

Community Observations

American Sentinel University

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Visual Observations

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A city can be thought of as a community in the respect that it is a group of people living in a similar area. These communities can be then broken down into several sub-populations according to certain statistics such as level on income. There is typically a very distinct difference that can be seen by the common eye when going from a community or neighborhood with a high-income level to one of low income and vice versa. Crime rates are typically higher in low income areas, as are the incident of chronic illness and poor nutrition. Harkness and DeMarco point out that a person's environment can have both positive and negative effects on someone's health (Harkness, & DeMarco, 2016).

Physical Environment

Sentinel City is broken up into four different areas which all have their differences and commonalities with each other. The start of the bus tour places the assessor into the Nightingale Square district which then neighbors the Acer Tech Center district, for the purpose of this report these will be categorized as the high-income areas. The next two districts are Casper Park and Industrial Heights which will be the low-income areas. There are no distinct environmental boundaries between the high income and low-income areas, there is however train tracks that run over the top of the city on elevated tracks which could be a demarcation line for the populations of each district.

The homes in their respective district do appear to have subtle differences, in the Acer Tech center there seems to be more high-rise apartment complexes than in the Industrial Heights. The placement of trees in the city does not appear to have any rhyme or reason as they are sporadically placed throughout. There are no apparent bike paths in any district causing the cyclists to utilize the main roads, however there are many alleys that can be utilized by cyclists and foot traffic alike. There is a vast array of different type of graffiti in all districts of Sentinel

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City. Most every grey door to a building has some sort of tagging on it. There is nothing discernable to be made out to tell if they are gang related or just randomized occurrences. There are several large murals of graffiti in the Industrial Heights district. The city is fairly standardized with it's placement of billboards as they all seem to relate to increases of public safety with signs encouraging vaccination and not texting and driving (Healthcare Learning Innovation [HLI], 2017).

In Sentinel City there are many different areas that are potential hangouts for groups of like minded people. There are areas such as the protestors in front of City Hall that seem very territorial or the construction workers hangout in Industrial Heights that seem like you must fit in to be there. However, there are several areas that seem very welcoming such as the area across the street from the grocery store is a small strip where performers such as musicians and jugglers show off for crowds. There is a Brooklyn Brewery which is a great potential hangout spot in the Nightingale Square area along with the Sentinel Gym. There are also two health food stands that are seen with people congregating around the Fruits and Veg stand as well as the smaller Green Cart (Healthcare Learning Innovation [HLI], 2017).

Health and Social Services

Most of the healthcare for Sentinel City is located in the high-income areas such as Acer Tech Center where the hospital and dentist office are located. There is a pharmacy located within walking distance of the hospital in the Nightingale Square district, this seems to be the only one in the city. The hospital has a large congregation of people of all races and sex standing out front of the outpatient signs. There is a health clinic located in Industrial Heights that caters to those with non-emergent such as birth control and sexually transmitted infections (Healthcare Learning Innovation [HLI], 2017).

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In Sentinel City there is an overwhelming presence of Italian food restaurants with one being at almost every corner. There was only one fast food restaurant noted, a Hardees, as well as multiple Donut Time shops in the city. Health food options consisted of two outside food markets both selling produce and fruit to the public. Joe's Grocery is the only major grocery store with the exception of the Bodega market in the Industrial Heights area. Sentinel City does not appear to have a big issue with fast food as only fourteen percent of the calories consumed by people ages 2-19 are from fast food restaurants (Healthcare Learning Innovation [HLI], 2017).

Senior living in Sentinel City is a concern for everyone as the population is only growing older. On a global scale, the population of those 60 years or older will increase from 600 million, to an estimated two billion people by the year 2050 (Sciegaj, & Behr, 2010). The city provides 2874 nursing home units as well as 1048 apartments for those seniors who are independently living (Healthcare Learning Innovation [HLI], 2017). In more than one district there are signs for Sentinel City Senior Living accommodations for the elderly.

Safety and Transportation

There is a visible police presence in Sentinel City, in every district there are police officers either patrolling the streets in cars or on foot. In areas such as Industrial Heights there seems to be a higher number of visible police. For instance, there is what appears to be an electronic store that has recently been looted with broken windows that are taped off with three police officers standing out front. It is common knowledge that the more police presence somewhere the higher likelihood of crime in the area. In Sentinel City 39% of arrest rates are related to controlled substances and cannabis combined, (Healthcare Learning Innovation [HLI], 2017). This increased number of arrests will increase the number of street level patrols in efforts to reduce the sales and use of illegal substances (Lipton et al, 2013) In recent years the number

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of violent crimes has dramatically reduced in Sentinel City (Healthcare Learning Innovation [HLI], 2017). With the amount of police presence in the city, the chances of being a victim of a crime seem to be low as long as one stays out of areas known for crimes such as areas with increased drug use and lack of visibility.

Sentinel City has a rather large provision for public transportation with the buses and multiple bus routes. The majority of people seem to walk around the city with some cyclists and the obvious car traffic. With no bike lanes, the cars share the roads with the bikes. There does not seem to be any signs of a nearby highway either in or out of Sentinel City. The streets of Sentinel city are very accessible to those with handicaps such as wheelchairs as there are no elevation changes, the sidewalks appear in good shape with nice wide walkways, there are several spots where trash could impede foot traffic. In Sentinel City there was a very small number of fire hydrants visible from the bus tour and walking around. One would have to go several blocks at times to find a fire hydrant. There was no discernable fire station as the only fire truck was parked on the street.

Conclusion

As in most cities around the country and even the world there will be visible differences in areas of wealth and poverty. These visual distinctions can play a factor in an area being stereotyped or categorized into either good or bad areas by the public. Along with the visual factors such as the condition of the houses and yards, the number of derelict cars on the streets or amount of visible trash, the wealthy areas have less crime than those impoverished areas. As previously stated, a person's environment plays a major role in their health and wellbeing.

References

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