Gurian, 2010). Museum directors can sometimes be torn between the two. Creating a more accessible museum with more audience-friendly programming makes the museum more likely to attract a larger audience, and potentially lead to more earned revenue opportunities. However, doing so at the expense of caring for a collection of objects would likely turn off high-

profile donors or corporations who have a more traditional view of a museum's role in society as a custodian of valuable objects.

As this research will show in a case study of Portland Art Museum, these conflicting interests within the art museum play out differently depending on the relationships between museum staff and management, as well as the socioeconomic context of the institution. Whether an art museum offers free admission, programming that is catered to nearby residents, or places that appeal to nearby residents (for example) depends on the relative financial need of the museum, the internal and external social connections of museum employees (including managers) and trustees, and the sources of funding enabled by the city's economy. The following are more in-depth discussions about art museums and the socio/economic processes that produce them.

### Urban economic and sociology literatures: art institutions as objects of urban processes

There are two general ways that the economic and sociology literature conceptualize phenomena like art museums and other non-profit arts institutions: 1) as *byproducts* of urban processes and 2) as *tools* that cities and their boosters<sup>12</sup> use to augment or catalyze urban processes. These two concepts evoke the dilemma of the 'chicken or the egg;' do cities create arts institutions or do arts institutions help to create cities? The dialectical relationship between arts institutions and their urban environments serves as

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<sup>12</sup> These include highly influential residents of a city, such as political leaders and managers/owners of large corporations.

a foundation for this research's understanding of art museums like the Portland Art Museum. The limitation of these literatures, I will argue here, is that they do not consider the implications of these institutions as more than passive objects of urbanization, but also as actors in their own right, which have their own needs and complex personalities. The needs and complex personalities of arts institutions, as alluded to in the museology literature and will be discussed in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation, are highly influential in how they impact their physical and social urban environment.

### Byproducts of urban processes

Both museum studies and urban economic literatures suggest that the creation of art museums and museum like institutions require a sufficient concentration of economic and social activities. The earliest ancestors of museums and arts institutions, from the Mouseion of Ptolemy's ancient Alexandria to the "curiosity cabinets" of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, would not have existed had there not been a sufficient consolidation of power and wealth in the places that birthed them (Abt, 2010; Crane, 2000; Duncan & Wallach, 1980; MacDonald, 2005; Wittlin, 1949). These early museum institutions and spaces owe their existence to those that had the power and wealth to acquire extensive collections of fine objects. The Ashmolean's collection of objects, for example, was a gift from an extremely wealthy and socially elite doctor to the British (Wittlin, 1949), and the Louvre's collection was 'created' through the appropriation of royal objects (and a palace) in Paris during the French revolution (Duncan & Wallach, 1980, pp. 453-455). Both the Ashmolean and the Louvre remain urban amenities for

their respective cities (Oxford and Paris), maintained in large part by their respective national governments.

Unique to the formation of American museums and arts institutions, however, was and is the country's underlying neoliberal political philosophy (even as early as the late 19th century) that looked to private philanthropy, instead of the government, to provide and manage cultural amenities for the masses (Abt, 2010; Orosz, 1990).<sup>13</sup> The physically largest, wealthiest, and most famous art museums in the United States, have almost exclusively been founded by wealthy businessmen and philanthropists of large and economically important cities: the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City; the Art Institute of Chicago and the Field Museum in Chicago; and the J Paul Getty Center in Los Angeles; to name just a few. Few art museums of the same size and influence are located outside of large economic and population centers,<sup>14</sup> further supporting the theory that there is a connection between the geography of where economic and social activities concentrate and the formation of these large arts institutions.

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<sup>13</sup> One notable exception to this assertion in the literature is the Smithsonian Institutions in Washington D.C.

<sup>14</sup> The Toledo Museum of Art, one of the country's great art museums, is not located in a large economic or population center, but was the product of a glass-making industrialist's philanthropy. See <http://www.toledomuseum.org/about/history/>.

### Economic activity, wealth, and art museums

According to geographic and economic literature, the accumulation of wealth through capitalism has gone hand in hand with the emergence and growth of cities.<sup>15</sup> As observed by 19th century theorists as Marx and Von Thünen and reemphasized in the 20th and 21st centuries by the geographer David Harvey, the socio-spatial characteristics of cities are intimately connected to the spatial needs of capitalist accumulation (Harvey, 2001, Chapters 12 and 14). Through his analysis of Marx and Von Thünen, Harvey explains that the organization of cities is dictated by the economic logic of most efficiently producing a good, bringing that good to market, and reaping the most surplus value for that good (ibid.). Thus, cities whose geographic characteristics minimize the cost of production and the cost to bring a product to consumers are more likely to be the best places to accumulate wealth, and theoretically, the most likely places where arts institutions are founded.

Historically, for example, cities that easily accessed nearby raw materials of the hinterland and could transport them to markets along a coast or major river provided supportive environments for industries (such as logging, shipping, etc) to flourish. Further, the jobs that these industries created attracted people from the surrounding area to their cities, making the cities themselves large enough to be profitable markets for industries in their own right (industries could sell goods directly to their city's consumers). The city of Portland, for example, is advantageously located nearby the

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<sup>15</sup> This statement does not mean to imply definitively that urbanization causes capitalist accumulation, but rather they are seen as highly correlated processes in the geography and urban economics literatures.



fertile Tualitan valley and along the Willamette and Columbia rivers, making it an important exporter of wheat and lumber from the early 19th century into the 20th century (Abbott, 2008). Portland also became a prominent ship builder for the US Navy during World War II, as it had easy access to the necessary raw materials and could immediately send ships into the Pacific Ocean from its Columbia River passageway (ibid.). These industries made millionaires out of the owners of the shipping and lumber companies and spurred much of the city's population growth during the mid to late 19th century and into the 20th century. The formation of arts institutions like the Portland Art Museum have strong connections to high performing industries and the surplus wealth they create.

Krugman (1999) refers to the proximity of industry to a sizable market and strategic production resources as 'backward linkages,' or a theoretical 'centripetal' force of economic development that pulls economic activity in towards other activity, concentrating it. Another type of centripetal economic force, as theorized by economic literatures, is the forward-linkage, where a large concentration of economic activity supports intermediary industries that make the production processes more efficient for the larger industries (ibid.). Highly populated cities are also more likely to contain the labor resources that industries need (also referred to as a "thick labor market"), which constitutes another centripetal force that concentrates development in urban areas (ibid., p 143).

Diversity of people and industries in a city is yet another centripetal force that pulls economic activity and residents closer to one another. Economic theorists have credited much of continuing city growth (in terms of population and GDP) to the externalities that interactions between diverse actors create, often called “innovation[s]” (Glaeser, 1992, p1127; Glaeser, 2011; Jacobs, 1969; Krugman, 1999).

For American museums and arts institutions, this agglomeration of diverse industries and actors make cities beneficial for consumption reasons as well. Because most arts institutions in the United States are expected to be maintained through philanthropy, and more recently through earned income and not through government funding, cities with large and diverse populations are theoretically more likely to have sufficient numbers of people who are interested in buying tickets to hear a concert or see an exhibition or become members of an art institution to make those institutions financially feasible (Glaeser 2011; Poon and Lai, 2008; Strom, 2002).

In opposition to these centripetal forces that favor concentration of population and activity are the ‘centrifugal’ forces that push economic activity away from other activity. Economic theory posits that these forces are due to higher land rents and negative externalities such as pollution, traffic, and overcrowding that are the result of too much concentration of economic activity (Krugman, 1999). However, the growing concentration of wealth and population in cities throughout the past three centuries suggests that the centripetal forces are stronger than the centrifugal ones, and as the

correlation between art institutions and wealth accumulation would predict, most large art institutions are located in large urban areas.

Thus, the emergence of non-profit arts institutions can theoretically be attributed to the growth of economic activity in, and subsequent accumulation of wealth in, cities.

Economic activity, for the most part, tends to favor the relatively compact organization of production space, consumption space, and living space that characterize cities. Those who own the means of production in these cities are often the ones responsible for the creation of large arts institutions. Further, the agglomeration of diverse industries and people in large urban areas creates a supportive economic environment of consumers that make these locations favorable for American art institutions that are expected to function almost exclusively on philanthropy and earned income.

#### Social competition, class structuring, and art museums

Much of sociology literature, in contrast, conceptualizes arts institutions as byproducts of urban social competition and domination. Social processes and economic processes are highly correlated in the urban theoretical literatures, but in this section, I will discuss how the creation of art museums are explained from a primarily sociological point of view.

Adapting a definition used by the urban sociologist Wirth: cities are generally characterized by many groups of people living in relatively close proximity to one

another (Wirth, 1930). Tönnies and Simmel theorized that the intermingling of diverse groups in the same space (as is the case in this basic definition of a city) changed the way people interacted with one another. Instead of forming interpersonal and economic relationships with others through familial bonds or shared mores, people in cities formed impersonal, transactional relationships to satisfy their need for basic resources, for example, food and housing (Simmel, 2005; Tönnies, 2005). Adding to this discussion in the literature, human ecologist Park theorized that the finite supply of resources in a given space leads to a constant cycle of competition and social structuring among a population (Park, 2005). In this competitive social and economic environment, those with the most resources, and who are atop the social structure in a given place, tend to manipulate space and culture in cities to maintain and increase their position (Castells, 2002, Ch 8; Logan & Molotch, 2005; Zukin, 1995). Art institutions are theoretically an example of this manipulation of urban space.

Zukin's analyses of urban culture in places like New York City (1989; 1995) reveal a theoretical production of symbols in space, which communicate to whom a place belongs and how one should behave in such a space. This production of a symbolic economy, she argues, is one way in which a dominant class impose their will on a city's society and culture. For example, the highly cultured, wealthy elite (also known as the "leisure class" up until the early 20th Century) use places like art museums and art galleries in cities to not only convey their wealth (a "conspicuous consumption" also theorized by Veblen, 1899), but to dictate what counts as art and what is aesthetically

pleasing. Other privileged groups like the highly educated, professional class would be drawn to these spaces to participate in and identify with “high culture.”

Castells describes institutions like art museums as a byproduct of elite social networking in his theoretical “space of flows” (Castells, 2002, Ch 8). According to Castells, the space of flows is not only a use of technology, but also a physical organizing of urban space that elites use to connect to an elite global social network (ibid.). Places like art museums are examples of how one city’s financial and political elite can symbolically identify with the urban elite in other cities, as well as physically socialize with them in the form of traveling exhibitions and collaborations. An example of this from the Portland Art Museum is its collaboration with the Louvre’s traveling exhibit featuring objects portraying the Tuileries Garden during the Summer of 2014. This collaboration marked one of the first times that Portland Art Museum, and those who lead the museum, met with and worked with representatives from the Louvre. Hosting objects from the Louvre’s exhibition not only symbolically linked the Portland Art Museum and its management to Paris’ world-famous museum, but represented an instance where constituents of both museums met with each other in person.

Another key characteristic of Castells’ space of flows, further, is the symbolic segregation of space for elites from that of other urban residents, evidenced by the oversized scale of places like art museums, their ‘global’ architecture, and their formal aesthetic that communicate that they are elite spaces. Castells argues that architectural styling is one way in which objects in the space of flows symbolically connect to one

another across the globe, and subsequently create global places that are distinct from local places in space (Castells, 2002, Ch 8 pp. 350-354). Many art institutions built in the 20th century (or had additions built in the 20th century) used the globally ubiquitous modern architectural style. Critics of modernism have argued that it leads to buildings and designs that are 'placeless,' or that have no aesthetic connection to their local place (Castells, 2002, Ch 8 p. 350). The concept that urban elites create and organize space in order to network with other elites suggests that those atop the urban social structure not only influence their social environment symbolically, but also physically.

Art and cultural institutions are also seen as byproducts of the theoretical urban growth machine, a social and political process by which urban space is determined by those in power for their own financial benefit. In their piece "The City as a Growth Machine," scholars Logan and Molotch (2005) analyze how land owners in cities have an incentive to develop urban space to increase the exchange value<sup>16</sup> of their property. Borrowing from arguments made by David Harvey about the monopoly of space, they argue that a place (the specific, physical space in which people live, work, and/or play) is not a substitutable good because each has its own distinct access to amenities (proximity to good schools, friends, family, shopping), as well as its own unique psychological and emotional meaning to people, which cannot be substituted with another good (Logan & Molotch, 2005; Harvey, 2001, Chapter 18). These qualities mean that real estate has an "asymmetrical relation between buyers and sellers," where the market favors the sellers because they hold a monopoly on space (Logan & Molotch, 2005, p. 99). Places that

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<sup>16</sup> Or the value of a good as a commodity in a market, as opposed to the use value of a good.

are located nearby desirable amenities and/or places with artistic or cultural meaning are the ones that have the most exchange value (Harvey, 2001, Chapter 18). Thus, property owners in cities have an incentive to encourage more development to both increase urban amenities (the access to which makes their property valuable), as well as decrease the supply of land and drive up prices. Art museums are one type of amenity that theoretically makes land more valuable in both respects; people of higher means view art museums as desirable amenities and would pay higher prices to live nearby them, and art museums tend to have large spatial demands (some several city blocks), which could otherwise be used as more housing.

Forming an art museum and holding a board membership are other examples of how people at the top of a social hierarchy of a city maintain and strengthen their position symbolically, especially in the neoliberal political environment of the United States. Looking almost exclusively to private philanthropy to create and maintain public amenities, those who have the wealth to donate or the influence to help lead an institution like an art museum are seen as people who ‘give back to their community’ or who ‘make the city a better place.’ Non-profit institutions like art museums give elites an outlet for conspicuous philanthropy<sup>17</sup> to further augment their social positions in cities.

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<sup>17</sup> Arguably, this is a logical extension of Veblen’s ‘conspicuous consumption’ theory (Veblen, 1899).

## Tools for augmenting/catalyzing urban processes

In addition to the theories that describe art museums as byproducts of urbanization, urban economic development literature also conceptualizes artistic and cultural amenities as tools that can be used for catalyzing urban processes. More specifically, city leaders, boosters, and planners have looked to arts and cultural institutions to help their cities make more money and become more significant centers of economic activity in their regions and globally.

One way in which the literature sees urban arts and culture making the city money is by attracting tourists (Holcomb, 1999). Cities place a high value on increasing tourist spending because it most often represents new revenue, as opposed to increased spending by locals, which is hard to distinguish from spending that would have occurred anyway. Art museums have played a significant role in urban tourism strategies. No case best exemplifies this than the Guggenheim Bilbao. The Basque region, suffering from a similar post-industrial 1990s decline as suffered by many cities in the U. S. 'rust belt,' chose to invest money in a new art museum with a famous brand name in the art world (Guggenheim) and architect (Frank Gehry). Since its opening in 1997, the Guggenheim Bilbao has attracted a significant number of new tourists to the the region, which has in turn nurtured the growth of its hospitality services industry and resulted in measurable overall economic growth (Plaza, 2006). This success sparked the eponymous 'Bilbao Effect,' which gave city boosters and planners around the world the idea that a new art museum designed by a famous architect would bring in new tourism



revenue which would catalyze economic activity (Grodach 2010; Rybczynski, September 2002).

Since the Guggenheim Bilbao, cities have hired ‘starchitects’<sup>18</sup> to design all new art museums, as well as new additions to their existing art museums, primarily to attract global attention and spur economic development. Examples of this phenomenon include: Denver Art Museum’s Hamilton Building (designed by Daniel Libeskind and opened in 2006); Fort Worth, Texas’ Modern Art Museum (designed by Tadao Ando and opened in 2002); Milwaukee Art Museum’s Quadracci Pavilion (designed by Santiago Calatrava and opened in 2001); The Broad Art Museum in East Lansing, Michigan (designed by Zaha Hadid and opened in 2012); and many others. Along these lines, the Portland Art Museum has been raising money in a capital campaign to fund a new, architecturally significant addition that will enhance the museum’s national and international image.

Urban planning scholar Carl Grodach has looked into the outcomes of a few of these ‘Bilbao Effect’ projects and found mixed results (Grodach, 2010). Most often, as his research suggests, the success of these projects depends on the existing socioeconomic contexts in which they are located (ibid.). For example, a new art museum built in a city (San Jose, CA) nearby a city with an already established presence in the art world (San Francisco, CA) would be less likely to spur new economic activity. Further, Grodach’s research supports the economic theory that

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<sup>18</sup> A colloquial name for a famous architect, usually one who has won the Pritzker Architecture Prize.

explains art museums as byproducts of a sufficient concentration of people and economic activity, as opposed to objects that can be placed in any context and thrive.

Another way in which economic development literature sees arts and cultural institutions as making the city money is as a magnet for new businesses and talented residents.

The globalization of economic activity over the past century has meant that cities, which initially competed within their regions and countries to serve as a base for economic activity, have had to compete with cities across the globe. Cities not only compete to host corporations and industries within their boundaries, but also compete to be home for highly talented people (also known as 'human capital'), on which, argue urban economic theorists, a city's economic success depends (Currid, 2007a, 2007b; Glaeser, 2011). In order to attract these companies and people, cities have felt the need to provide world-class amenities appealing to highly talented people, as well as low-tax environments and financial incentives that are appealing to corporations.

Arts and cultural institutions (such as art museums) are some of the amenities thought to attract human capital, particularly those of a certain class. For example, the Ford Motor Company has felt the need to support the Detroit Opera in order to recruit and keep white-collar manager level employees in Detroit (Strom, 2002). The city of Dallas, Texas, a new center for finance and energy in the United States as of the late 1970s, desired to make its presence known on the national stage and attract new residents by building an arts district just outside the city's commercial center.<sup>19</sup> The district would

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<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/2009/october/the-battle-to-build-the-arts-district?single=1>.

eventually be home to the Dallas Museum of Art, the Nasher Sculpture Center, the Trammel Crowe Collection of Asian Art, the Morton H Meyerson Symphony Center, the Winspear Opera House, and the Wylly Theatre.<sup>20</sup>

The economist Richard Florida embellished the idea that cities and their boosters needed to attract human capital by cultivating artistic and creative environments, by arguing that those environments specifically tolerant of LGBTQ people, new immigrants, as well as highly creative 'bohemian' types, were the cities that are most attractive to the most talented people (Florida, 2002). In his hypothesis, not only did cities need to have the requisite art museum and art festivals, but they also needed to nurture unique subcultures, local coffee shops and quirky boutiques to attract these highly skilled (and creative) residents. However, despite the widespread popularity of this strategy among city boosters, these qualities of Florida's 'Creative City' have never had much power in predicting a city's economic success.<sup>21</sup>

Using arts and cultural institutions to attract more tourism, new businesses, new residents, and catalyze economic development creates an ethical dilemma: it channels money to and focuses attention on the needs of 'outsiders' at the expense of the needs of local residents (Loukaitou-Sideris and Soureli, 2012; Quinn, 2005; Strom, 2002).

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<sup>20</sup> Dallas' city boosters, following the Bilbao Effect trend, chose four Pritzker-winning architecture firms to design many of these arts institutions, including Norman Foster, Renzo Piano, I. M. Pei, and Joshua Prince-Ramos and Rem Koolhaas. <http://www.thedallasartsdistrict.org/district/art-in-architecture/architecture>.

<sup>21</sup> Florida's 'Creative Cities' index, which he claimed predicted a city's economic success, proved very popular among city boosters and urbanists, arguably because of the economic optimism of applying ethical social policies. However, many urban scholars and economists, such as Glaeser (2005), have since argued that the Creative Cities index does not have the predictive power it claims to have.

Places like art museums are all too often designed to the tastes of a global, rather than local, audience, which echoes Castells' Space of Flows theory. The content of art museums and art festivals, often originally the serendipitous byproduct of unique urban cultures, are all too often commodified to appeal to an outside audience and diluted of qualities that made them special to a particular city and region (Quinn, 2005). Partly to blame is the privatized funding structures of U. S. art museums and other cultural institutions (even those with non-profit status). Because of an increased reliance on earned income, places like art museums must cater to corporate sponsors and elite interests to win their sponsorship, which are invaluable to maintain operating expenses (Quinn, 2005; Strom, 2002).

Whether a byproduct of economic or social processes or a tool to catalyze them, the formation of arts and cultural institutions like art museums leave a lasting physical and social legacy on the city. What these economic and sociologic literatures lack is a theoretical understanding of how institutions like art museums (both as an organization and place) also have agency, and how that agency affects their physical and social legacy. The following sections of this chapter review some of the urban anchor institution and museology literature that provide theories for how art museums exercise their agency in their urban environment and why.

## Anchor institutions, art museums, and their urban environments

Art institutions, such as art museums, tend to fit into passive roles in the established socioeconomic urban literatures, as theoretical byproducts of urban processes, or tools to be used to augment or catalyze such processes. However, a new vein of urban theory over the past 10 to 20 years has reframed the relationship between non-profit arts institutions (in addition to hospitals and universities) and their urban environments. The anchor institution hypothesis sees certain place-bound institutions as significant actors in urban development, with needs and personalities in their own right, and not simply objects used by the city. However, there are theoretical issues in this literature, including an often imprecise distinction between the institution's urban environment (where it is located) and who in that environment benefits from the institution's actions, as well as anchor institutions' potential connection to gentrification. Additionally, the literature tends to conceptualize anchor institutions as singular actors rather than an aggregate of multiple actors with diverse goals, obscuring internal institutional dynamics that are pertinent to understanding how institutions interact with their urban environment and why.

Urban planners and city boosters view anchor institutions, non-profit or for-profit organizations that are fixed to a particular geographical location, as valuable urban entities because they provide reliable economic benefits to the places where they are located (Birch, Griffin, Johnson & Stover, 2014; Porter, 2010; Taylor & Luter, 2013; Webber & Karlström, 2009). Anchor institutions may also provide other potential

benefits to their locations for rational self-interest reasons. These other benefits include contributing to placemaking and investing in local resources (such as schools, public safety, and transportation infrastructure) to attract and retain high quality employees (Porter, 2010; Webber & Karlström, 2009). The economic gravity of anchor institutions is also thought to attract new, complimentary businesses and amenities that feed off of the activities of the anchor institution, increasing local economic activity (ibid.). The most often talked about anchor institutions that provide these reliable economics-related benefits are hospitals, universities, large corporate headquarters, and stadiums (Taylor & Luter, 2013).

Art museums are different from the more traditionally conceptualized anchor institutions (“eds and meds”) in scale, public mission, and times they are in operation. Though they do share many of the same expansionary tendencies of places like hospitals and universities, they do so on a much smaller scale. This is due to the fact they generally receive much smaller government grants and philanthropic gifts. Museums also have a more general notion of serving “the public,” which makes it more acceptable for neighborhood residents and visitors to freely use museum space. Hospitals, in contrast, have a more practical and focused mission to serve and heal their clients (the sick), and thus, provide space and services specifically for those who need care (and can pay for them). Universities, while dedicated to the benefit of society as a whole, tend to produce and protect their spaces for the use of their faculty and students. Non-students, even at public universities, are often escorted off university premises by campus police officers

because they ostensibly do not belong there.<sup>22</sup> Lastly, art museums and other anchor institutions differ in their peak operational hours and seasons. Art museums are generally open most days of the week, and every once in awhile in the evenings (when there is money to support such activities). They also operate at a consistent level throughout the year. Universities, as many college towns can attest, have their peak operations between September and May (depending on the institution), and tend to shut down to some degree during the summer when students take a break from classes. Stadiums have perhaps the most restrictive operating times; they tend to host events once or twice a week for three or four hours at a time. At most other times, stadiums and their expansive parking lots sit empty and unused.

Similar to anchor institutions, art museums have local economic impact. Art museums in the largest 50 cities in the United States can spend tens to hundreds of millions of dollars every year on programming, staffing, curation of their art, and maintenance of their campuses. Though art museums might not compete with the majority of hospitals, universities and even stadiums in terms of buying power or employment in local economies, the largest art museums (such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Art Institute of Chicago) can spend hundreds of millions in most years on these activities. Studies of specific art museums show that art museums can also lead to increased local economic activity for surrounding neighborhoods and local regions by attracting tourism and cultivating related industries, given the right preexisting socioeconomic conditions (Grodach, 2010; Plaza, 2006; Sheppard et al., 2006). Though

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<sup>22</sup> This occurs quite often at the author's home institution, the University of Michigan.

not specifically identifying art museums, a housing market and socioeconomic analysis of Philadelphia census tracts by Stern and Seifert (2010) correlates improved economic conditions spatially with significant concentrations of cultural amenities.

From a sociological point of view, anchor institutions also can benefit neighborhoods by “anchoring” social activity, potentially increasing the social capital of its neighborhood through the provision of programming and space. Clopton and Finch (2011) argue that institutions can serve as anchors for community bridging (inter-group socialization) and bonding (intra-group socialization) if they provide a sufficiently supportive space for a wide variety of groups. Grodach (2011) echoes this argument in his analysis of community art spaces in the Dallas / Ft. Worth, Texas region, though he adds that successful arts/cultural anchor institutions also need to have a welcoming urban design that connects directly to diverse residential areas, as well as synchronized activities with other nearby commercial land uses.

Historically, civic boosters have promoted art museums using this same social anchor concept. The museum building boom of the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries in the United States stemmed, in part, from the desire of cities (and their wealthy businessmen) to provide valuable civilizing space for their people, where the lower and upper classes could socialize and learn from one another in the same place (Abt, 2010; Wittlin, 1949). The idea of art museums as social anchors has stuck even as art museums have evolved to become more than just buildings that contain artistic objects. Though they are known for their art-viewing galleries, art museums have also



incorporated other spatial uses, largely in response to market demands of more diversified space for increasing earned revenue potential (especially in the United States). Art museums not only feature gift shops, but cafes, restaurants, ballrooms, and corporate meeting spaces have also become ubiquitous. Though many art purists have balked at the transformation of art museums into mixed-use spaces, some see this as nothing but a benefit for neighborhood communities. Gurian (2001) argues that the diversification of spatial uses and the offering of new amenities in museums give these institutions capacity in reaching new communities, ones who might not want to just look at art. Spaces that do not require museum membership or paid admission, such as a cafe or sculpture garden, can cater to neighborhood constituents who might desire more casual space for everyday recreation and/or socialization.

Birch and her colleagues at University of Pennsylvania's Institute for Urban Research have done the bulk of empirical research on arts anchor institutions, including performing arts complexes and museums (Birch, et al., 2014). The case studies of institutions like Arena Stage and the Art Institute of Chicago in their work seems to suggest that spatial location was a critical component to how these institutions formed relationships with their city's people (ibid.). For example, Arena Stage, a performing arts organization and complex in southwest Washington D. C., decided against moving to a more lucrative location in the city center because of the close ties between the institution and its adjacent neighborhood (ibid., pp. 25-40). The neighborhood even lobbied the city to help raise funds for Arena Stage's new wing, the construction of which seemed to start a trend of new development in the neighborhood (ibid.). A case

study on the Arts Institute of Chicago during the great recession of 2008 recounts the poor public image the museum sustained when it opened a new, multi-million dollar modern art wing while simultaneously laying off several staff members and raising admission prices. The museum decided to rebuild its relationship with the city of Chicago by creating a better physical connection with the city's adjacent public spaces and reaffirming its educational commitment to free admission for school-children (ibid.).

While art anchor institutions, such as art museums, are not usually significant employers or purchasers of local goods and services like other anchor institutions (universities or hospitals, for example), their programming and physical plant can have significant impacts on their surrounding neighborhood. Many art museums (like the Arts Institute of Chicago or even the Portland Art Museum) have special programming and free admission for schools, emphasizing the educational role they play for cities. On Fridays, it is not uncommon to see hundreds of children from Portland suburbs in downtown Portland, lining up to visit the art museum. The Portland Art Museum also hosts large corporate functions in one of its several ballrooms and meeting spaces, bringing high-powered individuals into a somewhat poorer part of the city (more will be discussed about the socioeconomic context of Portland Art Museum and others in the following chapters). Dozens of museum 'open houses' and ex-museo programming take place over the summer, filling the outdoor spaces around the museum with food carts, performance artists, and public art. While the art museum might not have the employment capacity of a large hospital or research university, the people it attracts with its programming and the use of its physical plant impact its immediate neighborhood.

However, do the people who benefit from this programming come from the immediate neighborhood?

The most compelling part of anchor institution theory is that it purports to explain how location can compel private institutions to act in ways that benefit that location (Porter, 2010). However, as in the two case studies from the Birch et al white paper, anchor institution theory arguably does not adequately address the distinction between an institution's 'neighborhood' (the land uses and people in proximity of the institution's spatial location) and what I will refer to as 'constituency,' or the people that reap the benefits of the institution.

Neighborhood as an abstract concept can have several definitions; a contiguous space or set of spaces that share a symbolic identity, a contiguous space or set of spaces where people have strong economic and/or social ties, or simply a contiguous space defined by natural or human-made boundaries. Most of anchor institution literature appear to use a definition of neighborhood used by George Galster: "Neighborhood is the bundle of spatially based attributes associated with clusters of residences, sometimes in conjunction with other land uses" (Galster, 2001, p. 2112). Thus, the 'neighborhood' of an anchor institution is the collection of residents, businesses and other land uses that are within close proximity to the institution. All institutions have them, though some might have less population or a different mixture of land uses.

'Constituency,' on the other hand, refers in this analysis to the various groups of people that benefit from the actions of an anchor institution. Usually, these people are those with which an anchor institution has direct, intentional social relationships (for art museums, they might include corporate donors, museum members, real estate developers, or school children). Though not explicitly mentioned in much of anchor institution literature, constituency is often implicitly conflated with 'neighborhood.' Many proponents of anchor institution theory suggest that the institution's constituency and neighborhood are one in the same, such as how anchor institutions and the inner cities in which they are located are assumed to be socially connected, or if not already, able to interact in mutually beneficial ways (Porter, 2010). This particular assumption does not comport with Castell's theory of the Space of Flows, which argues that social networking among an elite class, and not spatial proximity, has a greater influence on the constituency of an anchor institution like an art museum (Castells, 2002, Ch 8). Further, much of globalism literature has theorized about the 'dual city,' where two societies with few direct social relationships cohabit the same urban space (Castells, 2002, Ch 7; Friedmann, 1986).

What anchor institution theory lacks is not only a clear distinction between the concepts of 'neighborhood' and 'constituency,' but also a better way of explaining why the two concepts sometimes occupy the same space, and other times different space. In the case of Arena Stage, its 'neighborhood,' a smaller-scale subset of Washington D.C., and its 'constituency' occupy the same exact space. The SW Washington D. C. neighborhood people and the institution were so strongly, directly, and socially

connected, that it resulted in Arena Stage remaining in the same location rather than moving to the city center. However, in the case of the Arts Institution of Chicago, its 'constituency' appears to include the entire city of Chicago, certainly covering a much larger area than its 'neighborhood,' which was conspicuously not mentioned.

One way to better understand why this discrepancy in neighborhood and constituency occurs is to better understand the internal dynamics of anchor institutions.

Doing so provides insight into why an institution acts in certain ways and not others (such as programming certain activities, proactively forming relationships with city groups, expanding the physical plant in specific ways, etc), and why those actions sometimes benefit institution neighborhoods and sometimes do not benefit them.

Museology literature details how museums have assumed new roles in society and faced new challenges in a changing economic landscape during the 20th and 21st centuries. Arguably, these changes explain the conflicting interests among an art museum's trustees, management, and staff. These, in turn, are some of the underlying reasons why museums make certain programming and physical planning decisions, as well as end up serving some communities and not others.

The concept of an anchor institution, in these economic and sociological points of view, imply both stability and gravity for neighborhoods. Anchor institutions theoretically provide a stable economic base from which a local neighborhood can expect employment, the purchase of local services, as well as the provision of space or services. This stability also theoretically prevents the decline of a neighborhood, its

population, and home prices. Neighborhoods can also theoretically expect indirect economic and social effects through an economic and social gravity of these institutions: new businesses, residents, visitors, and development. Arguably, it is the gravity of an anchor institution like an art museum, which implicates gentrification of a neighborhood and possible negative consequences like cultural hegemony, socio-cultural exclusion, or economic displacement.

### Gentrification, art museums, and neighborhoods

Urban studies literature has not settled on a single definition for gentrification, nor a definitive assessment of whether or not it is ultimately good for urban space and people (Vigdor, 2002). Most urban scholars seem to agree on one aspect of gentrification: that it is a process where wealthier and more educated groups move into and/or patronize urban space that is less wealthy and less (formally) educated (Atkinson, 2000; Deutsche & Ryan, 1984; Freeman, 2005; Freeman & Braconi, 2004; Lees, 2008; Ley, 2003; Marcuse, 1985; McLean, 2014). The literature also does not agree on an overall positive or negative assessment of gentrification: some espouse its value as a positive change in urban space, while others critique it as inevitably harmful to vulnerable populations, and many others fall in-between.

Those that believe in gentrification's potential to change urban space and people for the better describe gentrification in a way that almost exactly matches the theoretical gravity-related benefits that anchor institutions provide. The influx of wealthier groups

into an urban area (especially a particularly poor area) leads to more local tax revenues for the neighborhood, more support for the neighborhood economy, new and better neighborhood amenities, and a more socially diverse population (Lang, 1986; Vigdor, 2002). More tax revenue from wealthier groups means more money to keep streets clean and safe and more money to better fund local schools, a benefit also attributed to the economic and social gravity of anchor institutions (Porter, 2010; Webber & Karlström, 2009). New, wealthier residents also represent more potential revenue for local businesses, enabling those businesses to expand, hire more workers, and/or improve their facilities. The increased spending power of wealthier residents also might attract businesses that provide novel and/or higher quality amenities for a neighborhood (ibid.).

There is also the belief that an influx of wealthy residents into a poorer neighborhood improves the odds that poorer, less educated residents might benefit from relationships with these wealthier residents, escape poverty, and produce a more harmonious urban society (Lees, 2008). This belief in the benefits of social mixing that gentrification provides also mimics the belief in an anchor institution's ability to anchor social networking and improve inter and intra group socialization (Abt, 2006; Gurian, 2001; Wittlin, 1949). However, the lack of evidence that social mixing occurs when wealthier, more educated groups come in close spatial proximity to less wealthy and less educated groups tempers expectations that gentrification (or anchor institutions) can lead to a social "urban renaissance" through social mixing (Lees, 2008).

In contrast, many urban scholars have deemed gentrification (specifically when wealthier and more educated groups move into/patronize a less wealthy and less formally educated place) a harmful process to less wealthy, less educated, and ethnic minority groups (Atkinson, 2000; Deutsche & Ryan, 1984; Freeman, 2005; Marcuse, 1985). One of the most significant issues urban scholars critical of gentrification have with the process is its potential to displace vulnerable populations because of residential price increases that follow increased demand/patronization by wealthier groups (ibid.). In the event of displacement, populations that are sensitive to the price of their housing are forced to move and do not get to benefit from the positive changes in their neighborhood, if not experience disruption of their lives and established social networks.

Quantitative analyses of neighborhood socioeconomic change challenge this displacement theory of gentrification: sometimes populations that are vulnerable to price increases in housing are less likely to move when gentrification occurs, hypothetically because they are willing to pay more to take advantage of the new amenities and benefits gentrification brings to their neighborhoods (Freeman & Braconi, 2004; Vigdor, 2002). However, another explanation suggests that vulnerable populations stay because the price of moving to more affordable accommodation is prohibitive, or because more affordable accommodation is not available (ibid.). Such an explanation implies that price-sensitive residents inevitably bear more financial burden whether they want to or not. Making matters more complex, follow-up analyses of socioeconomic change in gentrifying neighborhoods suggest that displacement is indeed occurring, if on a small scale (Freeman, 2005).



Arts and culture have been linked to this debate about gentrification at least since after World War II, when urban policies in the UK and the US sought to make museums and cultural experiences equally available to both the leisure and the working classes (Lees & Melhuish, 2015). As Lees and Melhuish (*ibid.*) reveal in their review of arts and cultural policy in both the UK and the US in the mid to late Twentieth Century, the idea that arts and culture would be beneficial to the revitalization of poor urban neighborhoods through the attraction of wealthier and more educated classes, took hold in much of urban policy after this time, despite lack of evidence. Critiques of these policies appear in economic development literature, which have described a “double-edge” impact of arts festivals and cultural production on urban neighborhoods (Loukaitou-Sideris & Soureli, 2012; Quinn, 2005). For example, cultural tourism and arts festivals can attract wealthy and educated outsiders into a poorer neighborhood with the promise of unique experiences, thereby giving poorer neighborhood businesses increased revenues and access to social capital (*ibid.*). However, the attraction of outsiders can also start a process of changing the aesthetic and cultural identity of the poorer neighborhood to suit the tastes of the visitors (*ibid.*), yet another theoretical consequence of gentrification tied particularly to the arts.

Sociological theories describe a symbolism produced through aesthetic design and artistic and cultural practice as some of the sources of the gentrifying gravity which attracts wealth and privilege (Veblen, 2007; Zukin, 1995). Scholars of arts and gentrification suggest that the act of creating art is symbolic of identifying oneself with a dominant class (Deutsche & Ryan, 1984; Ley, 2003), explaining why even poor artists

who have no choice but to reside in poor neighborhoods end up attracting wealthy and educated classes to those neighborhoods (Deutsche & Ryan, 1984; Ley, 2003; Zukin, 1989). It also explains why specialized architecture and design of a neighborhood (aspects of placemaking) can end up attracting some groups and not others (predominately white, highly educated professionals — see Zukin, 1995), leading to economic displacement because of price increases, if it attracts people with more financial capacity, or even social exclusion, if it signals that only one type of group can use the space (Zukin, 1995).

### Differentiating a gentrifying neighborhood from an anchored neighborhood

The overlap in the theoretical benefits anchoring and gentrification bestow on their surroundings makes differentiating the two a tricky endeavor. Anchor institution literature implies that anchoring leads to an influx of new people into neighborhoods (either as visitors or new residents), which leads to increased local economic activity and human capital. Anchoring also suggests a stability in a neighborhood's existing population, where established residents benefit from the influx of new human capital and economic activity. However, increases in local economic activity usually leads to increased land prices, and increases in human capital usually refer to increases in wealthier and more highly educated residents, two groups associated with gentrification. Should any increase in land prices or increases in human capital, then, be considered gentrification?

One way to differentiate between anchoring and gentrifying neighborhoods is to define a gentrifying neighborhood as one that is likely experiencing the negative effects of an influx of wealthy, more highly educated, and white groups. For example, displacement, either by economic or socio-cultural means, might be signaled by a neighborhood's median household incomes increasing, its proportion of heads of households that are new (for a 10 year period) increasing, and its residential population becoming whiter. These indicators reflect Marcuse's definition of gentrification as a replacement of lower income, minority residents with new residents who are predominately higher-income and white (1985, pp. 198-199). The theoretical case where price-vulnerable residents stay in a neighborhood instead of move, experiencing a higher price burden of housing (Vigdor, 2002; Freeman, 2005; Freeman & Braconi, 2004), might be conveyed by an increase in the ratio of median housing/rent costs to median income, simultaneously with an influx of white and highly educated population without much change in minority population. There still exists the problem of deciding at what point an increase or occurrence of these socioeconomic indicators signal gentrification rather than just a sign that a neighborhood is experiencing an influx in (potentially) beneficial human capital.

Following gentrification literature's use of comparison in a baseline change in neighborhoods or regions to determine whether gentrification is occurring (Atkinson, 2000; Freeman, 2005; Marcuse, 1985), this research uses two comparisons in the next chapter to judge whether socioeconomic change in art museum-adjacent neighborhoods suggests gentrification. First, this article uses a comparison between change in these art museum neighborhoods and change in similar, nearby

neighborhoods that do not contain art museums. This comparison approximates a control-treatment scenario. Second, the following chapter uses a comparison between change in art museum neighborhoods and change across all other neighborhoods in their counties, which is similar to what other studies use in gentrification literature (ibid.). Socioeconomic change in an art museum neighborhood that signals a gentrifying neighborhood, thus, would be increases in median household incomes, higher price burden of housing, increases in new heads of households, which are significantly associated with proximity to an art museum and large when compared to change in other neighborhoods in the county.

Further, a decrease in ethnic/racial minority population with a simultaneous increase in white population (defined in this analysis as “nonwhite replacement”) is another indicator that a neighborhood is gentrifying, theoretically because nonwhites are being priced-out of a neighborhood or because they are socio-culturally excluded from a neighborhood. My research conceptualizes nonwhite replacement separately from other socioeconomic indicators in its analysis. In contrast to increases in median income, college educated residents, and median home/rent prices that are measured by their quantities, nonwhite replacement is determined using census data as occurring or not occurring, regardless of its amount.

Art museums are not just producers and buyers of goods and services for a local economy, as conceptualized in anchor institution theories, but institutions symbolic of and reliant on the attraction of wealth, which implicates them in these theories of gentrification. The national and international-scale art museums in the 50 largest US cities (that Chapter 3 discusses) rely significantly on earned income: philanthropic gifts, ticket sales, retail sales, membership dues, etc. Museums of their size, thus, cannot operate only with the support of their adjacent neighborhoods, but their entire regions. This is even more true for museums that are located next to high poverty, low wealth census tracts, as is the case with a sizable number of art museums analyzed in the following chapter. These art museums require a large enough pool of high-wealth corporations and private philanthropists with which to bolster capital campaigns, people interested enough in art to pay membership dues, if not daily admission fees, and volunteer labor that can dedicate daily hours of service without any need of remuneration (as discussed in Strom, 2002). Board members, volunteer advocates for the museum who are recruited from the city most financially and/or politically influential circles, are also invaluable to help the museum further its relationships among the philanthropic class and the art world.

National/international-scale art museums, thus, rely on gravity for their survival. They attract donors and new museum members with exclusive access to galleries, parties with dignitaries, and other benefits. They attract visitors (who are significantly more likely to be wealthy, highly educated, and white — see Figure 3-1) with grand architecture, exhibitions that appeal to the masses, and a variety of amenities (shops,

cafes, restaurants, etc). At the same time, art museums (including these national/international-scale ones) also have a strong philosophical foundation of providing a good for a broad public (G. Hein, 2006; H. Hein, 2000; Marstine, 2011; Weil, 2002). This role of museums to provide a public good (interpreted generally as the role of a custodian of material culture, an educator of the public, or a place for community gathering) complicates an exclusively elitist view of art museums in neighborhoods.

As they “pull” predominately white, wealthy, and highly educated people from the city and the region into their adjacent neighborhoods, do art museums inevitably change the socioeconomic character of their neighborhoods, either through economic displacement or cultural exclusion? Are they anchors, providing stability to existing population and attracting human capital to their neighborhoods, or are they gentrifiers, transforming neighborhoods into whiter, wealthier, and more educated ones?

The chapters following this one focus on three analyses of art museums and their role in neighborhood change. The first considers national and regional art museums throughout the largest cities in the United States and their connection to socioeconomic change of adjacent neighborhoods, engaging theories that connect arts and cultural development to gentrification. The second is a more focused and in-depth analysis of physical and socioeconomic changes in the Portland Art Museum’s South Park Blocks neighborhoods between 1890 and 2014 and the connections those changes have with the physical changes of the Portland Art Museum, citing urban economic and

sociological literatures. The third is an analysis of organizational change at the Portland Art Museum and how it has affected how the Museum reaches out to its communities.

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## **CHAPTER**

### **3. Socio-economic change in art museum neighborhoods in the United States**

As has been presented in the previous literature review chapter of this dissertation, much of urban economic and sociological literature conceptualize art museums as anchor institutions, or institutions that stabilize their neighborhoods with their economic activities (Porter, 2010; Webber & Karlström, 2009), provision of social-spatial amenities (Abt, 2006; Birch, Griffin, Johnson, & Stover, 2013; Clopton & Finch, 2011; Grodach, 2011; Gurian, 2001; Wittlin, 1949), and attractiveness to visitors and developers (Birch et al, 2013; Grodach, 2010; Plaza, 2006). However, the attraction of visitors and development raises the possibility of gentrification, or the process where wealthier and more highly educated people use or move into urban space that is less wealthy and less (formally) educated (Atkinson, 2000; Deutsche & Ryan, 1984; Freeman, 2005; Freeman & Braconi, 2004; Lees, 2008; Ley, 2003; Marcuse, 1985). There might be economic benefits to gentrification that are also attributed to anchor institutions, such as the attraction of social and spending capital to poorer neighborhoods, theoretically spurring economic growth and new opportunities for residents (Lang, 1986; Lees, 2008; Lees & Melhuish, 2015; Porter, 2010; Vigdor, 2002; Webber & Karlström, 2009). However, gentrification has also been tied to harmful change in neighborhoods, such as

displacement and / or social and economic exclusion (Atkinson, 2000; Freeman, 2005; Marcuse, 1985; Vigdor, 2002; Zukin, 1995).

Arts and cultural institutions, in particular, have been especially implicated in the gentrification of urban space through the attraction of these wealthy, highly educated residents through aesthetics and symbolism (Deutsche & Ryan, 1984; Lees, 2008; Lees & Melhuish, 2015; Ley, 2003). Indeed, art museums in the United States have a constituency of visitors that tend to be wealthier, more highly educated, and white (Figure 3-1), but few empirical studies have been done to understand what effect art museums and their visiting constituencies have on the socioeconomics of their surrounding neighborhoods. This chapter asks the questions: how have neighborhoods near art museums changed over time, and have they changed differently from other nearby neighborhoods or other neighborhoods throughout the city? By analyzing change in census data of art museum neighborhoods over time and comparing them to change in census data of other neighborhoods, this chapter investigates the possible effect art museums have on their surrounding neighborhoods according to the theoretical benefits of anchor institutions and likely symptoms of gentrification.

On the city and regional scale, arts institutions such as art museums have been used to attract new 'creative' residents and corporations. These strategies are thought to increase the number of talented individuals and large businesses, which would in turn, result in higher property tax and commercial revenues for the city. On a neighborhood scale, art museums and other arts institutions are thought to enhance property values



and raise rents because of the desirability of living nearby these highly aesthetic and elite spaces (Sheppard, 2013; Zukin, 1995). Anecdotally, developers have built high-priced condos adjacent to national and regional scale art museums, believing that people with higher incomes would want to live nearby.<sup>23</sup> Following the development of high income residential buildings in many art museum neighborhoods have been high-end retail, such as four star restaurants and boutique, designer stores. The clustering of expensive retail and housing around art museums over the past three decades has created a relatively new urban typology: the mixed-use arts district. Viewed through the lens of critical urban theorists like Harvey (2001) and Logan & Molotch (2005), development around these art museums appear to be the physical manifestations of elite financial and political interests. Here, the theming of space and the concentration of development theoretically raises the exchange value of land in these districts, resulting in higher rents for the land owners. Viewed through the lens of sociological theorists like Zukin (1995) and Castells (2002), creating these symbolic environments full of expensive stores and restaurants further amplifies the symbolic ownership of the space by those that can afford to use them.

Higher land value and symbolic ownership of space also, in theory, might lead to the displacement of poorer and ethnic populations from these neighborhoods (Lees, 2008; Ley, 2003; Zukin, 1995). This is particularly important in the context of neighborhoods around large art museums, because many are located in the inner-core of cities, where, historically, high proportions of poorer and ethnic populations reside.

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<sup>23</sup> Examples of this phenomenon can be seen in the neighborhoods around art museums in Portland, OR; Dallas, TX; Denver, CO; New York City's Museum of Modern Art; San Jose, CA; among others.

Several quantitative studies have been done on the economic effects of new art museums (Plaza, 2006; Sheppard, Oehler, Benjamin, & Kessler, 2006) and art museum expansions on particular neighborhoods (Sheppard, 2013). However, these studies do not consider longer-term change associated with art museums that have been anchored in their locations for a decade or more, nor do they look at data that suggest anything other than economic growth and change. The economic indicators these studies analyze are usually home prices, sector employment, tax revenues, and spending habits. This chapter, in contrast, looks at neighborhood change associated with art museums that have been fixtures in their neighborhoods for longer than 10 years, as well as focuses predominately on socioeconomic indicators found in the U.S. Decennial Censuses between 1970-2010.

Stern and Seifert's study (2010) presents a quantitative analysis of socioeconomic change throughout Philadelphia neighborhoods between 2001-2006 in relation to the clustering of "cultural assets" (p. 264), though it does not specify large institutions like art museums as potential influencers of neighborhood change, nor does it directly address how its dependent construct, "revitalization" (pp. 268-271), may implicate gentrification, except to say that revitalization has not coincided with neighborhoods becoming less diverse. However, the methodology used in this chapter's analysis owes much to Stern and Seifert's study, particularly the emphasis on change over time in socioeconomic indicators such as percent of population with at least a bachelor's degree and percent of population that identifies as "non-hispanic, white" as a measure for ethnic diversity in a neighborhood (pp. 272 & 274).

These quantitative studies also almost exclusively involve single regions or cases (Plaza, 2006; Sheppard, 2013; Sheppard et al, 2006; Stern & Seifert, 2010), which limits their generalizability to other regions and cases. There are obvious reasons to limit analyses to a single case. First, it means that multilevel, clustering effects present in cases that differ in geography, economy, and governance do not need to be addressed in the analysis. Second, it means that finer-grained data can be used, as this data is not always available, nor comparable, across multiple cases. Despite these challenges, the analysis presented in this chapter endeavors to use a quantitative comparison across multiple cases and multiple regions to identify general socioeconomic trends in art museum neighborhoods throughout the largest cities in the United States. The analyses here address the clustering effects of neighborhoods in similar regions by controlling for general economic trajectory of each region: regions whose economies are shrinking; regions whose economies are growing in a stable manner; and regions whose economies are growing quickly.

This chapter's study also incorporates an implicit comparison in change between neighborhoods near art museums to other neighborhoods in the region to identify the hypothetical effect the institution has on neighborhoods near them compared to neighborhoods that are not near them. Comparing the amount of change in art museum neighborhoods with the amount of change in other neighborhoods also identifies the difference between socioeconomic changes associated with anchoring with those associated with gentrification (please refer to the end of chapter 2, which differentiates between gentrifying and anchored neighborhoods). Freeman (2005) calls for a need in

studies of neighborhood gentrification to measure against a “baseline” to correctly identify whether neighborhood change suggests a phenomenon unique to the neighborhood or whether it is a change occurring elsewhere in other neighborhoods.

## Methods

To identify whether socioeconomic change in museum neighborhoods suggests anchoring or gentrifying, I employed cross sectional, longitudinal, and spatial regression analyses of census tract data between 1970 and 2010. For this analysis, I analyzed up to 154 neighborhoods<sup>24</sup> adjacent to 59 art museums located across the country in the largest 50 US cities<sup>25</sup> (Figure 3-2). I used data from the Longitudinal Tract Data Base<sup>26</sup> to compare socioeconomic change in art museum neighborhoods to nearby (but not directly adjacent) “comparison” neighborhoods, as well as to their respective, county-level socioeconomic trends.

Since no definitive sampling frame exists for art museums in the United States, I selected art museums to analyze from the 50 largest cities in the United States, according to the 2010 U.S. Census and the following criteria:

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<sup>24</sup> The number of census tracts available for analysis differs depending on the census. For example, only 106 museum census tracts are analyzed between 1970 and 1980 censuses, whereas 154 museum census tracts are analyzed between 2000 and 2010 censuses.

<sup>25</sup> One city in the top 50 in population did not contain an art museum that fit the criteria for selection in my analysis; in place of this art museum, I selected the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art in Salt Lake City, a city which falls just outside the top 50 cities in population but adds more geographic diversity to the analysis.

<sup>26</sup> Found at <http://www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/Researcher/Bridging.htm>.

- are non-profit organizations, with most of their funding (>50%) coming from earned income (thus, they are not institutions mostly funded by public sources);
- are fiscally independent of any colleges or universities;
- were founded before 2010 (the date of the most recent U.S. Census);
- had revenues of at least \$100,000 for the 2013 fiscal year (the most recent accounting year available for the majority of institutions);
- are not located within 0.5 mile radius of another art museum.

Using this protocol, I selected 59 museums (see Figure 3-2), representing 50 cities across the country in 27 states and the District of Columbia.

I used census tracts as a spatial unit for neighborhood analysis, based on the database created by Logan, Zengwang, and Stults (2014) that normalizes the boundaries of census tracts between the 1970 and 2010 censuses to allow for valid, longitudinal comparisons. Census tracts within a 0.25 mile radius of an art museum were defined as art museum neighborhoods (see Figure 3-3). One quarter mile was used because it was a minimum distance at which every art museum studied had at least one corresponding census tract neighborhood. It also represents around a 5 minute walk for an average person. My analysis also used “comparison census tracts,” defined as census tracts that lie within 0.75 mile radius from each sampled art museum, but no closer than 0.5 mile radius, to aid in the cross sectional and longitudinal analyses of socioeconomic change in museum census tracts. Comparison census tracts were selected close to the museum census tracts to control for other local influences on socioeconomic change

like nearby universities or natural features, but far enough away from the museum to differentiate the spatial effect the museum would have on them from the effect the museum would have on the census tracts much closer to the museum (museum census tracts). The museum and comparison census tracts all tended to be located near city centers, which make them more similar to each other and different than the 'average' county census tract.

**TABLE 3-1: CROSS-SECTIONAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC CENSUS TRACT CONSTRUCTS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

<b>construct</b>	<b>characteristic</b>	<b>definition</b>
race/ethnicity	high nonwhite	a census tract whose self-identified nonwhite percentage of its population exceeds its county's 75th percentile among census tracts
	high white	a census tract whose self-identified white percentage of its population exceeds its county's 75th percentile among census tracts
	racially/ethnically diverse	a census tract that does not qualify as high nonwhite or high white
education	high college attainment	a census tract where the proportion of college degree holders exceeds its county's 75th percentile among census tracts
	low college attainment	a census tract where the proportion of college degree holders falls below its county's 25th percentile among census tracts
	educationally diverse	a census tract that does not qualify as high or low college attainment
wealth	wealthy	a census tract whose median household income exceeds its county's 75th percentile among census tracts
	poor	a census tract whose median household income is lower than its county's 25th percentile among census tracts
	socioeconomically diverse	a census tract that does not qualify as wealthy or poor
affordability	expensive	a census tract whose median monthly rent exceeds its county's 75th percentile among census tracts
	affordable	a census tract whose median monthly rent is lower than its county's 25th percentile among census tracts
	diverse affordable	a census tract that does not qualify as expensive or affordable
home value	high home value	a census tract whose median home value exceeds its county's 75th percentile among census tracts
	low home value	a census tract whose median home value is lower than its county's 25th percentile among census tracts
	medium home value	a census tract that does not qualify as having high or low land value
resident turnover	high turnover	a census tract whose percentage of heads of households who have moved in the past 10 years exceeds its county's 75th percentile among census tracts
	low turnover	a census tract whose percentage of heads of households who have moved in the past 10 years is lower than its county's 25th percentile among census tracts
	medium turnover	a census tract that does not qualify as having high or low turnover
<p>NB: variables for nonwhite, white, college attainment, and turnover as defined by the U.S. Census</p>		

My study of museum census tracts and their socioeconomic change incorporated three analyses: First, all census tracts were characterized in cross section according to six socioeconomic constructs: race/ethnicity, education, wealth, affordability, home value, and resident turnover (please refer to Table 3-1 for specific definitions).

Census data was used to categorize census tracts according to three characteristic qualities within each construct; one that represents a high value, a low value, and a medium value of the construct. High and low values of each construct were judged according to the 75th and 25th percentile values of each neighborhood's corresponding county census tracts, respectively. This was done to normalize the differences in raw data between geographic locations, where socioeconomic characterizations such as a "high nonwhite" neighborhood and an "expensive" neighborhood have different quantitative definitions relative to regional characteristics.<sup>27</sup> These characterizations were determined at five time interval points using census tract level data standardized by the Longitudinal Tract Database for the last five U.S. censuses: 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010.

*Race/ethnicity* refers to the racial/ethnic identity of a particular census tract as defined as early as the 1970 U.S. Census, and its characteristic qualities are "high nonwhite" (where a relatively large proportion of the census tract's population identifies as nonwhite), "high white" (where a relatively large proportion of the census tract's

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<sup>27</sup> For example, a median home value of \$150,000 is above the 75th percentile in Indianapolis, IN in 2010, but falls well below the 25th percentile home value in New York City for the same census. Thus, geographic location determines whether a census tract with a median home value of \$150,000 is considered expensive or inexpensive.



population identifies as white), and “diverse” (where there is neither a relatively large proportion of nonwhites or whites).

*Education* refers to a census tract’s number of residents with at least a college bachelor’s degree. Its characteristic qualities are “highly educated” (where the proportion of people with bachelor’s degrees exceeds the county’s 75th percentile), “highly uneducated” (where the proportion of people with bachelor’s degrees falls below the county’s 25th percentile), and “educationally diverse” (where the proportion of people with bachelor’s degrees falls between the county’s 25th and 75th percentile).

*Wealth* refers to the overall socioeconomic status of people in each census tract. Its characteristic qualities are “wealthy” (where the median household income exceeds the county’s 75th percentile), “poor” (where the median household income falls below the county’s 25th percentile), and “diverse” (where the census tract is characterized as neither wealthy nor poor).

*Affordability* refers to the median rent of the census tract and has three characteristics: “expensive” (where the median rent exceeds the county’s 75th percentile for median rent among census tracts), “affordable” (where the median rent falls below the county’s 25th percentile for median rent among census tracts), and “diverse affordable” (where the census tract is characterized as neither expensive nor affordable).

*Home value* refers to the median home value of the census tract and has three characteristics: “high” (where the median home value exceeds its county’s 75th percentile median home value among census tracts), “low” (where the median home value falls below its county’s 25th percentile for median home value among census tracts), and “medium” (where the census tract is characterized as having neither a “high” nor “low” home value).

*Resident turnover* refers to the percent of household heads in a census tract who have moved into the neighborhood within the past 10 years, and has three characteristics: “high” (where the percent of new household heads exceeds its county’s 75th percentile percent of new household heads among census tracts), “low” (where the percent of new household heads falls below its county’s 25th percentile for percent of new household heads among census tracts), and “medium” (where the census tract is characterized as having neither a “high” nor “low” percentage of new household heads).

After each census tract was characterized, I calculated proportions for each construct characteristic (for example, the number of museum census tracts that are wealthy divided by the total number of museum census tracts). I compared the proportions of these characteristics among museum census tracts to the proportions among all county census tracts and comparison census tracts for the purposes of understanding how those near the sampled art museums differ.

**TABLE 3-2: LONGITUDINAL VARIABLES OF INTEREST**

<b>census tract variable</b>	<b>expectation for an anchor</b>	<b>expectation for a gentrifier</b>
total population	increase or no change	increase
white population	increase or no change	increase
nonwhite population	increase or no change	decrease
percent in poverty	no change	decrease
percent of population with at least a 4-year college degree	increase or no change	increase
residential turnover (percent of heads of households who moved into the census tract within the past 10 years)	no change or decrease	increase
percent of population that is nonwhite	no change or increase	decrease
white flight (decrease in white population with simultaneous increase or no change in nonwhite population)	no	no
nonwhite replacement (decrease in nonwhite population with simultaneous increase or no change in white population)	no	yes
large increase in median home value (greater than 75th percentile increase in median home values among county census tracts)	no	yes
large increase in median household income (greater than 75th percentile increase in median household income among county census tracts)	no	yes
large increase in median rent (greater than 75th percentile increase in median rent among county census tracts)	no	yes

In the second, longitudinal analysis, I calculated the proportion of museum census tracts, comparison census tracts, and county census tracts that changed between the five U.S. censuses (1970-2010) according to population, education, ethnicity, wealth, residential turnover, median home values, white flight, and nonwhite replacement (see

Table 3-2). Nonwhite replacement in my analysis refers to a loss in nonwhite population and a simultaneous increase or no change in white population. This indicator reflects whether or not a census tract neighborhood is becoming “whiter” at least in part because of nonwhites leaving. However, it is outside the scope of this analysis to decide whether nonwhite replacement stems from economic displacement, cultural exclusion, or natural succession (Freeman, 2005).

In this longitudinal analysis, I focused on categorical change rather than the amount of change in socioeconomic characteristics. Because of the theoretical connections between the large selected art museums used in the analysis and the economic trajectory of their regions, I conducted the longitudinal analysis controlling for three different types of counties: shrinking (change in population less than 0%), stable growth (change in population between 0 and 3%), and growing counties (change in population greater than 3%).<sup>28</sup>

In the third and final analysis, I conducted a spatial regression of census tract socioeconomic characteristics and change between 2000-2010 (the most recent period for which full census data is available) for the counties of my selected art museums. I used this analysis to test if the amount of socioeconomic change associated with 0.25 mile proximity to one of the selected art museums was significant in the context of socioeconomic change elsewhere in its county. For this analysis, I investigated change in the following dependent variables: population, nonwhite population, median home

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<sup>28</sup> Population change is used as an indicator of economic trajectory in several economic analyses, including Glaeser, 2001 and 2005.

value, college educated population, median household income, white population, resident turnover, residential price burden,<sup>29</sup> and whether or not nonwhite replacement occurred (as defined in the longitudinal analysis using a logistic regression model). I used a “museum census tract” dummy variable (defined as a census tract within 0.25 mile of one of the selected art museums) as my independent variable of interest. I controlled for census tract distance from their respective city centers, as well as controlled for spatial correlation with nearby census tracts by using a spatial lag term, and I included predictor variables for each dependent variable as specified in other socioeconomic regression analyses in the literature (for example, Stern & Seifert, 2010). As in the second analysis, I conducted the same regressions, stratifying the counties based on their percent change in overall population between 2000-2010, an indicator used in economic literature for economic trajectory (Glaeser, 2001 & 2005).

Lastly, I took into account the date when each art museum opened their present building location to the public, and only used museum census tracts (and corresponding comparison census tracts) in each analysis during which the art museum was opening their location to the public or had already been open to the public.

## Results

The analysis of cross sectional data for museum census tracts and comparison census tracts (Figures 3-9) shows that the neighborhoods closest to the selected art museums

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<sup>29</sup> Calculated as the percent change in median home value minus the percent change in median household income between 2000 and 2010.

are (and have been) more likely to be highly white, highly educated, and expensive (high rent and home value) neighborhoods when compared to the comparison census tracts. Except for 1990, museum census tracts have also been more likely to have high incomes than comparison census tracts, though they have relatively similar proportions of low income census tracts, suggesting that art museums neighborhoods are more likely to have large disparities in income (Figure 3-9). Cross sectional census data also suggest changes over time in museum census tracts when compared to comparison census tracts. For example, the graphing of differences in socioeconomic characteristic proportions in Figure 3-9 shows that museum census tracts, relative to comparison census tracts, have gone from being less likely to be ethnically and racially diverse (1970-1990) to more likely being diverse (2000 and 2010). Museum census tracts also went from being a little more likely to be high residential turnover neighborhoods (1970) to being much more likely to be high turnover neighborhoods than comparison census tracts (1980-2010).

The analysis of socioeconomic longitudinal change among museum, comparison, and county census tracts (Figures 3-10 through 3-13) reveals changes in neighborhoods near the selected art museums that reflect both anchoring and gentrifying. In some ways, change in museum census tract socioeconomic data suggests anchoring, such as a greater likelihood of population increase than comparison census tracts generally, and especially in shrinking counties (Figure 3-10), as well as a slightly lower likelihood of nonwhite resident replacement (Figure 3-11). Museum census tracts have also mostly decreased in residential turnover between 2000 and 2010 (Figure 3-10), though less so

than the comparison census tracts. Museum census tracts have lagged county census tracts in likelihood of population growth generally, except for the period between 2000 and 2010, possibly reflecting a change in residential preferences from suburban life to more urban, city-center life (Birch, 2002).

Nonwhite replacement also appears to be a relatively rare phenomenon generally, though it has seemed to increase slightly among all census tracts in the most recent 2010 census data (Figure 3-11). Museum census tracts lag comparison census tracts in likelihood of nonwhite replacement overall, though museum census tracts are more likely to experience nonwhite replacement than other county census tracts overall (Figure 3-11), suggesting that proximity to art museums themselves is not necessarily associated with nonwhite replacement.

When looking at large increases in median home values, rent, or household incomes that suggest gentrification of neighborhoods, museum census tracts have fared differently according to their county economic trajectory. For all counties and growing counties, Figure 3-12 shows that museum census tracts more or less follow the same trajectory as their comparison census tracts. However, in shrinking and stable counties, museum census tracts diverge quite a bit compared to nearby census tracts. In shrinking counties, museum census tracts have been more likely to experience large increases in rent and home value than comparison census tracts, though they have been much *less* likely to experience large increases in median household income that would logically precede such increases in housing prices. Museum census tracts in

stable counties, in contrast, show likelihoods of large increases in median rent and home values that are more similar to comparison census tracts, but were more likely to experience large increases in median household income.

The spatial regression analysis results at first glance show a significant gentrifying impact of museum census tract designation (a dummy variable) in shrinking counties, an ambiguous impact in stable growth counties, and limited impact in other cases (Figures 3-14 through 3-17). Evidence of these impacts appeared in the regression analysis even when controlling for other explanatory variables such as initial median home value, population, and percent of the population that identified as nonwhite. For all selected county census tracts, museum census tract designation was associated with a significant, and large decrease in median home value (estimate=-22,723, regression 6, Figure 3-14), and a significant increase in white population (estimate =129, regression 3, Figure 3-14). The significant increase in white population hints at possible gentrification, but the results of the regression do not show an increase in home prices and median household incomes that would also be associated with gentrification. In fact, over all selected county census tracts, those near the selected museums *decreased* in median home value, providing evidence against the hypothesis that these museums gentrify their neighborhoods by increasing prices of land or attracting wealthier residents in all cases.



Controlling for county-level economic trajectory revealed that neighborhoods near art museums experienced differing anchoring/gentrification effects when the county population was in overall decline versus when the county population was stable.

**TABLE 3-3: SUMMARY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSES, 2000-2010 MUSEUM CENSUS TRACTS BY COUNTY TYPE**

county type	evidence of anchoring effects in museum census tracts	evidence of gentrifying effects in museum census tracts
all counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &gt;60% of census tracts increased in population</li> <li>• no evidence that those in poverty were displaced</li> <li>• &gt;60% of census tracts decreased in resident turnover</li> <li>• no association with significant nonwhite replacement</li> <li>• &gt;74% of census tracts increased in highly educated population</li> </ul>	
shrinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• associated with significant increase in population (+632 people)</li> <li>• associated with significant increase in nonwhite population (+396 people)</li> <li>• no association with significant nonwhite replacement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• associated with significant increase in median home values (+\$51,582)</li> <li>• associated with significant increase in home price burden (median home value increased 46% more than median household income)</li> </ul>
stable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• associated with significant increase in population (+253 people)</li> <li>• &gt;58% of census tracts increased in nonwhite population</li> <li>• associated with significant decrease in home price burden (median household income increased 64% more than median home value)</li> <li>• no association with significant nonwhite replacement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• associated with significant increase in highly educated population (+236 people)</li> <li>• associated with significant increase in median household income (+\$14,084)</li> </ul>
growing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &gt;60% of census tracts increased in population</li> <li>• no association with significant nonwhite displacement</li> <li>• no significant decline in poverty</li> <li>• ~60% of census tracts decreased in resident turnover</li> <li>• &gt;83% of census tracts increased in highly educated population</li> </ul>	

Among the selected stable growth county census tracts (where percent change in county population between 2000 and 2010 was between 0 and 3%), 0.25 mile proximity to one of the selected museums was associated with significant increases in median household income (estimate=14,084, regression 5, Figure 3-16), in general population

(estimate=253, regression 1, Figure 3-16), and in college educated population (estimate=236, regression 4, Figure 3-16). Though this is evidence of gentrification associated with a significant influx of wealthier residents, the data do not suggest that proximity to one of the museums was at the same time associated with a significant loss in nonwhite population (regression 9, Figure 3-16) or an increase in overall residential turnover in these stable counties (regression 7, Figure 3-16). In fact, these museum census tracts in stable growth counties were associated with a significant *decrease* in housing price burden (estimate= -0.64, regression 8, Figure 3-16), opposite of an expected effect of gentrification.

Museum census tracts in growing counties (where the percent change in county population was over 3%) experienced the same overall negative effect on median home values (estimate= -36,390, regression 6, Figure 3-17). Most interestingly, museum census tracts in shrinking counties were associated with significant, positive effects on change in population (estimate=632, regression 1, Figure 3-15), change in nonwhite population (estimate=396, regression 2, Figure 3-15), and change in median home value (estimate=51,582, regression 6, Figure 3-15), at the same time also experiencing a significant increase in home price burden (estimate=0.46, regression 8, Figure 3-15). Thus, the spatial regression analysis provides evidence that socioeconomic change associated with proximity of 0.25 miles of one of the selected art museums varies with respect to a county's economic trajectory, and also exhibits signs of both anchoring and gentrifying.

## Discussion

When looking at the most recent period measured by the full U.S. census (2000-2010), the preceding analyses of the socioeconomic character of and changes in museum neighborhoods (defined as census tracts within a 0.25 mile radius of one of the selected art museums) support three main conclusions. First, neighborhoods near art museums, *on the whole*, do not experience negative effects that would suggest gentrification, such as large increases in median home values, median household incomes, or loss of nonwhite population. In fact, for all of the county census tracts included in the analyses, museum census tracts were associated with a significant reduction in median home values over this period. Second, neighborhoods near art museums experienced pronounced effects that suggest anchoring (population increase, nonwhite population increase, no loss of median home values) in counties that were in decline but also an increase in the burden of housing costs that is associated with gentrification. Third, the museum census tracts were associated with a significant increase in median household income, which suggest gentrification in these neighborhoods in counties that have modest rates of growth, albeit with a significant reduction in home price burden and without evidence of nonwhite displacement.

So what does this mean for people who live nearby art museums? For those who live near art museums in counties that are losing population, their neighborhoods seem to be attracting new residents, particularly nonwhite residents. The increased demand caused by the influx of new residents and the relative lack in residential development in

shrinking regional markets most likely explains why median home values in museum census tract median home values experience a significant increase in price over the same period. For homeowners in the area, this was a good outcome; it ensured that they did not lose value (and on the whole, gained value) in their home even when their region experienced economic decline. However, the outcome was likely mixed for renters in these neighborhoods. With increases in home prices in these areas, renters no doubt experienced increases in their rent, despite the downturn in regional economies. They also have experienced an increased cost burden of housing, as their incomes did not increase at the same rate as rent prices in their neighborhoods, reflected in the results of regression 8 of Figure 3-15.

This outcome echoes the supply-side gentrification hypothesis that predicts countercyclical residential demand in city centers (Berry, 1985, p. 58). However, there is no evidence of a replacement of lower income, minority groups with higher income, whites (as has been identified in this study as a symptom of gentrification). A high proportion of museum census tracts actually experienced an *increase* in the rate of poverty in these shrinking counties ( $\sim .70 = 1 -$  the proportion of census tracts in shrinking counties that experienced a decrease in the rate of poverty in Figure 3-10). Further, these neighborhoods also do not show any evidence of nonwhite displacement: the proportion of census tracts that experienced nonwhite displacement =  $\sim .20$  in Figure 3-10; the estimate for change in nonwhites in museum census tracts = +396 in regression 2, Figure 3-15; and there is no significant evidence of an increase in log-odds of nonwhite displacement in regression 9, Figure 3-15.

Even though the data show that neighborhoods nearby art museums in these shrinking counties experience significant home price burden, it is not likely due to a lack of other affordable places to live in the same county. It might even mean that people living near these art museums voluntarily choose to accept a higher financial burden of housing because of the desirability of living near an art museum and its amenities, though definitive evidence to support this hypothesis falls outside the scope of this paper.

For people who lived near the selected art museums in counties that were growing steadily (stable growth), there is evidence that art museum neighborhoods were associated with significant population increases, as well as significant increases in highly educated residents and median household incomes (Figure 3-16). Also, a majority of the census tracts near these museums experienced a decrease in their poverty rates, and were more likely to decrease in poverty than county census tracts (Figure 3-10). Though these data suggest that some amount of gentrification occurred in museum-adjacent neighborhoods in stable growth counties (in that their populations became wealthier), the majority of these museum neighborhoods also increased in their proportion of nonwhite population (Figure 3-11) and experienced a significant *reduction* in their financial burden due to housing costs (regression 8, Figure 3-16), both outcomes that confound the traditional expectations of gentrification. Gaining more highly educated, human capital without increasing the burden of housing costs is certainly a beneficial, anchoring effect experienced by these stable growth county museum neighborhoods, though only if it was not the result of replacing poorer populations with wealthier ones. Based on the data for residential turnover in Figure

3-10, this does not seem to be the case; the majority of museum census tracts actually decreased in residential turnover (around 70%), despite the influx of new population. Further, lower median housing costs relative to the increase in median incomes are likely a result of more residential development in these areas that match or supersede the demand for housing; investments which are likely to be made in the context of a steadily growing region.

On the whole and in high growth counties (which make up a majority of the selected counties for analysis), neighborhoods near the selected art museums more often than not experienced population growth and an influx of highly educated and white residents (Figure 3-10), but not significantly more than other county census tracts (there were no significant associations between museum census tracts and change in population, educated population, and whites, in all counties and growing counties; Figures 3-14 and 3-17). Also, there was no significant evidence of nonwhite or poverty-level resident displacement between 2000 and 2010 (Figures 3-10, 3-11; regression 9 in Figures 3-14 and 3-17 ). Surprisingly, art museum neighborhoods on the whole were associated with a significant decrease in median home value. These trends suggest that high growth in these counties was likely driven by influx of highly educated and white residents during this time, and that these new residents' relative lack of demand for housing in art museum census tracts and/or an oversupply of houses resulted in an overall decrease in median home values in these areas. Though home owners near art museums would not have benefited from the decrease in home values, renters in these neighborhoods would be less likely to be priced out by the influx of educated, white residents.

What should we as planners make of these results? First, none of the results in the analyses suggest that art museums neighborhoods experienced significant nonwhite replacement, displacement of those in poverty, or significant increase in resident turnover, all negative effects associated with gentrification that those critical of arts institutions might predict (Deutsche & Ryan, 1984; Ley, 2003; Zukin, 1989; Zukin 1995). The only time negative effects of gentrification presented in these analyses was when the price burden of housing increased in shrinking county art museum neighborhoods, possible evidence of the islands of renewal in seas of decay Berry observed (1985). However, this negative effect was less a result of wealthier residents moving in and raising prices, and more likely a result of more demand for housing near the art museums not being met with new supply. In fact, art museum neighborhoods in shrinking regions attracted significant amounts of nonwhite population, and did not show evidence of poorer residents being displaced. There is evidence that art museums anchor adjacent neighborhoods by contributing positively to population growth without displacing vulnerable populations, and most often not raising the overall burden of housing prices in stable and growing counties. However, for shrinking counties, the only instance where the data suggested a significant increase in the price burden of housing for residents due to proximity to a selected art museum, these negative effects could be mitigated by encouraging more development and density in these neighborhoods.

## Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to analyze how art museums impacted the socioeconomics of their adjacent neighborhoods, using the frameworks of anchor institution and gentrification theories, and decide whether that impact was ultimately good. Art museums, as they were introduced at the beginning of this paper, have the potential to serve as important hubs of social interaction and might also bestow their neighborhoods with economic benefits that come from their gravity, or the force of attraction that they theoretically have on highly educated, wealthy, and white people. As was hypothesized, economic trajectory of their urban context (using percent change in county population as an indicator) has proved in these analyses to be influential to socioeconomic change in art museum neighborhoods, though in ways that challenge traditional views of gentrification. In fact, there was little negative effect of the gravitational pull of these institutions in stable and growing counties. Increases in population, highly educated people, and even median household incomes were not associated with higher costs of living or replacement of nonwhite or poor populations, though most likely because demand for housing was met sufficiently (or superseded) by the supply of housing in the area. The only time this was not the case was in shrinking counties. Thus, there is reason for planners to see art museums as potentially valuable stabilizers of neighborhoods, if not institutions that increase human capital of neighborhoods. Planners should seek out ways to encourage development in art museum neighborhoods, especially in regions that are shrinking, to mitigate price burden increases that sometimes result because of their attractiveness to new residents.



Another significant outcome of these analyses is an understanding that economic context matters when predicting whether or not art museums anchor or gentrify neighborhoods nearby.

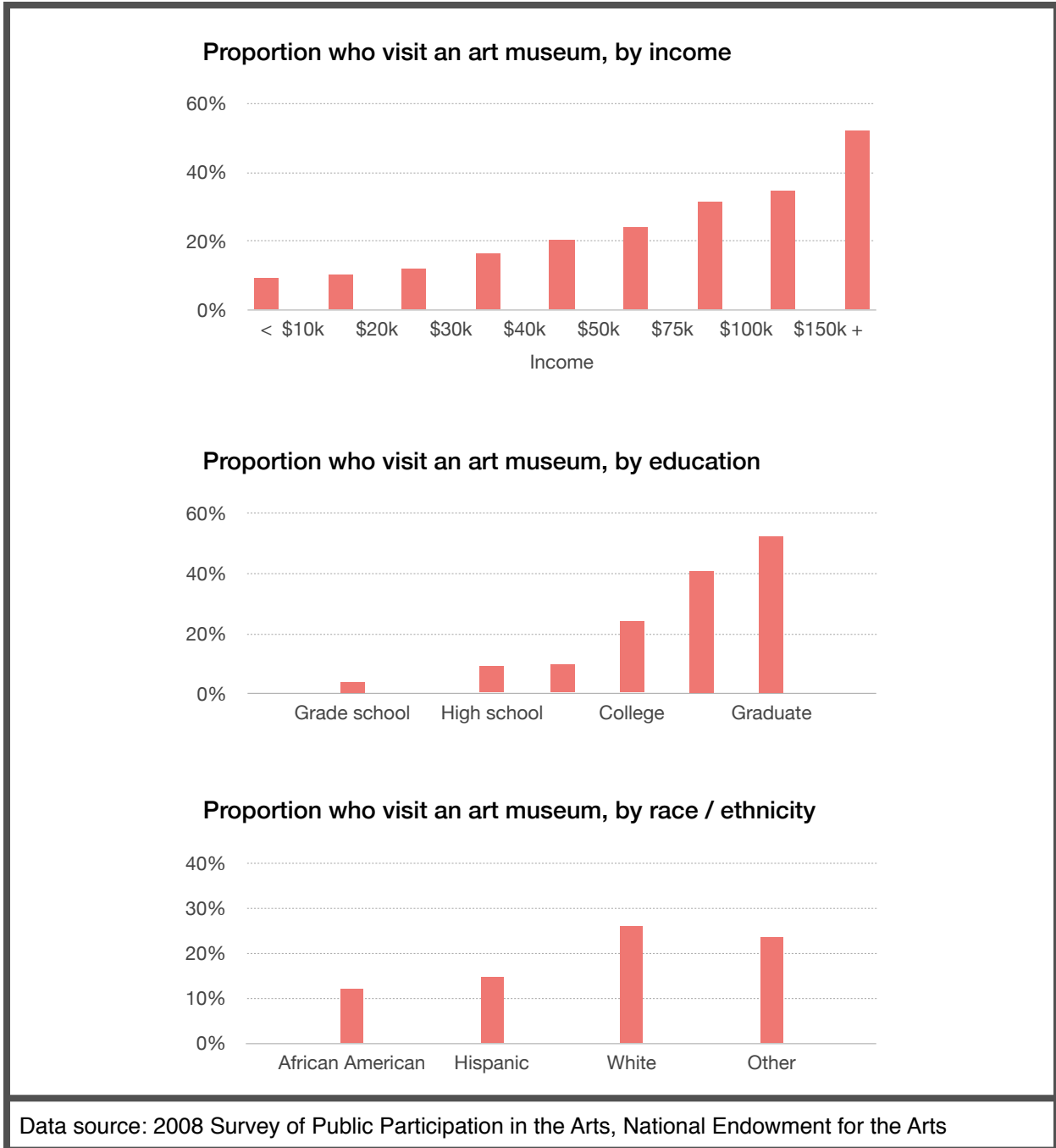
Using quantitative analyses of multiple art museum neighborhoods chosen from across the U.S., as this chapter does, provided a way to detect general trends among art museum neighborhoods throughout the country and to test if those trends are significantly different when compared to other neighborhoods in the city. However, these analyses of art museum neighborhoods and their socioeconomic character and changes are first steps to understanding their impact on neighborhood change. They do not speak to the potential “on-the-ground” benefits that these institutions provide their neighborhood residents and visitors through the provision of social space and programming. These analyses also do not capture whether cultural hegemony or exclusion are experienced by neighborhood residents as a result of how art museums provide space and program activities.

This chapter provides planners with evidence that art museums can be valuable socioeconomic anchors for surrounding communities and do not lead to a statistically significant transformation of neighborhood space that reflects primarily wealthy, well educated, and white groups, at least not at the level of socioeconomic census tract data. Planners should continue to pursue more fine-grained and qualitative research that elucidates how the programmatic and spatial value of art museums can be

maximized in these neighborhoods to further community development, particularly in socioeconomically and ethnically diverse neighborhoods.

Further, this chapter does not consider the physical and organizational changes that occur in art museums, simultaneously with changes in their neighborhoods. The next chapter addresses this issue of simultaneous change as it analyzes the physical and socioeconomic development of the Portland Art Museum's South Park Blocks neighborhood in the context of city and regional change between 1890 and 2014. The chapter following the next one analyzes how the Portland Art Museum has changed internally as an organization between 1994 and 2014, and how its changes have impacted its role in community development

**FIGURE 3-1: PROPORTION OF GROUPS WHO HAVE VISITED AN ART MUSEUM AT LEAST ONCE WITHIN ONE CALENDAR YEAR**



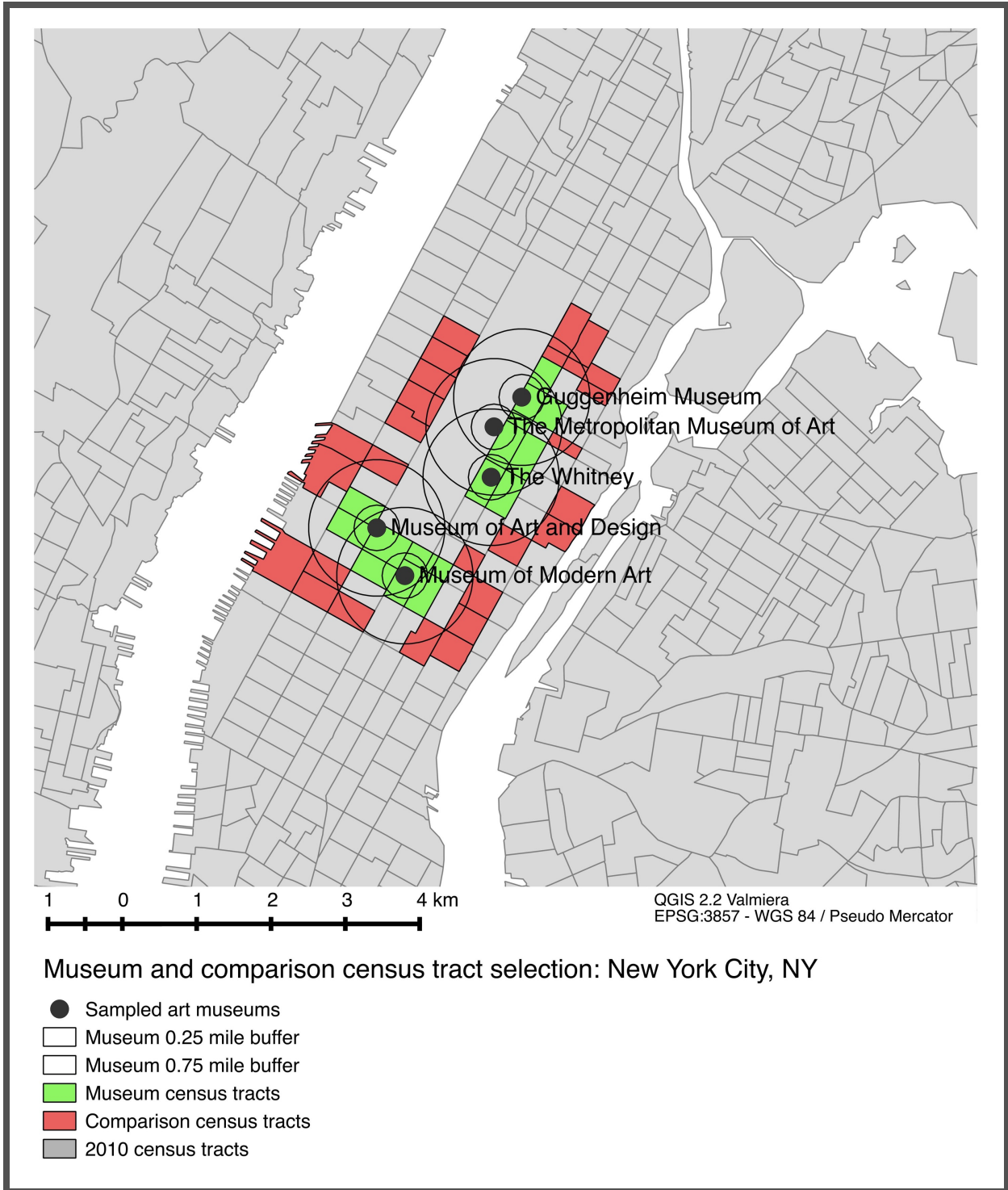
**FIGURE 3-2: U.S. ART MUSEUMS SELECTED FOR ANALYSIS**



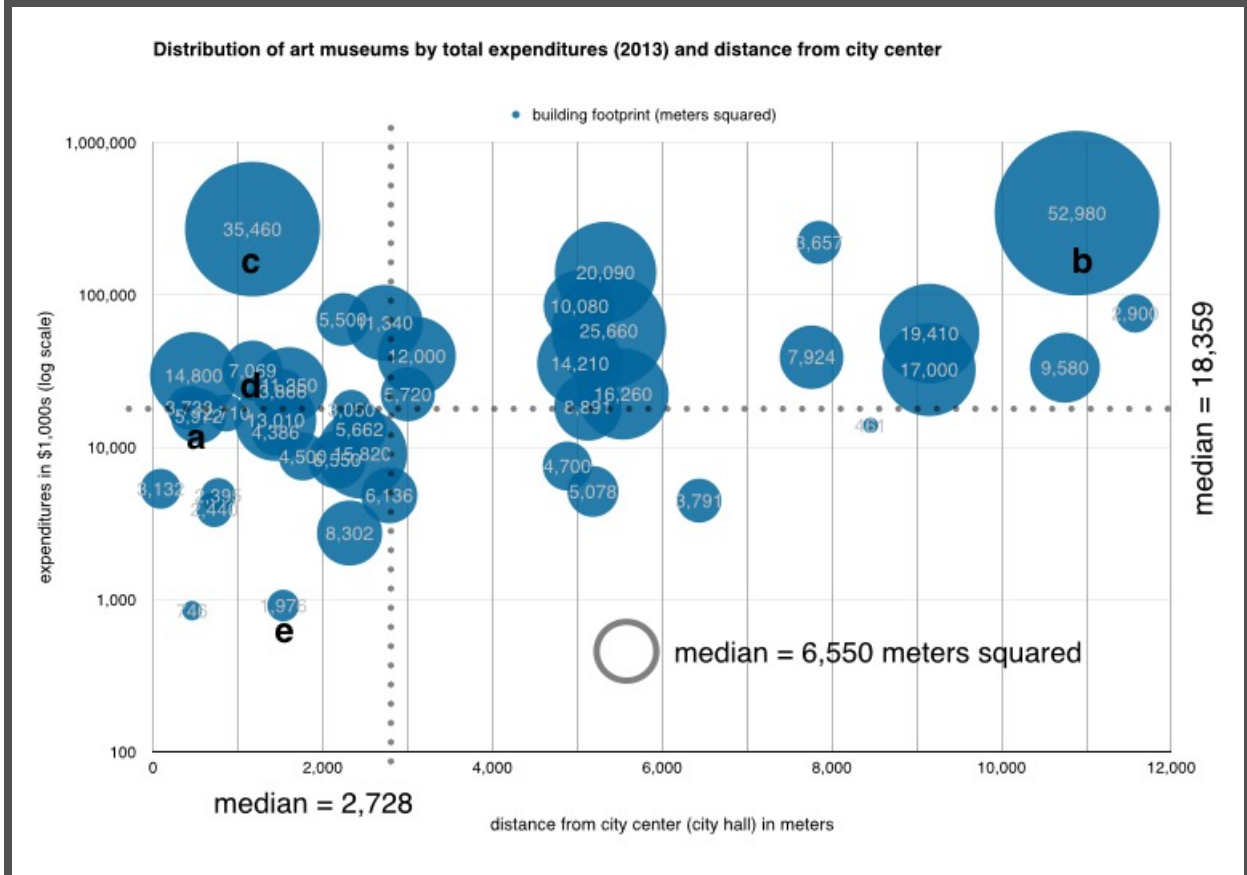
NB: These are a non-random sample of n=59 art museums selected from the 50 largest US cities by 2010 Census place population.

Map of the United States created using QGIS 2.2 Valmiera, Openstreetmap, EPSG 3857 - WGS 84 / Pseudo Mercator

**FIGURE 3-3: EXAMPLE OF MUSEUM AND COMPARISON CENSUS TRACT SELECTION: NEW YORK CITY, NY**



**FIGURE 3-4: SELECTED ART MUSEUM CHARACTERISTICS**



NB:

Bubble area represents museum building footprint in meters squared  
 Some selected art museums do not appear in this graph because they did not have publicly available information for their 2013 expenditures. The median values printed include these missing museums.

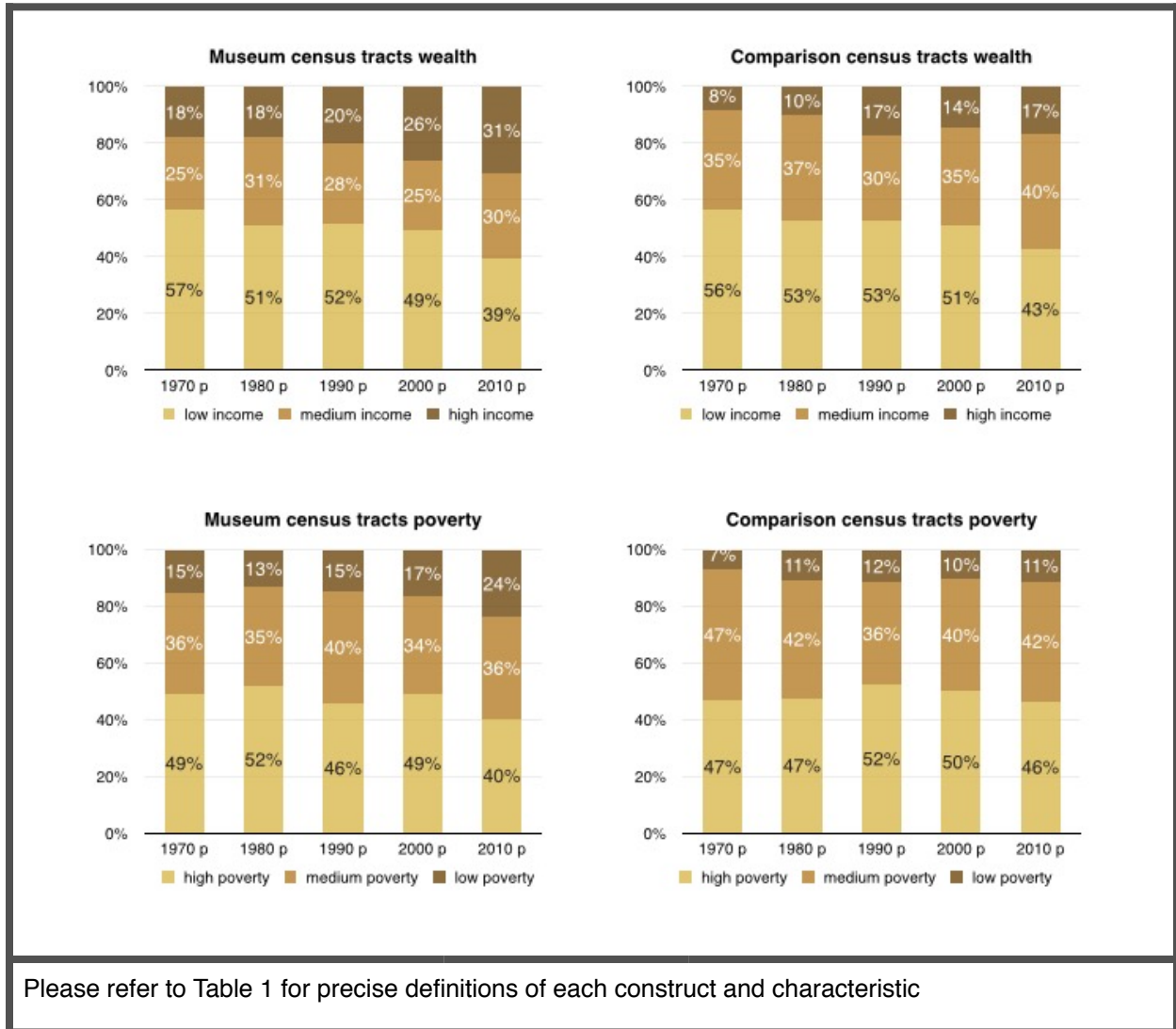
Key for identified museums:

- a) Portland Art Museum (Oregon)
- b) Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York City)
- c) The Art Institute of Chicago
- d) Seattle Art Museum
- e) Utah Museum of Contemporary Art (Salt Lake City)

**FIGURE 3-5: CROSS SECTIONAL ART MUSEUM AND COMPARISON CENSUS TRACT RACE/ETHNICITY, EDUCATION, AND RESIDENTIAL TURNOVER CHARACTERISTICS, 1970-2010**

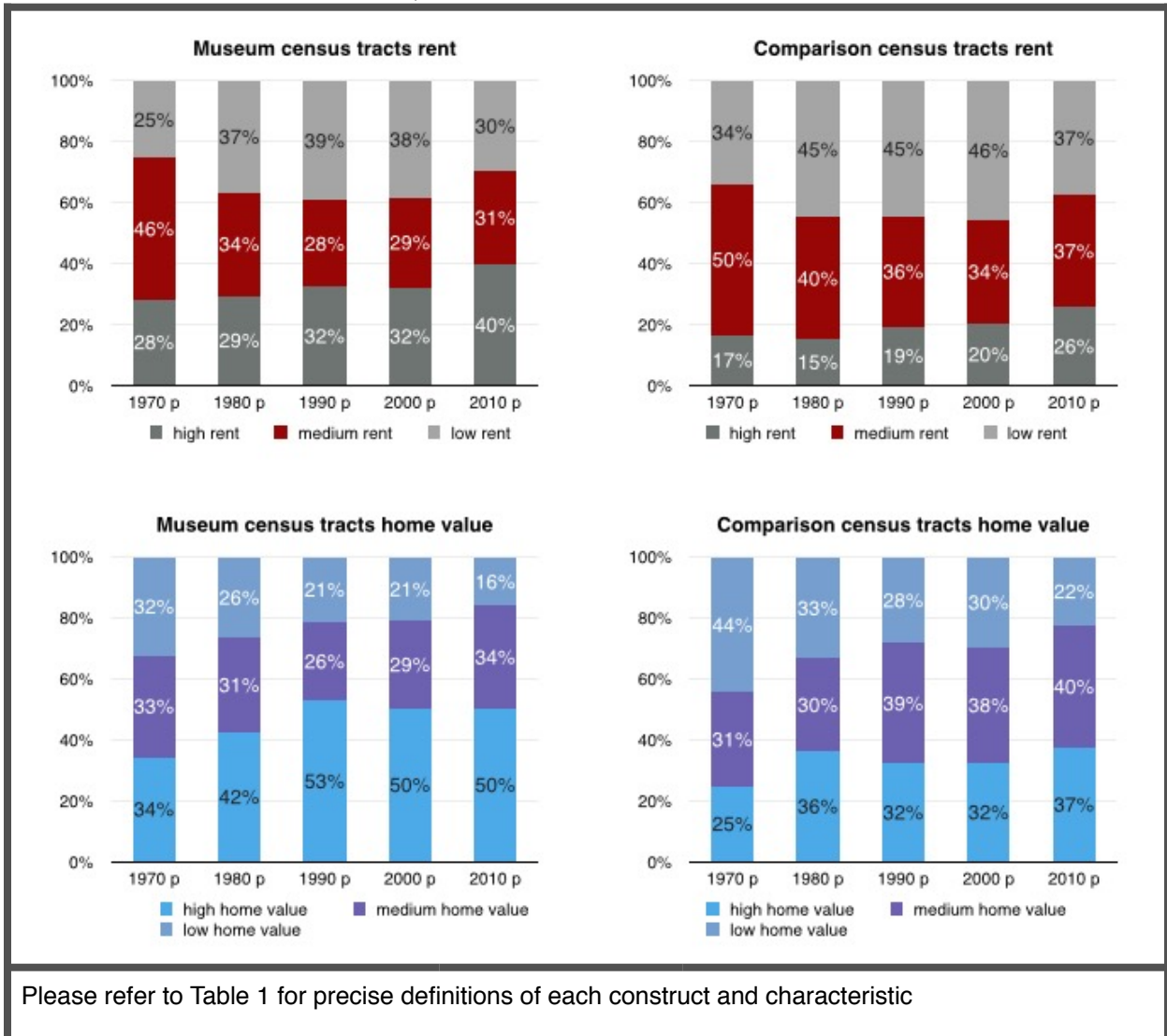


**FIGURE 3-6: CROSS SECTIONAL ART MUSEUM AND COMPARISON CENSUS TRACT WEALTH AND POVERTY CHARACTERISTICS, 1970-2010**

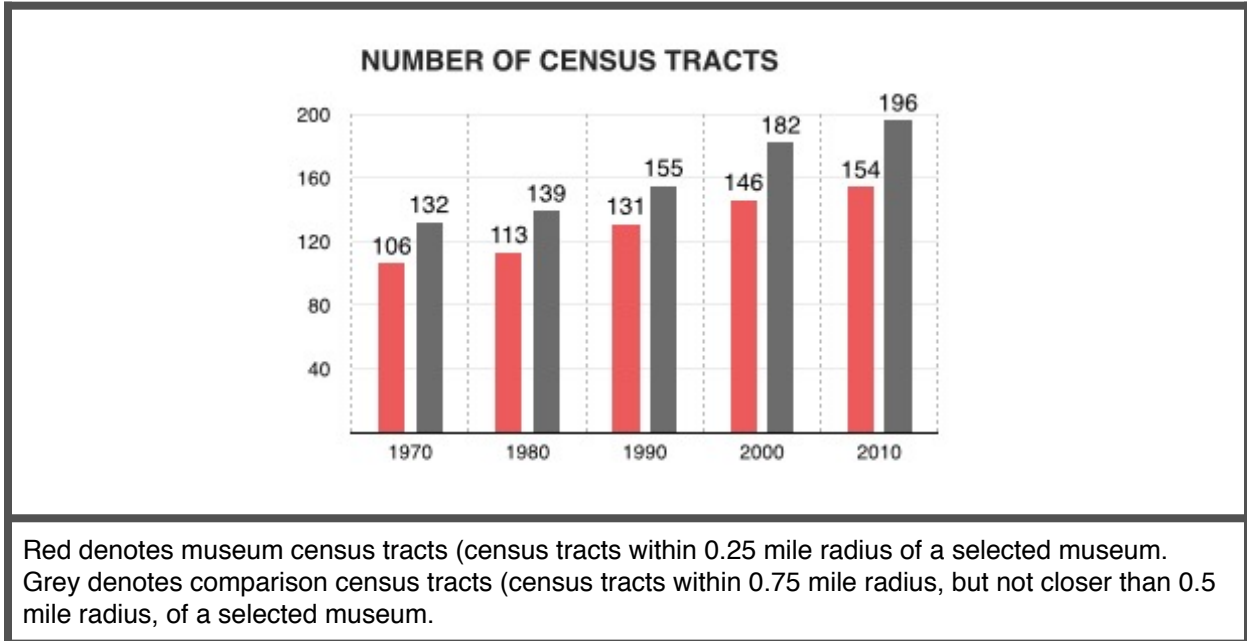




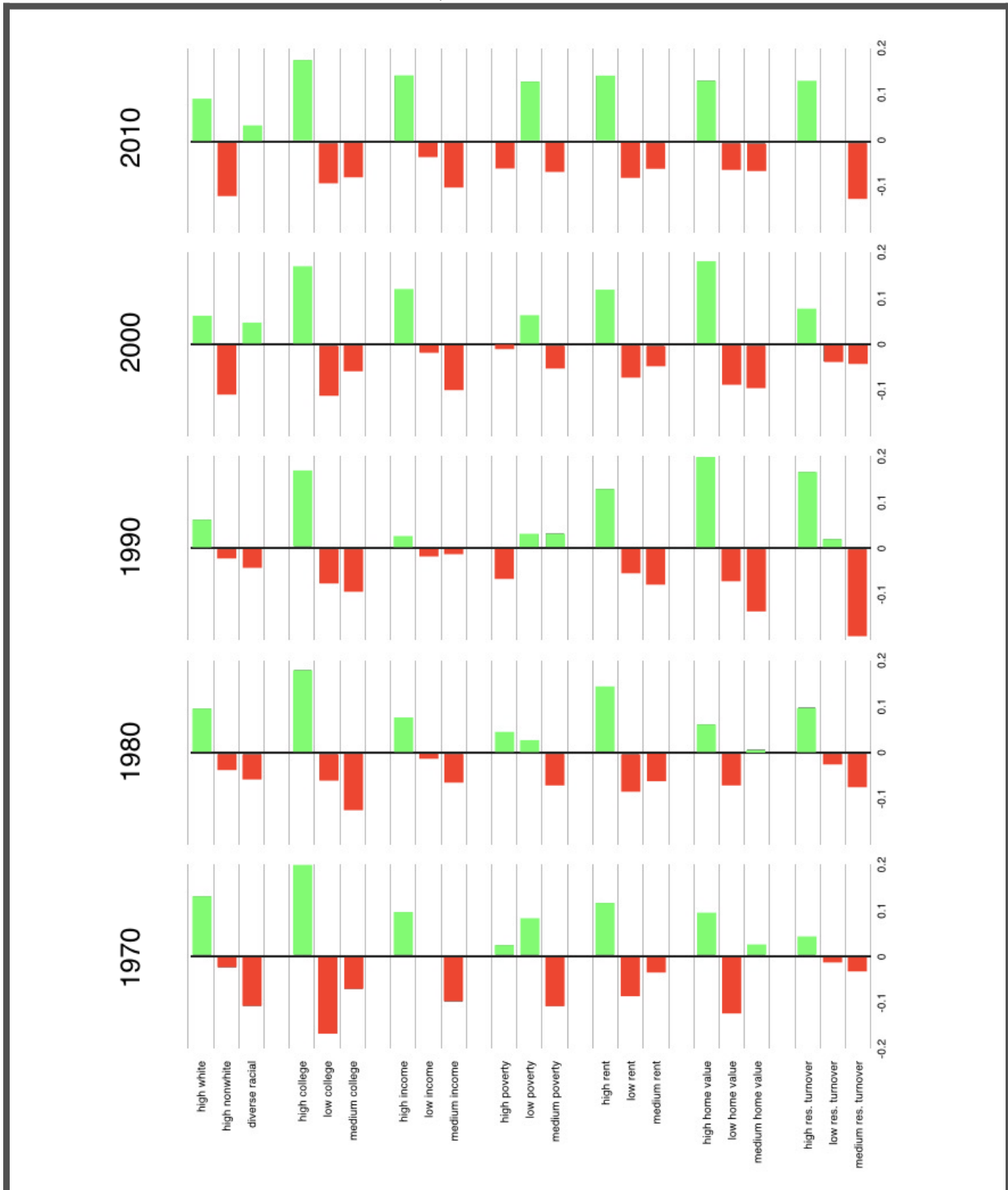
**FIGURE 3-7: CROSS SECTIONAL ART MUSEUM AND COMPARISON CENSUS TRACT RENT AND HOME VALUE CHARACTERISTICS, 1970-2010**



**FIGURE 3-8: CROSS SECTION ANALYSIS, NUMBER OF SELECTED MUSEUM AND COMPARISON CENSUS TRACTS USED IN ANALYSIS, 1970-2010**



**FIGURE 3-9: CROSS SECTIONAL DIFFERENCES IN ART MUSEUM AND COMPARISON CENSUS TRACT CHARACTERISTIC PROPORTIONS, 1970-2010**

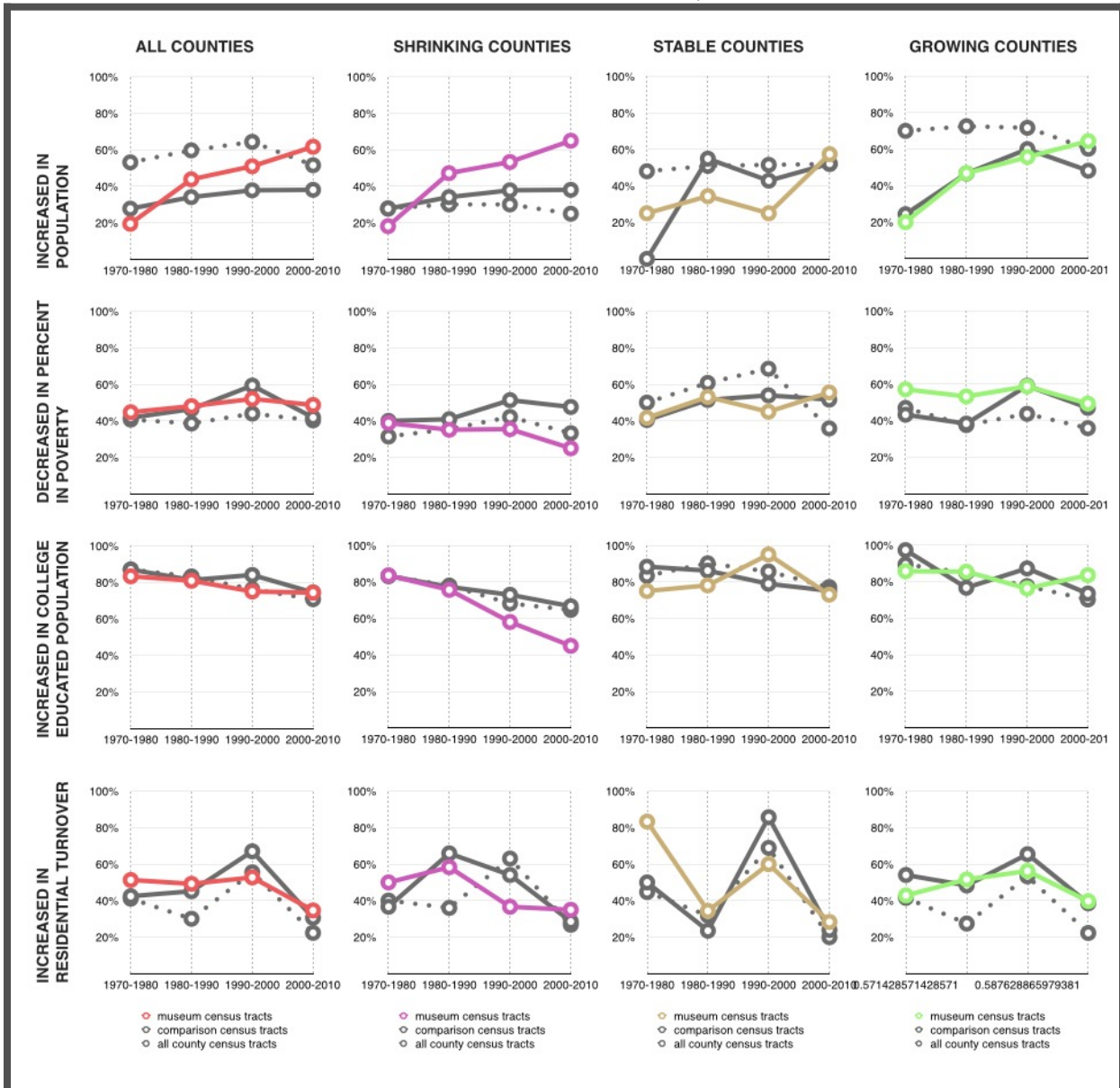


NB:

Values calculated by subtracting proportion of comparison census tracts with a certain characteristic from proportion of museum census tracts with the same characteristic.

Please refer to Table 1 for precise definitions of each construct and characteristic

**FIGURE 3-10: LONGITUDINAL CHANGE: PERCENTAGE OF CENSUS TRACTS THAT EXPERIENCED POPULATION CHANGE BETWEEN 1970-2010, BY COUNTY GROWTH**



NB:

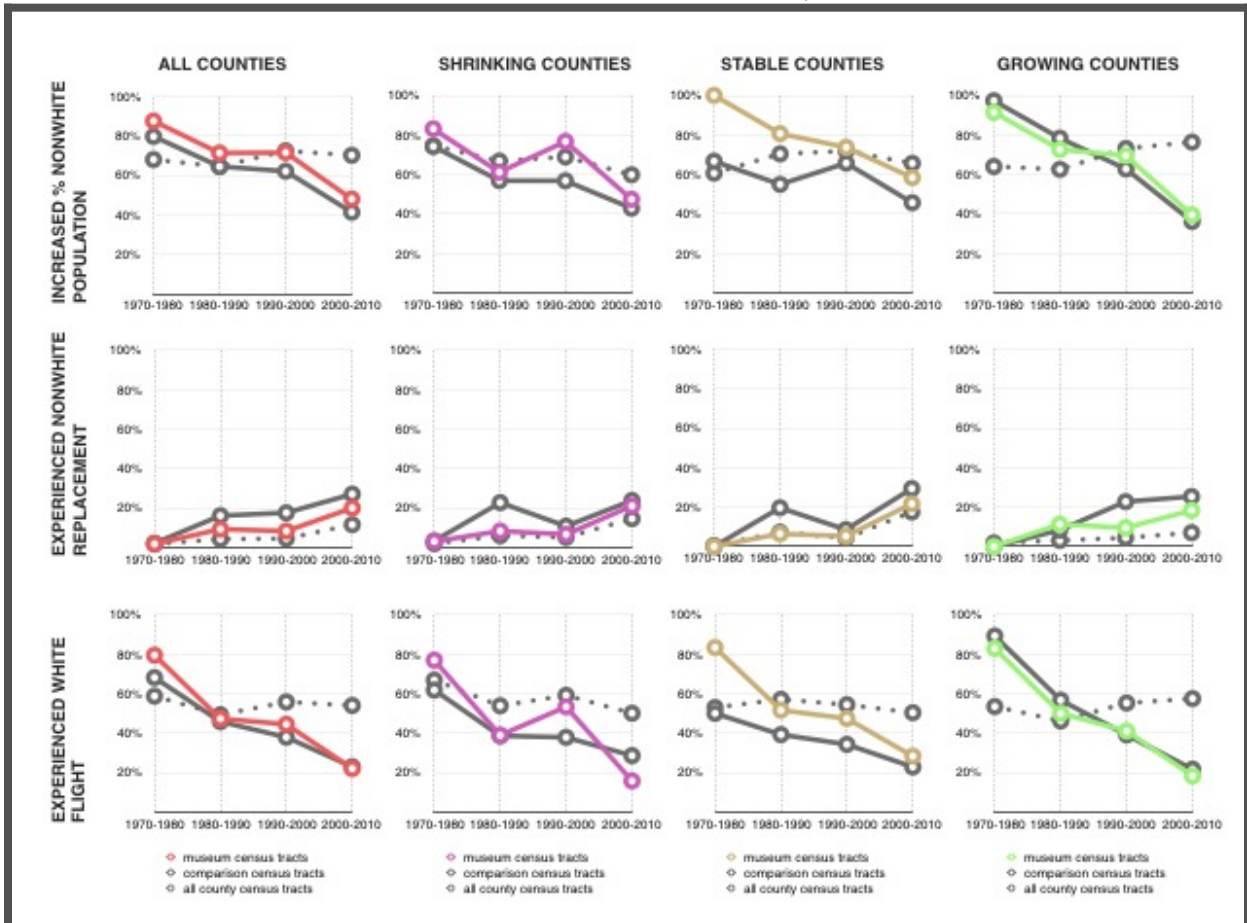
COLOR lines (red, purple, tan, and green) represent proportion of museum census tracts that experienced change

GREY lines represent proportion of comparison census tracts that experienced change

DOTTED lines represent proportion of all county census tracts that experienced change

Please refer to Table 2 for more information about longitudinal variables

**FIGURE 3-11: LONGITUDINAL CHANGE: PERCENTAGE OF CENSUS TRACTS THAT EXPERIENCED DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE BETWEEN 1970-2010, BY COUNTY GROWTH**



NB:

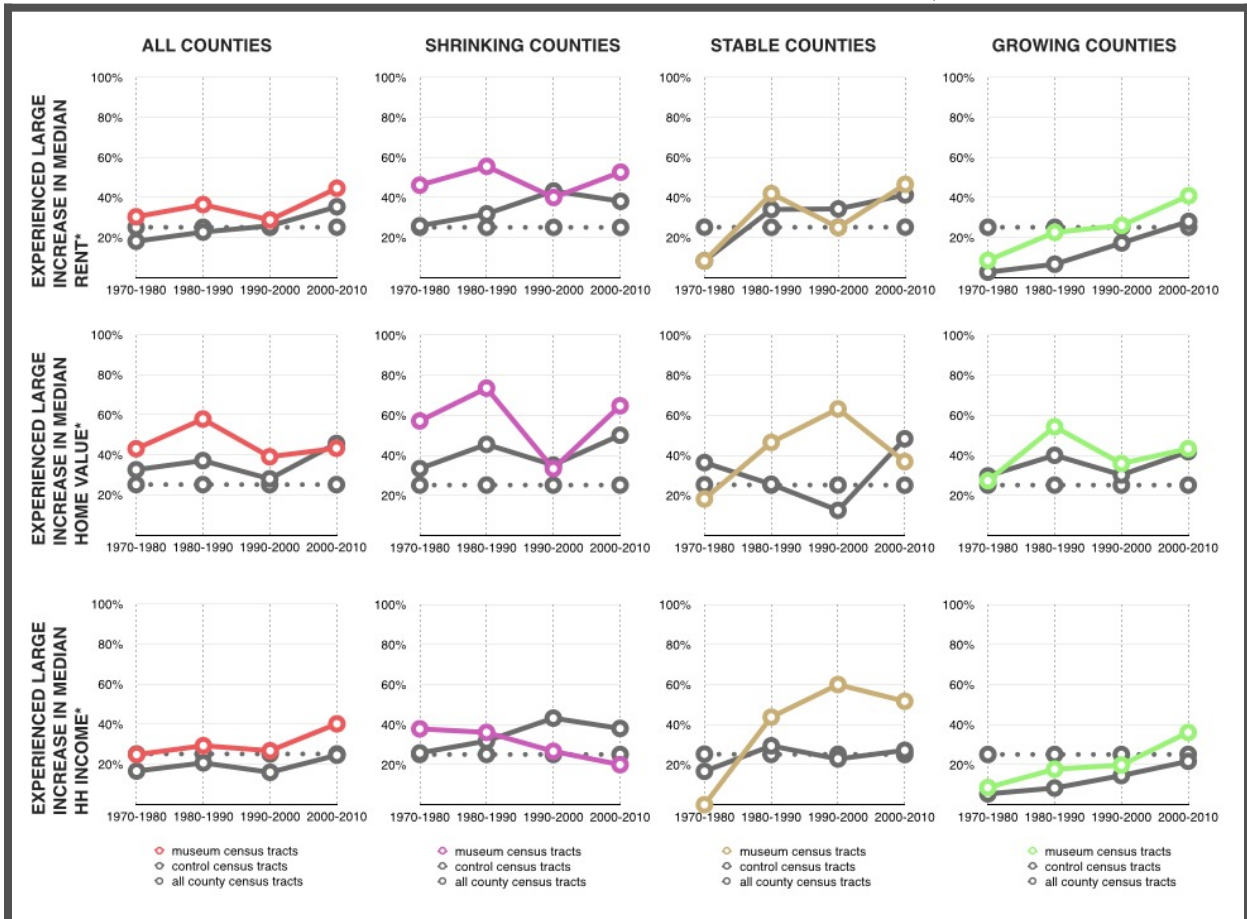
COLOR lines (red, purple, tan, and green) represent proportion of museum census tracts that experienced change

GREY lines represent proportion of comparison census tracts that experienced change

DOTTED lines represent proportion of all county census tracts that experienced change

Please refer to Table 2 for more information about longitudinal variables

**FIGURE 3-12: LONGITUDINAL CHANGE: PERCENTAGE OF CENSUS TRACTS THAT EXPERIENCED HOME AND RENT PRICE CHANGES BETWEEN 1970-2010, BY COUNTY GROWTH**



NB:

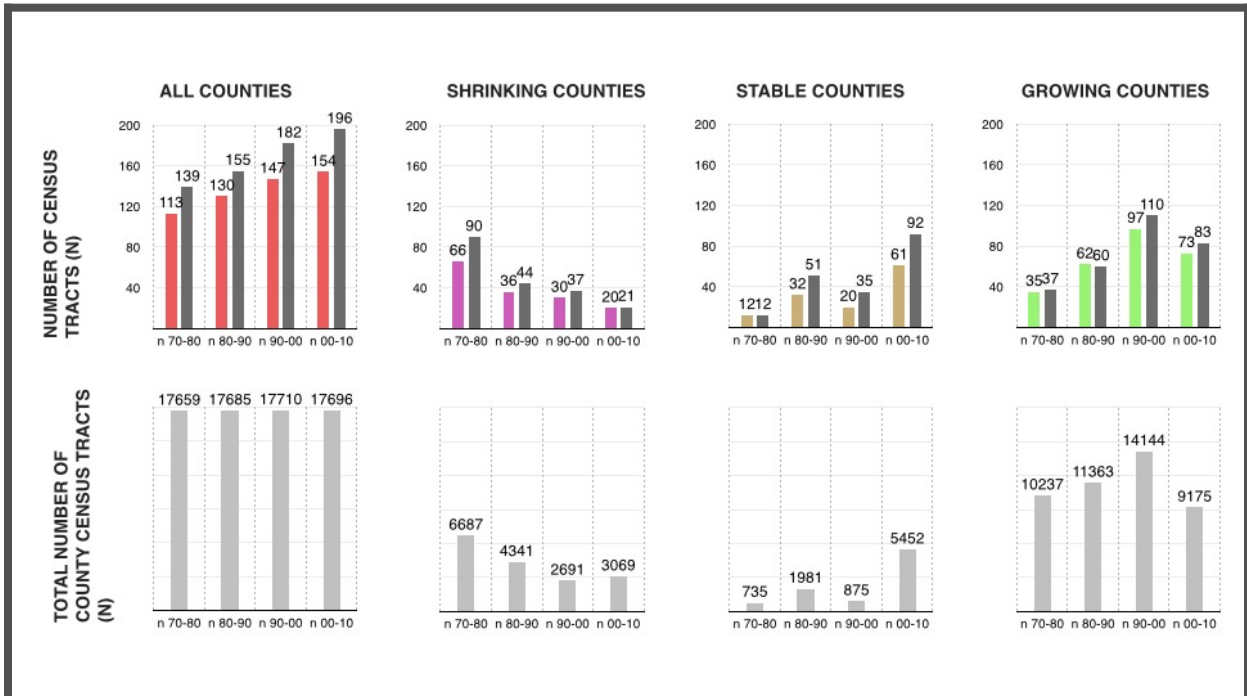
COLOR lines (red, purple, tan, and green) represent proportion of museum census tracts that experienced change

GREY lines represent proportion of comparison census tracts that experienced change

DOTTED lines represent proportion of all county census tracts that experienced change

Please refer to Table 2 for more information about longitudinal variables

**FIGURE 3-13: LONGITUDINAL CHANGE: NUMBER OF SELECTED MUSEUM, COMPARISON, AND COUNTY CENSUS TRACTS USED IN ANALYSIS**



NB:

COLOR bars (red, purple, tan, and green) represent the number of museum census tracts  
 DARK GREY bars represent the number of comparison census tracts  
 LIGHT GREY bars represent the number of total county census tracts

**FIGURE 3-14: SPATIAL REGRESSIONS FOR ALL SELECTED COUNTY CENSUS TRACTS, 2000-2010 CHANGE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA**

	Dependent variable:									
	Population	Non-white population	White population	College educated population	Median household income	Median home value	Resident turnover	Change in home price	burden	Nonwhite replacement
	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	logistic
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
Spatial lag (d population)	0.439*** (0.007)									
Spatial lag (d non-whites)		0.495*** (0.007)								
Spatial lag (d whites)			0.447*** (0.007)							
Spatial lag (d college educated)				0.314*** (0.008)						
Spatial lag (d median household income)					0.236*** (0.008)		0.713** (0.006)			
Spatial lag (d median home value)										
Spatial lag (d residential turnover)										
2000 population	-0.131*** (0.006)	-0.010** (0.004)	-0.123*** (0.003)	-0.009*** (0.002)	0.029 (0.073)	-0.444 (0.538)	0.232*** (0.003)			
2000 percent in poverty	-907.621*** (81.373)	-1,096.429*** (59.549)								
2000 median home value	0.00001 (0.0001)	-0.0003*** (0.0001)								
2000 percent non-white			88.214*** (16.279)	0.0002*** (0.00002)						
2000-2010 change in median home value			0.001*** (0.00004)	-47.303*** (0.052)	-5,846.619*** (350.143)	1,686.271 (2,704.175)	0.008** (0.003)	0.839*** (0.312)		1.776*** (0.111)
number of LIHTC units by 2010										
2000-2010 change in whites										
Distance from city center (meters)	0.0003*** (0.0001)	0.005*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.0004)	0.001*** (0.0002)						
Museum census tract (dummy)	154.191 (110.012)	94.621 (79.533)	128.911** (63.844)	24.959 (32.364)						
Constant	597.942*** (34.994)	334.533*** (25.298)	233.079*** (17.498)	482.722*** (9.923)	10,964.940*** (372.890)	42,481.750*** (2,898.896)	-9.016*** (0.003)	0.477 (0.329)		-1.889*** (0.117)
Observations	12,083	12,083	11,862	12,070	12,073	11,865	12,083	11,865	12,112	
R2	0.230	0.355	0.375	0.152	0.162	0.151	0.125	0.081		
Adjusted R2	0.319	0.354	0.375	0.152	0.152	0.151	0.124	0.081		
Maize Inf. Crit.										6.538.375

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01



**FIGURE 3-15: SPATIAL REGRESSIONS FOR SHRINKING SELECTED COUNTY CENSUS TRACTS, 2000-2010 CHANGE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA**

	Dependent variable:								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	Population	Non-white population	White population	College educated population	Median household income	Median home value	Resident turnover	Change in home price	Nonwhite replacement
Spatial lag (d population)	0.292*** (0.015)								
Spatial lag (d non-whites)		0.534*** (0.016)							
Spatial lag (d whites)			0.374*** (0.016)						
Spatial lag (d college educated)				0.219*** (0.016)					
Spatial lag (d median household income)					0.256*** (0.021)	0.715*** (0.015)			
Spatial lag (d median home value)							0.184*** (0.022)		
Spatial lag (d residential turnover)							-0.060*** (0.008)		
2000 population	-0.091*** (0.007)	-0.019*** (0.007)	-0.073*** (0.006)	0.007** (0.003)	0.185 (0.162)	0.244 (0.759)		0.009 (0.000)	-0.001*** (0.000)
2000 percent in poverty	-1.091, 51.8*** (66.964)	-1, 298, 530*** (66, 259)							
2000 median home value	0.001*** (0.0001)	-0.0003** (0.0001)	195, 998*** (22, 839)	0.0003*** (0.0001)					
2000 percent non-white			0.001*** (0.0001)	-42, 649*** (12, 981)	-0, 780, 459*** (663, 974)	-3, 916, 555 (2, 971, 239)	0.006 (0.006)	0.389*** (0.030)	1.592*** (0.248)
2000-2010 change in median home value									
number of LIHTC units by 2010									
2000-2010 change in whites									
Distance from city center (meters)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.002** (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001* (0.0004)	-0.060*** (0.018)	-0.155* (0.086)	-0.00000*** (0.00000)	-0.00000 (0.00000)	-0.0001*** (0.00001)
Museum census tract (dummy)	631, 930*** (138, 483)	395, 663*** (128, 895)	193, 256* (415, 896)	-77, 786 (66, 329)	-3, 862, 324 (2, 883, 442)	51, 562, 150*** (14, 988, 728)	0.017 (0.027)	0.455*** (0.146)	-0.514 (0.830)
Constant	165, 118*** (41, 588)	251, 481*** (38, 978)	-49, 648* (27, 791)	29, 915* (16, 153)	11, 341, 728*** (771, 898)	24, 613, 638*** (3, 553, 925)	-0.007 (0.007)	0.076** (0.036)	-1.444*** (0.258)
Observations	2,101	2,092	2,070	2,102	2,091	2,073	2,094	2,073	2,097
R2	0.385	0.458	0.366	0.424	0.223	0.524	0.095	0.176	
Adjusted R2	0.348	0.437	0.365	0.422	0.220	0.523	0.092	0.174	
Alaike Inf. Crit.									1,387.403

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

**FIGURE 3-16: SPATIAL REGRESSIONS FOR STABLE SELECTED COUNTY CENSUS TRACTS, 2000-2010 CHANGE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA**

	Dependent variable:									
	Population US (1)	Non-white US (2)	White US (3)	College US (4)	Median US (5)	Median US (6)	Resident US (7)	Turnover US (8)	Home US (9)	Replacement US (10)
Spatial lag (d population)	0.309*** (0.025)				0.271*** (0.029)	0.722*** (0.022)	0.223*** (0.023)	-0.00000 (0.00000)		
Spatial lag (d non-whites)		0.592*** (0.024)								
Spatial lag (d whites)			0.525*** (0.022)	0.308*** (0.028)						
Spatial lag (d college educated)					-0.625*** (0.233)	-5.565** (2.527)	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.00002 (0.00002)		
Spatial lag (d median household income)										
Spatial lag (d median home value)										
Spatial lag (d residential turnover)										
2000 population	-0.036*** (0.000)	0.003 (0.010)	-0.040*** (0.007)	0.025*** (0.004)	-0.625*** (0.233)	-5.565** (2.527)	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.00002 (0.00002)		
2000 percent in poverty	12.529 (88.843)	-276.866*** (106.972)								
2000 median home value	0.0002 (0.0001)	-0.0004*** (0.0001)								
2000 percent non-white			131.819*** (29.735)	0.0003*** (0.0001)	-3.961.984*** (971.819)	-4.828.431 (10,395.458)	-0.029*** (0.009)	0.269*** (0.026)		1.227*** (0.262)
2000-2010 change in median home value										
number of LIHTC units by 2010										
2000-2010 change in LIHTC units by 2010										
Distance from city center (meters)	0.0002 (0.002)	0.0009*** (0.003)	-0.010*** (0.002)	-0.007*** (0.001)	-1.903 (3.500)	67.457* (37.967)	0.0001*** (0.00003)	0.0005 (0.0004)		-0.001 (0.001)
Museum census tract (dummy)	252.786** (123.709)	167.782 (149.626)	51.799 (119.603)	236.042*** (64.425)	-0.027 (0.778)	0.067 (7.337.549)	-0.00000*** (0.00001)	-0.00002*** (0.00001)		-0.0001*** (0.00002)
Constant	91.527* (48.806)	32.116 (59.158)	45.903 (42.595)	45.396* (25.638)	12,414.428*** (1,348.634)	83,514.149*** (14,698.138)	0.018 (0.012)	0.323*** (0.141)		-1.357*** (0.341)
Observations	1,086	1,086	894	1,086	1,013	984	1,013	984		1,014
Adjusted R2	0.164	0.458	0.548	0.221	0.137	0.539	0.139	0.637		0.837
Akaike Inf. Crit.	0.159	0.447	0.545	0.216	0.181	0.536	0.124	0.838		0.816.788

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

**FIGURE 3-17: SPATIAL REGRESSIONS FOR GROWING SELECTED COUNTY CENSUS TRACTS, 2000-2010 CHANGE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA**

	Dependent variable:								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Population	0.414*** (0.089)								
Non-white population		0.450*** (0.089)							
White population			0.433*** (0.088)						
College educated population				0.314*** (0.089)					
Median household income					0.218*** (0.010)				
Median home value						0.679*** (0.088)			
Residential turnover							0.224*** (0.010)		
2000 population	-0.160*** (0.007)	-0.018*** (0.005)	-0.141*** (0.004)	-0.016*** (0.002)	-0.004 (0.008)	-0.269 (0.163)	-0.0002*** (0.0001)	-0.0001*** (0.00003)	-0.001*** (0.0001)
2000 percent in poverty	-996.705*** (110.072)	-1,163.370*** (179.026)							
2000 median home value	-0.0002*** (0.0001)	-0.0005*** (0.0001)							
2000 percent non-white		48.553*** (21.782)							
2000-2010 change in median home value			0.001*** (0.00005)						
number of LIHTC units by 2010					-5,551.528*** (445.615)	4,785.075 (3,460.521)	0.016*** (0.004)	1.094** (0.443)	2.024*** (0.144)
2000-2010 change in whites							0.0001*** (0.00001)	-0.0001 (0.001)	-0.001* (0.0004)
Distance from city center (meters)	0.010*** (0.001)	0.006*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.0005)	0.001*** (0.0002)					
Museum census tract (dummy)	55,249 (139,297)	39,408 (99,203)	88,092 (77,599)	3,051 (40,021)					
Constant	820,212*** (44,314)	446,013*** (31,096)	342,663*** (22,164)	142,231*** (12,596)	11,207.910*** (453.252)	44,457.720*** (3,469.245)	-0.024*** (0.004)	0.585 (0.442)	-2,200*** (0.147)
Observations	0.976	0.952	0.980	0.962	0.969	0.988	0.976	0.988	0.981
Adjusted R2	0.312	0.314	0.377	0.125	0.152	0.476	0.135	0.001	0.0004
Model F - Crit.	0.311	0.314	0.376	0.124	0.151	0.476	0.135	0.0004	4,242.886

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

## Citations

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# CHAPTER

## 4. The Portland Art Museum and its neighborhood: physical and socioeconomic change between 1890 and 2014

The preceding Chapter's analyses of socioeconomic change in multiple art museum neighborhoods across the United States gives a general (though not representative) picture of how art museums may influence the socioeconomics around them. This, however, is only one aspect of neighborhood change associated with art museums. Art museums, in addition to drawing visitors from across the city and region, also expand physically and programmatically over time, potentially resulting in new space and amenities for neighborhood residents (Gurian, 2001; Sheppard, Oehler, Benjamin, & Kessler, 2006). In doing so, they also hypothetically catalyze neighborhood real estate development, aesthetic placemaking, and changes in land use (Deutsche & Ryan, 1984; Grodach, 2010; Sheppard, Oehler, Benjamin, & Kessler, 2006). In fact, these hypothetical qualities of art museums (in addition to other arts related industries) are what make them attractive economic development strategies for revitalizing neighborhoods and regions (Grodach, 2010; Plaza, 2006; Strom, 2002). However, despite catalyzing economic growth in some settings (Plaza, 2006), art museums and other arts institutions do not always live up to these expectations in all situations

(Grodach, 2010). This is because art museums are ultimately products of social and economic surplus; they exist in the context of urban activity that provides sufficient base of art consumers and philanthropists. Thus, the location of established art museums is no accident; it is highly dependent on a city's historical economic and socio-political context. Understanding this fact is integral to understanding how art museums influence neighborhood change, and is the first argument presented in this chapter.

Given an economic and social context that can support a non-profit art museum, where the art museum locates is influenced by negotiations between the goals of the institution's leaders, what is economically feasible for the institution (where it can afford to locate), what is physically feasible (is there enough, desirable building space for the museum), and what is socially/politically ideal (will the location upset anyone). Once art museums locate in a particular location, they tend to stay at that location,<sup>30</sup> becoming a fixture of both the physical and social landscape of adjacent neighborhoods for decades and even hundreds of years.

Though the organizing and location of art museums are highly dependent on urban economic and socio-political factors, this chapter also analyzes the other direction of influence: how the art museum as a physical space and land use impacts its built and social environment. Anchor institution theory, discussed previously, hypothesizes that institutions such as these necessarily benefit their surroundings economically and

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<sup>30</sup> There are exceptions to this statement, most notably, the Whitney Museum in New York City, which moved from the Upper East Side of Manhattan to the rapidly gentrifying Meatpacking district of Chelsea, on the west side of Manhattan after 2010. It has just recently reopened in its new location as of May, 2015.

socially because they are not likely move, even if there are local or regional socioeconomic changes (Birch, Griffin, Johnson, & Stover, 2013; Porter, 2010; Taylor & Luter, 2013; Webber & Karlström, 2009). Thus, they supposedly stabilize their surroundings and provide gravity that attracts people and perhaps even new development to neighborhoods (ibid.). However, attraction of new development and people might gentrify neighborhoods, or change them in a way that benefits wealthier, more highly educated, and whiter groups over others (Deutsche & Ryan, 1984; Ley, 2003; McLean, 2014).

This chapter analyzes, in particular, a theoretical chain of events present in urban economic and sociological literatures for the case study of the Portland Art Museum and its South Park Blocks neighborhood. The theoretical chain of events include: the economic and social maturation of a city that leads to the formation of an art museum; the siting of the art museum according to economic and socio-political logic; and the change in physical character, land use, and socioeconomics of the neighborhood between 1890 and 2014 as result of both the presence of the art museum and changes throughout the city of Portland. By analyzing these three parts grounded in urban theoretical literature, this chapter answers three questions: 1) How have the Portland Art Museum and its neighborhood, the South Park Blocks, changed between 1890 and 2014? 2) How have the Portland Art Museum and the South Park Blocks neighborhood influenced change in one another, if at all? 3) Do changes in the South Park Blocks neighborhood suggest that the Portland Art Museum anchored or gentrified the neighborhood?

In answering these questions, this chapter demonstrates three things. First, it demonstrates how the socio-political and urban economic context of Portland, OR has shaped the Portland Art Museum as a physical entity. Second, it demonstrates how the Museum has influenced intensive physical development in South Park Blocks only as recently as 1980 and in conjunction with the City of Portland's Urban Renewal Area revitalization efforts. Third, this chapter demonstrates that the Museum's physical space and land use has anchored the diverse social environment of its neighborhood in ways that complicate the view of the Portland Art Museum, and institutions like it, as exclusive space for a dominant class (Deutsche & Ryan, 1986; Zukin, 1995; McLean, 2014).

For this analysis, I put the history of the Portland Art Museum within the context of the South Park Blocks' changes in land use, building footprint, and demography. Evidence for this analysis comes from a variety of sources: published histories of Portland (particularly the work of Carl Abbott), the South Park Blocks, and the Portland Art Museum; compiled historical accounts of the museum's programming;<sup>31</sup> historical Sanborn insurance maps and Google maps; city planning documents; interviews with Portland Art Museum and South Park Blocks neighborhood constituents, and first-hand walking surveys of the neighborhood. The interview evidence that this chapter's analysis draws on comes from 15 informal and 15 formal interviews with South Park Blocks neighborhood constituents residents, employees of local businesses, students, visitors to the museum) and Portland Art Museum employees (please refer to Appendices B and D).

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<sup>31</sup> This specifically refers to the research of original source material by Portland Art Museum scholar and former Kress Fellow, Sarah Lampen, completed between 2013 and 2014.

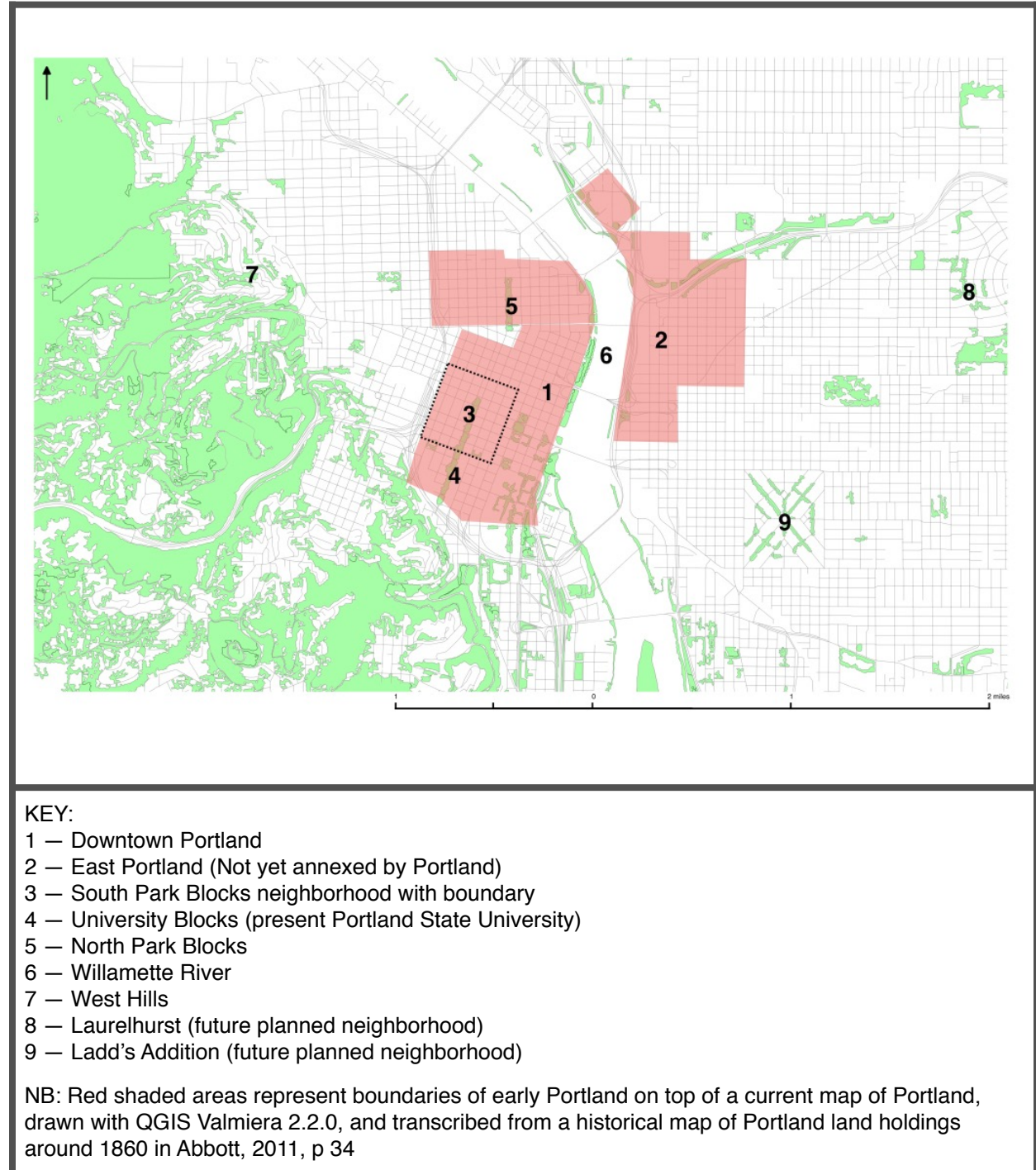
## Early Portland and the South Park Blocks, 1850-1889

Portland, Oregon first became a place for significant urban activity when businessmen in the mid-19th Century discovered its advantageous location along the Willamette River and its easy access to the Columbia River and Pacific Ocean (Abbott, 2008). Prior to becoming a bustling center for shipping and commerce, the land that would eventually become downtown Portland and the South Park Blocks was owned by series of businessmen and real estate investors looking to discover the next great frontier town (Abbott, 2011). Brought to the far west by the promise of adventure and opportunity for becoming rich, many East-coast transplants, including the ones who originally purchased and transferred ownership of several future Portland neighborhoods, competed with each other to build the best city along the Willamette (ibid.). The city of Portland's name is famously linked to a coin toss between two East coasters, Asa Lovejoy and Francis Pettygrove, who wanted to name the new town after an East coast city. Lovejoy, who was from Massachusetts, wanted to name the town Boston, but Pettygrove won the toss and decided to name it Portland, after the largest city in his home state of Maine.

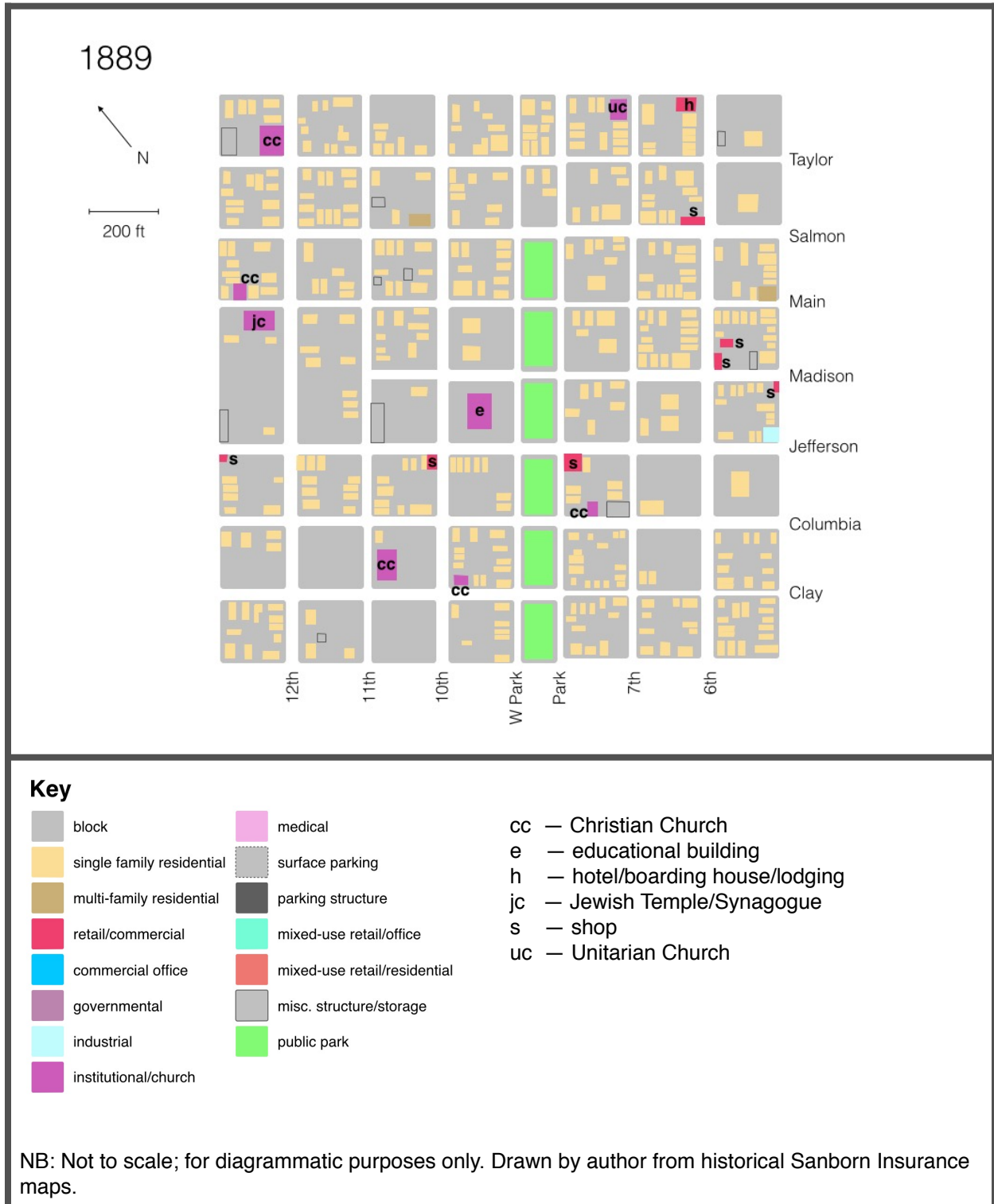
Portland's location on the Willamette was at a point to which deep-draft ships could still navigate, opening up access from Oregon's fertile Tualitan valley and rich lumber resources to the Pacific Ocean via the Columbia River (ibid.). However, what made Portland distinctive from its other rival river towns along the Willamette were its trappings of a quickly modernizing and civilizing town: its regular ferry connections to

San Francisco (set up by Portland boosters) and the first major daily newspaper in the Northwest, *The Oregonian* (ibid.).

**FIGURE 4-1: MAP OF PORTLAND, OREGON WITH EARLY (C. 1860) BOUNDARIES**



**FIGURE 4-2: LAND USE AND BUILDING FOOTPRINT MAP OF THE SOUTH PARK BLOCKS, CIRCA 1889**



As a port town, commercial and industrial urban activity initially concentrated at the edge of the Willamette river (number 1 in Figure 4-1), whereas the blocks to the west, like the South Park Blocks neighborhood (number 3, Figure 4-1), were more suburban (see Figure 4-2). Initially, successful businessmen from the East coast (mostly from New York) lived in the area known as the South Park Blocks around the mid to late 1800s (ibid.). These men tended to their businesses in the downtown area adjacent to the Willamette River and built their residences a few blocks to the West to escape the bustle and debauchery of downtown (ibid.). Around 1850, Daniel Lowndale, a tanner and one of the largest property owners in Portland who purchased his plots from Pettygrove for \$5,000 in leather goods, convinced other prominent property holders to donate several contiguous parcels of land along the Western boundary of the city to create an urban park, predicting that the future city of Portland would grow westward (Abbott, 2011; Nelson, 2008). Rather than donate the land to the city, some land owners wanted the city to purchase their land for the urban park at very steep prices (Nelson, 2008). The city refused (because they could not justify the expense) and what was originally envisioned as a singular strip of parkspace along the Western edge of the city became two separated park strips, their areas named the North Park Blocks (number 5 in Figure 4-1) and the South Park Blocks (ibid.).

Between the mid to late 1800s, the South Park Blocks became home to more “well-to-do” families from the East, including Jewish families. They formed churches and synagogues in the neighborhood, on which much of their social lives centered (ibid.). Figure 4-2 shows building footprints and the land uses of those buildings, transcribed



from 1889 Sanborn Insurance maps of the South Park Blocks. All of the purple-coded rectangles on the map signify religious spaces, including Christian churches and Jewish Synagogues. The one exception, the purple rectangle at the Northwest block of W Park and Jefferson is the Park School that educated the children of the neighborhood. Some of commercial/retail uses from downtown Portland (to the East and Southeast beyond the map: number 1 in Figure 4-1) mingled into the neighborhood around 1889 (red rectangles in Figure 4-2), though the area was still predominantly residential and low-density. In addition to the larger manors of the most successful businessmen in Portland (the large yellow rectangles), more middle-class families moved into smaller, single-family residences (depicted by the smaller yellow rectangles in Figure 4-2).

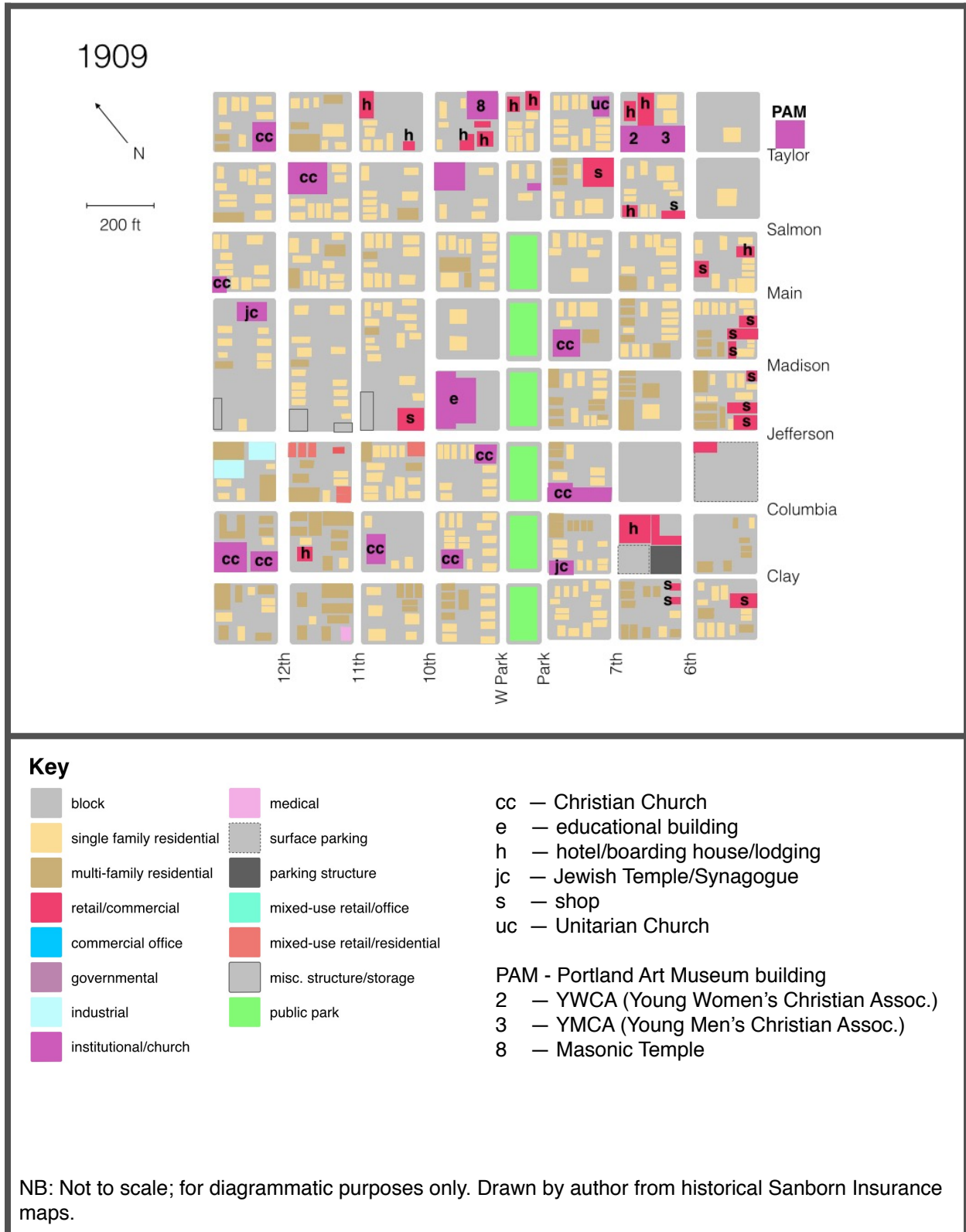
### The birth of the Portland Art Association and its early years, 1892-1905

It was also during the late 1800s that Portland's elite businessmen and political leaders became interested in providing cultural amenities for their quickly growing city (Abbott, 2011).<sup>32</sup> By 1892, some of the city's most prominent and "public-spirited" (*A Handbook...*, 1971, p 7) citizens (Henry W. Corbett, Dr. Holt C. Wilson, Henry Failing, William M. Ladd, Winslow B. Ayer, Rev. Thomas L. Eliot, and C. E. S. Wood) formed the Portland Art Association, the first incarnation of the Portland Art Museum, which endeavored to obtain a collection of artistic objects and exhibit them in a permanent space in the heart of the city (*A Handbook...*, 1971; Ellison & Pierce, 1996).

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<sup>32</sup> Also see: [http://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/portland\\_art\\_museum/#.VRrIvlyJc20](http://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/portland_art_museum/#.VRrIvlyJc20).

**FIGURE 4-3: LAND USE AND BUILDING FOOTPRINT MAP OF THE SOUTH PARK BLOCKS, CIRCA 1909**



These founding members consisted of the wealthiest and most influential families of Portland at the time. Many of the Association's founding board members also served on civic service boards, such as the Library Association and the Water Committee,<sup>33</sup> which was chaired by Henry Failing and served by Corbett and Ladd (Abbott, 2011). Other founding members held places of high esteem in the Portland community, such as the Rev. Thomas Lamb Eliot. Eliot was not only the pastor of the First Unitarian Church, but also an advocate of social welfare organizations in Portland (such as the Boys and Girls Aid Society and the Board of Charities) that ameliorated some of the symptoms of Portland's poverty, if not its root causes (ibid.). The Association's founders had a strong sense of social mission; they felt that exposure to great art was an indispensable component of an enlightened urban society, drawing from the experience-as-learning Pragmatic philosophy of Dewey (Clausen, 1994). As such, the Association would later have close ties with the Portland Public School system, incorporate an art school for Portland's citizens, and partner with nearby churches and social organizations like the YMCA and the YWCA (Clausen, 1994; Ellison & Pierce, 1996; Lampen, 2014).

At the time of its founding, the Portland Art Association only had \$1,000 to its name — not enough to begin purchasing original objects with which to start its collection (Ellison & Pierce, 1996). Instead, the Association's collection initially consisted of casts and prints of original works, purchased with philanthropic gifts given by some of the founding

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<sup>33</sup> The Water Committee was tasked with planning the city new water system, bringing fresh water from glacier melt on Mount Hood to the city via a 40-mile iron water pipe. Conveniently, the pipe's routing first served William Ladd's neighborhood development, Ladd's Addition, making it one of the first neighborhoods in Portland with fresh and abundant water supply.

board members. The Portland Lumber industry's Winslow B. Ayer and his wife acquired 100 casts of Greek statuary in Europe, paid for by Portland businessman and fellow Art Association founder Henry Corbett (*ibid.*). These objects started the association's collection, and were first displayed inside Portland's public library in 1895, well to the North of the South Park Blocks neighborhood that would eventually be the museum's home (*ibid.*). The Association supplemented their permanent collection of casts and prints with borrowed works from the personal collections of Portland's wealthiest families and the Association's members: the Woods, Corbetts, Failing, and the Ladds (*A Handbook...*, 1971; Ellison & Pierce, 1996). These objects formed many of the first special, temporary exhibits displayed in the city library.

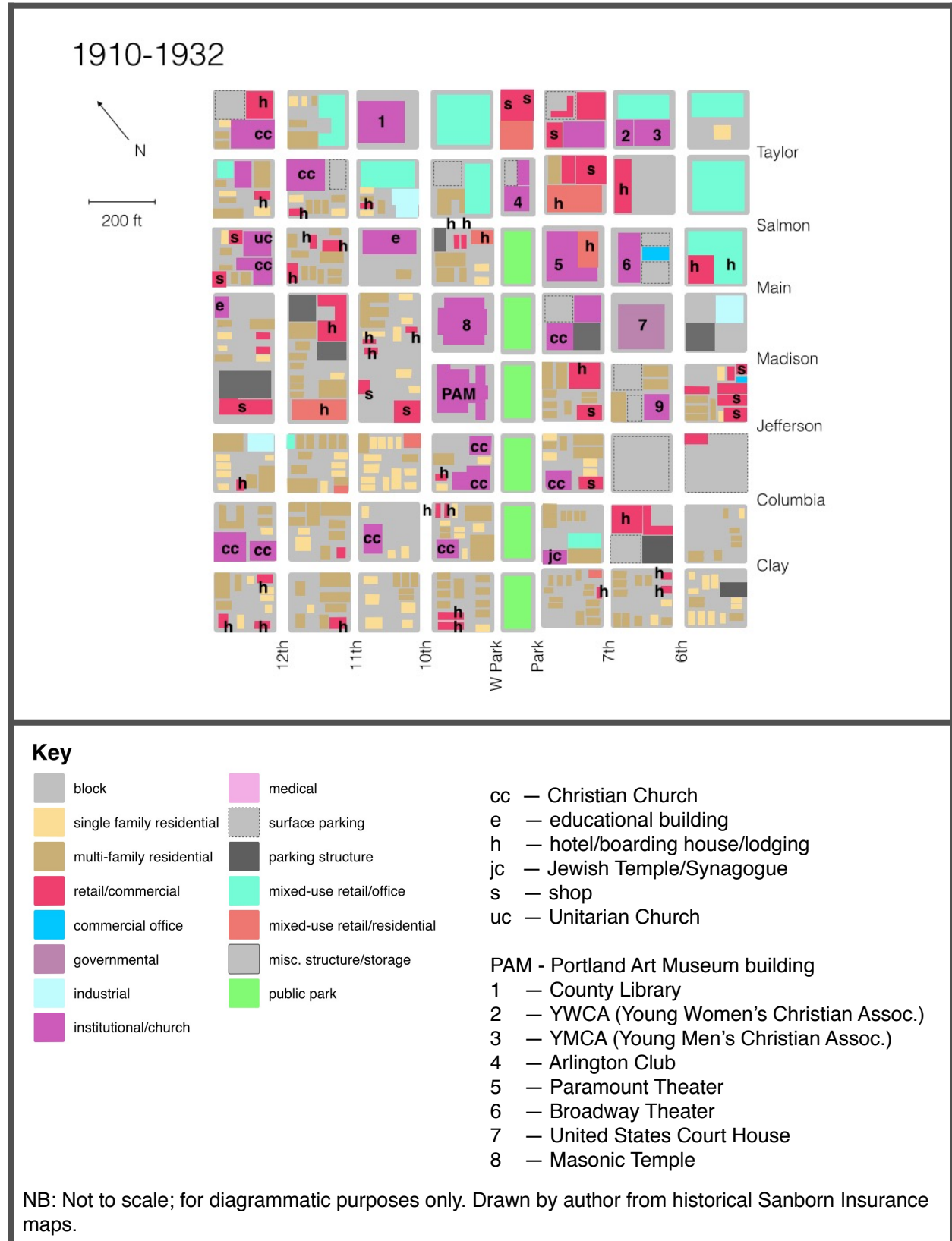
Eventually, members of the Association's board (notably Corbett and Ladd) pulled together enough money to build the first art museum-dedicated building in 1905, located in the city center, symbolized in Figure 4-3 by the purple rectangle on Taylor Street, just outside the Northeast boundary of the South Park Blocks (Abbott 1981; Ellison & Pierce, 1996). That same year, Portland hosted the Lewis and Clark Exposition (Portland's version of a World's Fair) that exhibited artwork from the Pacific Northwest region, which would eventually be exhibited at the art museum (*ibid.*). The Lewis and Clark Exposition, at one point led by the Art Association's Corbett, bolstered the city of Portland's credentials as a fully-formed center for economic and cultural activity, and helped put the city and its cultural institutions (notably the Association's art museum), on the map (Abbott, 1981 and 2011).

## Population and economic growth after the Lewis and Clark Exposition, 1905-1929

Portland's population continued to grow steadily, aided by the Lewis and Clark Exposition of 1905. Much of the economic activity of downtown Portland had begun to spread into the South Park Block neighborhood, which the Art Association's new museum bordered (see Figure 4-3). More retail and commercial uses entered the South Park Block neighborhood. Portland's increased draw as a tourist destination (in large part due to the Exposition) fueled demand for more hotel and lodging accommodations that began to emerge in the South Park Blocks (the smaller red rectangles in the Northeastern corner of Figure 4-3). A surging population meant more multi-family dwellings in the neighborhood (the brown rectangles), either taking form from newly built apartment buildings or larger, single-family manors repurposed into multiple flats (Nelson, 2008). Additionally, new church buildings were erected in the neighborhood, and existing ones grew in size.

Later in 1917, the need for cargo ships during the first World War led the U.S. government to order nearly one hundred vessels from Portland's shipbuilders (Abbott, 2008; 2011). The increase in ship production created demand for laborers and builders along the shipbuilding supply chain, attracting a flood of new residents looking to fill those jobs and leading to a spike in Portland's population (Abbott, 2011). Employment in the shipbuilding and related industries in Portland rose to around 33,000 (ibid.).

**FIGURE 4-4: LAND USE AND BUILDING FOOTPRINT MAP OF THE SOUTH PARK BLOCKS, BETWEEN 1910 AND 1932**



Meanwhile in the South Park Blocks, the simultaneous growth of commerce in the adjacent city center (spurred by the population boom), new transportation options, and appealing residential subdivisions in the West Hills and East of the Willamette River, led to a transfusion of population. The encroaching commercial and industrial uses from downtown (as seen later in the large mixed use buildings in the Northeast corner of Figure 4-4) and availability of newly planned neighborhoods for the middle class outside of the Park Blocks gave many South Park Block families reason to move (Nelson, 2008). Streetcars, the increasing ubiquity of the automobile, and new bridges across the Willamette made new residential oases like Laurelhurst and Ladd's Addition (numbers 8 and 9, respectively, in Figure 4-1) an easy commute to Portland's downtown, eliminating the proximity-advantage that living in the South Park Blocks gave business owners with families (Abbott, 2011; Nelson, 2008). Also, these new residential enclaves had race-restrictive covenants that would separate the predominately white, Western-European groups from Blacks, Asians, and other immigrant groups who increasingly lived downtown (East of the South Park Blocks) and to the North of downtown (Abbott, 2011; census map from 1930 on p. 102). As soon as the first wealthy families of the South Park Blocks neighborhood (the ones who built the grand Italianate mansions in the mid to late 1800s) had access to automobiles, they moved their families into grand estates in the West Hills that were inaccessible by older transportation methods (Abbott, 2011, p. 109). The flight of families from the South Park Blocks meant that the neighborhood had little use for the Ladd's School (which replaced the burned-down Park School on the Northwest block of W Park and Jefferson in Figure 4-3), and was put up for sale in

1926 by the school district (Nelson, 2008). The Portland Art Association would soon purchase the school's property for their new and expansive art museum building.

While families were moving out of the South Park Blocks for the greener pastures to the West and East, the neighborhood saw new, larger office and retail buildings replace residences to the North and East (see Figure 4-4). Single-family homes were replaced by apartment buildings and boarding houses for new (single) city residents attracted by the supply of jobs and growing commerce of the city's downtown district (see the new brown rectangles in the West and South of Figure 4-4). New cultural institution buildings emerged in the neighborhood, such as the new Multnomah County Library on the Northwest block of 10th and Taylor (Figure 4-4), the Broadway Theatre on the Northeast corner of 7th and Main, the Masonic Temple on the Northwest corner of W Park and Madison, the Paramount Theatre (Northeast corner of Park and Main), and eventually, the new Portland Art Museum (Northwest corner of W Park and Jefferson). For those who wanted a cosmopolitan, urban life style in Portland, the South Park Blocks had grand entertainment venues, modern apartment buildings, cultural amenities, and plenty of green park space (ibid.).

During Portland's sustained period of population increase in the 1920s, due in large part to the city's thriving shipping and ship building industry (Abbott, 2008 & 2011), the Portland Art Museum outgrew its original building. It commissioned architect Pietro Belluschi, graduate of the Art Association's museum-affiliated art school, to design its new home, at the museum's present location along the South Park Blocks, the



Northwest block at W Park and Jefferson (Figures 4-4, 4-5, 4-6, 4-7; Clausen, 1994).

The new building was paid for, in part, by a gift of \$100,000 from Winslow Ayer, and opened in 1932, in the depths of the Great Depression (Clausen, 1994).<sup>34</sup>

The building's design was a measured one; it brought elements of a new, international modernist style to the neighborhood and the city of Portland, but did not overwhelm the neighborhood as a conspicuous artistic object in and of itself (Clausen, 1994; Ellison & Pierce, 1996; Ross, 1967). Belluschi gave the museum a clean and ordered facade (as is common in modernist architecture) that raised only about 4 stories, and neatly organized its internal spaces around a central lobby and sculpture atrium (ibid.). Its entrance facing the park on W Park Avenue is only modestly elevated from the pavement, needing seven steps to get from the pavement to the front door. Belluschi also planned the first building phase in such a way as to leave plenty of room for future additions on the same urban block (Clausen, 1994). Ultimately, the Portland Art Museum would cover the entire block.

The Portland Art Museum's building on W Park and Jefferson was (and still is) quite different from the cultural institution building of the time and the 'starchitecture' of contemporary museum building today. A more human-scaled and approachable institutional design for the museum stemmed from two main factors: the Deweyian educational philosophy of the museum's leaders and the modest budget that the

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<sup>34</sup> This is indicative of the lag time between economic shock to the market and the construction industry.

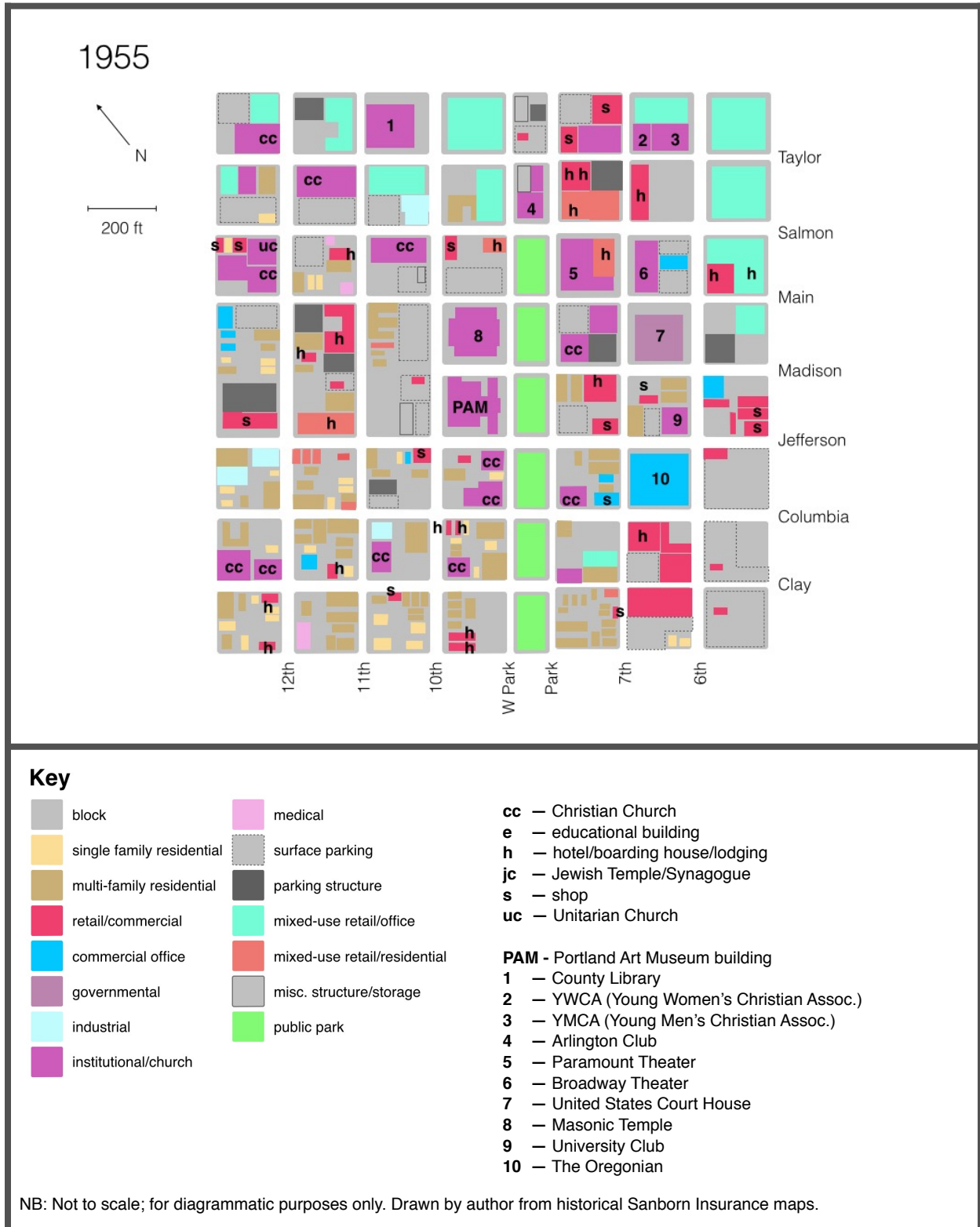
Portland Art Association had to spend on the new building, especially as the Great Depression hit.<sup>35</sup>

The original design specifications for the project, written in part by the museum's curator (Anna Crocker) and one of its founders (Henrietta Flailing), repeatedly emphasized that the new building be accessible to the general public. Rather than spend money on luxurious building details ubiquitous in most other art museum architecture of the time (such as marble surfaces and classical architectural details), the design brief dictated that the relatively little amount (\$150,000) be spent to ensure that the building gives visitors a comfortable and engaging experience of the art (ibid.). Thus, the building was relatively modest in massing when compared to its surroundings, and did not interrupt the existing street grid.

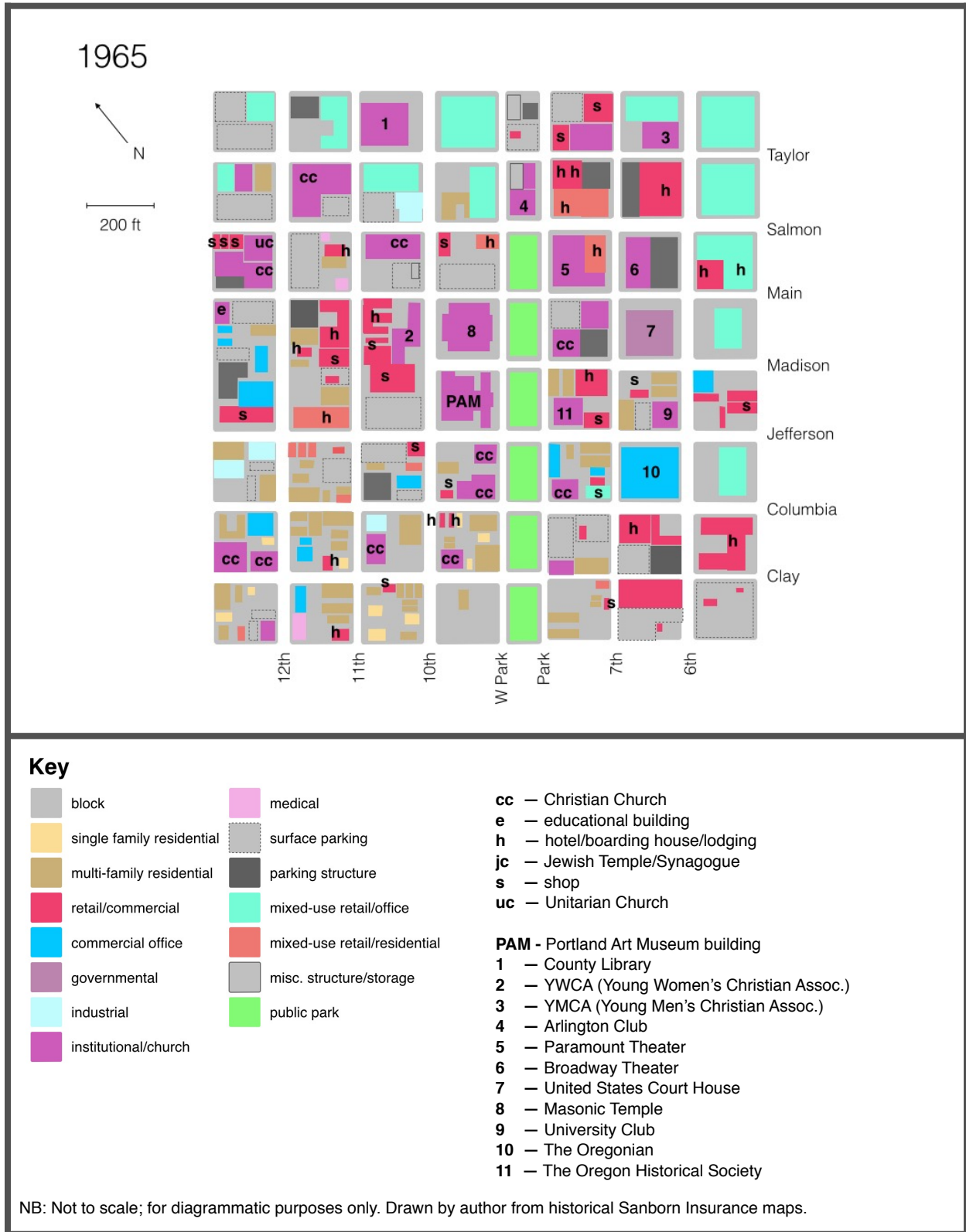
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<sup>35</sup> In contrast, many other museums at the time were built on much larger scales: the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art's first building, also built in 1932, raised \$3 million for their museum building that stood on 22 acres of grounds.

**FIGURE 4-5: LAND USE AND BUILDING FOOTPRINT MAP OF THE SOUTH PARK BLOCKS, CIRCA 1955**



**FIGURE 4-6: LAND USE AND BUILDING FOOTPRINT MAP OF THE SOUTH PARK BLOCKS, CIRCA 1965**



## Modest change in the neighborhood and museum, 1930-1980

The fifty or so years after the opening of the new art museum building in the South Park Blocks saw only modest growth and development in the Art Museum (up until the directorship of John Buchanan) and the South Park Blocks neighborhood, despite another spike in economic activity and population growth during World War II. Arguably, the relative lack in change in the South Parks Block neighborhood simultaneous with an overall growth in the city and region's economy was indicative of the housing preferences of these decades which led to growth on the city's periphery instead of its center.

During World War II, the Federal government purchased \$2.4 billion worth of ships from the Kaiser shipyards in the North edge of Portland and in Vancouver, WA (Abbott, 2008 & 2011). Like during World War I, the Federal money put into the shipbuilding industry supplied thousands of new jobs, which attracted over 150,000 new citizens to Portland between 1940 and 1944 (ibid.). This relatively sudden population growth produced such headaches for the city as housing shortages, transportation slowdowns, and tensions between existing and new Portland residents (Abbott, 2011). Portland put up several large housing projects (both permanent and temporary housing) to help alleviate the housing shortage, but most of these projects were located in North Portland (ibid.).

There is little evidence that this population growth did much to change the Portland Art Museum and its South Park Blocks neighborhood, except to increase demand and raise prices for its increasingly limited residential units.

After the war, much of the commercial and residential activity in downtown Portland and in the South Park Blocks waned in the 1950s and 1960s, as suburbs on the outskirts of Portland (Beaverton, Hillsborough, and Clackamas, for instance) had their own shopping centers and commercial centers. In the South Park Blocks neighborhood, relatively little new construction took place since the booming years of building in the 1910s and 1920s (Nelson, 2008). Except for a new *The Oregonian* building (Northwest corner of 6th and Columbia in Figure 4-5), a reasonable sized grocery store (Northwest corner of 10th and Jefferson, behind the art museum building, Figure 4-6), more surface parking, and more automobile service stations to the Southeast of the neighborhood, the neighborhood experienced only modest physical change between 1932 and 1985. The South Park Blocks still had a strong religious presence (mostly Christian congregation churches, as a few of the Jewish synagogues had moved elsewhere in the city), plenty of cultural/entertainment offerings (the library, theatres, and the museum), mixed-use retail/office buildings and luxurious hotels on its Northeastern corner towards downtown Portland, and well-appointed apartment buildings lining the park and to the Southwest (Figures 4-5 and 4-6).

The two most significant changes in the Portland Art Museum during this period were the construction of two wings and new acquisitions to its permanent collections. Though the museum received funds from its (new) wealthy board members to purchase some original artwork on the open market, most of the museum's new acquisitions came from the bequeathments from Art Association founders and Portland's wealthy families whose patriarchs and matriarchs were passing away (Ellison & Pierce, 1996). The Ladd

family donated their parent's collection of 750 Japanese prints the same year the new museum building opened (ibid.). In the ensuing decades, the museum received French impressionist paintings from the estates of Winslow Ayer and C. F. Adams; furniture and paintings from the Rossmans; and funds for new acquisitions from the Ladd's and other prominent families (ibid.). The museum also used memorial gifts to fund the new museum wing construction.

The first addition to the original Belluschi art museum building, the Hirsch Wing in 1939 provided additional exhibition space for the museum's new acquisitions to its permanent collection. In 1969, the Hoffman wing construction created studio and classroom space for art education, as well as a 480-seat auditorium for lectures and special events (ibid.). Though these additions drastically changed the internal environment of the museum to incorporate functional space for new activities, they had little physical impact on its neighboring streets and blocks, something architect Belluschi had planned for in his original design for the first museum building in 1932 (Clausen, 1994).

Since the grand opening of the Belluschi building, the Portland Art Museum had over the decades become a "sleepy institution," much like how commerce in its surrounding neighborhood had become somewhat anemic (S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). People still came to the South Park Blocks from elsewhere in the city to visit the art museum or attend a show in one of the theatres (Abbott, 2011), but compared to before the 1910s, the South Park Blocks were now less of a residential district and more of an amalgamation of office, retail, and institutional uses. The *Portland Downtown Plan*

of 1972, the earliest such report on the South Park Blocks and other central neighborhoods and written by the citizens advisory committee of Portland, sought to make these neighborhoods more livable by setting out goals for increasing residential land-use, especially low and middle-income housing options in the coming years (*Planning Guidelines...* 1972, p 3).

Census tract data from between 1970 and 1980 show that the South Park Blocks neighborhood and its surrounding area were home to poorer populations than other census tracts in Multnomah County at this time (see Figures 4-14 and 4-16) as well as more residents who identified as “non white” than most other census tracts (See Figure 4-13). These socioeconomic characteristics of the South Park Blocks neighborhood mirror neighborhoods in urban cores around the country at the time. Central city neighborhoods had been abandoned by white, middle-class groups for suburbs on the outskirts of cities. The implementation of Portland’s urban growth boundary in 1978 (which followed Oregon State Senate Bill 100s focus on preserving natural resources and using urban space more efficiently)<sup>36</sup> and the South Park Block’s designation as a local urban renewal area in 1985 sought, in part, to reverse this trend.

### Urban renewal in the South Park Blocks and Museum growth, 1985 to 2010

By the time the city of Portland Development Commission designated the South Park Blocks as an Urban Renewal Area (URA) in 1985, the South Park Blocks were one of

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<sup>36</sup> See <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/urban-growth-boundary>.



the poorest neighborhoods in the county (see Figure 4-8, 4-12; Abbott 2011).<sup>37</sup> The lack of demand for central city residential development, despite the draw of central city amenities like the Portland Art Museum, the park blocks, and theatres, resulted in only modest home values (of the few owner occupied units in the neighborhood, see Figure 4-11) and some of the lowest rents of all census tracts in the county (see Figure 4-13). Retail and commerce in the downtown area and its adjacent neighborhoods (like the South Park Blocks neighborhood) at the same time suffered economically from several decades of competition with new suburban developments (Abbott, 2011). The city of Portland and its Development Commission saw an urban renewal initiative as an opportunity to revive the South Park Block neighborhood's economy and make it an attractive place to live by encouraging new, mixed-use development that was affordable to a variety of incomes.

The URA initiative incentivized development in the South Park Blocks neighborhood by offering attractive capital financing loans with delayed interest payments, as well as tax abatements to projects that furthered their goals.<sup>38</sup> These goals included: increasing residential units, especially low and middle income units; increasing mixed use building types (retail on the ground floor, offices or residences on the top floors), and improving specially designated existing neighborhood amenities (such as historic apartment buildings, streetscapes, and public gardens/parks).<sup>39</sup> In contrast with the Federally funded urban renewal areas designated by Portland and other cities in the late 1950s

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<sup>37</sup> See also: <http://www.pdc.us/our-work/urban-renewal-areas/south-park-blocks/overview.aspx>.

<sup>38</sup> See <http://www.pdc.us/for-businesses/financial-support.aspx>.

<sup>39</sup> See: [http://www.pdc.us/Libraries/South\\_Park\\_Blocks/South\\_Park\\_Blocks\\_Projects\\_Map\\_pdf.sflb.ashx](http://www.pdc.us/Libraries/South_Park_Blocks/South_Park_Blocks_Projects_Map_pdf.sflb.ashx).

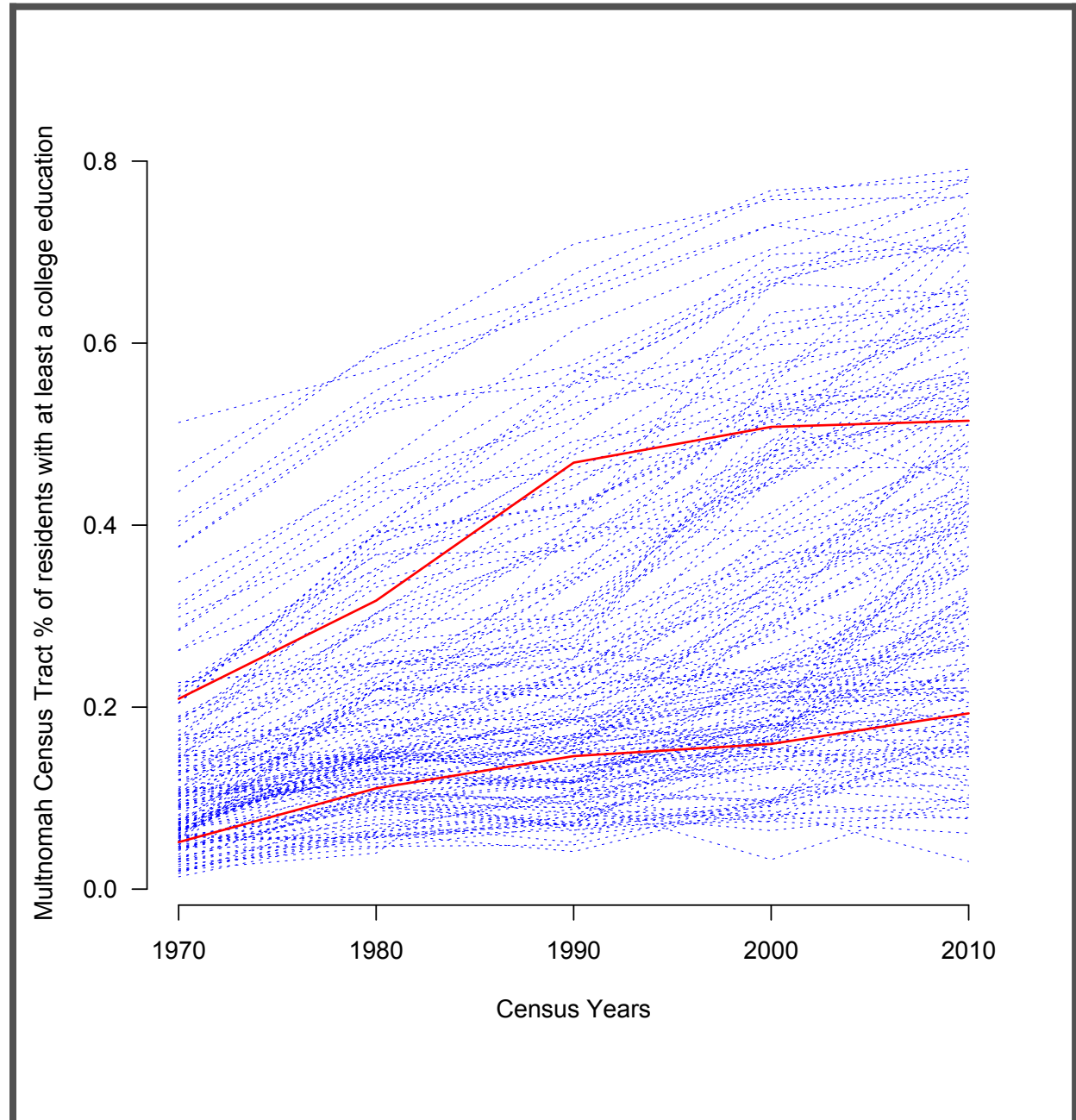
and 1960s, the 1985 Urban Renewal Area designation for the South Park Blocks was and continues to be funded by local tax sources.<sup>40</sup> Since its inception, the URA has catalyzed the development of around 30 new buildings and area improvements in the South Park Blocks, including low income housing (St. James Apartments, St. Francis Apartments, Chaucer Court, and Fountain Place), middle income housing (Southpark Square and University Park), social service buildings for vulnerable populations (Outside In, New Avenues for Youth, The Jeffrey, and the YWCA), and luxury residences (Eliot Tower).<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> See: <http://www.pdc.us/our-work/urban-renewal-areas.aspx>.

<sup>41</sup> See: [http://www.pdc.us/Libraries/South\\_Park\\_Blocks/South\\_Park\\_Blocks\\_Projects\\_Map\\_pdf.sflb.ashx](http://www.pdc.us/Libraries/South_Park_Blocks/South_Park_Blocks_Projects_Map_pdf.sflb.ashx).

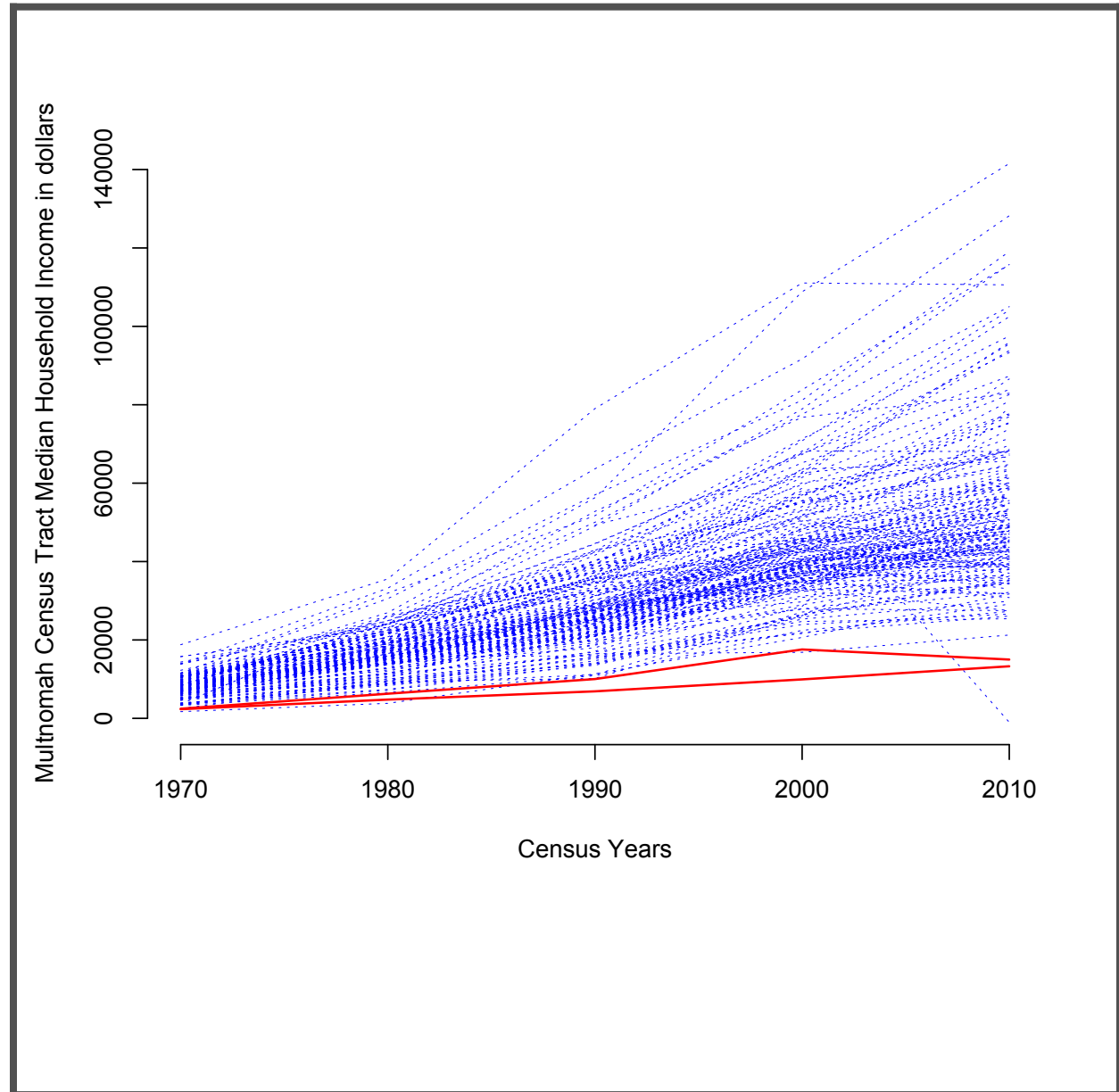
**FIGURE 4-7: MULTNOMAH COUNTY AND SOUTH PARK BLOCKS NEIGHBORHOOD CENSUS TRACTS % OF RESIDENTS WHO ARE COLLEGE EDUCATED BETWEEN 1970 AND 2010**



NB:  
Blue dotted lines represent data for all Multnomah County census tracts, whereas the two red lines represent data for the two census tracts containing the South Parks Block neighborhood

Data from the Longitudinal Tract Data Base:  
Logan, John R., Zengwang Xu, and Brian Stults. 2014. "Interpolating US Decennial Census Tract Data from as Early as 1970 to 2010: A Longitudinal Tract Database" *The Professional Geographer* 66(3): 412–420.

**FIGURE 4-8: MULTNOMAH COUNTY AND SOUTH PARK BLOCKS NEIGHBORHOOD CENSUS TRACTS MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BETWEEN 1970 AND 2010**



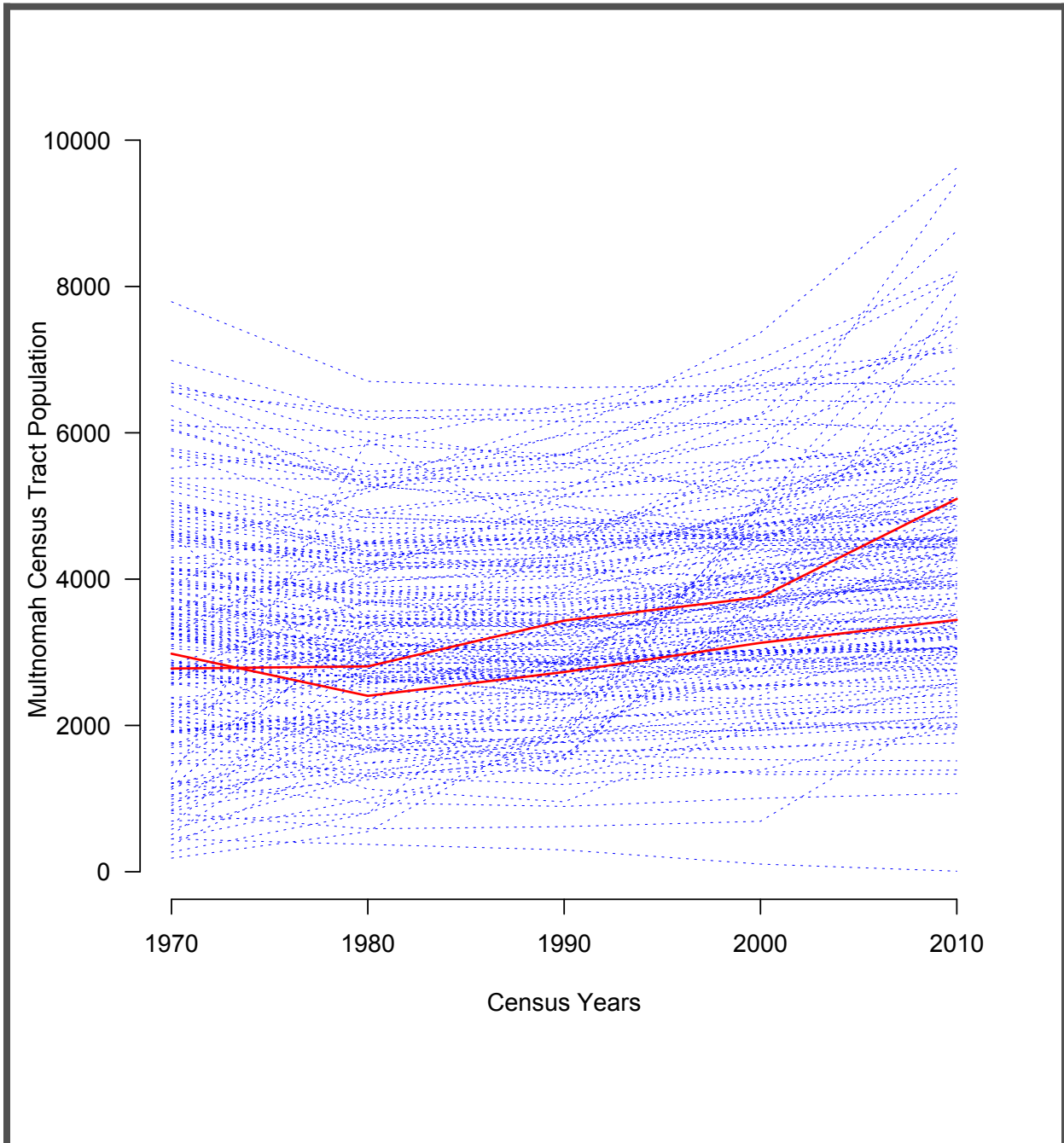
NB:

Blue dotted lines represent data for all Multnomah County census tracts, whereas the two red lines represent data for the two census tracts containing the South Parks Block neighborhood

Data from the Longitudinal Tract Data Base:

Logan, John R., Zengwang Xu, and Brian Stults. 2014. "Interpolating US Decennial Census Tract Data from as Early as 1970 to 2010: A Longitudinal Tract Database" *The Professional Geographer* 66(3): 412–420.

**FIGURE 4-9: MULTNOMAH COUNTY AND SOUTH PARK BLOCKS NEIGHBORHOOD CENSUS TRACTS POPULATION BETWEEN 1970 AND 2010**



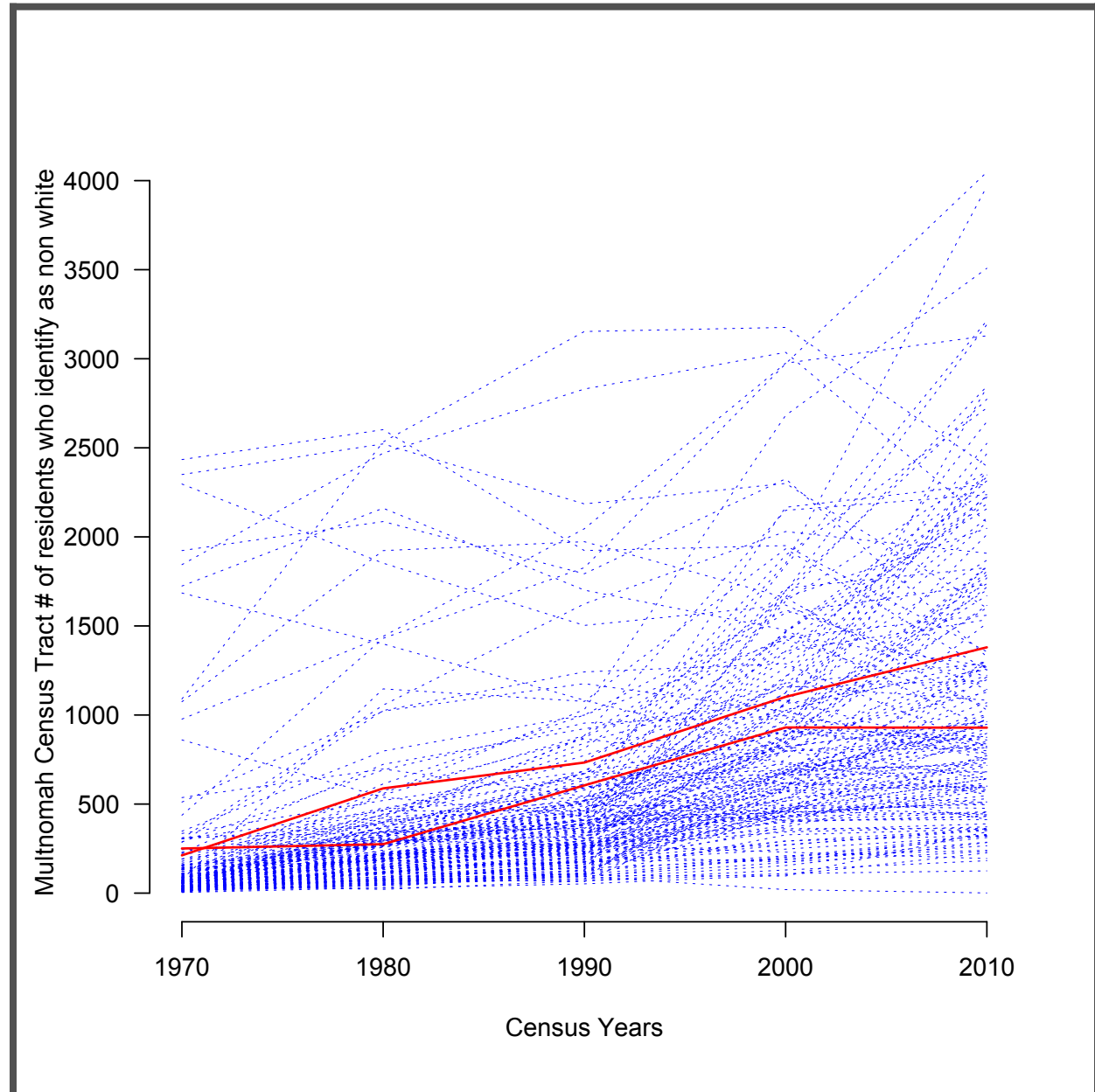
NB:

Blue dotted lines represent data for all Multnomah County census tracts, whereas the two red lines represent data for the two census tracts containing the South Parks Block neighborhood

Data from the Longitudinal Tract Data Base:

Logan, John R., Zengwang Xu, and Brian Stults. 2014. "Interpolating US Decennial Census Tract Data from as Early as 1970 to 2010: A Longitudinal Tract Database" *The Professional Geographer* 66(3): 412–420.

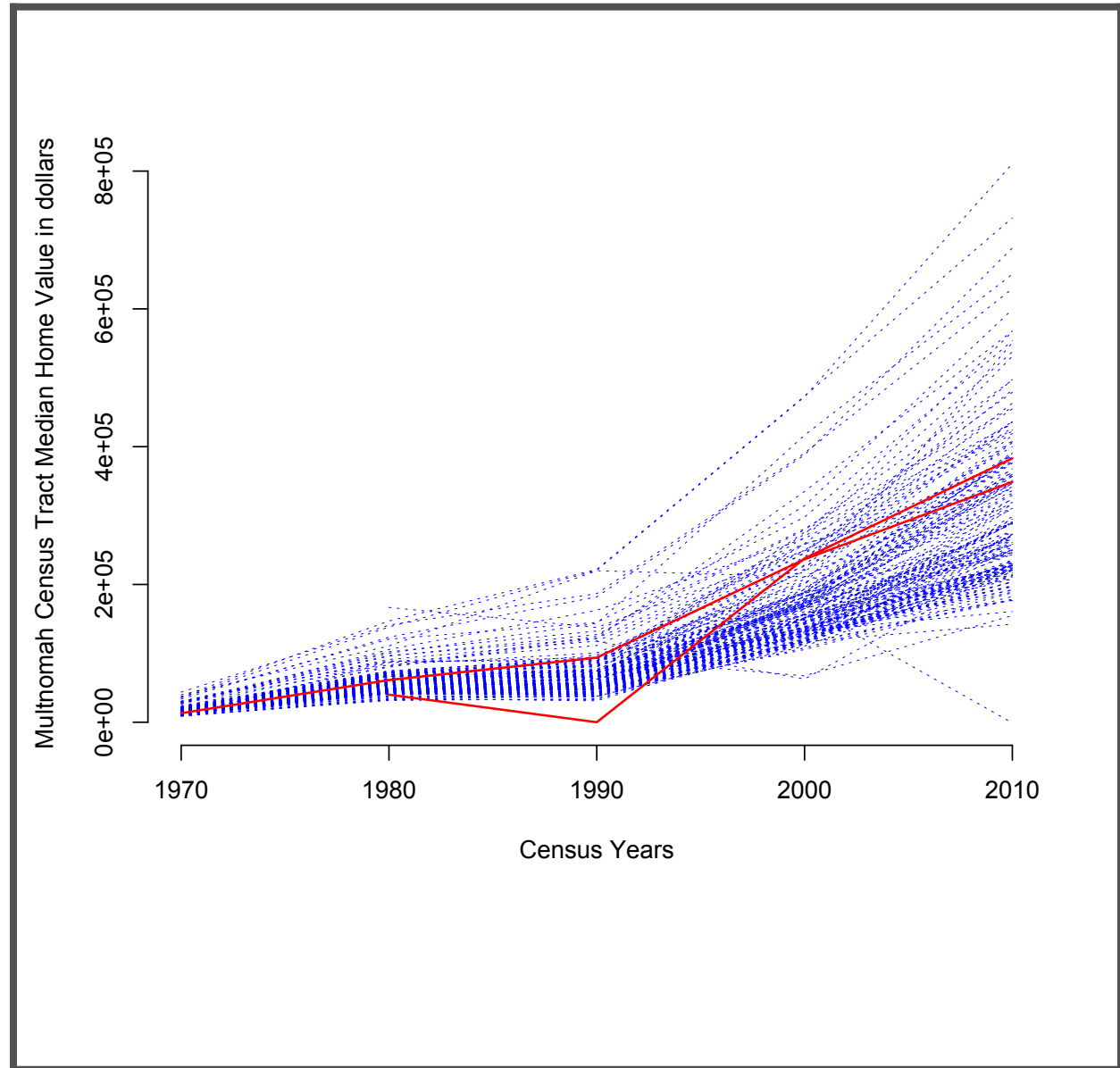
**FIGURE 4-10: MULTNOMAH COUNTY AND SOUTH PARK BLOCKS NEIGHBORHOOD CENSUS TRACTS NUMBER OF "NON WHITE" RESIDENTS BETWEEN 1970 AND 2010**



NB:  
Blue dotted lines represent data for all Multnomah County census tracts, whereas the two red lines represent data for the two census tracts containing the South Parks Block neighborhood

Data from the Longitudinal Tract Data Base:  
Logan, John R., Zengwang Xu, and Brian Stults. 2014. "Interpolating US Decennial Census Tract Data from as Early as 1970 to 2010: A Longitudinal Tract Database" *The Professional Geographer* 66(3): 412–420.

**FIGURE 4-11: MULTNOMAH COUNTY AND SOUTH PARK BLOCKS NEIGHBORHOOD CENSUS TRACTS MEDIAN HOME VALUE BETWEEN 1970 AND 2010**



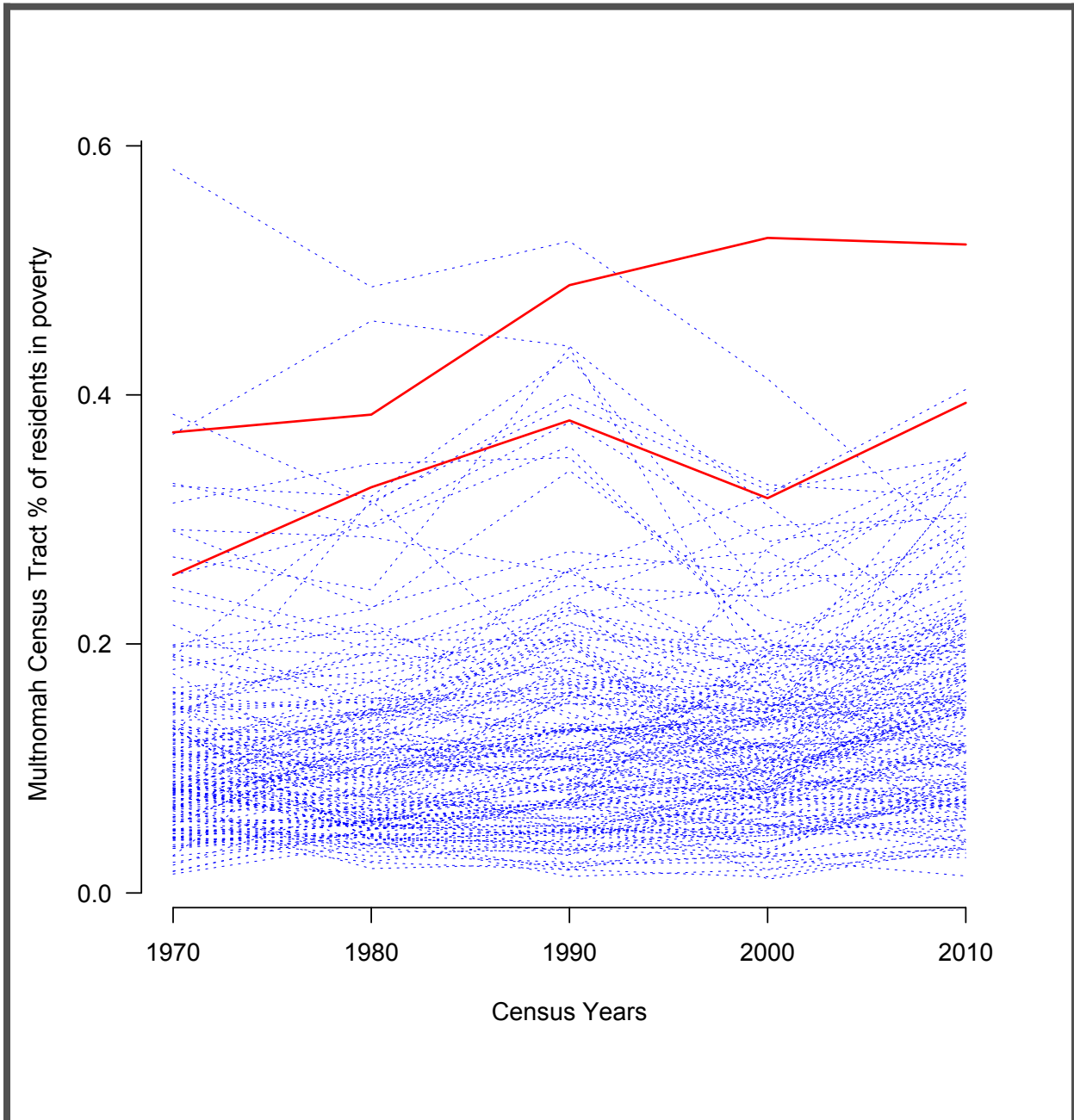
NB:

Blue dotted lines represent data for all Multnomah County census tracts, whereas the two red lines represent data for the two census tracts containing the South Parks Block neighborhood

Data from the Longitudinal Tract Data Base:

Logan, John R., Zengwang Xu, and Brian Stults. 2014. "Interpolating US Decennial Census Tract Data from as Early as 1970 to 2010: A Longitudinal Tract Database" *The Professional Geographer* 66(3): 412–420.

**FIGURE 4-12: MULTNOMAH COUNTY AND SOUTH PARK BLOCKS NEIGHBORHOOD CENSUS TRACTS % OF RESIDENTS IN POVERTY BETWEEN 1970 AND 2010**

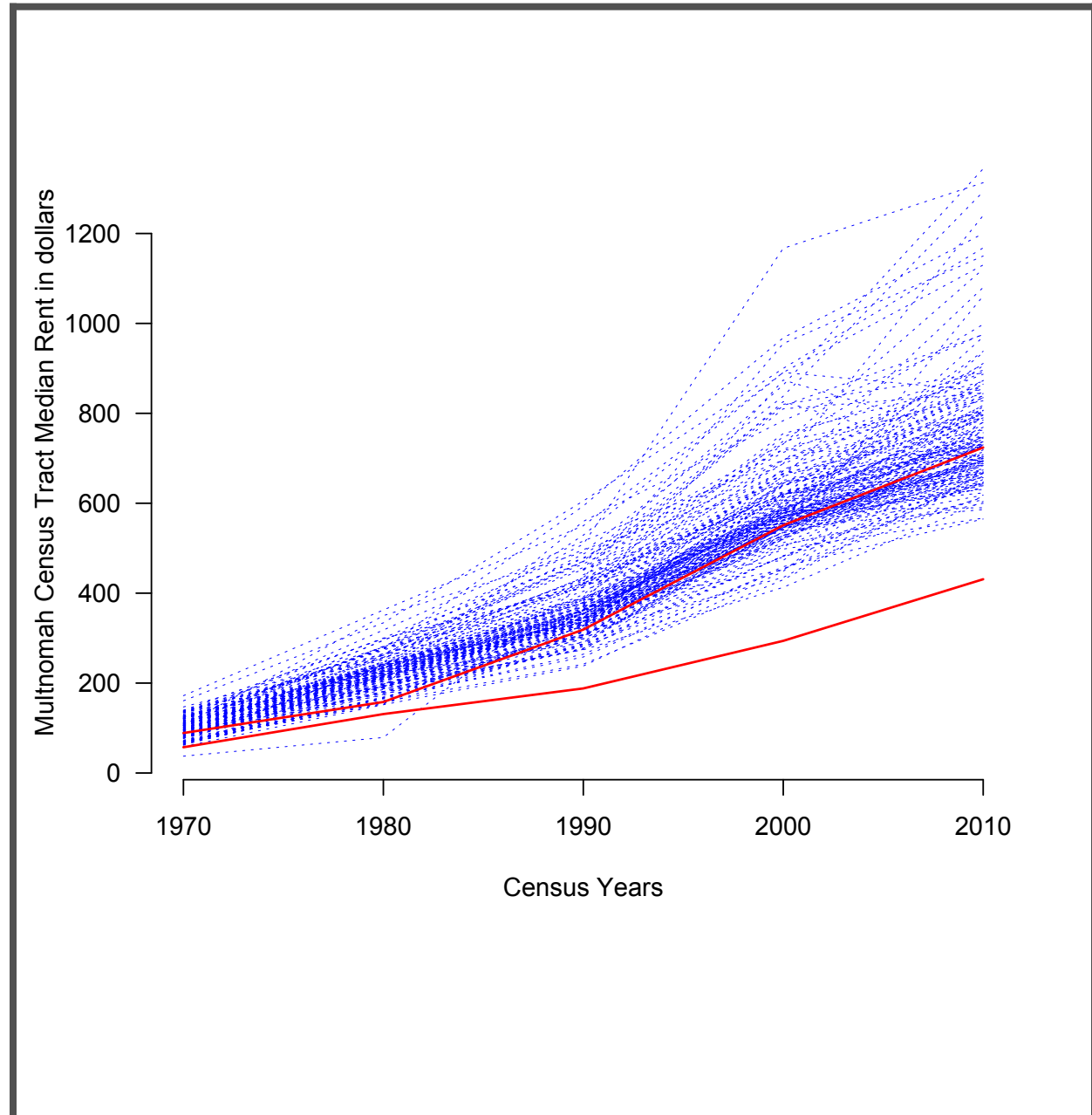


NB:  
Blue dotted lines represent data for all Multnomah County census tracts, whereas the two red lines represent data for the two census tracts containing the South Parks Block neighborhood

Data from the Longitudinal Tract Data Base:  
Logan, John R., Zengwang Xu, and Brian Stults. 2014. "Interpolating US Decennial Census Tract Data from as Early as 1970 to 2010: A Longitudinal Tract Database" *The Professional Geographer* 66(3): 412–420.



**FIGURE 4-13: MULTNOMAH COUNTY AND SOUTH PARK BLOCKS NEIGHBORHOOD CENSUS TRACTS MEDIAN RENT BETWEEN 1970 AND 2010**



NB:

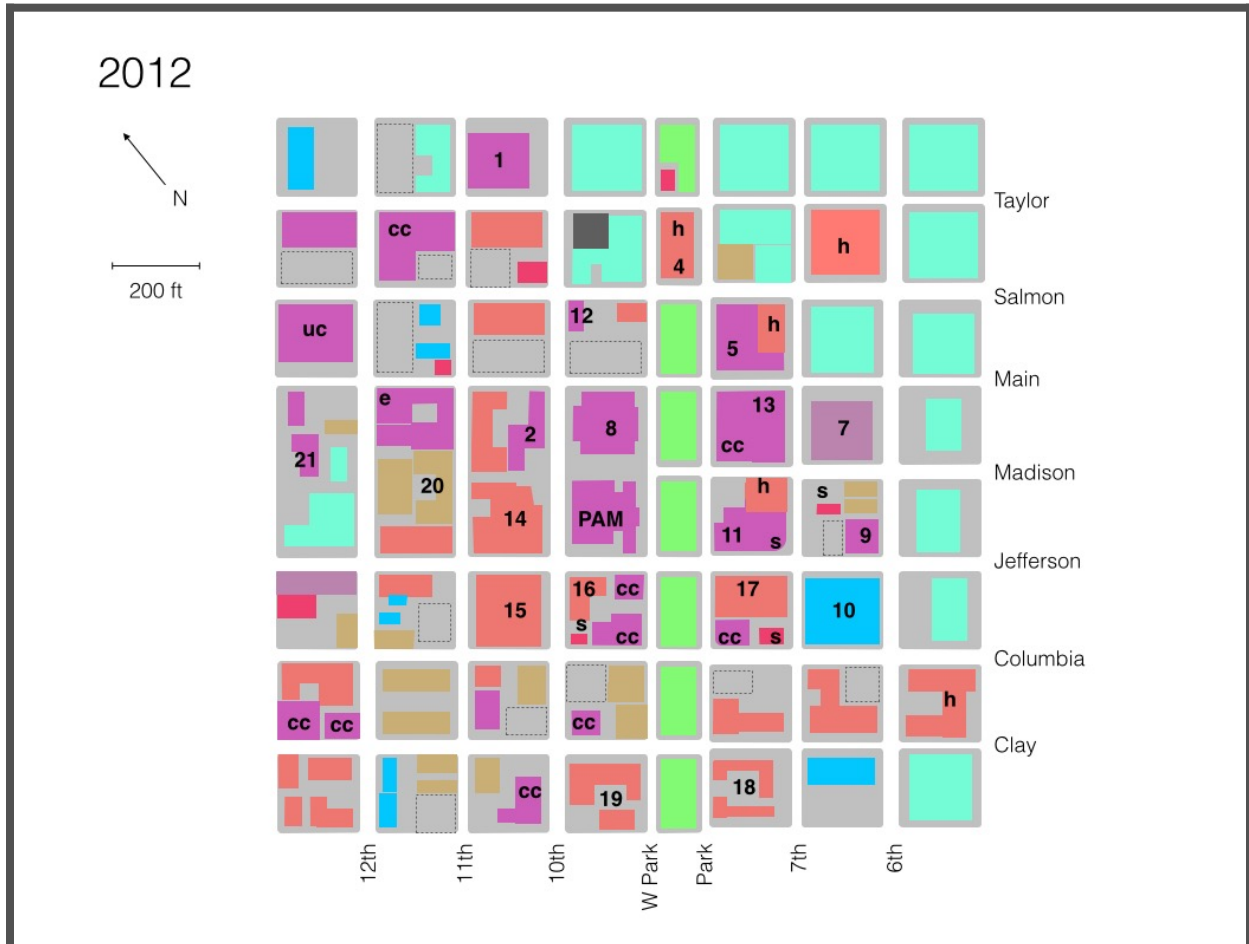
Blue dotted lines represent data for all Multnomah County census tracts, whereas the two red lines represent data for the two census tracts containing the South Parks Block neighborhood

Data from the Longitudinal Tract Data Base:

Logan, John R., Zengwang Xu, and Brian Stults. 2014. "Interpolating US Decennial Census Tract Data from as Early as 1970 to 2010: A Longitudinal Tract Database" *The Professional Geographer* 66(3): 412-420.

Consequently, the census tract populations of the South Park Blocks neighborhood have increased slightly between 1990 and 2010 (Figure 4-9), though their poverty rates remain quite high compared to other Multnomah County census tracts (Figure 4-12). The median rent for one of the South Park Block census tracts has remained quite low, due to the new low-income affordable apartments (see Figure 4-13). The other census tract that contains part of the South Park Blocks has experienced an increase in its median rent to around a little less than the average median rent for the county, as it contains fewer of the new low-income/affordable apartments and more market rate apartments (also Figure 4-13). Home values in both census tracts, meanwhile, have climbed to overtake the median value of homes in most of the county's census tracts (Figure 4-11), as new condo developments initiated by the URA have been market rate or even luxury-priced and located quite close to the Museum and other cultural institutions (for example, the Eliot Tower and the Ladd Tower, numbers 14 and 17, respectively, in Figure 4-14).

**FIGURE 4-14: LAND USE AND BUILDING FOOTPRINT MAP OF THE SOUTH PARK BLOCKS, CIRCA 2012**



**Key**

- block
- single family residential
- multi-family residential
- retail/commercial
- commercial office
- governmental
- industrial
- institutional/church
- medical
- surface parking
- parking structure
- mixed-use retail/office
- mixed-use retail/residential
- misc. structure/storage
- public park

- cc** – Christian Church
- e** – educational building
- h** – hotel/boarding house/lodging
- jc** – Jewish Temple/Synagogue
- s** – shop
- uc** – Unitarian Church

- PAM** - Portland Art Museum (Belluschi building)
- 1** – County Library
- 2** – YWCA (Young Women’s Christian Assoc.)
- 4** – Arlington Club
- 5** – Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall
- 7** – United States Court House
- 8** – Masonic Temple (part of PAM)
- 9** – University Club
- 10** – The Oregonian
- 11** – The Oregon Historical Society
- 12** – Northwest Film Center (part of PAM)
- 13** – Winningstad Theatre
- 14** – Eliot Tower
- 15** – Safeway Grocery / Museum Place South Condos
- 16** – St. James Apartments
- 17** – Ladd Tower
- 18** – University Park Apartments
- 19** – Southpark Square Apartments

NB: Not to scale; for diagrammatic purposes only. Drawn by author using GoogleMaps.

Since the South Park Blocks' URA designation in 1985, Portland Art Museum has also undergone significant physical change, mostly during the directorship of John Buchanan between 1994 and 2005.<sup>42</sup> The Museum's *Project for the Millennium* campaign between 1997 and 2000 raised tens of millions of dollars for capital improvements of and expansions to the Museum's facilities, as well as a large increase in the institution's endowment (Hammlin, 2006; *Portland Art Museum: Project for the Millennium*, 2000). The Museum purchased the Masonic Temple next door and moved its administrative and art sales/rental offices there in the late 1990s. Later, the Museum installed a brand new modern/contemporary art gallery in the South part of the Masonic Temple building (closest to the Belluschi building) and closed the section of Madison Street in-between the two buildings to cars for its contemporary sculpture court and a pedestrian right-of-way that connects the neighborhood park with 10th street, the Eliot Tower, and the YWCA (see Figure 4-14).

During the *Project for the Millennium*, the Museum also purchased the surface parking lot on the opposite side of the Masonic Temple, on the block named "Parcel 934," bounded by 10th, W Park, Salmon, and Main, in Figure 4-14 (Hamilton, 2008; Row, 2009). This was a strategic purchase by the Museum; it now owned land on three contiguous blocks that it could develop into more gallery space and amenities in the future to further its world-class ambitions (Hamilton, 2008). However, the Museum did not own the land on the Northwest corner of the parcel (where the NW Film Center building currently exists, number 12 in Figure 4-14), which was zoned for much higher

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<sup>42</sup> Please see the following chapter for a more in-depth analysis of how external social forces and internal institutional culture led to the significant change in Portland Art Museum between 1994 and 2014.

density than the other parts of the block that touch the park blocks (Hamilton, 2008; Row, 2009).<sup>43</sup> The owner of that particular property, investor Robert Miller, had plans to develop it into a high density residential condo or office tower, which would significantly hamper the future development potential of the Museum's part of the block (ibid.). The current director, Brian Ferriso, and some of the Museum's board of Trustees caught wind of this at a bad time:<sup>44</sup> Miller's developers had already sunk around a million dollars into the design plans for the project and the Museum was grappling with structural debt and the start of the Great Recession (Hamilton, 2008). Despite these hurdles, Ferriso and the Museum's board decided that the land was so important to future expansion plans, that they bought the property from Miller (for \$2 million) and paid for the sunk design costs out of the Museum's endowment (ibid.). Now, the Museum owns all of the block, except the Roosevelt Apartments on its Northeast corner, and could possibly build up to one million new square feet of space in the future.<sup>45</sup>

## The Portland Art Museum and South Park Blocks today: land uses and social groups

Due in large part to the URA initiative, the South Park Blocks neighborhood today has more of a residential character that balances out its institutional uses at its center and

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<sup>43</sup> Blocks along the park, including those owned by the Portland Art Museum, are zoned with height limits to preserve views of the park from other buildings in the neighborhood (Hamilton, 2008).

<sup>44</sup> Miller and his son, past contributors to the museum, say that they had approached Portland Art Museum's former director Buchanan and the museum's board on several occasions about purchasing the property, which might be valuable for the museum's future expansion plans, before making development plans of their own. The museum, they say, was never interested in purchasing the land. (Hamilton, 2008).

<sup>45</sup> This total includes a transfer of 500,000 square feet from the park side of the block to the west side of the block, because of the height restrictions to preserve park views.

commercial uses in its Northeastern corner, abutting the city's downtown business district. Many of the new residential units have been incorporated into the neighborhood through new, mixed-use buildings that were prioritized by the URA. The URA also prioritized low and middle-income residential projects, responsible for establishing no fewer than ten of these projects in the South Park Blocks. These affordable residential projects, combined with the existing churches and new social service institutions, have made the neighborhood home to a variety of social groups.

Portland State University students live in the affordable apartments and walk to class at the University (to the South of the South Park Blocks). Recent college graduates live near the University in those same affordable apartments as they look for work or earn their first (meager) paychecks. Poor retirees live in their dedicated housing and socialize in the park. Homeless populations, either living in their dedicated neighborhood housing or elsewhere in the city, line up to partake in a meal and conversation at some of the neighborhood churches and social organizations. And more affluent retirees, living in some of the new luxurious condo buildings or historic apartment buildings, walk their dogs in the park, relax in some of the neighborhood cafes, or peruse the art museum. Two groups that the South Park Blocks neighborhood has ostensibly failed to attract, families and middle-income earners still tend to eschew the South Park Blocks neighborhood and make their homes on the East side of the Willamette River and in the suburbs (*Workforce Housing...* , 2003).

Physically, the neighborhood has continued to transform from one with many granular, one to four story small buildings occupying each block (as in 1889 and 1909; Figures 4-2 and 4-3, respectively) to one where each block is dominated by a single building, many ten or more stories tall. This trajectory started soon after the Lewis and Clark Exposition in 1905 as the South Park Blocks became the home for many new, single use institutional buildings that tended to take up the entire blocks (examples include, the County Library, the Paramount Theater, the Portland Art Museum, the Masonic Temple, etc). However, the single-block, mixed use building typology has allowed newer commercial and residential development to add far more sellable units than they might have replaced when the neighborhood blocks were populated with many smaller buildings each. While this does increase the supply and potentially drop the prices of commercial and residential units that are housed in the upper floors of these taller, block sized buildings, the number of potentially replaced retail units, which are supported by ground level foot traffic, does not increase.

Even though the Museum has expanded during the 1990s and early 2000s, it has kept the block structure of the neighborhood relatively intact by reusing the historic Masonic Temple (number 8 in Figure 4-15; now called the Mark Building) and connecting it with its Belluschi building (“PAM” in Figure 4-14) via an underground passageway (see Figure 4-15, level “LL”). However, the Museum’s land holdings to the North of the Masonic Temple building and architectural ambitions that coincide with a 125th capital campaign<sup>46</sup> may in the future lead to a merging of these blocks to create a Museum

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<sup>46</sup> This is discussed in the following chapter of this dissertation.

super block.<sup>47</sup> While the trend of larger building footprints continues in the South Park Blocks neighborhood, the URA has incentivized mixed-use designs that have retail and social services on the ground level of these buildings, and residential or other commercial uses in the floors above.

The Portland Art Museum, after the *Project for the Millennium* capital improvements, has followed the mixed-use trend of buildings in the area by including expanded retail space, a cafe, a publicly accessible library (open between 12 and 5pm on weekdays), rentable meeting space and ballrooms, and seating areas outside in its sculpture court (see Figure 4-15). The cafe is accessible to people even before the Museum opens (starting at 8am on most days), via its own direct entrance off of 10th Avenue (Figure 3-15), and does not require purchase of a ticket to the museum galleries. For the most part, other uses in the museum (the shop, the library, and outdoor seating in the sculpture court) only remain open and accessible when the Museum is open (10am-5pm Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday; 10am - 8pm Thursday and Friday).<sup>48</sup>

These uses sometimes complement other neighborhood uses (during the weekdays, weekend days, and Thursday and Friday nights) and connect the predominately upscale downtown retail corridor to the North and East of the South Park Blocks with the less expensive, student retail and restaurants to the South (Figure 4-16). However,

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<sup>47</sup> This is speculative, but based on conversations with Museum boosters and management.

<sup>48</sup> See <http://portlandartmuseum.org/plan-your-visit/hours-admission/>.



during most weeknights and weekend nights, these activities close when the Museum closes and leave a large gap in activities between the University district to the South and the downtown district to the North (Figures 4-17 and 4-18). The Museum's mixed-uses and the activities they provide are, therefore, not designed as part of a neighborhood plan, but are the result of the institution wanting to provide more amenities for its visitors, increase its earned revenue, and compete with other regional and national arts institutions. Keeping these amenities open costs the Museum money. Because the Museum is responsible for its own revenues and financing, the institution decides when keeping these amenities (and its own galleries) open serves its institutional goals and is financially feasible, regardless of whether or not they are beneficial to the surrounding neighborhood.<sup>49</sup>

Interviews and casual conversations with neighborhood residents who live in both the luxury towers (the Eliot and Ladd buildings, in particular) and affordable housing buildings nearby (St. James Apartments and Rose Schnitzer Tower) revealed to me many ways in which the Portland Art Museum, as a physical space and collection of a variety of land uses, has both anchored diverse groups, as well as exhibited signs of gentrifying the neighborhood.

A "community management representative" for St. James Apartments (low income, affordable apartments) described to me how the Portland Art Museum makes the

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<sup>49</sup> The implications of these decisions on the social network of the museum are explored further in the following chapter of this dissertation.

neighborhood attractive for low-income individuals and families, though only very recently (interview, February 28, 2014):

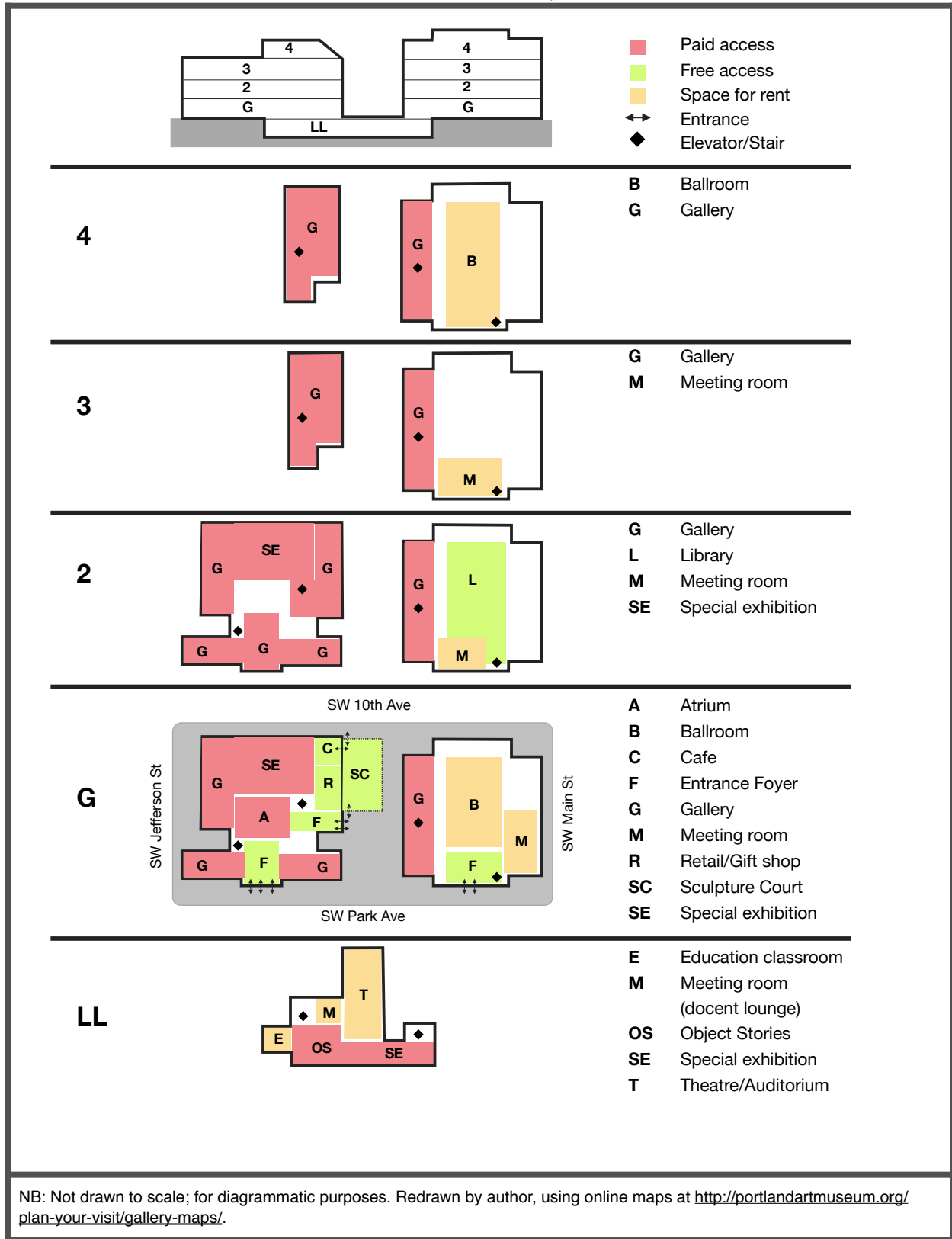
People are really drawn to the building by the location. It's a very popular location. Though it was a revolving door for awhile [back in 2011]; people got promotions and moved out of state. But now there is a waiting list!

She also noted that the Museum's free fourth Friday evenings made visiting the museum a popular activity for families who lived in the low-income apartments, though there was no hard data available on how many people actually went regularly.<sup>50</sup> Free fourth Friday evenings at the Portland Art Museum attract these families, not only because they are free, but also because they are conveniently timed to start in the early evenings when parents are arriving home from work (ibid.). They are also an easy walk for parents with children, only a five minute walk for residents of the South Park Block's affordable housing buildings to the Museum. Free fourth Fridays also, on occasion, attract food carts to the passageway between the two main Museum buildings, a part of the neighborhood that does not normally have inexpensive dining options in the evenings (see Figure 4-17), further transforming the neighborhood into an inclusive and active social spot, though only on these select evenings.

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<sup>50</sup> I was unable to obtain the zip code data collected from all visitors by the Portland Art Museum. The contact responsible for such data said that the Museum was busy transitioning from one internal software system to another, and the zip code data they collect was still in the process of being converted to work with the new software. However, other contacts at the Museum have told me that while zip codes have been collected for many years, they have never been able to see the data, suggesting that either: the data does not flatter the Museum and its mission to serve local community members; the data has not been collected carefully enough to be used for analysis; or the data does not exist.

FIGURE 4-15: PORTLAND ART MUSEUM COMPLEX MAP, 2014

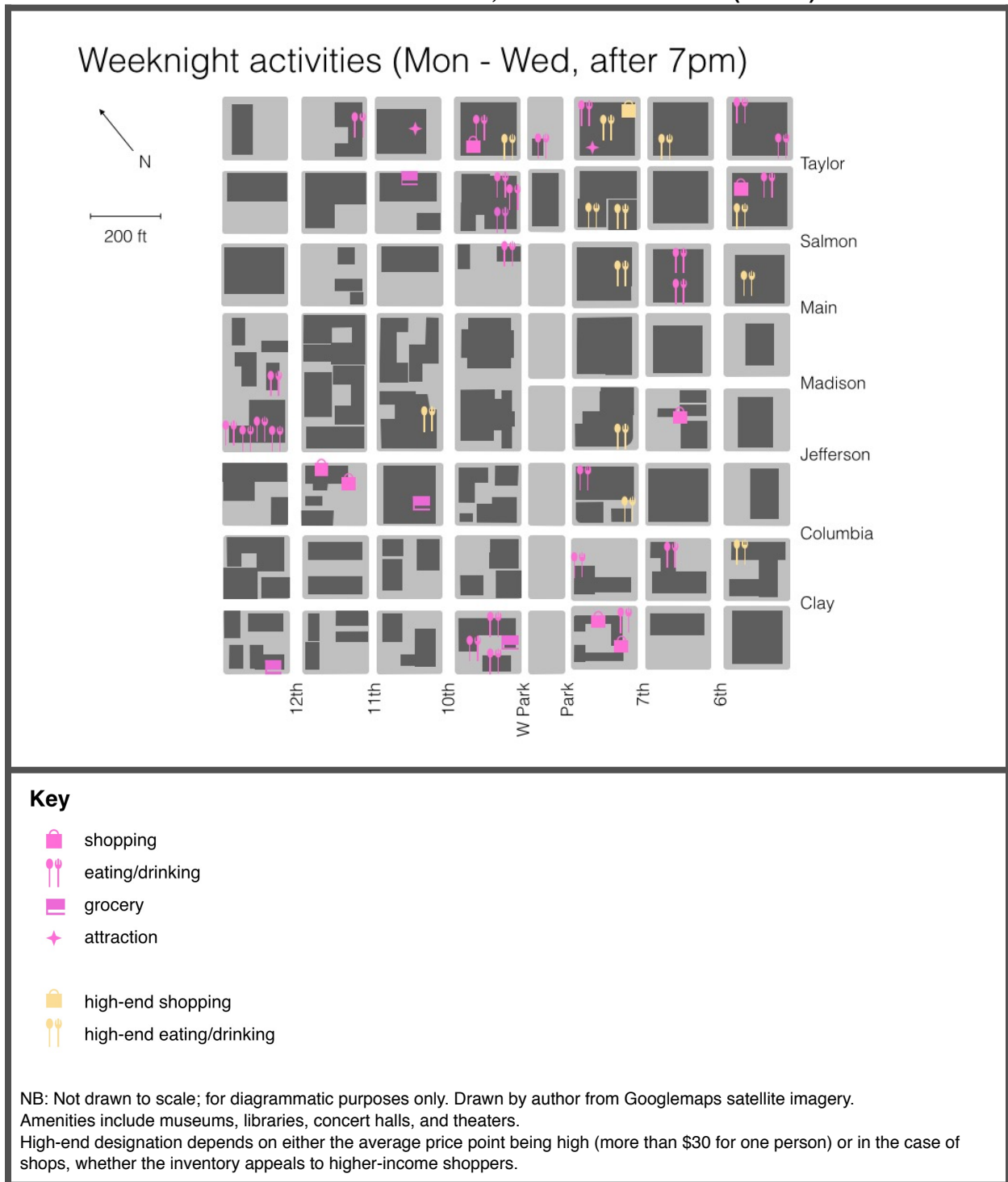


NB: Not drawn to scale; for diagrammatic purposes. Redrawn by author, using online maps at <http://portlandartmuseum.org/plan-your-visit/gallery-maps/>.

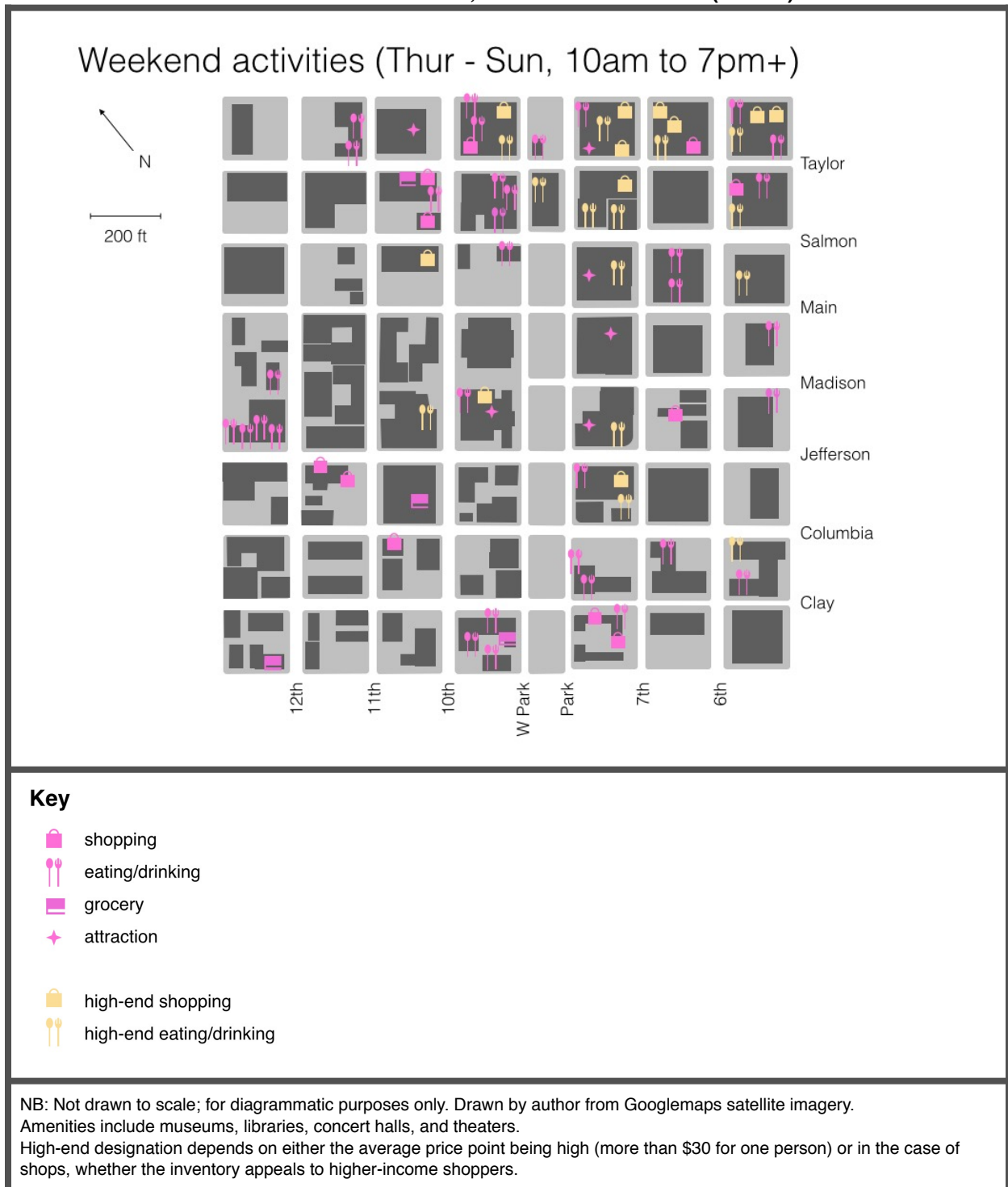
**FIGURE 4-16: MAPS OF WEEKDAY AMENITIES, SOUTH PARK BLOCK (C 2015)**



**FIGURE 4-17: MAP OF WEEKNIGHT AMENITIES, SOUTH PARK BLOCK (C 2015)**



**FIGURE 4-18: MAP OF WEEKEND AMENITIES, SOUTH PARK BLOCK (C 2015)**



Current and former residents of the market rate and luxury condo buildings (for example, The Eliot, The Ladd Tower, or Museum Place) echo the attractiveness of the South Park Blocks neighborhood for its proximity to the Museum. Said one older, retired school teacher:

This is the best neighborhood ever. I'm from New York [City], and I loved the Upper West Side lifestyle — mom and pop stores, arts and culture. Everything here [in the South Park Blocks] is within walking distance. And it is very easy to get involved at the museum. I feel welcome. (interview, February 28, 2014).

This neighborhood resident also became a docent at the Museum soon after moving to the South Park Blocks, urged on by many of her neighbors who also served as docents (*ibid.*). Another resident of a luxury building, and former docent, described how nice it was to live so close to the Museum: “the Museum is my next-door neighbor; it is wonderful to pop in!” (interview, November 4, 2014). Indeed, proximity to the Museum and other cultural amenities has been a prominent marketing strategy for these luxury buildings, and features prominently on their websites.<sup>51</sup>

A sizable percentage of the Museum’s volunteers are retired individuals who live in one of the neighborhood’s luxury buildings (Portland Art Museum public programs staff member, November 4, 2014). Docents are often found chatting and sipping tea at the Museum’s cafe (Figure 4-15), even on days when they are not volunteering. They even

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<sup>51</sup> See <http://www.museum-place.com>; <http://www.eliottower.com>; <http://www.liveladd.com>.

have a dedicated lounge that members can use at their leisure (Figure 4-15, LL, letter “M”).

An interview with a former PSU undergraduate student who used to live in the area (interview, March 31, 2015) suggests that, while not an everyday activity, the art museum is an important amenity for other residents in the neighborhood. She said: “Art is very important to me and my family. I would always go [to the museum] when my family were in town visiting me. It made me proud to have the museum so close” (ibid.). Further, “living so close put [the museum] on [her] radar, even after moving.” Here, the presence of the art museum is more of an option value, if not a daily part of her life. But she mentioned that she had been to the Portland Art Museum as early as primary school, even while living 4 hours away, suggesting that her early exposure to the institution had a part in how she valued it as a neighborhood space and amenity (ibid.). However, despite the museum’s assortment of amenities and space, the former PSU undergraduate only thought of the museum as a place to look at art and not necessarily a place to study, socialize, or get a coffee.

Another former PSU student (who used to live in one of the South Park Block’s affordable housing buildings but now works in a nearby church) did not have the same attachment to the museum (interview, April 16, 2015). She said in the interview: “Never really been to the art museum, but maybe I would go if there was something interesting going on” (ibid.). This former student and current non-profit employee, unlike the



previous student, said she did not grow up appreciating art more than the average person.

Though these interviews suggest that only wealthy retirees or people who grew up appreciating art from the neighborhood use Museum space, attachment to the Museum and use of its spatial amenities was also found among poorer groups who lived in the neighborhood and who did not note any exposure to art growing up. Docents and Museum staff contacts told stories of one woman who came nearly everyday to the Museum cafe from her home in one of the affordable housing buildings (docent, interview, February 28, 2014; docent, interview, November 4, 2014; public programs staff, interview, November 4, 2014). Staff members began noticing this woman, because she would sit in the cafe for hours, drawing on paper (*ibid.*). Eventually, staff members started talking with the woman and over time formed strong friendships with her, friendships so strong that several Museum staff members at one point raised several hundred dollars so that the woman could receive needed dental work. The woman has recently joined the ranks of Museum volunteers, and is still a fixture at the Museum cafe when not on duty (*ibid.*).

However, not every experience of the Museum's space by a low-income individual was as ostensibly positive. In my field work, I met a poorer neighborhood resident socializing on the sidewalk with one of his friends, an African American man (April 16, 2015). After several minutes casually talking with the two men, I began asking about their experience of the neighborhood, and whether they had ever visited the museum.

Somewhat surprised by the response, the older, disabled neighborhood resident responded: “every day!” (ibid.). He continued:

I used to eat my breakfast (received at a nearby food kitchen) at the Museum [cafe] everyday. But then one day, someone from the Museum told me to leave because I didn't buy anything, but I know the real reason. I was making people uncomfortable. I wasn't rich.

This man's experience evidences the effects of Museum gentrification by exclusion, where those who do not fulfill the socio-cultural expectations of those who control the space are removed from it. Zukin (1995) speaks of this phenomenon as part of the privatization and policing of space, where those who own the space protect it from groups that do not belong or who might scare off members of the dominant class. In this case, the dominant class are the potential Museum members and trustees who are responsible for much of the financial and political support of the institution. From the perspective of the Museum and those who work there, anyone who might upset Museum members or trustees or make them feel uncomfortable might also hurt the Museum's reputation or bottom line.

It was not obvious why the disabled gentleman's experience of Museum space was not as positive and inclusive as that of the woman who eventually became such close friends with Museum staff members. It could be that the woman's drawing activities in the cafe each day endeared her to the staff members of the Museum who have

backgrounds in the visual arts. Perhaps the gentleman's account of his removal from the Museum cafe is not shared by others in the cafe at the time.<sup>52</sup> Still, these stories evidence how Museum space has both anchored different groups, as well as perpetuated socioeconomic class divisions through the exclusion of some who may not identify with the dominant class. The diversification of land use at the Museum has contributed to both anchoring and exclusion of different neighborhood groups. Its cafe, in particular, seems to have the most power in drawing different groups into the museum without having to pay admission fee and with its own entrance directly onto the sidewalk and adjacent to the outdoor sculpture garden (Figure 4-15, G, letter "C").

### The linkages between change in the Portland Art Museum and the South Park Blocks, and its impact on neighborhood groups

The analysis of physical and socioeconomic change in the South Park Blocks reveals a relationship between the museum and its neighborhood driven by both economic growth of the city, the housing preferences of its people, and the City of Portland's URA initiative, which have led to both physical and demographic change.

The Portland Art Museum is fundamentally a creation of wealthy and social elites; in the first instance, those who created the Portland Art Association were worldly elites who had traveled to many of the world's great cities and whose previous homes (mainly East Coast cities) had many cultural institutions. These citizens wanted to replicate the cultural accoutrements of other cities in their new city of Portland. Second, collecting art,

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<sup>52</sup> I could not verify his story with anyone working at the Museum.

finding space to exhibit that art, and hiring people to take care of the art requires significant financial investment. Even with the resources of several wealthy founding patrons, this financial investment took time to grow to make a direct physical impact on the urban environment. The Portland Art Association started out exhibiting casts and prints in the existing city library and then borrowing art works from its founders to exhibit. As its financial resources grew large enough, it purchased its own original works and then built its own dedicated building in a quarter block in downtown Portland in 1905 — its first direct physical impact on the city.

The addition of cultural amenities like the art museum and events like the Lewis & Clark Exhibition attracted more visitors and residents to the city of Portland, leading to increased hotel/lodging and residential development in the areas like the South Park Blocks neighborhood (as in Figure 4-3). A neighborhood that was first sparsely settled by high-born East Coasters and prominent businessmen's families in large manor homes during the mid to late 1800s soon incorporated more modest housing for middle class families and workers that wanted a quiet lifestyle and close proximity to their downtown businesses, only a few blocks East toward the Willamette River. After Portland became a cultural destination after the 1905 Lewis & Clark and its population grew even more, real estate developers (many who were already among Portland's wealthy families) added new housing options further away from downtown for middle class families who wanted more space and respite from the encroaching commercial activity downtown, leading many middle-class families in the South Park Blocks to move once advancements in transportation (the addition of bridges, streetcars, and the

invention of the automobile) made commuting downtown from these new neighborhoods feasible.

Subsequently, this exodus of families in the South Park Blocks made room for other kinds of development in the neighborhood, including large cultural institutions (a new library, theaters, and churches), new commercial and office space spilling in from the downtown district, and a new, larger art museum building in place of a school made redundant by the lack of children in the neighborhood. Thus, the South Park Blocks neighborhood transformed from a primarily residential neighborhood into a cultural and business district, instigated by the diminishing residential demand in the neighborhood which made blocks available and affordable for Portland's growing cultural institutions.

Much like other city centers between the 1950s and through the 1990s, people who could afford to move to new and exclusive<sup>53</sup> residential neighborhoods at the edges of the city left, leaving poorer and minority populations in the South Park Blocks neighborhood as it turned into a cultural and business district. Those who left the South Park Blocks still came occasionally to visit the Museum and other institutions, though the stagnant growth in downtown Portland during this time suggests these visits did not do much to support retail and commerce nearby the South Park Blocks neighborhood.

A rise in median home values from the lowest in the county to above average in the county between 1970 to 2010 evidence the appeal the South Park Blocks neighborhood

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<sup>53</sup> Those whose housing stock carried race-restrictive covenants, for example.

has achieved as a place to live (Figure 4-11). The Portland Art Museum has assuredly had something to do with this appeal, though the spike in home values in the neighborhood really started in 1990, right after the neighborhood's URA designation and during the new movement of residents back into the city center. Had the Museum been the single variable attracting wealthy residents to the neighborhood, home prices would not have been the lowest in the county before the 1985 URA designation. Rather, new neighborhood development and attraction of upper-middle class residents in the case of the South Park blocks are more likely the result of new financial incentives for developers (as was part of the URA) who created demand by adding new supply of affordable housing, as well as the socio-cultural switch in demand for housing in city centers that is now ubiquitous across the United States at the turn of the 21st Century.

At the same time as this influx of wealth into the South Park Blocks, median rents have remained the lowest in the county (Figure 4-13), due to the addition of multiple affordable housing projects since the URA designation in 1985. Consequently, the neighborhood has remained a home to poorer populations who rent rather than buy their homes, as evidenced by the neighborhood continuing to have one of the highest rates of poverty among county census tracts (Figure 4-12). This juxtaposition of poor residents, a few wealthy home owners, and cultural institutions like the Portland Art Museum, which are created and supported by a city's wealthy and powerful citizens, forms a unique social milieu. The Portland Art Museum, in the context of this social milieu, exhibits signs of both social anchoring and gentrification in its provision of space and programming.

The South Park Block's URA designation in 1985, in addition to being responsible for shaping the socioeconomic makeup of the neighborhood over the past three decades, was responsible for the neighborhood's most significant physical change since the 1920s and 1930s. The URA's financial incentives attracted new development, replacing many single-use buildings with multi-use ones. This infused the North and South of the neighborhood with new shops and restaurants, in addition to new places to live. The Portland Art Museum, further, created more neighborhood activity by adding retail space, a cafe, and a library to its growing campus. These new museum mixed-use spaces, however, were not planned as a part of a neighborhood land use strategy, but rather were the products of the Portland Art Museum's ambitious *Project for the Millennium*, which made the museum more competitive with art museums in other cities and increased the museum's revenue earning opportunities. Thus, the connection of activity the museum provides between the downtown retail/business district with the Portland State University district is not planned in concert with other neighborhood uses to promote a 24-hour space, but only occurs when the museum is open for business, six days a week, 10am to 5pm. The nightly lull in park block activity, however, does perk up on the Thursday and Friday evenings that the museum remains open until 8pm, thanks to large philanthropic gifts that pay for the museum's extra operating costs incurred during these extended hours.

This analysis of physical and social neighborhood change has shown that while the Portland Art Museum has undoubtedly had some anecdotal affect on the physical

development in the South Park Blocks neighborhood and who chooses to live there,<sup>54</sup> housing preferences driven by socio-cultural factors<sup>55</sup> and the provision of financial incentives for development in the URA have been the primary drivers of neighborhood change. In fact, one interpretation of historical evidence suggests that the changes in the South Park Block neighborhood during the turn of the 20th century led the Portland Art Association's board to locate its new art museum there. (The neighborhood's elementary school had become redundant to a mostly single and male population, making a full block of land near the heart of the city available and affordable to the Art Association looking to build a larger museum building.).

## Conclusion

The change in the Portland Art Museum and the South Park Blocks tells us that the art museum was and has not been a root cause of the kind of gentrification that displaces people of lower incomes or *necessarily* excludes them. The art museum (and other cultural institutions) located in the South Park Blocks did anchor the neighborhood socially during the mid twentieth century by continuing to attract patrons and visitors to the neighborhood even when many white and privileged families moved their residences elsewhere in the city. More recently, as downtown living has become more desirable among many white and privileged groups, the South Park Blocks' combination

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<sup>54</sup> This is based on interviews with retiree residents, many of whom live in the Eliot Tower luxury condos.

<sup>55</sup> E.g. white, middle-class families wanting to avoid living nearby downtown districts and minorities in the early 20th Century; and the desirability of downtown living to retiring Baby-Boomers and highly educated young people in the late 20th, early 21st Century.



of the URA's financing options and proximity to the art museum has brought several new luxury developments to the neighborhood in the 2000s. An increase in higher cost housing in the neighborhood and high design aesthetics of the new URA developments, however, did not significantly change the socioeconomic character of the neighborhood. Home values did rise significantly in the neighborhood, but rents stayed among the lowest in the city. Poverty, for better or worse, stayed among the highest of Portland's neighborhoods. Gentrification, as presented and measured in chapter 3, has not been present in these socioeconomic data.

Interviews and observation of many neighborhood constituents, however, have revealed some social structuring of place that reflects gentrification. This social structuring of downtown space in a way that has placed high-wealth individuals alongside poorer groups speaks in part to the "Islands of decay in Seas of Renewal" that Wyly & Hammel (1999) conceptualize. An analysis of the more recent (1980-2014) physical and social transformation of the South Park Blocks neighborhood provides empirical evidence of Wyly & Hammel's hypothesis that the back-to-the-city movement of gentrifiers has "infiltrated" downtown neighborhoods where social housing programs have been developed, showing that the rich will indeed live next to housing dedicated to poorer groups (ibid.). Evidence from interviews and the marketing strategies of luxury buildings in the South Park Blocks suggest that the Museum has had much to do with making the neighborhood attractive to wealthier groups. Further, the case of the Portland Art Museum and the diverse constituencies that frequent the South Park Blocks provides evidence that different socioeconomic groups not only live next to one another, but also

share the same socializing space, if only when such space is financially and programmatically inclusive.<sup>56</sup>

For example, rarely do residents of the neighborhood's affordable housing go inside the museum's galleries, except for during times of free admission. These residents do, on occasion, use the museum's cafe to sit and rest or eat a meal, as well as use the museum bathrooms adjacent to the library, which makes the museum a beneficial amenity for neighborhood residents who are not among the most likely to be members of the institution or art lovers. Stories of social exclusion (the disabled veteran who was asked to leave the museum cafe) complicate the perception of the museum as a social anchor for both privileged and less privileged groups,<sup>57</sup> but do not invalidate the ways in which the museum benefits different groups by attracting activity and providing amenities that have no financial cost to access.

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<sup>56</sup> In particular, this refers to the Portland Art Museum's free Friday evenings once a month and other free evening events.

<sup>57</sup> The evidence suggests, though, that this is not so much a conscious decision to benefit some groups and sometimes exclude others, but that this kind of gentrification is a result of looking after the perceived financial sustainability of the institution, as well as ideological differences among various museum employees.

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## **CHAPTER**

# **5. Institutional change at the Portland Art Museum and its effect on community development**

Portland Art Museum, like many other non-profit cultural institutions, serves as a place for public education and cultural enrichment in its city. Also like many other non-profit cultural institutions, the financial needs and human-organizational dynamics of the Portland Art Museum have a profound influence on what kind of services/amenities the institutions offers, how it provides those services in its physical space, and who benefit from them. This chapter looks at how and why the Portland Art Museum transformed its programing and physical space between 1994 and 2014, and who those changes have benefitted.

As has been mentioned in previous chapters of this dissertation, the connection that institutions like art museums have in some cases to increased local and regional economic activity (Grodach, 2010; Plaza, 2006), increased property values (Sheppard, 2013), and increased number of highly educated and higher earning residents (as presented in the results of chapter 3), have made them popular strategies/tools for revitalizing neighborhoods, if not to bring increased prestige to a city. These literatures,

in addition to Birch, Griffin, Johnson, & Stover's case studies on arts and cultural institutions (2013), Gurian's exposition on mixed-use space in art museums (2001), and historical studies on the origins of public museums (Abt, 2006; Wittlin, 1949), place art museums in the anchor institution literature and further the argument that they provide economic and social stability to neighborhoods, if not attract new investment and growth.

However, anchor institution literature's hypothesis that place-fixed institutions necessarily provide economic and social benefits to their locations (Porter, 2010; Taylor & Luter, 2013; Webber & Karlstrom, 2009) makes large assumptions about who receive their social and economic benefits, as well as the ability and desire of all anchored institutions to provide these benefits. This chapter provides more context into how one particular kind of anchor institution, the Portland Art Museum in Oregon, has been affected by change in its leadership and the economic hardship of the Great Recession, and shows that these events have had profound effects on how the museum programs and provides space and connects to its neighborhood. Here, I also make the argument that financial considerations, philosophical differences among museum staff, and internal governance structure of the institution ultimately decide how the museum grows physically, provides programming and services, who benefit from those activities, and ultimately, how they affect community development.

Museums and other non-profits in the United States overwhelmingly rely on 'earned income,' or revenues brought in from sources other than government funds. These



sources include ticket sales, grants from interest groups, donations from the general public, and other retail sales (such as those in coffee shops, restaurants, and gift shops). Even though an institution like the Portland Art Museum has a self-described mission to educate and enrich the public,<sup>58</sup> it also must pay salaries to its employees, pay for the maintenance of its building, and pay for programming. These financial considerations inevitably influence how an institution fulfills its mission, and subsequently, who benefits from its services and amenities. In this analysis, I conceptualize the museum's sources of funding as 'external' influences, because they inevitably influence, from the outside-in, how the museum (or any other non-profit reliant on 'earned income') programs events, designs and programs its physical space, and with whom the museum seeks out relationships.

In addition to these external forces, internal dynamics influence how non-profit institutions like the Portland Art Museum program, design their spaces, and with whom they build relationships. Large cultural non-profit institutions (for example, those with more than 100 staff members) employ many talented individuals with unique perspectives, all of whom are united by a common mission statement. However, their differing roles in the institution (curation versus development versus education) and their unique perspectives lead them to have different interpretations of how to fulfill the institution's mission statement. These different interpretations, as will be explored further in this analysis, manifest themselves in projects and programming that inevitably

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<sup>58</sup> "The mission of the Portland Art Museum is to engage diverse communities through art and film of enduring quality, and to collect, preserve, and educate for the enrichment of present and future generations." This is quoted from the museum's missions statement, found at <http://portlandartmuseum.org/about/mission/>.

resonate with different groups of people, and thus affect the constituency of the museum.

This examination of the Portland Art Museum's external influences, internal dynamics, and how they affect the museum's relationship to its surrounding communities focuses primarily on the past twenty years of the museum, between 1994 and 2014. Over this period, the museum not only had to navigate the financial difficulties of the Great Recession in 2007-2009, but also experienced a dramatic change in leadership just before the recession hit as its director, John Buchanan, left Portland Art Museum to direct the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco in 2006 (Row, October 30, 2011). Evidence for this analysis come from interviews with 15 key staff members of the Portland Art Museum,<sup>59</sup> newspaper articles accessed from archives,<sup>60</sup> as well as a three month, in-depth observation of the museum as an intern in the Public Programs and Education department between April and July 2014. More information about my methodology can be revisited in the methods appendix D of this dissertation.

## The directorship of John Buchanan between 1994 and 2006

John Buchanan, director between 1994 and 2006, left a profound legacy of rapid growth and "world class" expectations for the Portland Art Museum (Row, 2008). Buchanan,

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<sup>59</sup> I interviewed staff members at all levels of operation at the museum; from senior management, mid-level associates, to entry level positions. The bulk of the interviewed staff came from the public programming and education department, but others came from executive, development, and volunteer positions. Please see Appendices B and D for more information.

<sup>60</sup> These include archives of the Portland Art Museum, the Oregon Historical Society, and online.

arguably, turned an institution that was an afterthought in Portland, OR into a premier place and amenity in the city and the Pacific Northwest region (A. Gray, personal interview, Nov 4, 2014; Hammlin, 2006; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). Buchanan's ambition to make the Portland Art Museum an important place for the city focused primarily on the patronage, both physical and financial, of Portland's elite.<sup>61</sup> One museum staff member summarized this strategy as one that "concentrated [only] on the 200 wealthiest Portlanders" (S. Parrish, January 22, 2015).

As is the case for most non-profit art museums in the United States that have ambitious goals of attaining, at the very least, regional prestige, cultivating relationships with local 'movers and shakers' is a necessary endeavor. Not only are a city's wealthiest and most prominent citizens important sources of large financial gifts, their service on the museum's management board enables the museum to access their social networks, as well as political and business contacts, for purposes of underwriting exhibitions, gaining city approval for expansion plans, finding investments for the museum's endowment capital, and connecting with other museums throughout the world for collaborative exhibitions.<sup>62</sup>

Buchanan's administration formed relationships with Portland's wealthiest citizens by hosting parties and lavish social gatherings at the museum (Row, October 30 2011; S.

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<sup>61</sup> "Elite" referring to citizens with access to significant wealth, social/business connections, and/or political power.

<sup>62</sup> One such board member who had experience in the financial services industry helped the Portland Art Museum pay off its outstanding building debt, as of June 12, 2015. <http://portlandartmuseum.org/museum-pays-off-mark-building-remodeling-debt/>.

Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). They also programmed “blockbuster” exhibitions whose regional and national attention caught their attention, as well as the attention of many people around the region who would have never have considered visiting the art museum (B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015; Row, October 30 2011; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015).

An example of how important elite constituents were (and are) to increasing the museum’s profile and connection to more important constituents: Deeda Blair, a friend of Buchanan and important supporter of the Portland Art Museum in the 1990s, introduced both H elene de Ludinghausen (the last Stroganoff) and His Royal Highness Moritz, Landgrave of Hesse to the museum director at two separate social engagements (Dobrzynski, 2005; Moonan, 2006). After meeting with Buchanan, both H elene and Landgrave Moritz proposed using their royal family art collections, some never before seen in the United States, as the basis for one-of-a-kind exhibitions at the Portland Art Museum (ibid.). These plans came to fruition in the museum’s exhibitions “Stroganoff: The Palace and the Collections of a Russian Noble Family” in 2000 and “Hesse: A Princely German Collection” in 2005. Each exhibition had extravagant opening galas where the who’s who of the Pacific Northwest could mingle with Russian and European royalty (Dobrzynski, 2005; Moonan, 2006; Row, October 30, 2011). It is at these galas, attractive to wealthy and powerful citizens, where more elite social connections were made (and continue to be made at art museums across the country) to increase the museum’s financial, political, and artistic resources.

Buchanan's strategy of targeting elite constituents and programming to suit their tastes,<sup>63</sup> as well as the tastes of the general public, led to a dramatic increase in annual museum attendance, as well as quadrupling of the museum's membership during his tenure (Hammlin, 2006). The Portland Art Museum became a regional destination for museum-goers, as well as a place where the wealthiest and most influential people in the area socialized (Hammlin, 2006; Row, October 30, 2011; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). Catering to an elite constituency had the benefit of not only tapping into large (potential) funding sources, but also served to increase the museum's reputation in the region and country, as its connections to influential philanthropists and art world personalities across the world multiplied. Said one former docent of Buchanan's tenure: "it was a golden age for the museum" (interview, November 4, 2014).

However, capital improvements were an essential (and costly) step for Buchanan to take in order to realize his ambitions for the museum. Hosting traveling exhibitions with special objects on loan (such as those from the Stroganoff and Hesse collections) required significant upgrades to the museum's climate control system and the museum's gallery space. Courting Portland's philanthropists was, thus, an essential first step to raising money to improve the museum's physical plant. After raising enough money to bring the museum's climate control systems to industry standards, Buchanan and the museum's board started expanding the museum in 1997 in its *Project for the Millennium* initiative and in 2005 after purchasing the Masonic Temple next door 10

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<sup>63</sup> In the case of Stroganoff and Hesse, the director's new royal acquaintances directly influenced the subjects of the exhibitions.

years prior. The *Project for the Millennium* initiative repurposed what used to be the art school wing of the museum into a large gallery space dedicated exclusively to traveling exhibitions, as well as space dedicated to visitor amenities such as a cafe and gift shop (*Portland Art Museum: Project for the Millennium*, 2000). To replace the educational space that a previously affiliated art school provided,<sup>64</sup> the project used funding from PGE-Enron to develop the museum's basement for an auditorium, and education classrooms (*Portland Art Museum: Project for the Millennium*, 2000). While the project provided the physical resources for educational programming, the museum still did not have a dedicated education department, staffed by full-time educators (A. Gray, personal interview, Nov 4, 2014; B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). Following *Project for the Millennium*, the museum also found more space for hosting large social gatherings (which appealed to Portland movers and shakers) in the Masonic Temple building just next door, in addition to space for a new modern and contemporary gallery and administrative offices. In fact, the Temple already had no fewer than two ballrooms that could accommodate several hundred-person social functions (Nelson, 2008).

In addition to providing space for courting the museum's patrons and patrons-to-be, and the necessary operations of the museum, these expansions made by Buchanan and the museum's board also gave the museum more space for generating revenue. Cafes and gift shops like the ones Portland Art Museum created in its *Project for the Millennium* campaign present more opportunities for museum visitors to spend money and can

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<sup>64</sup> The art school had previously moved to an independent site on the other side of the city.

even attract people to the museum that do not usually visit to look at art galleries,<sup>65</sup> echoing Gurian's argument (2001) that mixed-use space gives museums capacity to bring different communities together. The cafe even has its own entrance right off SW 11th Avenue that opens two hours before the main museum building and galleries open.

The ballrooms in the newly acquired Masonic Temple (now the Mark Building) could be rented out to conferences and other private events when not used by the museum, providing additional income. For instance, many different outside groups use these ballrooms: the Oregon Health Science University departments often use them for Christmas parties; a variety of Pacific Northwest corporations use them for summer conference retreats; and even religiously affiliated groups use them for daily Bible study. With the exception of the museum's annual 'Shine a Light' and miscellaneous one-off events (discussed later in this chapter), the ballrooms are rarely used directly by local neighborhood residents.

The courting of Portland's elite and expansion/programming suggests a cyclical pattern of development at the Portland Art Museum during Buchanan's tenure: courtship of patrons, expansion, more courtship of patrons, and further expansion. In order to achieve the goal of making the museum a significant place in the city and region, Buchanan needed relationships with those in the city that could provide access to the social networks and financial backing the museum needed to realize these ambitions. Those relationships were cultivated by providing the kind of programming and events

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<sup>65</sup> Interviews with neighborhood residents (for example, from the previous chapter) revealed that many people visited the museum cafe every day, for example, without ever going into the museum galleries.

that attracted Portland's wealthy and powerful citizens, such as exhibitions from international museums and grand social gatherings. Providing the programming necessary to court Portland's wealthy and powerful required new space for exhibitions and social events, which in turn needed funding from Portland's wealthy and powerful. Thus, Portland Art Museum experienced a feedback loop of courtship and expansion during Buchanan's tenure, put in motion by the need to attract elite constituents to the museum.

The external influences of Portland's elite (their artistic tastes, as well as what might persuade them to join the museum board, etc.) had a profound effect on how the Buchanan Portland Art Museum operated, programmed, and expanded. Common criticisms of the museum under Buchanan's direction, its outreach to Portland's elite did not leave many resources for public education programs, and the programming of events and exhibitions, while attracting the interest of the average Portlander, looked past local, nearby residents and unique communities within Portland, toward what would capture the most visitors, attention, and donations for the Museum. Even though the blockbuster exhibitions appealed to the average Portlander, their main objective was to bring in the most ticket revenues possible and attract the most attention from the regional and national press, not necessarily to push conceptual boundaries or build relationships with communities. Further, the creation of new programmed space in the museum (a museum cafe and an expanded gift shop) and the dedication of space for special exhibitions and social gatherings evidence the outside influence of elite



constituents, as well as the influence of a 'mixed use' trend in museum design that increases a museum's earned revenue (Gurian, 2001).

By courting the "200 wealthiest Portlanders" and programming extravagant, blockbuster exhibitions, Buchanan put the Portland Art Museum "on the map" in the Pacific Northwest cultural scene (Hammlin, 2006; Row, 2008; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). What was once a relatively quiet institution on a relatively quiet block in downtown Portland, OR became a place where Portland's wealthiest and most powerful citizens wined and dined and where one could find extravagant objects from far away lands (Dobrzynski, 2005; Hammlin, 2006; Row, 2008; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). The exhibition galleries were filled with objects from Egyptian Pharaoh and Chinese Emperor's tombs, attracting the attention of art patrons throughout the Pacific Northwest, as well as brought many people to the museum who had never before been (ibid.). Using newly established connections with Portland's elite, Buchanan was able to fund much-needed improvements to the museum's physical plant, and nearly tripled its urban footprint by buying up the neighboring blocks containing a Masonic Temple and a surface parking lot (Row, 2008). While his aggressive fundraising quintupled the museum's endowment (from \$8.5 million to \$49.6 million) and raised \$125 million for the museum's capital projects in less than 10 years (Hammlin, 2006), it could not keep up with the rapidly increasing maintenance costs as the museum grew (Baker, 2012; Row, 2008). When Buchanan left for the director position at the Fine Arts Museums in San Francisco, he left his successor, Brian Ferriso, a museum operating at a loss and around \$15 million in debt to the Bank of America

from its capital projects, still growing into its newly acquired space, and trying to maintain its “world class” expectations, just before the Great Recession hit (Row, 2008; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015).

### Refinancing and refocusing during the Great Recession: the directorship of Brian Ferriso

Brian Ferriso succeeded John Buchanan as the Portland Art Museum’s director in 2006 and inherited a museum with significant financial issues. Not only did the museum have costs it could not sustain with its current revenue streams, it lacked a fully fledged education department (a necessary component for any large museum in the 21st century), and suffered from a reputation as being an exclusive place with little concern for the local public (B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015; former Portland school teacher, personal interview, August 6, 2014). To make matters worse, the Great Recession between 2007 and 2008 dried up once dependable private philanthropic sources of funding (B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015).

Ferriso’s main objectives for the Portland Art Museum were first, to reorganize the museum’s finances and second, to refocus the museum’s attention to rebuilding relationships with the Portland community. These goals, made in the context of a shrinking economy and unsustainable finances, in large part, paved the way for a museum whose space and programming makes greater acknowledgement of its adjacent neighborhood and place in the city.

As experienced by too many non-profits during the Great Recession, a dramatic decrease in philanthropic donations and earned income at the Portland Art Museum required director Ferriso to reduce the museum's expenditures. Ultimately, he reduced what was a budget of \$21.8 million in expenditures in 2006 to under \$14 million (Row, October 30 2011). One of the largest items on the list of expenditures was the cost of human resources at the museum. Ferriso and the museum had no choice but to 'lay-off' several of the museum's staff (B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015).

Another significant cost to the museum was the pricey grand exhibitions and galas that Ferriso's predecessor, Buchanan, used to build the museum's reputation and increase its membership. Because the museum's wealthy supporters lost much of their capacity to provide financial gifts to the museum,<sup>66</sup> the accoutrements the museum previously used to attract and maintain their support (including the lavish parties and exhibitions) were no longer a programming and outreach strategy on which the museum could depend for earned income.

In place of the grand, international exhibitions, Ferriso gradually refocused the museum's attention on smaller-scale and more cost effective exhibitions that took advantage of the physical resources already in the museum's possession (B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015; Row, December 26 2009). These smaller exhibitions, which did not lack in artistic quality, tended to focus more on locally relevant genres and art, which in turn, reflected more of the museum's locale in Portland, OR.

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<sup>66</sup> One anecdote from my personal interview with Ferriso (March 13, 2015): a longtime annual donor who used to give \$50,000 a year to the Portland Art Museum said he could barely give \$5,000 in 2008.

Examples of these included: “China Design Now” in 2009, which encompassed many subjects that are a part of Portland’s identity: Pacific Rim and alternative cultures, social media, and design; “Portland Collects: Riches of a City” in 2011, which focused on the art of local Portland collectors; a survey of contemporary Northwest art in 2011; and “Body Beautiful” in 2012, which explored the human form through nude Greek sculpture and presented an opportunity to tie in a pervasive aesthetic practice in Portland: body tattoos (Row, December 26 2009 & May 2011).

Often repeated goals that Ferriso had when he arrived at the museum were to make greater connections with the Portland community and to play the role as a community resource for education and enrichment (B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015; Row, May 6, 2011; Row, October 15, 2011). While Buchanan endeavored to bring regional and national acclaim to the Portland Art Museum through elite patronage and building expansions, Ferriso wanted to rebuild the museum’s relationship with Portland residents, who saw the institution as inaccessible and only catering to the narrow tastes of traditional museum philanthropists (Row, October 3, 2009; Row, May 6, 2011; Row, October 15, 2011). Ferriso also wanted to make a clear departure from the culture and philosophy of the museum under Buchanan so much so that he even completely rebranded the museum (Row, October 15, 2011).

However, some former employees of the museum argue that Ferriso, while directly responsible for rebuilding the education department, only peripherally wanted to rebuild relationships with Portland communities. The ideas and impetus for connecting with

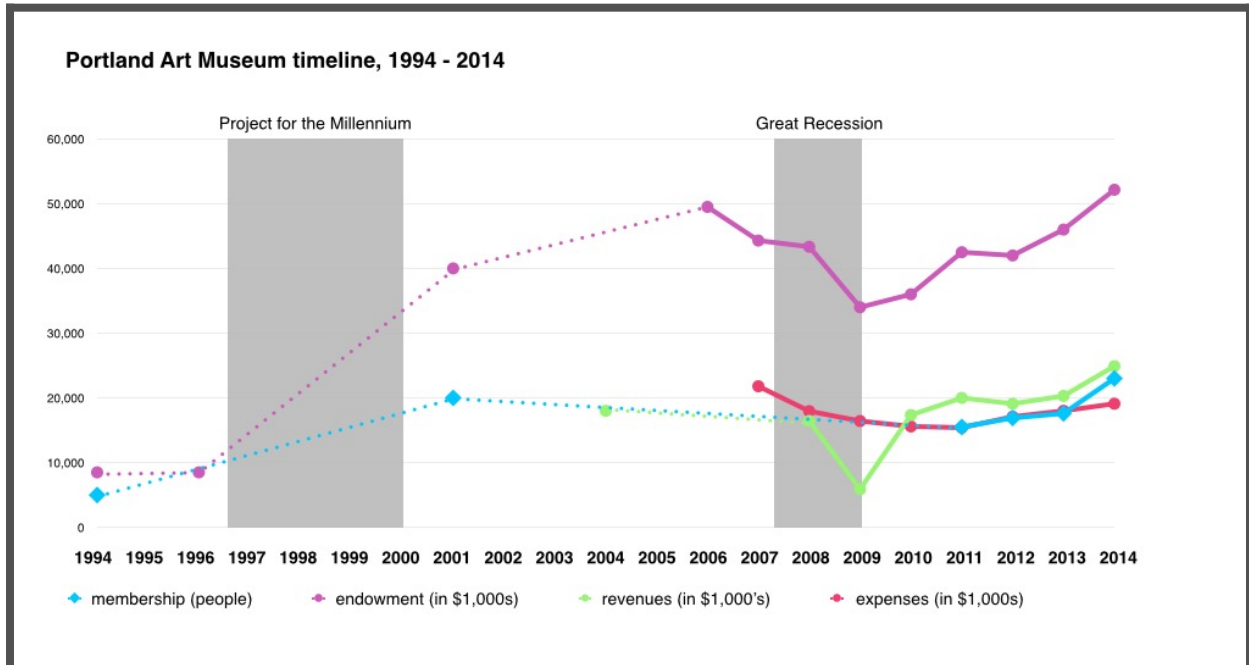
targeted community groups, they say, came from the employees of the education department themselves (anonymous informant, interview, May 14, 2015). Others argue that the boundary-pushing and risk taking projects of the education department would not have been possible if not for the autonomy and equal footing that Ferriso gave educators within the hierarchy of the museum departments (anonymous informant, interview, January 22, 2015; anonymous informant, interview, November 20, 2014).

In 2008, Ferriso and the museum accepted a \$1.6 million donation from two prominent Portland Philanthropists and The Bank of America Charitable Foundation to ensure free museum admission to K-12 school groups and anyone under 17 years of age, making the museum more accessible to young audiences financially (Row, February 27, 2009). Later, in 2009, the museum accepted a donation of \$1 million to fund four free Sundays a year, benefiting many families who tend to visit the museum on the weekends (ibid.). However, the museum's lagging earned income as late as 2009 due to the Great Recession necessitated an increase in the Portland Art Museum's general admission from \$10 to \$12 (Row, February 27 & June 25, 2009). After reducing museum costs as much as he could by shrinking department staff, decreasing some management salaries by 5-6% and non-salary expenses by 10%, Ferriso had to increase admission prices to sustain the functions of the museum (ibid.).

One step forward toward both a more locally accessible and relevant museum was a new programming strategy for special exhibitions. In deciding which exhibitions to bring to the Portland Art Museum, Ferriso began to not only look at the cost-effectiveness of a

show, but how well it fit in with the interests and culture of Portland communities. For example, “China Design Now” was chosen instead of another prominently exhibited show about modern European designers, *EDN*, in 2009, because of Portland’s trade connections with China as a Northwest shipping hub, and because of its prominent ethnic Chinese community (McCallion, 2009 & 2010). Many of the city’s local (small) businesses with links to China participated in the exhibition, from providing meals for young-adult tours of the exhibition to helping pay for the costs of the exhibition (ibid.). The largest single donation to the exhibition cost, for example, was given by a sportswear company from China that had just opened a new store in Portland (Row, October 3, 2009). Other Portland businesses displayed Chinese street art, created ‘pop-up’ versions of their stores at the museum, and participated in panel discussions, in collaboration with the “China Design Now” exhibition (McCallion, 2009). The exhibition even catalyzed relationships with local businesses and local arts groups that had not before existed (McCallion, 2009 & 2010). Another aspect of the exhibition that resonated with groups outside of the traditional art museum-goer community, “China Design Now” hosted several virtual conversations on social media that got local designers, museum curators, and young Portland residents communicating (ibid.). As a more experimental exhibition, contrasting with the tried and true traditional museum exhibitions that feature objects from Egyptian tombs and royal European artifacts and very little discussion between visitors and the museum, “China Design Now” spoke to a niche community within the city of Portland through its relevant subject matter and facilitated dialogue between the group, the museum, and museum visitors (ibid.).

**FIGURE 5-1: PORTLAND ART MUSEUM TIMELINE OF MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS**



NB:

Data for the years 2007 to 2014 come from official museum financial statements, publicly available at <http://portlandartmuseum.org/about/finance/>

Data for years prior to 2007 come from public statements made in archived newspaper articles:

<http://articles.latimes.com/2001/feb/09/entertainment/ca-23014>

[http://www.wweek.com/portland/article-2965-the\\_deal\\_of\\_the\\_art.html](http://www.wweek.com/portland/article-2965-the_deal_of_the_art.html)

Portland Art Museum did not make their yearly financial statements public until 2008

Solid lines between data points do not have missing data; dotted lines between data points represents time periods with missing data

“China Design Now” is emblematic of how the Portland Art Museum’s external influences had changed since the hiring of Ferriso. Given the museum’s goal of expanding its relationship in the Portland community under Ferriso’s new administration, it started programming in ways that resonated with non-traditional groups within the Portland community. Though it still programmed exhibitions with wide appeal among Portlanders (such as the “Allure of the Automobile” exhibition in 2011), the Portland Art Museum under Ferriso balanced these popular, high-revenue exhibitions with ones that dealt with topics pertinent to sub-groups in the Portland community (such as Chinese

design and culture, graphic novels, tattoo body art, and later, outdoor photographers and Instagrammers). Consequently, the museum's highly venerated platform within the city of Portland opened these specialized conversations up to wider Portland audiences.

In addition to changing how the museum programmed by speaking to the interests and appealing to the tastes of non-traditional audiences, Ferriso also significantly changed the management culture inside the museum. The management culture of the museum under Buchanan was very top-down, with the director himself often micro-managing nearly every aspect of the museum (often in spite of the wishes of many of the curators — Row, May 3, 2008). Ferriso gave much more autonomy and authority to the curators to manage exhibitions on their own, as well as raising funds to have most of their positions permanently endowed (Row, May 3, 2008).

Another way in which Ferriso changed the museum's culture, and subsequently its internal dynamics, was by balancing the traditional view of the institution as custodian of and authority on material culture, a view central to the role of curators, with programming and outreach that gave visitors more sense of authorship in the museum's content. Ferriso pursued this balance of museum philosophies by building up the museum's education department and hiring a strong director who would advocate for giving visitors a more active and authoritative role in shaping the museum.

Despite the difficult financial position of the museum, Ferriso made the decision to hire full-time museum educators and create a dedicated education and public programming



department at the museum in 2008 (A. Gray, personal interview, Nov 4, 2014; B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015; Row, May 3, 2008 & June 12, 2010). These hires, particularly the newly appointed head of education and public programming Christina “Tina” Olsen, added a new perspective on how to achieve the museum’s educational and enrichment mission. With the autonomy and authority that Ferriso gave to his department heads, a departure from Buchanan’s micro-managing style, Olsen’s visitor-centered programming philosophy was given equal weight to the more traditional, museum-as-authority programming philosophy of the curatorial department (ibid.).

With their backgrounds in art education that emphasized constructivist educational philosophy, Tina and her small, but dedicated, department instituted people-focused programming that gave visitors an active, participatory role in their museum experience and reimagined how museum space could be used. Two important examples of this kind of programming were “Object Stories” and “Shine-a-light,” which continue, in some form or another, to this day.

*Object Stories* is an interactive exhibition project that explored the relationship that people have with objects (House, 2011; Lampen, 2014; Row, September 21, 2009). Encompassing a video recording studio, digital archive, and display gallery, *Object Stories* was one of the first art museum education projects to use digital technology to record, archive and exhibit the perspectives of everyday people.<sup>67</sup> Private funding for

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<sup>67</sup> See <http://objectstories.org>.

the project would not have been possible in the austere philanthropic environment during the Great Recession (S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). However, Portland Art Museum's education department sought funding from the MetLife Foundation, which had requested proposals for educational projects that would increase the scope of visitor engagement (Lampen, 2014; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). The grant from MetLife in 2009 provided the capital funds for starting *Object Stories* and enough money to maintain the technology and gallery space for three years (S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). While *Object Stories* still has a presence online<sup>68</sup> and in the museum's digital archives, the difficulty in finding money necessary to maintain the recording studio booth and the in gallery interactive displays has put a pause on new content generation (S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015). The scope of *Object Stories* has expanded to include specially selected objects from Portland community members (curated by the education department) that resonate with current special exhibitions.

*Shine a Light*, like *Object Stories*, involves people from outside of the museum institution generating content for others to experience in the museum setting, though these experiences only last for one night. *Shine a Light* was originally conceived of in 2009 as an opportunity for the Portland Art Museum to collaborate with local art students, both providing a practical educational experience for students and cultivating relationships between the museum and new, younger groups (ibid.). Serendipitously, Portland State University, only a few blocks away from the museum and abutting the

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<sup>68</sup> See <http://objectstories.org/stories/>.

same park blocks as the museum, had an art and social practice MFA program that was well suited for the collaboration. The content in *Shine a Light*, produced by students in the art and social practice program, aims to reimagine what is possible in an art museum space, including such novel experiences as getting tattooed, listening to stand-up comedy, and engaging in a scavenger hunt inside the galleries (Row, September 21, 2009; House, 2011).

*Object Stories* and *Shine a Light* changed the way the Portland Art Museum interacted with groups outside of its walls. Not just catering to the tastes of different community groups (particularly ones that rarely interacted with the art museum, such as younger groups), these projects gave people outside of the museum an opportunity to form their own museum experiences and contribute to the content of the museum, thus making the museum space and content more a reflection of its local citizens.

### A recovering economy and an evolving museum: the Portland Art Museum after the Great Recession

Still under the directorship of Ferriso as of 2014, the Portland Art Museum has continued evolving as the economy has rebounded from the Great Recession. During my observation of and participation in the operations of the Portland Art Museum in the Summer of 2014, I found evidence of renewed interest in programming for elite audiences, as well as the continuation of programming for non-traditional groups among the greater Portland community.

By the start of my observation of the Portland Art Museum in the Summer of 2014, the institution seemed to have finally emerged from its precarious financial position. The museum had paid off three-quarters of its debt sustained from the Buchanan years of expansion (Row, October 30, 2011), had established its community engagement credentials with the ongoing *Object Stories* gallery and the annual *Shine a Light* event, hosted several blockbuster-worthy exhibitions (such as *Venice, the Golden Age of Art and Music* and the Louvre's *Art of the Tuileries Gardens*), as well as hosted the (then) most expensive work of art in history, Francis Bacon's *Three Studies of Lucian Freud* ("World's most expensive..." 2013; Stabler, 2014). Tina Olsen, the director of education responsible for much of the museum's visitor-as-participant style, experimental programming, had moved on to lead the Williams College Museum of Art in 2012, and was succeeded by Mike Murawski.

In 2014, the museum had had four years of solid revenues while keeping its expenses in check. Its endowment (investment portfolio) grew during to \$52 million, the highest it had ever been.<sup>69</sup> Much like the rest of the country, Portland had seemingly recovered from the depths of the Great Recession, evidenced by the much stronger financial performance of the Portland Art Museum's investments, as well as its growing ambitions.

Ferriso and the museum's board, after weathering difficult times at the start of Ferriso's directorship, have recently set their sights on a new capital campaign for the museum's

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<sup>69</sup> From audited financial statements from 2011 to 2014, found at <http://portlandartmuseum.org/about/finance/>.

125th year (in 2017) to raise funds to enclose the public street between the main museum building and the Mark (former Masonic Temple) building (B. Ferriso, during a museum all staff meeting on May 21, 2014; and in a personal interview, March 13, 2015). Capital campaigns, like the ones led by Buchanan in the 1990s and into the early 2000s, are thought to excite philanthropists more than an annual donation, because such funds are usually dedicated for large and highly publicized building projects (B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015). Further, campaigns that fall on big anniversary years (like the upcoming 125th year since the museum's founding), are thought to be even greater opportunities to attract large donors and raise large sums of money for a project (ibid.).

Ferriso describes the upcoming capital campaign project as an opportunity to connect the main galleries and the contemporary/modern art galleries (in the Mark building) in a more obvious way (ibid.). Currently, the main galleries and the contemporary/modern art galleries are connected via an underground passageway, which also houses education classrooms, the *Object Stories gallery*, and an auditorium. Ferriso has mentioned that this layout means that many visitors are not able to find their way to the contemporary/modern art galleries (B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015). He also noted that the project would be an opportunity to incorporate an architectural element into the physical plant of the museum that would identify the Portland Art Museum as a "world-class museum" (B. Ferriso, all staff meeting, May 21, 2014). Specific details for this potential new space have yet to be finalized (much less its funding), but Ferriso and the museum's board have communicated that it would be free to the public, so that people

can still enjoy the sculpture court without having to pay admission (B. Ferriso, all staff meeting, May 21, 2014; personal interview, March 13, 2015). However, it is not known whether the space would still allow the public to cut through the museum blocks when the galleries are closed.

Another ambition of the museum, led in part by the gradually expanding education department, has been the adoption of more cutting-edge social and digital technologies in its programming. Since the *China Design Now* experiment with social media in the depths of the Great Recession, the Portland Art Museum has included more social media technology into its programming. For instance, it encouraged visitors to its *Body Beautiful* and *Legendary Samurai* exhibits to post ‘selfies’<sup>70</sup> to the museum’s Instagram feed, as well as experimented with giving people outside of the museum an opportunity to create content for display alongside the *Art of the Tuileries Gardens* exhibit in the Instagram project, *#captureParklandia*.

*#captureParklandia*, a project I spearheaded with my colleague Kristin Bayans at the museum during the Summer of 2014 in conjunction with the museum’s *Art of the Tuileries Gardens* special exhibition, crowd-sourced experiences of Portland’s parks from the general public through the social media application, Instagram. The images captured by Instagram (using our project’s hashtag, “#captureParklandia”) were then displayed in an interpretive space alongside the *Tuileries* exhibition inside the museum.

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<sup>70</sup> Or photographs of themselves, usually via social media applications like Instagram and Facebook.

The initial idea for the project came from several museum staff members<sup>71</sup> who had the idea to link the *Tuileries* (an exhibition of artwork inspired by Paris' famous urban park) with Portland using a participatory social media project, which encouraged people to share their experiences of urban parks in their own city. *#captureParklandia* gave museum visitors and people who will never set foot in the museum the opportunity to have their image of a Portland park displayed on a digital screen inside the museum, in an interpretive gallery adjacent to the *Tuileries* exhibition.

Giving members of the public a new way to affect the content inside the museum using the social media application Instagram, as well as drawing on the subject matter of urban parks, helped the museum forge new relationships with the Portland Parks Foundation and InstaPDX, one of the largest Instagram artist and hobbyist communities in the world. Over the course of the project between June and September of 2014, the Portland Parks Foundation and the museum co-hosted several outdoor events, including: French movie screenings in select parks, scene painting outside the museum in the South Park Blocks ("Plein Air Paint Out"), and a bicycle tour of Portland urban parks (Pokorny, 2014; Stabler, August 4, 2014). The InstaPDX community, many of whom had never been inside the museum before, captured their experiences of the museum galleries for their hundreds of thousands of social media followers. Also, many artist members of the InstaPDX community contributed images that were featured on Portland park trading cards and distributed to museum and park visitors. The museum

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<sup>71</sup> Including the head curator, the director of the marketing department, and several members of the education department.

even hosted a scavenger hunt for InstaPDX members, further cementing a relationship between the institution and the social group.

Not only did *#captureParklandia* represent an opportunity to incorporate contemporary social media (Instagram) and challenge whether crowd-sourced content could be displayed alongside traditional objects in the same exhibition, but it also developed further relationships the institution has with other non-profits and grass-roots social groups. The project would not have been possible had the museum not already had experience experimenting with audience engagement in technology like it did during the Great Recession. Internal support for projects like *#captureParklandia* existed among museum managers, curators, and educators for two reasons. First, when changing the internal culture of the institution, Ferriso gave the education department authority in programming closer to that of the curatorial department. This meant that programming reflected more of education's constructivist philosophy, where the museum public shares in the creation of museum content and takes an active role in shaping the museum. Second, the experimental engagement methods used by the education department, in contrast with the more traditional forms like museum lectures and tours, had proven successful in programming *China Design Now*, *Object Stories*, and *Shine-a-Light*.

Since the initial days of experimentation during the Great Recession, the museum had also tried other untraditional forms of programming that linked with locally relevant groups and events. For example, on the suggestion of the new director of education



Mike Murawski, the museum welcomed participants of Portland's annual Naked Bike Race to its exhibition on bicycle design, *Cyclopedia*, with admission prices that reflected the amount of clothing worn (\$1 for every item of clothing — Haberman, 2013; Mike Murawski, personal interview, November 20, 2014). Despite the objections of some other peer institutions (ibid.), the Portland Art Museum attracted hundreds of nude (and semi-nude) museum goers to the exhibit by helping celebrate an event much loved by many in the city's biking community.

Another untraditional programming experiment, *Art & Beer: The Drunken Cobbler*, invited local brewers to craft beers inspired by the Jean-Baptiste Greuze painting in the museum's collection, *The Drunken Cobbler*. Two hundred Portland beer connoisseurs, many who do not normally visit the museum, paid a small fee to try the creations of Wider Brothers Brewing, Breakside, Ecliptic, Humble Brewing, and Laurelwood, while listening to a lecture on *The Drunken Cobbler* given by the Portland Art Museum's curator for European Art. The event tapped into one of Portland's most important local industries to link the experiences of drinking beer and viewing art.

Despite the museum's evolving experiments with visitor-based programming and forming relationships with niche-interest community groups, there is still evidence of programming for the tastes of more privileged audiences of the museum, driven by the financial needs of the museum. For example, the exhibition planned for the fall of 2014, *In Passionate Pursuit*, featured the collection of one of Portland's most prominent

philanthropists, Arlene Schnitzer (How the Schnitzers..., 2014).<sup>72</sup> Arlene Schnitzer, whose name adorns other civic institutions like the Schnitzer Concert Hall in Portland, has been a prominent board member of the Portland Art Museum and has given much to the museum in the form of monetary gifts and artistic objects. This exhibition of her (and her late husband's) private art collection celebrated the important role they played in supporting the artistic community in the Pacific Northwest for several decades. As pre-arranged by the Schnitzers and the museum, several objects were accessioned into the museum's collection after the exhibition. Though it can be thought of as an anthropological study of one couple's taste in art, the subject matter of the exhibition reminded one of the subject matter from many of Buchanan's blockbuster exhibitions: the art and objects of the wealthy and elite. The pretext of an exhibition like this might be construed as a message to Portland's elite art patrons: support our museum, and we will exhibit your collections. Of course, this was not explicitly stated in any meetings or documents, and is one interpretation of the exhibition's purpose.

### Ambitions, financial considerations, and departmental philosophies: what they mean for museum space, programming, constituency, and community development

An analysis of the Portland Art Museum's operations and changes over the past 20 years reveals the critical role external influences and internal dynamics have on how the museum plans its physical space, programs events and exhibitions, and forms relationships with outside groups. Specifically, the financial hardships caused by the

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<sup>72</sup> See also <http://portlandartmuseum.org/exhibitions/passionate-pursuit/>.

Great Recession forced the Portland Art Museum and its new director to move from an engagement strategy that focused on Portland's wealthiest citizens to one that made more inroads with Portland community groups. Further, the autonomy that Portland Art Museum's current director (Ferriso) gave to the museum's education department allowed them to take risks and pursue more constructivism-inspired programming.

The major expansions of the Portland Art Museum from the 1990s and into the early 2000s stemmed from the ambitions of its then director, John Buchanan, to create an institution that competed on a regional, if not global, level. To properly host the kinds of traveling exhibitions that drew the attention of regional art patrons, in addition to having the same kinds of mixed-use accoutrements (cafes, gift shops, auditoriums, ballrooms) that other large art museums have, the museum under Buchanan tripled its urban footprint in the South Park Blocks neighborhood near downtown Portland. A dilemma for art museums, and other non-profits, with ambitions to build a regional/national/global reputation, these kinds of expansions require the financial, social, and political support of elite patrons, who in turn, are attracted by the extravagant programming that require these expansions. Thus, during the tenure of Buchanan, there was a noticeable cycle of the museum courting elites for their financial and political support for capital campaigns, expansion of museum facilities to incorporate more extravagant programming and events for courting elites, who would, in turn, continue to help support the museum financially. Admittedly, the wide appeal of Buchanan's blockbuster programming did bring new people to visit the Portland Art Museum.

The museum's growth-machine like cycle, fueled by ambitions to be "world-class," focused on the external influences of blockbuster trends, rather than the unique interests of Portland communities. It meant that museum programs and space were planned first for earning revenue and attracting the wealthy and the socially/politically significant citizens of Portland. Also, there were few opportunities where someone could visit the museum for free. As a consequence, the Portland Art Museum gained a reputation among local Portlanders as exclusive, inaccessible, and unconcerned about the average Portlander (B. Ferriso, personal interview, March 13, 2015; Row, October 3, 2009; Row, May 6, 2011; Row, October 15, 2011; S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015; former Portland school teacher, personal interview, August 6, 2014).

The Portland Art Museum 'non-profit growth-machine' changed considerably when Brian Ferriso took over as director and the Great Recession started. The financial state of the institution and the drastic reduction of donations from private philanthropy and other 'earned income' forced Ferriso to refocus the museum's ambitions. There was little to no money available to fuel the cycle of growth and expansion as there was during the Buchanan years, and Ferriso was concerned by the frosty relationship between the museum and the general public in Portland. Thus, there was little reason to continue prioritizing the needs/desires of Portland's elite class for the purposes of courting support; rather, the slow financial times gave the museum and its education department the opportunity to refocus on building relationships with the larger Portland community. Programming looked to efficient, but high quality, exhibitions that took advantage of local resources. Consequently, these exhibitions resonated more with local Portland

interests and forged lasting collaborations with community groups like local Chinese businesses, InstaPDX, local craft brewers, and Portland State University student artists. Serendipitous gifts enabled free admission for school groups, youth, and family-oriented quarterly Sundays made the museum even more accessible for some Portlanders.

Though Ferriso generally tried to reduce costs incurred by the museum, he did take a few significant financial risks by hiring a new education team and giving them the freedom and internal authority to try new programming. The hiring of the “change agent” (S. Parrish, personal interview, January 22, 2015) Tina Olsen resulted in a sea change at the museum: the museum started pushing its own boundaries of what art museum engagement looked like by emphasizing ways in which communities in Portland could affect, and consequently take ownership in, the museum. These experiments led to the democratizing of museum content in projects like *Object Stories* and *#captureParklandia*; seeing museum space in new (and less exclusive) ways in *Shine-a-Light*; and importantly, forming relationships with local community groups/businesses (many who had previously not ever been to the museum) through relevant exhibitions and projects (*China Design Now*, *Shine-a-Light*, Naked Bike Ride night at the museum, *Cyclopedia*, *Beer and Art*, *#captureParklandia*, etc).

While most museum staff members agree that a city art museum (like the Portland Art Museum) has a responsibility to serve everyone in the city, this is a vague concept that rarely leads to specific strategies for the museum to implement. Instead, the concept of whom a museum serves *in practice* varies according to the individual who works in the

museum and what that individual's responsibilities are. For example, art museum curators take great pride in the quality of their objects and scholarship, which is most often prepared for an educated and initiated audience. Development managers in an art museum (whose responsibilities include fund raising) are likely to favor policies and programming that make current donors happy and that might attract new ones, ensuring the financial sustainability of the institution for future generations of city residents. Education staff are more likely to favor policies and programming that make the museum accessible to younger audiences and/or audiences with less knowledge of art. Each of these actors within an art museum tend to work for a different audience. Sometimes, each audience can be adequately served with the resources at the museum's disposal. However, as is often the case when there are limited financial resources, decisions are made to serve the groups that best ensure the longevity of the institution. For institutions like art museums, these groups tend to be large corporate sponsors and high-profile donors who have the financial capacity to make six and seven-figure gifts. In a hypothetical scenario, an art museum with limited financial resources would be more likely to spend those resources creating exhibits that are attractive to donors than spend those resources lowering the cost of admission.

As is the case with most non-profit organizations, the Portland Art Museum must balance financial needs with its institutional mission. That institutional mission, having some notion of serving the public good, is inevitably interpreted in different ways depending on the ambitions of the museum, the financial requirements to fulfill those ambitions, how staff inside the institution interpret the mission of the museum, and how

they work together. As shown in the analysis of the Portland Art Museum over the past 20 years, the Great Recession and the change in museum director had a large part to play in how the museum interpreted its mission: how it planned its physical space, how it programmed that space, and with whom it formed relationships.

Consequently, these choices impacted who benefited from the institution and the community relationships that were developed, from Portland's wealthiest art patrons who were wooed by exclusive perks and parties in the 90s, to people from around the metroplex who had never before been to an art museum and attended Buchanan's mega exhibitions of royal artifacts and Egyptian mummies, to socio-cultural minority groups that participated in smaller exhibitions such as *China Design Now*, to young techies and creatives who collaborated with the Museum in the *#CaptureParklandia* project, to young art students who received space to explore new ways of experiencing an art museum in *Shine a Light* events.

From the populist, blockbuster exhibitions that brought in large audiences and attracted the attention of Portland's wealthiest arts benefactors, to the smaller-scale, locally significant exhibitions that attracted niche community support and forged collaborations between the museum and these groups, Portland Art Museum has gradually changed whom it attracts and the relationships it helps create through its programming and space. As this chapter's analysis has shown, the museum's activities in community development depend on how much autonomy the internal governance structure of the museum gives its employees in pursuing their own interpretations of the museum's

mission. Further, this governance structure and the activities of the museum are always driven by an instinctual drive to remain financially sustainable, tending to favor activities that promote earned income and high growth in good economic times. This complicates the anchor institution hypothesis that implicitly assumes that place-fixed institutions provide consistent space for community building and develop relationships with their adjacent neighborhood (Birch et al, 2013; Grodach, 2011; Gurian, 2001). Rather, anchor institutions such as the Portland Art Museum are likely to change how they impact their social environment depending on changes in their region's economic climate, the employees they hire, and how they come to programming and space management decisions as an institution. The conclusions of this analysis highlight the importance of urban planning research that looks into these institutional dynamics; such research is necessary for understanding how art museums and similar non-profit institutions affect community development and, potentially, economic development.



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## **CHAPTER**

# **6. Art museums, neighborhoods, and implications for urban planning**

What are the roles that art museums play in neighborhood change? Are art museums anchors, providing economic and social stability to their locations; or are they gentrifiers, part of a production of space that benefits the wealthy, highly educated, and white at the expense of others? The preceding analyses, particularly in the case study of the Portland Art Museum, provide answers to these questions, as well as highlight the need for research that delves into the organizational dynamics of non-profit institutions and their economic contextual factors to forge new theories about institution-led neighborhood development.

A necessary step that this dissertation makes before analyzing whether art museums anchor or gentrify neighborhoods is distinguishing between the two (see end of chapter 2). Anchor institution and gentrification literature both describe similar changes in neighborhood socioeconomics: increases in educated residents and general population that theoretically also provide increased economic activity and social capital. This dissertation argues, however, that an anchored neighborhood is one whose existing

resident population is more or less stable and benefit from increased social capital and economic activity. In contrast, this dissertation sees a gentrifying neighborhood as one where the neighborhood's racial/ethnic identity and socioeconomic characteristics are changing quite significantly compared to other neighborhoods in its city, reflecting either a replacement of established residents with new residents or the overwhelming increase of new residents. Chapter 3 of this dissertation looked for indications of an anchored neighborhood, including consistent general population and nonwhite population gains (especially in times of economic downturn), more educated residents, no significant replacement of nonwhite and poorer residents with white and wealthier ones, and no significant increases in the housing cost burden (the ratio of percent change in home value to percent change in median incomes of the neighborhood over time). Indications of a gentrifying neighborhood, on the other hand, were defined as nonwhite replacement (simultaneous decrease in nonwhite population with an increase in white population in a neighborhood), as well as significant increases in new heads of households and home cost burden increases compared to other neighborhoods in the city.

Analyses of socioeconomic change in 156 selected art museum neighborhoods around the country show that proximity to museums, on the whole, is associated with anchoring: increases in population, educated people, and no association with displacement or significant rises in the cost of housing or median incomes, which are indicative of gentrification in the literature (Atkinson, 2000; Deutsche & Ryan, 1984; Freeman, 2005; Freeman & Braconi, 2004; Ley, 2003; Marcuse, 1985). There was the



association of museum neighborhoods and higher costs of housing in shrinking regions, but this was likely an outcome of the increased housing demand for neighborhoods around museums not being balanced out by increased supply. Rather than reflecting the whiter and more educated “islands of renewal” gentrification of which Berry (1985) speaks, these art museum neighborhoods in shrinking counties significantly increased their population of nonwhite residents despite the significant rise in home prices. These quantitative analyses show on a census tract level, how neighborhoods around art museums have changed over the past several decades, whether there are consistent patterns in this change, and whether these changes are generally positive, or ones that that might reflect displacement. What has become clear, is that socioeconomic change in art museum neighborhoods, perhaps unsurprisingly, is connected to the economic trajectory of their greater regions, but also reflective of housing preferences. Still, spatial regression analyses of the most recent full census data, and a period of an ostensible “back to the city movement,” do not show, on a census tract level, socioeconomic changes predicted by gentrification theory. Specifically, the data do not show evidence of a replacement of low income, nonwhite residents with higher income, white ones, as theorized in gentrification literature (Ley, 2003; Marcuse, 1985). Additionally, in times of economic hardship and shrinking urban populations, art museum neighborhoods are significantly more likely to retain and grow their populations than other urban neighborhoods. Thus, there is reason to believe that art museums are beneficial to their neighborhoods, stabilizing them from socioeconomic change in times of economic hardship, so long as planners can protect the supply of housing in these neighborhoods.

A more in-depth and focused analysis of physical and socioeconomic change in the case of the Portland Art Museum and its South Park Blocks neighborhood evidenced that the museum had little effect on the physical development of the neighborhood until the Museum's *Project for the Millennium* and the City of Portland's URA initiative, which both started in the late 1980s and went on into the 1990s. Residential preferences drove physical development in the most recent decades, and diverted development away from the neighborhood between 1930 and 1990. When given more development incentives through the URA initiative, the South Park Blocks neighborhood benefited from its proximity to the Portland Art Museum by attracting the development of at least three luxury condo buildings; the Eliot Tower, Museum Place, and the Ladd Building. Physical development also occurred once the Museum raised enough money to act on its ambitions to grow its exhibition and activity space, a propensity that might also be shared by other non-profit institutions. Luxury residential and commercial developments in the past fifteen to twenty years in the South Park Blocks leveraged their proximity to the Portland Art Museum by offering special museum membership deals to residents, as well as exclusive weekly social events at the museum. These buildings are also from where the Museum has recruited many of its volunteer docents: well educated, retired women who are interested in teaching and art.

The case of the Portland Art Museum and change in the South Park Blocks neighborhood also supported another conclusion from the socioeconomic analysis of art museum neighborhoods: that the South Park Blocks did not experience socioeconomic change associated with gentrification. The South Park Blocks have been one of the

poorest areas of Multnomah County even since the the early twentieth century, when new, leafy neighborhoods on the outskirts of Portland attracted wealthier families that used to call the neighborhood home, leaving behind poorer populations that could not afford to move, as well as immigrants who were barred from the new neighborhoods by race-restrictive covenants (Abbott, 2011). Only until after Portland incentivized new development in the South Park Blocks and the Portland Art Museum turned into a regional attraction in the 1990s and 2000s was there evidence of wealthier residents moving in and rises in median home values. Median rents, stabilized by fixed-income and affordable housing in the neighborhood, stayed among the lowest in the region.

Though the neighborhood did not show census tract level, socioeconomic evidence of gentrification, there was evidence of social exclusion associated with the Museum, though this was less an intentional act of class division and more a result of the underlying financial sustainability instincts characteristic of the Portland Art Museum, and arguably, all non-profits dependent on earned income. However, the story of how a poorer, elderly neighborhood resident became such a valued constituent of the museum provides evidence that prevents a single, elitist interpretation of the institution.

In terms of their provision of programming and space, art museums, if we see them as analogous to the Portland Art Museum, can be social anchors for their neighborhoods and both supportive of and beneficial to diverse neighborhood constituents. But multiple factors, both external and internal to the museum, decide whether the museum benefits diverse groups or just wealthier, more educated ones. As a non-profit organization

dependent on earned income, art museums like the Portland Art Museum must program in such a way as to meet both its financial obligations/expenditures and its self-described public mission. An art museum director's leadership of his or her institution, and the unique composition of employees' philosophies, ultimately determine how these goals of the institution are achieved. These decisions made often by a collection of museum management, however, are made in the context of the economy because of art museum's reliance primarily on earned income (ticket sales, philanthropic gifts). These decisions sometimes yield direct benefits to the people of surrounding neighborhoods, but not always.

How an art museum meets its financial obligations, as has been explored in the analysis of institutional change in the Portland Art Museum between 1994 and 2014, depends in large part on its connections to city social networks and regional economic trajectory. When Portland's regional economy was in good shape and there were plenty of individuals and corporations able to support the museum, the Portland Art Museum was able to accomplish its goals and realize its ambitions by offering amenities and events appealing to these people. At the same time, the museum was able to attract new visitors from the general public by programming "blockbuster" exhibitions with wide appeal: Egyptian mummies, Royal treasure troves, and the *Art of the Automobile*. While these strategies provided the Museum with fivefold increases in its endowment and significant improvements to its physical facilities, they left many in the Portland community feeling that the Museum was not a public resource, but an impersonal institution for the wealthy. In contrast, during the Great Recession, the Portland Art

Museum (as well as most other museums) lost the ability to rely on individual and corporate patrons, and the general public was much less likely to spend money on entrance to the museum. Consequently, the Museum changed its strategy during the 2008 Recession and looked to cutting costs and building relationships with community groups with the help of a new education department supported almost entirely by government grants.

Though the art museum has had (and continues to have) a strong sense of mission to educate the public through the exhibition of great art,<sup>73</sup> its methods for achieving that mission, while beneficial to the institution and its constituents, might not be directly beneficial to the neighborhood and *its* constituents.<sup>74</sup> For example, for it to collect and exhibit fine art with which to educate the people of Portland, the Museum needs space to store and care for its objects and to exhibit them. If it is going to be a regional or nationally recognized museum that hosts traveling exhibitions, it generally needs lots of space. The building that supports these spaces vital to the Museum's mission will be built somewhere, and depending on that location, may drive up home values if it leads to a smaller supply of residential units in the presence of the (currently) strong demand for central city land, attracts other desirable city amenities and institutions (like libraries and other cultural institutions), and/or attracts wealthier people who want to live nearby an art museum.

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<sup>73</sup> "The mission of the Portland Art Museum is to engage diverse communities through art and film of enduring quality, and to collect, preserve, and educate for the enrichment of present and future generations;" from <http://portlandartmuseum.org/about/mission/> .

<sup>74</sup> I purposefully refer to neighborhood constituents and not neighborhood residents, because not everyone who uses the neighborhood lives there, such as employees of churches, shops, etc, or homeless populations.

The Portland Art Museum, and very likely other museums with regional/national ambitions, will want to continue to grow through the purchasing of adjacent parcels, new building construction, and the incorporation of new amenities, if supported by a strong regional economy. Sometimes, these expansions benefit the neighborhood, such as giving the neighborhood a new cafe, a place for neighbors to buy museum-related gifts, space to rent for meetings, improved pedestrian access to parkspace, or space to sit and socialize or look at outdoor sculptures (as is the case with the Portland Art Museum today). These expansions may even attract enough visitors and catalyze enough activity to support other neighborhood businesses nearby, such as restaurants or other shops. Other times, these expansions might not benefit neighborhood constituents or might maintain urban social divisions (wealthy versus non-wealthy; outsiders versus locals; educated versus not educated).

Art museums are more than the art they care for and exhibit; they are places where people work, learn, socialize, relax, eat, and purchase goods and services. They are organizations with strong, if complicated, connections to public service in the roles of custodians of culture, educators/enrichers of the public, and community spaces. They attract visitors from other neighborhoods, parts of the city, region, and even country. They also, stemming from their lasting and fixed presence in their urban locations, can be economic and social anchors, as well as gentrifiers.

Thus, they are important objects of urban research and planning for the reason that they can impact their surroundings both in the amenities they provide and the people and

development they attract. The implicit goal of this dissertation was to find out whether art museums are good for their neighborhoods as economic and social stabilizers, or whether they can be harmful or at the very least exclusive of neighborhood residents who are less wealthy, less educated, and/or nonwhite. Research contained in this dissertation show that art museums are generally beneficial anchors for their nearby neighborhoods, but that the benefits of their space and programming are dependent on physical and financial factors, many over which urban planners have some amount of control.

For instance, an art museum's need of significant space and maintenance resources can be negotiated for city-owned resources in return for more free access to neighborhood constituents, and more local services like after school educational programs for neighborhood children, and more provision of space for community activities. The home price burden increases in museum neighborhoods in shrinking regions can be alleviated by incentivizing new housing development (cities might have a convincing argument for why developers should invest in these neighborhoods, considering the significant population increase associated with these areas), and at the very least, protecting existing housing supply nearby these institutions. Additionally, there can be more neighborhood representation in the decision making processes of the art museum, such as through board membership sponsored by a public investment in the museum's endowment and chosen by democratic means within the neighborhood. There can be representation of more diverse groups inside the museum by increasing the diversity of the Museum's volunteers. This could be done by removing the minimum

volunteer hours and training times inconvenient for working groups, as well as by establishing diversity-sensitive mentoring recruitment and education processes.

The results of this dissertation serve to critique the Bilbao Effect and economic development theories that emerge from anchor institution literature. First, large, immovable institutions like art museums do not benefit their locations the same way in all urban contexts. As this dissertation's multi-case and singular case studies have demonstrated, art museums have different effects on their surroundings given different economic trajectories of their cities. Second, anchor institutions are not homogenous entities, but a collection of institutions with diverse spatial needs/development patterns and philosophies that share the same quality of being fixed in their urban locations (recall discussion in chapter 2). Art museums may share some significant characteristics in common with traditional anchor institutions like universities, hospitals, and stadiums (such as their fixedness in the built environment), but they are different types of institutions with different financial capacities, organizational structures, different employees, and different societal goals.

One outcome of this dissertation is a more nuanced view of art museums and their respective differences to other anchor institutions. Being fixed to a particular location does not make the socioeconomic benefits of a stadium the same as an art museum. An aspect of art museums that begs further research, as presented in the case of the Portland Art Museum, is the tendency for art museums to grow, acquire land, and develop real estate.



Further, another contribution of this dissertation research is a more critical take on the assumed socioeconomic benefits of non-profit anchor institutions, as well as their potential connection to gentrification. Not only are contextual factors external to an institution (such as regional economic growth) influential to how an institution builds relationships (or does not build them) with communities, but so are the internal dynamics of the institution vis a vis its institutional mission. This highlights the need for more internal, organizational research by planners to build more robust institution-led neighborhood development theories. Potential dependent factors ripe for research (as exculpated by the research here) include funding sources and management hierarchies.

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# APPENDIX A

## Art museum selection and data

**TABLE A-1: SELECTED ART MUSEUMS FROM THE 50 LARGEST US CITIES BY 2010 CENSUS PLACE POPULATION**

city	state	city population	museum	date	county
New York City	NY	8,175,133	Brooklyn Museum of Art	1897	Kings County
			Guggenheim Museum	1959	New York County
			Museum of Art and Design	2008	New York County
			Museum of Modern Art	1939	New York County
			The Metropolitan Museum of Art	1880	New York County
			The Whitney	1966	New York County
Los Angeles	CA	3,792,621	LA County Museum of Art	1965	Los Angeles County
			MOCA LA	1986	Los Angeles County
Chicago	IL	2,695,598	Museum of Contemporary Art	1996	Cook County
			The Art Institute of Chicago	1893	Cook County
Houston	TX	2,099,451	Museum of Fine Art Houston	1924	Harris County
Philadelphia	PA	1,526,006	Academy of Fine Arts	1876	Philadelphia County
			Philadelphia Museum of Art	1876	Philadelphia County

city	state	city population	museum	date	county
Phoenix	AZ	1,445,632	Phoenix Art Museum	1959	Maricopa County
San Antonio	TX	1,327,407	San Antonio Museum of Art	1981	Bexar County
San Diego	CA	1,307,402	MOCA San Diego	1993	San Diego County
			San Diego Museum of Art	1926	San Diego County
Dallas	TX	1,197,816	Dallas Museum of Art	1984	Dallas County
San Jose	CA	945,942	San Jose Museum of Art	1969	Santa Clara County
Jacksonville	FL	821,784	Cummer Museum of Art	1902	Duval County
Indianapolis	IN	820,445	Indianapolis Museum of Art	1970	Marion County
San Francisco	CA	805,235	SF MOMA	1995	San Francisco County
Austin	TX	790,390	The Contemporary Austin Jones	1998	Travis County
Columbus	OH	787,033	Columbus Museum of Art	1931	Franklin County
Fort Worth	TX	741,206	Kimbell Art Museum	1972	Tarrant County
Charlotte	NC	731,424	Mint Museum of Art	1936	Mecklenburg County
Detroit	MI	713,777	Detroit Institute of Arts	1927	Wayne County
El Paso	TX	649,121	El Paso Museum of Art	1998	El Paso County
Memphis	TN	646,889	Memphis Brooks Museum of Art	1916	Shelby County
Baltimore	MD	620,961	Baltimore Museum of Art	1914	Baltimore city
Boston	MA	617,594	Museum of Fine Arts Boston	1909	Suffolk County
Seattle	WA	608,660	Seattle Art Museum	1991	King County
Washington	DC	601,723	The Phillips Collection	1897	District of Columbia
Nashville	TN	601,222	Frist Center for Visual Arts	2001	Davidson County
Denver	CO	600,158	Denver Museum of Art	1971	Denver County

city	state	city population	museum	date	county
Louisville	KY	597,337	KY Museum of Art and Craft	2001	Jefferson County
			Speed Art Museum	1927	Jefferson County
Milwaukee	WI	594,833	Milwaukee Art Museum	1957	Milwaukee County
Portland	OR	583,776	Portland Art Museum	1932	Multnomah County
Las Vegas	NV	583,756	Contemporary Arts Center LV	1989	Clark County
Oklahoma City	OK	579,999	Oklahoma City Museum of Art	2002	Oklahoma County
Albuquerque	NM	545,852	ABQ Museum of Art and History	1967	Bernalillo County
Fresno	CA	494,665	Fresno Art Museum	1960	Fresno County
Sacramento	CA	466,488	Crocker Art Museum	1885	Sacramento County
Long Beach	CA	462,257	Long Beach Museum of Art	1957	Los Angeles County
Kansas City	MO	459,787	Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art	1933	Jackson County
Atlanta	GA	420,003	High Museum of Art	1983	Fulton County
Omaha	NE	408,958	Joslyn Art Museum	1931	Douglas County
Raleigh	NC	403,892	CAM Raleigh	1997	Wake County
Miami	FL	399,457	Perez Art Museum	1984	Miami-Dade County
Cleveland	OH	396,815	Cleveland Museum of Art	1916	Cuyahoga County
Tulsa	OK	391,906	Philbrook Museum of Art	1938	Tulsa County
Minneapolis	MN	382,578	Minneapolis Institute of Arts	1915	Hennepin County
			Walker Art Center	1927	Hennepin County
Wichita	KS	382,368	Wichita Art Museum	1935	Sedgwick County
Arlington	TX	365,438	Arlington Museum of Art	1989	Tarrant County

city	state	city population	museum	date	county
St Louis	MO	319,294	St. Louis Art Museum	1904	St. Louis city
Pittsburgh	PA	305,704	Carnegie Museum of Art	1895	Allegheny County
Norfolk	VA	242,803	Chrysler Museum of Art	1933	Norfolk city
Salt Lake City	UT	186,440	Utah MOCA	1979	Salt Lake County

NB:

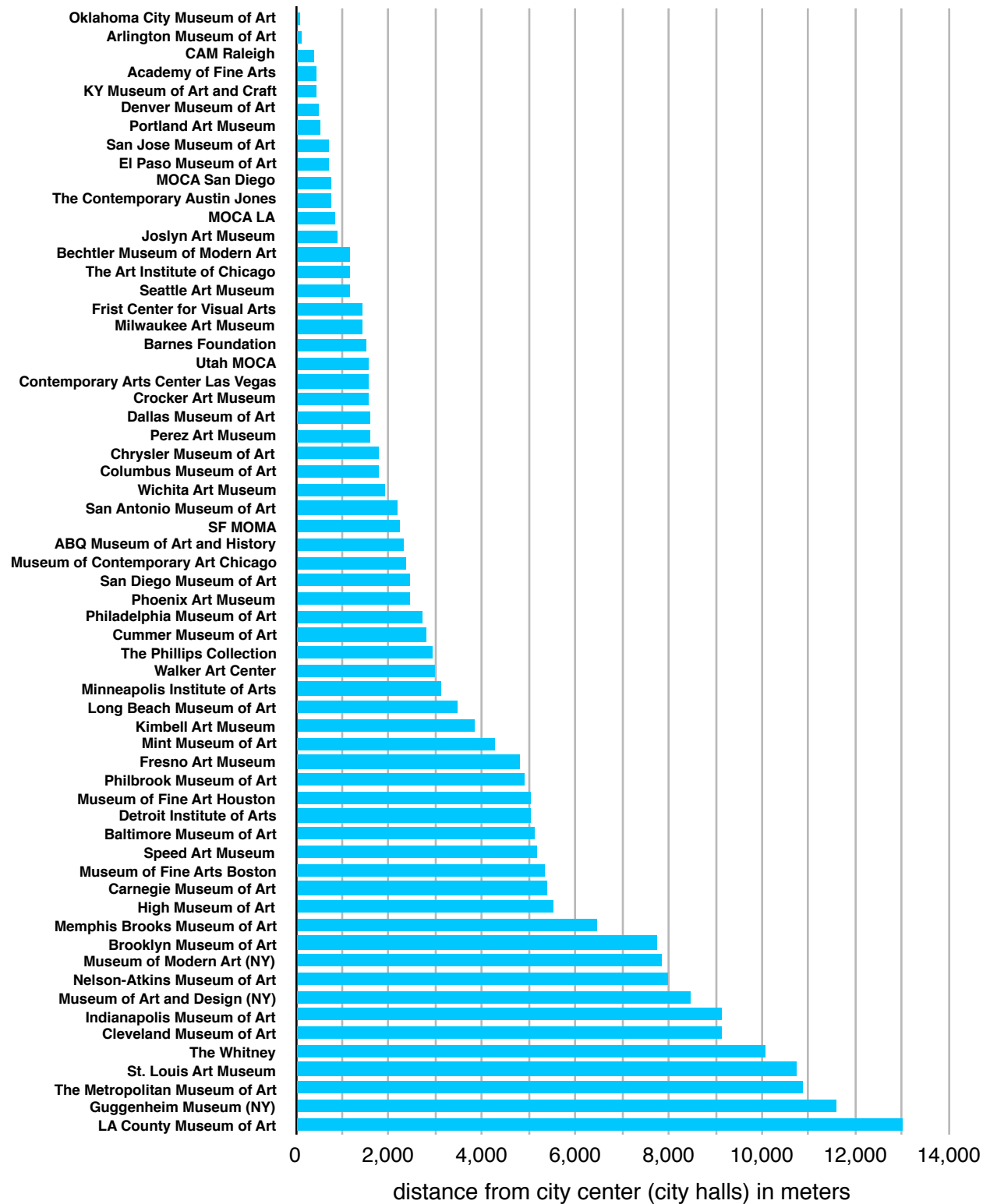
City Population taken from 2010 Census Place

Date refers to earliest opening date of current art museum building

Selection Criteria: for each city, art museums were selected that are non-profit organizations, fiscally independent from a college or university, in physical locations that have been open to the general public no more recent than 2009.

No art museums were sampled for the cities of Tucson, AZ; Mesa, AZ; Colorado Springs, CO; or Oakland, CA because art museums located in these locations did not meet the selection criteria.

**FIGURE A-1: SELECTED ART MUSEUMS AND THEIR DISTANCES FROM CITY CENTERS**





**TABLE A-2: SELECTED ART MUSEUMS 2013 EXPENSES AND NET ASSETS**

<b>museum name</b>	<b>expenses (in \$1,000s)</b>	<b>net assets (in \$1,000s)</b>
The Metropolitan Museum of Art	343,867	3,003,448
The Art Institute of Chicago	270,251	1,037,036
Museum of Modern Art	220,843	1,086,806
Museum of Fine Arts Boston	140,399	920,880
LA County Museum of Art	105,231	241,816
Museum of Fine Art Houston	84,485	1,299,246
Guggenheim Museum	75,583	114,796
SF MOMA	68,858	589,902
Philadelphia Museum of Art	65,424	693,894
Carnegie Museum of Art	58,058	383,519
Cleveland Museum of Art	55,781	896,352
Minneapolis Institute of Arts	39,669	283,716
Brooklyn Museum of Art	38,933	270,878
Detroit Institute of Arts	35,450	200,552
St. Louis Art Museum	33,225	336,388
Indianapolis Museum of Art	32,311	352,934
Seattle Art Museum	31,810	252,977
Denver Museum of Art	29,531	42,994
Dallas Museum of Art	25,523	177,745
Barnes Foundation	23,284	205,622
High Museum of Art*	22,337	87,416
Walker Art Center	22,226	264,979
Baltimore Museum of Art	18,359	87,775
Academy of Fine Arts	18,175	51,531
Museum of Contemporary Art	17,656	119,397
MOCA LA	16,785	38,693

<b>museum name</b>	<b>expenses (in \$1,000s)</b>	<b>net assets (in \$1,000s)</b>
Portland Art Museum	16,027	113,969
Chrysler Museum of Art	15,921	73,106
Milwaukee Art Museum	15,028	130,590
Museum of Art and Design	13,906	92,343
San Diego Museum of Art	13,106	75,418
Frist Center for Visual Arts	12,566	25,421
Mint Museum of Art	10,608	105,429
Phoenix Art Museum	9,052	4,412
Columbus Museum of Art	8,688	126,821
San Antonio Museum of Art	8,274	69,512
MOCA San Diego	7,852	66,997
Philbrook Museum of Art	7,517	56,231
Joslyn Art Museum	5,696	82,743
Oklahoma City Museum of Art	5,328	38,598
Speed Art Museum	5,121	133,399
Cummer Museum of Art	4,831	50,550
The Contemporary Austin Jones	4,813	23,811
Perez Art Museum	4,682	156,029
Memphis Brooks Museum of Art	4,458	5,886
San Jose Museum of Art	3,902	13,487
ABQ Museum of Art and History	2,731	15,769
Long Beach Museum of Art	1,226	4,081
Utah MOCA	913	651
KY Museum of Art and Craft	845	3,459

**museum name**

**expenses (in \$1,000s)**

**net assets (in \$1,000s)**

NB: Museum financial details publicly available at [charitynavigator.org](https://www.charitynavigator.org) and museum websites. Some museums were not included that did not have publicly available financial data (Arlington Museum of Art, CAM Raleigh, El Paso Museum of Art, Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Contemporary Arts Center Las Vegas, Crocker Art Museum, Wichita Art Museum, The Phillips Collection, Kimbell Art Museum, Fresno Art Museum, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, and The Whitney.

\* The High Museum of Art is financially a part of the Woodruff Arts Center; financial statements give aggregate numbers for five arts institutions — basic estimate for the High Museum of Art was calculated by dividing the aggregated expenses and net assets by the number of arts institutions in the Woodruff Arts Center (5).

# **APPENDIX B**

## **Interview protocols**

Unstructured interviewing methods in both informal and formal settings were used in my case study of the Portland Art Museum and the South Park Block neighborhood to answer the underlying questions of how museum space, programming, and amenities impact the neighborhood and why, and whether such impacts suggested anchoring or gentrification. For each interview, I began with a list of prepared questions (Figure B-1) and allowed each respondent to respond freely. Follow-up questions were asked as needed to provide more context or to follow up on a surprising answer.

Some interviews took the form of casual conversations with people inside and outside the museum, both staff members and neighborhood constituents. Casual conversations sometimes took place in unplanned situations, such as encountering a visitor inside the art museum or encountering someone within a five-minute walk radius of the museum (boundaries for the South Park Blocks neighborhood). I conducted these interviews on a variety of days and times to reach groups that I might not have been able to find otherwise, for example, on Mondays when the museum is closed as well as the fourth Friday of the month in the evenings when the museum has free admission. So not to bias interview subjects' answers to my questions, I did not identify myself as a researcher and did not carry a notepad or recording equipment. Instead, I transcribed

the conversation immediately following the informal interview in private. In total, I conducted 15 informal interviews, including with:

- Local church employee (former resident of the neighborhood)
- Local church employee (not a resident of the neighborhood)
- Local church parishioner (not a resident of the neighborhood)
- Retired and disabled resident who uses social services
- Minority daytime resident who uses social services
- Former Portland public school teacher (not a resident of the neighborhood)
- 2 former Portland State University students (both former residents of the neighborhood)
- 5 current residents of high-end condos
- 1 current resident of market rate condos
- 1 former resident of low income apartment complex

**TABLE B-1: PREPARED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

- |  |
|--|
| <p>For interviews with neighborhood constituents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whereabouts do you live in Portland?</li><li>• How often do you come down here to this neighborhood?</li><li>• Why do you come down here to this neighborhood?</li><li>• How do you like this neighborhood?</li><li>• Do you visit the art museum often?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why do you visit the art museum?</li><li>• What do you like about the art museum?</li><li>• What do you not like about the art museum?</li></ul></li><li>• Why don't you visit the art museum?</li></ul> |
|--|

Formal conversations with people, in contrast, were planned in advance to gather data on specially targeted demographics. For example, I targeted community groups such as

those who live in affordable housing, those who are served by the neighborhood charitable organizations, and those who own luxury condos nearby. I also targeted art museum staff members, including public programmers, education specialists, membership service staff, the director, and docents. Some formal interview subjects recommended other potential subjects. Through this combination of targeted interviewing and snow-ball sampling method, I conducted 15 formal interviews. These included:

- Real estate manager for a high-end condo complex
- Manager of an affordable apartment complex
- 3 art museum docents
- Brian Ferriso, Director of the Portland Art Museum
- Stephanie Parrish, Associate Director of Public Programs for the Portland Art Museum
- Mike Murawski, Director of Education for the Portland Art Museum
- Amy Gray, Docent programs associate for the Portland Art Museum
- Tina Olsen, former Director of Education for the Portland Art Museum, current Director of the Williams College Museum of Art
- Kristin Bayans, Interpretive media specialist for the Portland Art Museum
- 4 sources who wish to remain anonymous

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Portland Art Museum Staff**

The Portland Art Museum today has around 150 full-time employees and several hundred volunteers.<sup>75</sup> Employees work in several distinct departments of the museum, organized by function, in a fashion much like a small corporation. Generally speaking, the museum employees tend to have advanced academic degrees in art, art history, or a related field. The majority hold “entry level” positions, while a dozen or so hold well-paid positions as department directors or endowed curators. There are very few ‘mid-level’ positions.

Curatorial, perhaps the most visible department in the museum, employs around half a dozen curators in endowed positions, covering Modern and Contemporary art, Asian art, European art, art of the Pacific Northwest, and Photography. Virtually all of the curators hold advanced degrees in art history (either MA’s or PhD’s), and have some of the highest base salaries in the museum (based on conversations with museum employee informants). The curators also are expected to have a large amount of curatorial experience. They are often the ones responsible for the planning and implementation of the museum’s exhibitions, in addition to cataloguing and caring for the museum’s

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<sup>75</sup> <http://portlandartmuseum.org/about/museum-facts/>

current object collections. In close collaboration with the curatorial department, the collections and exhibitions department employs specialists in conservation, who usually also hold advanced academic degrees in conservation science. They assist the curators in managing the care of the objects and helping obtain objects for exhibitions.

The education and public programs department employs mostly young and female professionals, most with advanced degrees (MA's) in either education or art history. Some of the employees in the education and public programs department are paid directly by the museum, but a few are paid by fellowships that support one or two year terms (such as Kress Fellows). While not the lowest base pay scale of the museum departments, the education department employees mostly "entry-level" positions. They are responsible for handling school tours, organizing docent training, designing a rotating *Object Stories* exhibition, and organizing engagement activities for a variety of groups outside of the museum. The museum also employs a small staff in the Marketing department. People who work in this department have degrees and experience in communication/marketing, as well as graphic design. They are responsible for interacting with the press and creating print and digital content to advertise the museum's exhibitions and programs.

The Museum also has departments that are vital to its day-to-day operations, such as a department that oversees the finances of the institution, the maintenance and security of its building, and the relationships it has with its visitors and members. While the financial department's duties requires and thus employs people with education and



training in accounting and finance, the maintenance/security and visitor/member services seemingly would not have formal education requirements, and would look more to experience. Thus, there is (and conversations with fellow staff members suggest) a belief that maintenance/security and visitor/member service employees have less formal education and lower salaries of other departments in the Museum.

Participatory observation suggests, at least regarding the subject of level of formal education, otherwise. During my internship with the Portland Art Museum during the Spring/Summer of 2014, I met several security officers who had formal education in art, art history, and education. Some identify first as artists who, because of the difficulties of leading a full-time career as one, work part-time shifts at the museum as security guards or service employees to pay their bills.

In charge of all of these departments and people is the director (currently Ferriso), who ultimately shapes the philosophy and constituency of the Museum, through the hiring of employees, interpreting the museum's mission, and setting the museum's priorities. The director also reports to the Museum's board of trustees. The board of trustees, though not technically employed by the Museum and do not earn a salary from the institution, are nonetheless extremely valuable to its operations. As has been described in previous chapters of this dissertation, the board of trustees are usually wealthy and/or well connected with businesses and political actors who might benefit the Museum. Portland Art Museum's board numbers 50, and includes people who are presidents, partners, chief executive officers, chief operating officers of some of Portland's biggest

corporations and institutions.<sup>76</sup> These include financial institutions and real estate investment firms (such as Ferguson Wellman Capital Management; Grove Properties; David Wright Tremaine, LLP; Drumlin Holdings, LLC Signature Northwest, LLC; Aequitas Capital; Wells Fargo Private Bank; Harsch Investment Corporation; Columbia Investments, LTD; Winkler Development Corporation, among others). Board members also represent prominent media outlets (including the Oregonian newspaper and KGW Media Group Portland), and nationally recognized brands such as Nike and the Portland Trailblazers National Basketball Association (NBA) team. There is even a board member who is co-president of Portland's Downtown Development Group, LLC, a corporation responsible for much of the planning of Portland's city center.

The personnel structure of the Portland Art Museum follows both a production and an financial sustainability logic. As an institution that promotes learning in its mission, the Portland Art Museum employs many highly educated people who are experts or are in the process of becoming experts in their fields (such as in the Curatorial, Education and Public Programming, Conservation, and Marketing departments). However, because of the financial restraints on non-profits like art museums, most of its "talent" is young and fills entry-level positions that do not pay much, despite many holding advanced degrees in their fields. The few exceptions who are paid relatively well are the curators, on whose expertise the Museum's reputation depends, and the department directors whom are hired away from private corporations and much larger institutions (like Oregon Science University Hospital) to work for the Museum. These leadership positions

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<sup>76</sup> <http://portlandartmuseum.org/about/board-of-trustees/>

command higher salaries so that they attract highly educated *and* experienced talent from other institutions.

## **APPENDIX D**

# **Participant Observation of the Portland Art Museum**

Another type of methodology that this research uses is an immersive, first-hand experience working as an intern at the Portland Art Museum. This type of method is valuable to my inquiry because it uncovers motivations and influences of human behavior that cannot be ascertained by detached/objective empiricism.<sup>77</sup> These motivations include the root causes or influences that lead people in PAM to program certain museum activities and not others, or that lead community members to visit the museum or the museum's neighborhood, for example. Such motivations might not be mentioned during interview methods because an interview subject might not be consciously aware of them or may be purposely keeping them private.<sup>78</sup> Further, these motivations or influences are likely not observable without more in-depth knowledge of the social, political, and physical context in which they take place.

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<sup>77</sup> "Objective empiricism" refers to a method of research that only considers physical evidence that exists outside of a person's subjective experience and that can be observed by others. For example, this evidence would include visible objects in nature and observation of human behavior, but *not* what people think or feel.

<sup>78</sup> Reasons that interview subjects might keep some information private are because the nature of the interview questions causes the interviewee to feel uncomfortable, the information might physically or reputationally harm the interviewee, or the information might implicate illegal activity.

In my inquiry, I, the researcher, am both a participant and observer in the museum context. Through this inquiry, I observed the behavior and listened to the conversations of fellow museum staff members and connected those behaviors and conversations with what I feel as a participant. Thus, I was able to experience some of what a museum staff member experiences *and* observe them in a non-laboratory setting. In this process, I can connect the observable data about behaviors in and around the museum (detached observations) with hypothetical social, economic, and physical causes 'observed' during my internship. However, as the instrument of observation, I must acknowledge that my own biases might affect my conclusions.

Working as an employee of PAM, maintaining objectivity as a researcher was a difficult task. Working side by side with education department staff and joining them in social activities did forge new friendships. These friendships might lead me to view their actions/behaviors less critically than other department's actions/behaviors. Further, my inclusion in the PAM organization's culture (invitation to all staff meetings, parties, excursions) might have led me to view the PAM institution, as a whole, less critically. It should be noted that while I may be influenced socially by PAM, I have not received any financial remuneration for any time I spent there.<sup>79</sup>

The bulk of my education department internship experience for this research took place between April 2014 and through June 2014. During my internship, I had access to a

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<sup>79</sup> My internship at PAM was funded by the University of Michigan Museum Studies Program Practicum Grant, valued at around \$6,000. The only financial benefit I received from PAM was free admission to its galleries and occasional food/drink provided at internal meetings and other events.

multitude of museum staff, I got to participate in several internal meetings, I listened to many casual conversations, and I got an overall feel for what it was like to work at Portland Art Museum. Before embarking on my internship, I notified the people with whom I worked and the museum's human resources department of my intention to use my internship experience in my dissertation research. The following will provide more detail on how I collected data during my internship.

The sources of evidence in my participant observation are primarily verbal, with some observation of behavior. I decided against carrying around a digital recorder, for fear that it might make my fellow PAM staff members uncomfortable, or at the very least, might have affected what was said. Rather, once listening to a conversation or participating in a meeting, I immediately wrote down notes in shorthand to describe the conversations and/or behaviors that took place. Most of my observations took place during meetings held internally among museum staff, as well as held between museum staff and outside groups. These included: internship project meetings, education department meetings, and all staff meetings.

Internship project meetings involved the work I was responsible for during my employment at PAM; an in-gallery Instagram project that crowd-sourced images of Portland's Parks. Our project, entitled #captureParklandia (or #CP for short), was born out of a collaboration between PAM, the Portland Parks Foundation, and Portland Parks and Recreation. Project meetings usually entailed one or two members from each partner organization, and generally took place at a cafe nearby to the museum.

Education department meetings were a weekly routine that brought all staff members of the department together after lunch. At these meetings, department staff briefed everyone in the department about the progress of their projects. Additionally, these meetings were fertile ground for exploring tensions that the education department had with other departments. Education staff members tended to be quite frank when they had problems with other museum departments or with their projects in general. These meetings almost always took place at the department's conference table.

'All staff meetings' were a monthly time for all museum departments (including security and maintenance staff) to meet and discuss the overall issues of the museum.

Departments took turns to lead these meetings, and in the process, focused more on department-specific issues, in addition to museum-wide ones. These meetings were held in a large, all-purpose museum conference room in the morning.