

## Reading Tips and Study Questions

### CLASS FOURTEEN

#### Required reading

- (video lecture) Lawrence J. Vale, "Public Housing in the United States: Public Housing, Neighborhood Renewal and the Poor (or, Some Things to Think About Before Thinking About 'Mixed-Income' Housing)."
- Bristol, Katherine G. 1991. "The Pruitt-Igoe Myth," *Journal of Architectural Education* 44:3 (1991)
- Vale, Lawrence J. 2014. "Myth #6: Mixed-Income Redevelopment Is the Only Way to Fix Failed Public Housing," in Nicholas Bloom, Fritz Umbach, and Lawrence J. Vale, eds., *Public Housing Myths: Beyond Victims and Villains* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press).
- HUD, Choice Neighborhoods program webpage.
- Stephens, Alexis. 2014. Risks vs. Rewards: Inside HUD's Favorite New Program. *Next City*.
- Navarro, Mireya. 2014. Public Housing in New York Reaches a Fiscal Crisis. *The New York Times*, August 11.

#### Recommended

- Vale, Lawrence J. 2005. "Standardizing Public Housing," in Eran Ben-Joseph and Terry Szold, eds., *Regulating Place: Standards and the Shaping of Urban America* (New York: Routledge, 2005).
- Vale, Lawrence J. and Yonah Freemark. 2012. From Public Housing to Public-Private Housing. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 78(4).
- Popkin, Susan et al. 2004. *A Decade of HOPE VI: Research Findings and Policy Challenges* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute and Brookings Institution, May). Executive Summary only.
- McCormick, Naomi, Mark Joseph and Robert Chaskin. 2012. "The New Stigma of Relocated Public Housing Residents: Challenges to Social Identity in Mixed-Income Developments." *City & Community* 11(3):285-308.
- Joseph, Mark L. Robert J. Chaskin and Henry S. Webber. 2007. "The Theoretical Basis for Addressing Poverty Through Mixed-Income Development." *Urban Affairs Review* 42(3): 369-409.
- (Video) "North Town Village: Cabrini-Green," from *60 Minutes II* (December 2002). Running time: 13:32.

#### Session overview

In this session, with help from guest **Larry Vale**, we will consider the aims for, challenges of, and limits to "revitalizing" subsidized housing developments, especially public housing, often with mixed-income configuration and often involving private developer partners. Professor Vale has carried out significant research on efforts to redo public housing, including "twice-cleared communities" – sites that were cleared for the original, early phase of public housing decades ago and razed again recently for the HOPE VI public housing rebuilding program.

The Obama Administration has launched new versions of programs to redo public housing. The *Choice Neighborhoods* program differs from HOPE VI in that it proposes holistic neighborhood change around public housing sites, revises controversial HOPE VI provisions related to replacing housing (though not necessarily replacing it onsite), and relocates tenants more responsibly. The *Rental*

*Assistance Demonstration* program (see article) allows local housing authorities to take on private debt and work with private development partners in order to obtain the capital needed to rebuild older developments

Reminder: **Discussion questions**

1. What key “revisionist lenses” does **Vale** (in his video lecture) identify for interrogating the paradigm of “public housing failure”? And what lessons does he draw for planners about tenant activism and other aspects of the politics of public housing redevelopment?
2. What does **Bristol** say is the cause of the decline of Modernist public housing complexes like Pruitt-Igoe? What historical narrative is she arguing against?
3. In what ways does **Vale** (in “Myth #6”) suggest the potential of mixed-income development has been over-sold or poorly communicated? On what bases does he seem to be supportive of its potential, and under what conditions?
4. Skim the contents of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD’s) program webpage for **Choice Neighborhoods**. From your point of view, does the agency acknowledge the major challenges of mixed-income development or just the hoped-for benefits? What role does HUD imagine for social services, health, community organizing, or other “beyond bricks-and-mortar” elements of change?

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

11.401 Introduction to Housing, Community, and Economic Development  
Fall 2015

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.