

Priced Out: Stuyvesant Town and the Loss of Middle-Class Neighborhoods

Rachael A. Woldoff, Lisa M. Morrison, Michael R. Glass



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On an average morning in the tree-lined parks, plazas, and play-areas of Manhattan's Stuyvesant Town housing development, birds chirp as early risers dash off to work, elderly residents enjoy a peaceful morning stroll, and flocks of parents usher their children to school. It seems an unlikely location for conflict and strife, yet this eighteen-block area, initially planned as middle-class affordable housing, is the site of an ongoing struggle between long-term, rent-regulated residents, younger, market-rate tenants, and new owners seeking to turn this community into a luxury commodity. Priced Out takes readers into this heated battle as a transitioning neighborhood wrestles with contemporary capitalist strategies and the struggle to preserve renters' rights. Since the early 2000's, Stuyvesant Town's owners have sought to transform this iconic Manhattan housing development into a luxury destination for those able to afford the higher price tag. Attempting to replace longtime residents with younger, more affluent tenants, they have disrupted native residents' sense of place, community, and their perceived quality of life. Through resident interviews, the authors offer an intimate view into the lives of different groups of tenants involved in this struggle for prime real estate in New York, from students experiencing the city for the first time to baby boomers hanging on to the vestiges of middle-class urban life. A compelling, fascinating account of changing urban landscapes and the struggle for security, *Priced Out* offers a comprehensive perspective of a community that, to some, is becoming unrecognizable as it is upgraded and altered.

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