

Gentrification in Canadian Inner Cities: Its Impact on Society

Li Wei

weilisdu@sdu.edu.cn

School of History and Culture

Shandong University

Abstract: Since the 1960s, gentrification has been evolved into a phenomenon in the inner city of western countries. The western scholars explain its triggering mainly from two opposite perspectives: “Rent-gap theory” identifies housing supply criteria as uppermost while demand-side explanation emphasizes middle class’ demand for environmental and cultural amenities. The gentrification process in Canadian metropolitan cities, whose extent, location and nature can be measured by census variables, produces both positive and negative effects. The major negative effects are aggravating housing problems and resulting in the clash among different social and ethnic groups. This article argues that the most important factors inhibiting the negative impact of gentrification are the government’s policy for restoring social housing construction and the effective support to small ethnic groups in inner cities.

Key words: Canada; city; gentrification; social compact