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Runner up entry for 2019

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Connecticut College

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Respondent: **Allie Girouard** Submitted on: Saturday, February 23, 2019, 1:34 PM

Library Research Prize 2019: Application Form

During which semester was your research undertaken?

- Fall 2018

At approximately what level were you in your undergraduate studies when you completed this research? For example: Sophomore

- Senior

List or create a name for your paper/project/work. For example: Toward a Critique of New Technology: Rethinking Virilio and Haraway.

- Transit-Induced Gentrification in Somerville, Massachusetts

List the name/department and number of the course for which your research was completed. For example: Freshman Seminar: The Net Generation (FYS 145H)

- Globalization & American Culture Since 1945 (AMS 465)

List the name(s) of the faculty member(s) for whom your research was undertaken. For example: Professor Jane Doe.

- Professor Catherine Stock

List your major/minor fields of study or interest. For example: Film & Philosophy double-major, French minor

- American Studies & Sociology double-major, PICA scholar

Which citation style are you using for your bibliography?

- MLA

Describe how you came to choose your topic, specifically noting any pre-research that you did. What sources did you use in this pre-research? To what extent did you

consult with librarians, faculty, or others? How did this pre-research lead you to your topic?

I came to choose my topic largely based on my personal experience working on an urban design project in Somerville, Massachusetts in the summer of 2018. Working daily to design, implement, and staff an indoor public space in the Union Square neighborhood brought me into contact with hundreds of Somerville residents who care deeply about both the physical and social fabric of their community and are worried about its future. I came back to Conn in the fall with a desire to use an academic lens to gather research to support the anecdotal experience of transit-induced gentrification. This topic also came out of my PICA senior integrative project, an independent study in sociology about how urban design can be used to promote social justice. My advisor, Professor Flagg, and I worked with a number of sources on gentrification that became the concrete pre-research for this project. My independent study research also led me to consult with PICA faculty and fellow PICA students, as well as interview reference librarian Andrew Lopez about his experience working in urban development with the Hodges Square Village Association. Combining my justice-oriented urbanism research with my knowledge of the Somerville community, I proposed to research transit-induced gentrification in Somerville for my culminating paper in the American Studies senior seminar.

Describe your process of finding information for your project. Note specifically the tools you used to undertake your research, as well as the specific search strategies you used within these tools. (Note: "Ebsco," being an umbrella vendor, is not a specific enough response when identifying tools; listing the "library database" is also an unacceptably vague answer. Specific tools include JSTOR, America: History & Life, Web of Science, etc., along with OneSearch, the new library system.)

My goal for this research was two-fold: to historicize a contemporary phenomenon using an American Studies lens and to act as a scholar-activist as I'd been trained to in PICA. These goals required a diversity of sources - historical and contemporary, primary and secondary, policy-focused and human-centered. My pre-research had provided me a decent number of sources on the theory of gentrification, so I started by using OneSearch to find sources with information about the city of Somerville itself. I was able to find a book by Tufts professor Susan Ostrander, "Citizenship and Governance in a Changing City", a case study on Somerville, and which I was able to access through ProQuest Ebook Central. This source ultimately formed the core of my paper. I also used ProQuest Ebook Central to access "There Goes the 'Hood" by Lance Freeman. I then used key search terms such as "gentrification", "activism", and "transportation" in Academic Search Premier to find an article in the Housing Policy Debate academic journal

which provided supplemental information on the impact of transportation on gentrification and an additional article on the impact of displacement in the Urban Studies academic journal. Both were accessible through Taylor & Francis Online. Lastly, I needed contemporary reporting on gentrification in Somerville to round out my research and to allow me to support my assertions. I used Newspaper Source Plus to access Boston Globe articles, which then led me to additional articles in a local magazine.

Describe your process of evaluating the resources you found. How did you make decisions about which resources you would use, and which you wouldn't? What kinds of questions did you ask yourself about resources in order to determine whether they were worthy of inclusion?

My process of evaluating resources and deciding which to use was primarily structured by my need to balance sources on Somerville with sources that speak to the larger, global processes of gentrification. I chose my sources on Somerville based on the following questions: How recent was the research conducted? Does the information match or contradict my understanding of the city as an area resident, and why? What is the researcher's connection to the city? I chose my sources on gentrification based on the following questions: How recent was the research conducted? How relevant are the theories proposed to my specific case study? Is the research place-based, and if so, what indicates it could be applicable to another city? Due to my heavy use of newspaper articles and editorials, I had to be intentional about the role those sources played in my analysis. I interrogated whether the articles used fact-based or opinion-based arguments. I did often use quotes from opinion-based pieces, however, I was sure to mention the authors' positionality and point-of-view. It was important to include these voices to hear directly from local stakeholders, but it was also essential to be transparent in the text of my paper about the types of sources I was pulling from.