

How are the Public Housing Projects represented on Social Media?
Socioeconomic Status and Stereotypes in YouTube videos of New York
Neighborhoods

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INTRODUCTION

Perception is the process of receiving, interpreting, and organizing sensory information. Our perceptions are easily influenced based on how we choose to view certain things, factors that may contribute include: past experiences, education, values, culture, and present circumstances. These factors may shape how we even perceive our own neighborhood, especially when living in a low-income community since it tends to have socioeconomic disadvantages such as poverty, segregation, and inequality.

While there is extensive research on how people perceive neighborhoods, there is less on how people represent each other on social media. This project focuses on how socioeconomic status and neighborhoods are shown on YouTube videos, examining the use of positive representations or negative stereotypes. There have been many studies that provide information on how neighborhood inequality negatively affects people and communities, but research rarely asks how people perceive neighborhood inequality. The proposed methods consist of using content analysis and random sampling of videos on social media to help analyze my research question through the data presented. By using these methods, it will provide a deeper understanding of the lifestyles, behaviors, decisions, and actions of residents from low-income neighborhoods, and how they differ and contribute to an individual's perception.

My research question matters because an individual's position in the social class determines what their living conditions are like, which impacts the way they perceive themselves and where they live. An example for this would be people who live within the public housing project's community, they are considered to be a part of the middle/lower class based on the perception of their living conditions being poor. There have been many situations where individuals will receive or give themselves, judgment based on their living conditions when

comparing it to another's because they may not receive the same privileges as they do due to where they live.

In this paper, I will argue that representations of the projects on YouTube are generally based on an outsider of the community's opinion. Their opinions either consist of having a negative or positive outlook of the community, which is persuaded by the way the media presents it due to their socioeconomic status and stereotypes. My findings implicate that an individual's perception of the public housing project has to do with whether they are insiders or outsiders of the community. For people who want to learn about the projects or make videos about them, I suggest looking into videos that reveal both the positive and negative outlooks of the community rather than sticking to only one perspective. By revealing both sides, it helps the viewers with being well informed and will help them with deciding where their standing within the community will be.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociologists have studied many aspects of low-income neighborhoods and how they are perceived and represented through different media. In this section, I will summarize three main subfields within the literature, the disadvantage of socioeconomic status, construction of racial segregation, and the impact of perception. Each of these helps us understand what factors contribute or are used to persuade the way individuals perceive neighborhoods like public housing projects. What is missing, however, is the way residents of these communities perceive their neighborhood. My project fills this gap in a way that by using these YouTube videos, it reveals how certain residents of the community are chosen to represent their community based on the intentions of the video being conducted, whether it is to present the community negatively or positively.

DISADVANTAGE OF SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS:

Neighborhoods and Socioeconomic status inequality

The purpose of this sub-section is to reveal how an individual's social position contributes to certain resources they are entitled to and how they are treated or perceived because of it. This has to do with my project because being that public housing projects have residents of low-income, the lack of resources contributes to the quality of their living conditions. With social disorganization theory, it supports and examines how neighborhood ecological characteristics are due to where these communities are located.

Social disorganization has an impact on the community, it emphasizes "the need to consider the economic and political contexts in which these communities embedded." (Bursik Jr. and Grasmick, 1993) Through social disorganization theory, the structural characteristics of a community are covered, these characteristics being urbanization and family disruption. These characteristics are important because the community family structure has a direct and indirect effect on income inequality. (Shihadeh and Steffensmeier, 1994) This was discovered by examining the relationships between socioeconomic issues, such as income inequality and family disruption by viewing communities as unties of both stratification and social control. (Shihadeh and Steffensmeier, 1994) These findings emphasizes the inability of "a community structure to realize common values of its residents and to keep the effective social control." (da Silva, 2014) These help understand how separating neighborhoods from one another, such as public housing project communities from wealthier communities based on socioeconomic status, is made to ensure that communities are receiving certain resources that they can afford to determine the quality of their living conditions. By doing this, I believe it causes individuals from wealthier

communities to have a negative perception of residents from the projects as being poor and it will cause residents from the projects to view themselves as being less than in comparison to them.

The importance of socioeconomic status is that an individual's economic and social position is based on their income, education, and occupation. B.F.A da Silva found that, by using the unit of analysis, the results that supported the social disorganization theory helps us to understand the logic of each perception type and how it occurs, which seemed to be consistent with Shaw and McKay's theoretical formulation of social disorganization in communities. (da Silva, 2014) Also, when using asset indices and the individual's response on their own perception of relative wealth to "measure relative economic position", there was a negative impact of relative position on an individual's well-being. (Shifa and Leibbrandt, 2018) Not only does an individual's socioeconomic status effect where they are within the social class, but it affects certain advantages or disadvantages they may receive. This contributes to seeing how communities are separated based on residents' incomes, it gives individuals the idea that residing in communities like the public housing projects is something they should want to avoid.

An individual that is victimized, who happens to be from a low-income community like the projects, will not receive the same health care benefits as someone who is victimized and is from a high-income community. (Cerda, Tracy, Ahern & Galea, 2014) In the article, "Addressing population health and health inequalities: the role of fundamental causes", it is shown that universal experiments reduced rates of victimization more than targeted experiments but neither experiment reduced inequalities, so to reduce inequalities, it was necessary to eliminate racial/ethnic residential segregation. (Cerda, Tracy, Ahern & Galea, 2014) This supports the idea of income inequality within the social class, and how socioeconomic status affects where certain people can live and what different types of benefits are given to them. Socioeconomic status affects

income inequality on certain advantages and disadvantages low-income communities receive, which may be the roots of the differences in perception of low-income neighborhoods. Other than socioeconomic status inequality, there is also racial inequality involved in low-income communities.

CONSTRUCTION OF RACIAL SEGREGATION:

Neighborhoods and Racial inequality

This sub-section exposes how stereotypes are associated with racial segregation in these communities. Its purpose in my project is because since other than an individual's social position, some individuals view minority groups for the stereotypes they have been associated with. With these stereotypes, it causes racial inequality within these communities, which is another factor that contributes to an individual's perception of public housing projects because of their residents who happen to be minorities.

Racial inequality theorists construct racial differences based on a collective black psychological reaction to racial deprivation. Racial segregation contributes to diversity, but when others are not judging each other by their race, they tend to judge people on their lifestyles; meaning their behavior, decisions, and actions. It was found that racial inequality theorists have accounted for these disparities in terms of differences in the aggregate characteristics of black and white communities. (Covington, 1999) This contributes to the belief certain individuals have about high-income neighborhoods being safer and better than low-income neighborhoods, which should have nothing to do with race. The public housing project's community, as mentioned before, would be an example of an individual's perceiving it not to be safe due to some indications of either there

being garbage all over the floor, police officers wandering around, or residents mainly being minorities.

The racial separation between black and white homogeneous promotes a basic confusion between race and class. (Anderson, 2015) This meaning that some people would believe that people of color's skin would assume to be a part of the lower-class, so they must live in the "ghetto", and white's skin would be known to be a part of the higher-class, so they receive more privileges than those from other social classes. Another factor in the racial/ethnic disparities is based on the residential exposure to violent crime, which is largely explained by a residential process that restricts minority group members to poor minority neighborhoods where violence is more prevalent. (Thomas, 1999) It was discovered that, with the pattern of race-place stratification, reinforcing the relationship between race and violent crime will help to ensure that blacks will reside in urban contexts very different from their white counterparts. This contributes to the stereotype about minorities being associated with violence, so they must be separated from their white counterparts so they will not bring violence into their communities.

In the article, "Living with crime: The implications of racial/ethnic differences in suburban location", the racial differences in exposure to property in the New York metropolitan region were investigated. There were two stages of variables being tested, individual-level variables, which included household income and homeownership, and contextual variables, which included reflecting community racial composition, the extent of poverty, and population size. (Alba, Logan, & Bellair, 1994) The three variables that they found that contributed to their study had to do with the "percent black, percent poor, and population size – constitute a powerful explanation for individual and group variations", which were in exposure to properties. The disadvantages are an index of the extent of joblessness, professional or managerial occupations, high school graduates,

female-headed families, secondary sector workers, and poverty. (Krivo, Peterson & Kuhl, 2009) The findings showed that racialized social system allows the dominant white population to use its privileged position to minimize the deleterious criminal and other outcomes for whites and thereby reproduce a racial structure in which Blacks, Latinos, and other non-Whites bear the brunt of social problems. (Krivo, Peterson & Kuhl, 2009)

These build on the stereotypical idea that where there are minorities, there is more chance of violence being involved. Although racial segregation determines the racial differences in exposure to inequality within low-income neighborhoods, a factor that has a greater impact and largely contributes to the way individuals' communities are viewed, regardless of resident's income and race, is by their perception of it.

IMPACT OF PERCEPTION:

People perceive inequality

This sub-section explains how important perception is when trying to determine their interpretation of the information or environment presented to them. The reason this has to do with my project is that the way public housing projects are being presented through social media has a way to either persuade or change the way individuals views the community. In this case, a common perception in this project is of inequality involving residents' socioeconomic status and stereotypes in public housing project communities.

There is a growing interest in the ways people perceive inequality. Perception has negative and positive effects that may be influenced by the way people were raised or taught, to perceive a specific thing because of the way the world, or others, views it. An individual's status, class, race, and gender structures contribute to interactional vandalism, these are perceived to be layers of

trouble that each intensify the effect of the other. (Duneier & Harvey, 1999) People are repeatedly exposed to the unfamiliar and thus have the opportunity to stretch themselves mentally, emotionally, and socially. (Anderson, 2004) These explain how the perception of individuals are still constantly developing or being changing through the interactions being created and shared with certain individuals through a various number of platforms like social media. Other than the negative perceptions that were mentioned before in regards to an individual's socioeconomic status and race in communities like the public housing projects, a positive perception is about the diversity within it allows individuals to unite, get to know strangers, and gain social experience with others they define as different from themselves.

The way low-income neighborhoods are perceived affects the living conditions within the community. Community demands (lack of safety) are independently associated with work-family interaction and also amplify the effect of job demands (work intensity) on work-family conflict for residents of lower SES areas. (Skinner & Ichii, 2015) This was found by Skinner and Ichii through sampling and measuring work demands, work resources, community demands, community resources, work-family interactions, and socioeconomic status of geographic area. This covers the perception of how an individual's job and where they live impacts their work-family interactions, so since residents from the projects are perceived to not have the best paying jobs and living conditions then they must have poor interactions with others. Another factor that contributes to the perception individuals have about the public housing projects community is based on its appearance.

Being that it is a low-income community, they are not surrounded by the best resources like their counterparts and there have been attempts to change that, but it ends up doing more harm than good to the residents. This affects residents because, with large-scale demolition, the

socioeconomic is upgraded within deprived neighborhoods since it helps maintain middle- and high-income households. (Zwiers, van Ham & Kleinmans, 2019) These changes cause a class transition from a low-income community to a higher one, so it makes it difficult for residents to secure their housing in gentrifying areas. It was found that the changes made within a community's surroundings, can cause a sense of loss or gain within a community based on its social structure. (Shaw & Hagemans, 2015) In this case, when improvements were being made in shops and meeting places, it caused a limitation or loss for places that use to cater to people who come from low-income communities.

These articles contribute to the idea of inequality of individuals from low-income neighborhoods experience. Unfortunately, in current discussions of low-income neighborhoods, scholars rarely ask how the residents perceive their neighborhood. With my senior project, I am going to study this through using content analysis by watching YouTube videos and analyzing the types of ways the public housing project community is presented and what is used to represent them based on the purpose of the video. My research contributes to the literature by looking into the two different types of perceptions there are being presented in social media when it comes to creating videos on public housing projects. These perceptions are either positive or negative and are coming from the perspectives of outsiders to the community using its residents.

METHODOLOGY

The data I used to answer my research question was through content analysis. I used videos from YouTube that I believed would provide more information on my research question. This study focuses on existing data, such as the YouTube videos, that help analyze my research question through random sampling. The reason why I chose to gather and analyze this data is because I

believe these would contribute more information to strengthen my research question and would allow us to be able to view their perceptions much better than having to through conducting interviews and surveys. In order to organize my methodology, I planned to separate the information I gathered into certain categories based on what is taking place in each video. An example would be one section being about the differences in perceptions by individuals there are on low-income neighborhoods, then one section on how much the role of perception influences neighborhoods, and a section on what in those neighborhoods contribute to those perceptions.

With the many resourceful data that I researched for my research question, I was able to observe and learn the way other researchers and individuals perceive certain neighborhoods. By using the keyword 'projects in the boroughs' in YouTube's search box, there were over 50 videos provided with the keyword mentioned in the videos title posted by individuals. From these large amounts of videos provided, I planned to randomly select to watch 50 of these videos. While watching these videos, I looked into a variety of things that helped separate the information I receive into sections. For example, for my first section I saw how long each video was, the amount of times it has been viewed, who conducted the video, and what the main focus was in these videos and its reason for it. This is because these are useful to know, so while conducting my research, I have background information on the types of individuals who were conducting these videos and where they are from because that may have an influence on what is going on within the videos. An example of that would be an individual, who is a tourist, exploring the projects in one of the boroughs and perceiving them differently than someone from that borough since projects may not be common where they come from.

These will show and explain what they use and why they use what they use in order to support their own perceptions on the certain neighborhoods. In the other section, I would be

reading a few amounts of the comments under these videos, what is shown, and how it is being perceived. This is because these demonstrate the differences of opinions/perceptions individuals have on this low-income neighborhood. Also, these have an influence on the way individuals may perceive their own neighborhoods the way these videos through representations perceive them themselves. Overall, these resourceful data will help contribute to each section and I felt that these data's will provide support and a deeper understanding to my research question.

FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

The five boroughs in the state of New York include The Bronx, Queens, Staten Island, Brooklyn, and Manhattan. According to the New York Times, these boroughs are categorized in order from poorest to wealthiest borough based on their housing projects. This order consists of The Bronx (being the poorest), Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, and Manhattan (being the wealthiest). (Stefanos Chen) Other than the socioeconomic status of their housing projects, the way the media represent these boroughs contribute to how they are perceived, either negatively or positively, to the audience.

Negative Representation Affecting Perception

The point of this section is to focus on the ways YouTubers, from the videos that I have watched, have used residents' socioeconomic statuses and stereotypes against them as a disadvantage in order to portray the housing projects in these boroughs in a negative way. In the YouTube videos, the negative sides of these boroughs are mentioned to help build and support the YouTubers point of view. For example, The Bronx, Brooklyn, and Staten Island are believed to be

dangerous due to the number of times the News reports have shown more of their association with crime and violence rather than the positive aspects of them.

The main themes presented in these videos is the lack of resources and how these housing projects are controlled in these communities to persuade individuals to avoid going to these areas. In the video, “10 Most Notorious Housing Projects in The Bronx (New York)”, photos and videos of the past and present-day Bronx are displayed. The appearance of the ten housing projects discussed are shown as tall story brown buildings, which all seem to look similar to one another. These are followed by other photos and videos taken from News reports of shootings, bodies being carried away by ambulances, police officers making arrests, residents seeming to be in mourning, protests, gangs, and poor living conditions. This video was posted on November 21, 2017 with no names mentioned under the channel that posted it. The channel with over 100 thousand subscribers focuses on gangs and hoods located in the United States. The purpose of this video is to expose the negative side of the Bronx and the housing projects that should be avoided, which mentions socioeconomic status.

In the video, it is stated that “this ‘low income’ village seems to have been left to its own device. Residents lament lack of maintenance or plumbing and streets that are unsafe both night and during the day.” (02:51) This contributes to what I believe is the given perception that since the projects lack certain resources, it is due to the residents being of ‘low income’. Another statement made was that the “Bronx River houses erected to provide temporary houses to the many working-class families who flooded the area after World War 2. The Bronx River houses soon became a hotbed for crime and violence.” (05:17) This also contributes to what I believe is another given perception that the ‘working-class’ families are the cause for the crime and violence that take place within the projects. In my opinion, this video lacks up-to-date research to supports its

claims because it mainly references to the past-day Bronx and how it is perceived on the News based on certain crimes that took place in the past.

In the video, “Rats Running Rampant at Brooklyn Housing Projects”, Monica Morales from Pix11 News goes to Albany Houses in Brooklyn to hear from its residents about the rat situation they have been experiencing and sending videos to her about. It focuses on revealing the rat situation the housing project is experiencing after months of assuming it would be already been taken care of since they have exterminating three times in the past three months. Morales is taken on a tour of the housing projects by three female residents to where piles of trash bags are seen on the walkway residents use to get to their buildings and the infestation of rats running around it. This video was posted on January 10, 2019 and is controlled by the Pix11 News with its very own being the interviewer, Monica Morales. The channel with over 73 thousand subscribers focuses on giving its people the best in tri-state news and is seen in “more than 10 million homes through over-the-air and satellite distribution.” (Pix11 News) The purpose of this video is to expose how poorly maintained this housing project is with their distribution of wastes and how other outside sources are affecting the situation even more.

One of the residents in the video stated, “it’s a health problem and we want housing to change the facts of how they are disposing the garbage.” (01:13) This reveals how the lack of maintenance has contributed to their living conditions with these rats infesting their waste and frightening their children. It was also stated that “construction nearby may be aggravating the problem. It is really a team effort.” (01:54) Based on these statements and videos provided by the residents, I believe it is clear that families who live within this community is at a disadvantage for the simple fact that they are unable to afford better options to get rid of the rats, or have better resources to prevent this from happening in their housing to begin with. A resident took Morales

on what was referred to as a ‘disturbing’ tour of the neighborhood to show where the rat holes were and by doing so, I believe it exposes the little care that is given in trying to make bettering the housing situation a priority even when it was supposedly said to be by then candidate for governor, Cynthia Nixon.

In another video, stereotypes are involved when taking a tour of the Stapleton Projects in Staten Island during the nighttime. In “Stapleton Projects Goons says They run Staten Island & No Folks is Out There”, Melz TV interviews Estacks, what the interviewee refers himself as, and his group of friends while taking a tour of the Stapleton Projects to see what happens in the nighttime. The interview is takes place in a variety of places such as in front of one of the food restaurants across the street from the housing project, inside in the lobby of one of the housing projects and walking around in the walkway in the housing project. As the interview moves from place to place, the community appear to be deserted and quiet, with the exception of Estacks and his group. This video was posted on December 8, 2018 by the Melz Tv with one their own conducting the interview, whose name is not mentioned, and Estacks as his interviewee. The channel with over 46 thousand subscribers focuses on “interviews from up and coming artist.” (Melz Tv) The purpose of this video is to witness what it is like at nighttime in the housing projects and how there are rappers and their groups that claims to be in control of the area.

There was no specific statement, but I believe that the interviewer chose to talk to Estacks and his group because they fit into certain stereotypes. In my opinion, Estacks and his group display the stereotypical perception of what residents who live within these housing projects look and act like to those who live on the outside, which is not a good image or representation. This video may give viewers the idea that the way these young men are portrayed is how all of its residents may be as well. It also appears that most of the stores surrounding the housing project

are closed, things like these that are seen on the tour may give off the perception that it may be dangerous to have these stores and its residents outside during the nighttime. Overall, these three boroughs differ from the others in a way that they are more likely to have these negative representations, which causes and contributes to the negative perceptions, based on past events rather than looking into recent ones to determine and indicate its growth since then.

Positive Representation Affecting Perception

The point of this section is to focus on the other YouTubers that represent residents' socioeconomic status in a positive way to bring attention to the poor living conditions in the housing projects from the lack of resources. In the YouTube videos, the negative sides of these boroughs are used to reveal to viewers that the residents deserve better quality care regardless of their socioeconomic status and they are not what stereotypes claim them to be. For example, there are well-known celebrities, like Sonia Sotomayor, that have lived in housing projects and used their experience to motivate them in order to make their community better.

In "Episode 8 - \$amhill At Forest Houses, The Bronx", Bronx MC \$amhill is interviewed on the history of the Forest Housing projects in the Bronx, where he started up from, and the legacy of Big Pun, a known American rapper and actor who contributed and is loved by the Forest Housing projects where he is also from. It focuses on MC \$amhill, the interviewee, and is taken place in parts of the Forest Houses projects based on the background. The interview happens during the daytime in front of the housing's playground and basketball court, you can see how filled it is with individuals enjoying themselves rather than what it is like during the nighttime. Then it moves up the street while \$amhill takes us to see Big Pun's graffiti mural. This video was posted on June 23, 2013, it does not fully identify the interviewer, but the interviewee mentions the interviewers

name to be Rob. The channel with over 1.66 thousand subscribers focuses on the “moving image division of the Conservative Rap Coalition.” (Unkut Dot Com) The purpose of this video is to shine light on how living in the projects has motivated some residents to make a living for themselves in order to get out of their current living conditions.

\$amhill states that “it’s a real aggressive neighborhood and you know these buildings made people who we are you know also saying because we come from nothing, but we learn to take nothing and make it into something.” (01:31) I believe this contributes to the given stereotypical perception that those who live in the projects have nothing because of their living conditions. Individuals that live in projects may not receive the best resources, but they are still given housing, which keeps them from being homeless, and there may be some residents that feel satisfied with their lives because of it. Another statement made by \$amhill when Rob questions if living in the projects is what makes people work the best at what they are doing, he answers saying “of course it had to because this is one of your only chances to getting out the hood, they took what they did from this area and let that make them who they are.” (01:46) In my opinion, this statement and video shows that there is also good things and stories to come from living in the projects rather than all the bad things you see or hear on the news.

Another similar video is called “Nas’ Brother Jungle Takes VIBE Through Queensbridge Projects.” In this video, Jungle Jones, a recorded artist, is interviewed by Vibe Magazine on behalf of his brother Nasir Jones, a rapper, about the significant parts of their community that they grew up in. The interview takes place on the walkway as they walk through the neighborhood in the housing project, and, in the background, parts of the community are revealed to show the types of minorities who are living within this housing project and the stores surrounding it to help contribute as resources. This video was posted on April 16, 2014 by the Vibe Magazine with one

of their own as the interviewer, whose name is not mentioned, and Jungle Jones as their interviewee. The channel with over 64.8 thousand subscribers focuses on “predominantly young, urban followers of hip-hop culture.” (Vibe Magazine) The purpose of this video is to receive the recorded rappers personal experience and life story with Nasir of living in the housing project and how it motivated him to make it out.

When the interviewer asks Jungle if their first experience of losing a friend when they were younger pushed Nasir to ensure that his music would become successful, Jungle states “that was the push to let him know that like he gotta do everything positive and make it out like you know we’re not gonna stay here and die too. We’re going to make it out of this and if we do come back, it is to save people and inspire them.” (02:17) The interview suggests that the poor living conditions in housing projects has pushed individuals to ensure they end up in better places, these housings should be improved to prevent residents from experiencing loss and other traumatic events. In my opinion, the life story and experience Jungle shares overall about him and Nasir promotes the stereotypical life of a rapper from the boroughs who comes from living in a housing project. Jungle explains that by being able to do this video, it shows himself as a person who the ‘new generation’ in the housing projects can be inspired by.

Holy Moe is another celebrity who grew up in a housing project and decided to give back to his community. In “Holy Moe Talks Growing Up in Park Hill on Staten Island”, Holy Moe, a rapper and local basketball star in Park Hill, is interviewed by Staten Island Advance while being taken on a tour walking through the neighborhood to significant parts of his community, such as the basketball court in Luis Lopez park. This video was posted on November 3, 2016 by the Staten Island Advance with their own, Shane DiMaio, conducting the interview with Holy Moe as the interviewee. The channel with over 24.2 thousand subscribers focuses on “breaking news, trends,

debate, sports, how-to guides and innovative, fun content from Staten Island.” (Staten Island Advance) The purpose of this video is to reveal the good parts of his community and share his life experience growing up there.

In the interview, Moe states “I don’t like to really dwell on the negative cause there’s a whole lot of positive things going on out here. A whole lot of positive people made it up out of here. You know I’m just trying to be one of them.” (02:13) I feel this supports the idea that there are not only bad outcomes that comes from living within the housing projects as other may believe. Moe explains how much his neighborhood contributed to creating the person that he is even though he did not have the best role models or environment surrounding him. In my opinion, Moe represents his community in a way that gives a better image to its residents and goes against the stereotypical perceptions of what a person from housing projects is like. Moe also states “I just think about all the people that didn’t make it you know throughout the violence that going throughout my neighborhood. I consider myself blessed; I consider myself fortunate. I don’t take anything for granted, I know any given day could be my last.” (02:00) This video reveals that there are individuals who are proud to be where they are from regardless of their limited resources and how negative their community may be perceived by those who are not from it. Moe shows that his and other housing project communities are not all as bad as they may be perceived to be, he hosts a basketball tournament to unite the communities in order to get them away from the street violence.

In “Brownsville Brooklyn Hood/Youth Interview”, two young boys, Isaiah and Tre, are interviewed about their opinions on their neighborhood being perceived as the worst in New York. The video starts off by recording a drive around the neighborhood during the nighttime. There seems to be only a few people and cars on the street with only few stores open at this time. At first,

the interview was taken place in front of a closed building with graffiti displayed on the walls then it got dark and too loud due to being by the train tracks. The interview was moved to the front of an open grocery store that is seen with trash on the sidewalk and street. This video was posted on September 29, 2019 and the videos are made by Jeekle Buther. The channel with over 304 thousand subscribers focuses on “inner city urban areas and interviews with local people from said areas.” (CharlieBo313) The purpose of this video is to receive the perception of how those who actually live in this neighborhood may view or feel about it rather than relying on the perceptions of those who live outside of it.

When Buther mentions the ‘rule’ that New Yorkers have about it being hard to fit in when you are not originally from a certain area, Tre states “it’s hard to fit in because you probably don’t know a lot of people here like you got to have history with some of these people.” (05:00) This contributes to the idea that if you are not from a specific area then you cannot have an accurate opinion on it unless you have personal living experience being there. In that case, I believe that only those who are from that area, like how Isaiah and Tre are from Brownsville, know what their neighborhood is like on the inside rather than those who witness from the outside. Another statement made was when asked if they believe it is getting or worse in their neighborhood, Isaiah states “as of the area, it’s getting more strict on us because there are a lot of cops that are just being around so not a lot of things could happen.” (04:16) In my opinion, because their area is perceived to be the worse, this has contributed to the idea that more police officers are needed there more than usual. This video provides insight on the differences of perceptions and opinions between those who are insiders or outsiders of that community.

In “Inside NYCHA Housing: A Firsthand Account”, Glenn Collins gives the MetroFocus, a television and multiplatform news magazine that focuses on the New York region, a tour to get

a firsthand look at the living conditions in the Redfern Housing projects in Queens. During the tour, we are given a walkthrough of the inside and outside of the housing project where certain issues were pointed out by Collins. While outside, Collins points out how the walkway lights are not in sync with the city lights and are seen to be on during the daytime but not in the nighttime when it is really needed. While inside, Collins points out cases of mold and cracks growing within some staircases and resident's apartments, there happens to even be a staircase that is not properly attached to the wall as it should be. Collins shows other issues such as broken intercoms, what appears to be gun shots at one of the front doors with cracked windows, and no disability access.

Greg B. Smith, a reporter at The City, joins CBSN to be interviewed about the findings of the dangers of living in public housings in the video called "New York City's Public Housing 'Emergency'." The interview is being conducted in the studio with a television in the middle displaying photos of the housing project with the tall story brown buildings, trash cans piling up with waste, rusty staircases, lead paint falling apart, and important statements made by Smith in his report. This video was posted July 23, 2019 by CBS News with their own, Reena Ninan, as the interviewer and Greg Smith as their interviewee. The channel with over 2.6 million subscribers focuses on "providing the highest quality journalism under standards it pioneered and continues to set in today's digital age." (CBS News) The purpose of this video is to reveal the unhealthy living conditions that residents from New York housing projects are living in due to the lack of resources provided and not being treated as a priority.

Ninan states "often it is the poor and people who are economically unable to move up that are almost always affected by this." (04:32) I believe this supports the idea that low-income families that reside in these housing projects are not being given safe and sanitary homes that they deserve, like Smith states "these are conditions that nobody should have to deal with." (04:29)

This video reveals how negatively affected families are and what they must go through with situations such as illnesses caused by the building itself, infestation of rats, and poor maintenance. I believe this is due to their lack of resources the government is failing to give to them in order to provide them with better living conditions, whereas outsiders are given the perception that this is just how residents in housing projects live in their community.

The final video that contributes to my research and has to do with our present-day pandemic is called “Why NYC Public Housing is Unprepared for Coronavirus, The New Yorker.” In this video, Michael Kamber investigates on The New Yorker about the lack of information or support residents from public housings are receiving from New York City Authority, NYCHA, about the coronavirus. Kamber is seen walking through the neighborhood handing out flyers with information to help residents protect themselves during this pandemic. As he is putting up flyers in the buildings, Kamber stops to talk to some of the residents about their opinions on their living conditions and none seem to be pleased with the way it is being operated. In other parts, there are photos and videos of these housing projects close up and from far away being displayed while listening to a recording of Gregory Russ, the chair and C.E.O of NYCHA, answering Kamber’s questions about some of the concerns with the living conditions during this pandemic. This video was posted on March 27, 2020 by The New Yorker while taking a tour with Kamber on some of New York’s housing projects and to hear what its residents has to say. The channel with over 458 thousand subscribers focuses on offering “a significant mix of reporting and commentary on politics, foreign affairs, business, technology, popular culture and the arts.” (The New Yorker) The purpose of this video is to reveal the lack of attention housing projects are given, especially in present-day conditions with a pandemic going on.

Smith states “in the midst of a calamity, New York’s poorest residents are on their own.” (06:07) This supports my belief about families living in public housings in New York, are not being protected with the same care as its residents that do not live in these housing projects. Smith also mentions that these residents “have no internet service and. Little access to reliable information, so people repeat rumors or snippets of information.” (05:17) Due to the lack of resources, residents must depend on what they do have and at times it may not be beneficial because they are being deprived of useful information by relying on rumors or snippets of information that can possibly be inaccurate. Smith discusses how NYCHA management rather than giving them information in order to protect themselves. In my opinion, this shows how housing projects are viewed as not a priority even in the present-day, which poorly impacts its residents.

Video Name	Author	Date Published	Duration	Number of Views	Neighborhood Referenced	Representations
10 Most Notorious Housing Projects in The Bronx (New York)	UnitedVurseTV	November 21, 2017	10:51	502,533	The Bronx	Generally Negative
Rats Running Rampant at Brooklyn Housing Project	PIX11 News	January 10, 2019	02:07	5,975	Brooklyn	Generally Negative
Stapleton Projects Goons says They run Staten Island & No Folks is Out There	Melz Tv	December 8, 2018	11:44	47,562	Staten Island	Generally Negative
Episode 8 - \$amhill At Forest Houses, The Bronx	Unkut Dot Com	June 23, 2013	04:49	4,441	The Bronx	Generally Positive
Nas’ Brother Jungle Takes VIBE Through	VIBE Magazine	April 16, 2014	04:46	391,337	Queens	Generally Positive

Queensbridge Projects						
Holy Moe talks Growing Up in Park Hill on Staten Island	Staten Island Advance	November 3, 2016	02:34	5,561	Staten Island	Generally Positive
Brownsville Brooklyn Hood / Youth Interview	CharlieBo313	September 29, 2019	07:08	410,151	Brooklyn	Generally Positive
Inside NYCHA Housing: A Firsthand Account	MetroFocus	February 9, 2018	09:04	37,825	Queens	Generally Negative, used in a positive way
New York City's Public Housing "Emergency"	CBS News	July 23, 2019	05:30	10,329	Manhattan	Generally Negative, used in a positive way
Why NYC Public Housing is Unprepared for Coronavirus, The New Yorker	The New Yorker	March 27, 2020	06:25	960,519	Manhattan	Generally Negative, used in a positive way

CONCLUSION

After viewing a variety of YouTube videos, it is shown that the media has a bigger influence on how public housing projects are perceived based on what is revealed. Many of these videos have shown how an individual's socioeconomic status and stereotypes are used to create a certain image of residents who live within housing projects. Most of these videos were mainly opinion or story based, there were interviews and tours conducted to support their claims. Some YouTubers had the intention in exposing the bad outcomes in living in public housing, whereas others showed the good outcomes. Although my other code, race, was not mentioned specifically in the videos I viewed, it was shown based on the choice of residents these YouTubers chose to show and/or interview.

The main thing that all these housing projects have in similarity is the lack of resources that is provided to their residents by the government. This lack of resources has been a major contribution in the way the housing projects are presented and how its residents are taken care of. Those who view the housing projects in a negative way try to show that the residents either chose or deserve to have such poor living conditions because of how they are ran by gangs and have a history of violence that follows it. For those who view it in a positive way try to show well known celebrities that have grown up in these living conditions, which motivated them to want better for themselves, and how residents try to make the best out of tough situations they are given.

In the videos I viewed, the men that were being interviewed were men of color and during the tours you witness a variety of minority families in the background in these public housings. These men were chosen in a sense to represent the rest of the residents in the public housings in the way the YouTuber wanted them to. For one of the videos, Estacks and his group were interviewed to reveal how housing projects are controlled by what would be perceived based on their clothing and behavior, as gangs. In another video, Holy Moe, who is dressed and presented well, is interviewed to reveal how his living conditions encouraged him to bring all the communities together to prevent street violence and to be seen as a role model for the 'newer generation'. These videos portray housing project communities in contrasting ways by YouTubers who are outsiders that try to get insights from those who are insiders, their choice of insiders is used to focus on the purpose of their videos whether if it is to benefit the community or not.

The implications of my research mean that people's perceptions of neighborhoods are generally based on their standing within the community. These videos have been conducted by interviewers who are outsiders to the community, but the way they chose to represent these communities, whether it is in a negative or positive way, is based on their personal opinions about

them from what they have seen on social media or heard from others. To the individuals who watch videos on YouTube, I recommend while watching these videos, or ones similar, to not allow their perceptions of these communities to be persuaded by individuals socioeconomic status and stereotypes. For those individuals who make YouTube videos, I recommend when creating videos like these revolving around communities, they should look into interviewing more individuals to receive both perspectives rather than just interviewing one individual, making it one sided. I believe these representations should reveal these neighborhoods as a community rather than the assumptions that are made of them through the media based on their socioeconomic status and stereotypes.

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