

Giving Credit Where Credit is Due in Inglewood- a part of harnessing black consumer and economic power as an agent for social change.

Inglewood's a great city that has survived "white flight"- specifically the racial, ethnic category of "white alone, non-Hispanic/Latino" flight¹ and life in the Los Angeles Basin area.

Inglewood residents obtained significant academic achievement. Inglewood is the childhood home of black alum at many schools. Students from Inglewood represent a significant percentage of the black student body at many of the most prestigious schools in the country and in the local area. They always have. This fact has always been known as well. Many students continued to excellent colleges and graduate schools. Contrary to popular culture and the US Census, numerous blacks with higher educational degrees reside in or grew up in Inglewood since the sixties after covenants promoting segregation were declared unconstitutional in the forties.

Inglewood always contained quiet and safe neighborhoods with low crime and well maintained homes. The new whites moving into the city are not responsible for the quiet safety. I grew up in Inglewood and now live here again.

It is very important the fact that blacks worked for decades to keep their areas livable and nice places to raise children is not lost during these changing times for both social and economic reasons. In order for blacks to begin to get equal return on their property and therefore break economic Jim Crow in this state, the reputation for the desirable factors, such as safety, education levels and home condition, must go to the black community. These factors increase desirability which then increases the price of a property. Credit must also be given to ensure that Inglewood does not become a symbol of modern Jim Crow where for the black population it is a ghetto or hood with depressed property values and economic reputation and where for the non-Hispanic white population a symbol of economic opportunity with homes unaffordable other places now available for a bargain hood price.² A lot of future profits are expected.³ Unfortunately many do not seem to realize that the urban areas were not empty.

The black communities are being used as a source of cheap reserve housing for others including non-Hispanic whites- bottom line the other areas are too expensive.⁴ Some zip codes, such as 90301, are arbitrarily being devalued despite containing a number of two-story homes in good condition with ocean breezes.⁵ Most of these residents have higher education degrees and so do their children⁶. Our property values are not reflecting these positive factors of an educated workforce, climate and home condition affecting desirability and prices.⁷ In fact, the area is seeing more non-hispanic whites hoping to buy great homes at bargain hood prices.⁸

It turns out nothing was wrong with Inglewood and probably the other black communities. My own building went from being mostly black to being the new home of whites in a matter of months. Now Inglewood is ready to integrate?—Ha!⁹ Inglewood has been called disparaging names, including "Inglehood" etc. Sadly some members of the black communities and others have very determinedly put forth this negative image of a hood Inglewood via rhetoric, media and jokes. I'm not talking about rappers or entertainers—we all know the Hollywood/TV machine. I'm talking about blacks who consider themselves educated and sometimes community leaders. These jokes only reinforce public perception of an economically depressed area ripe for economic exploitation. All factors need to be addressed If black communities are to see a real share of these future economic profits.

What can we do? Harness black consumer power as an agent for social change and expand the discourse or narrative. People with something good to say about Inglewood should write or say it. The disparaging jokes and discourse are no longer tolerated. Clearly there is nothing wrong with living in Inglewood. With regards to the property values, discussion and setting higher prices etc may help raise community reputation. Discussion is key. An economic boycott may be necessary as a message that we are a community of consumers that deserves to be respected and our communities developed without a major demographic change for us¹⁰. Relocation of blacks is both occurring and already occurred in New York, Washington D.C., San Francisco and Seattle.¹¹ It is a message to both white political groups, developers and to the general public that our communities offer more than athletes and opportunities for exploitation (most media articles praise our relocation calling it “a make-over”, “renewal” and “renaissance” (literally bringing white to darkness- haha)). These groups should not benefit so much from Jim Crow property segregation. It is time for blacks to share in the expected profits. I would like to see the following points addressed as a result:

- 1) Ensure black property owners finally receive an equal and fair value for their property
- 2) Ensure blacks who rent are not pushed out due to skyrocketing rents
- 3) Increase black home ownership so that additional blacks are able to take advantage of and participate in this latest round of property development and profits
- 4) End police brutality on ALL fronts, including the economic push by the new urbanites and young professionals to remove blacks from their communities. Without a full discussion of the economic stimuli behind the police law enforcement policies, these economic stimuli will not be addressed or changed especially in the blue states. Only then will police brutality decrease.¹²
- 5) End economic Jim Crow in the Northern States, including racist California.
- 6) Tell developers/team owners and their corporate sponsors, who made billions due to black consumer dollars and black players, we are not for exploitation any more. That includes exploitation from other developers and corporations. If they can call up the politicians and get green lights for all of their projects they can for ONCE pick up the phone for us. For example, the NBA’s role in the development of Los Angeles is deplorable- Staples Center. The Rams have shown up for a piece. Tell the general white population we are not for exploitation and removal any more- enough is enough- they hypocrisy, greed and whitening of the urban cores must stop.

The greater Los Angeles area and the entire state still contains just enough blacks to make a real economic impact with regards to key products. New York and California combined contain almost 50% of the country’s black populations. I have written about the economic desirability equation in other spots.

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¹ United States, Census Bureau, *2010 Census Racial and Ethnicity Categories*, Washington DC: Department of Commerce, 2010.

² “Inglewood, California (CA) Zip Code Map- Locations and Demographics”, City-data.com, <http://www.city-data.com/city/Inglewood-California.html> (Inglewood below state average with regards to average household income, median home price, education levels).

For example, a New York Times article states that public school system ranking is no longer an important factor with regards to price in newly redone urban areas like San Francisco where most of the property is now some of the most expensive in the country after “revival”. “Good Schools, Affordable Homes, Finding the Suburban Sweet Spot,” *New York Times*, March 3, 2017,

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/03/30/upshot/good-schools-affordable-homes-suburban-sweet-spots.html>. Close proximity to metro lines and urban cores is now more desirable than a good public school system and therefore worth paying for.

However for blacks, these exact reasons- closeness to downtown and poor schools- are still used as negative factors when the desirability equation is applied to determining the value of black property and in black areas. By analogy the black areas should be higher valued because they are also close to downtown Los Angeles/LA Live and USC, and will soon be stops along the new metro lines which caters to the exact same crowds as in San Francisco. Of course, black areas are not valued more highly.

Indeed it appears our communities have been intentionally left underdeveloped in order to serve as cheap housing for the new city dwellers so they may profit from the depressed prices and future expected profits from urban renewal- aka the “fixer upper market”. After relocation, in cities such as San Francisco, New York and Washington D.C., the property values skyrocket out of the reach of most Americans and these increased values are based partly on factors such as proximity to urban areas and metros”. See Jed Kolko, “Top 10 Least and Most Expensive Housing Markets for Today’s Middle Class”, *Forbes online*, May 14, 2014, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/trulia/2014/05/14/top-10-least-and-most-expensive-housing-markets-for-todays-middle-class/#5221ee3f63f6>; “Good Schools, Affordable Homes, Finding the Suburban Sweet Spot,” *New York Times*, March 3, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/03/30/upshot/good-schools-affordable-homes-suburban-sweet-spots.html>. The greater Los Angeles area is also following the same pattern of development and relocation.

³ Angel Jennings, “Downtown Development Boom Set To Move Into South Central L.A. As City Approves Controversial High Rise Complex”, *Los Angeles Times*, November 22, 2016, <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-reef-development-20161122-story.html>; “Controversial ‘Reef’ Project In South LA Get Green Light From City”, *The Open Daily Los Angeles*, November 23, 2016, <http://www.theopendaily.com/business/controversial-reef-project-in-south-la-gets-green-light-from-city>. The prices are only increasing as are the rents. Kerri Anne Renzulli, “10 Most Expensive Cities To Be A Renter”, *Time.com*, April 8, 2016, <http://time.com/money/4287132/most-expensive-cities-to-rent>. Here in Los Angeles, the LA Live/Staples Center Downtown complex and area are perfect examples of how expensive a renewed area can become and how quickly the demographics can change. Downtown/ LA Live originally centered around the Staples Center and now contains a number of hotels with every increasing construction also adjacent to the metro lines. At the same time, Los Angeles’ city and county homeless population is increasing at an alarmingly rate-in 2017 it increased 23% from 2016, which increased from 2015’s numbers. Gale Holland and Doug Smith, “Los Angeles County’s Homelessness Jumps A “Staggering 23%” As Need Far Outpaces Housing, A New Count Shows”, *Los Angeles Times*, May 31, 2017, <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-In-homeless-count-20170530-story.html>; Gale Holland and Peter Jamison, “Los Angeles Sees Another Sharp Rise in Homelessness and Outdoor Tents”, *Los Angeles Times*, May 4, 2016, <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow>; Thomas Gaist and Marc Wells, “Homelessness Sharply Increases In Los Angeles County”, *World Socialist Web Site*, June 9, 2017, <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2017/06/09/home-j09.html>. The demographics are visibly different- filled with the same relocation groups as in the other cities. In Inglewood, the new stadium and additional development will be worth billions. David Davis, “The End Zone Is Near- The Rams Come Full Circle, and So Does Inglewood”, *Los Angeles Magazine*, March 2016.

⁴ For example in January 2016, a home in lower Santa Monica is worth an average of \$1.6 million while in North Inglewood the average home is \$349,000. *Inglewood, Inglewood CA Housing, Market, Schools and Neighborhoods*, *Realty.com*, January 2016, http://www.realty.com/local/Inglewood-Inglewood_CA. See also Jed Kolko, “Top 10 Least and Most Expensive Housing Markets for Today’s Middle Class”, *Forbes online*, May 14, 2014, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/trulia/2014/05/14/top-10-least-and-most-expensive-housing-markets-for-todays-middle-class/#5221ee3f63f6>. Jana Kasperkevic, “Too Damn High- Manhattan’s Average Apartment Prices Reach Record of \$1.87 Million”, *The Guardian, US Edition*, July 1, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jul/01/manhattan-new-york-apartment-rent-prices-record-high>; Dan Burrows, “Most Expensive Cities in the United States to Live 2017”, *Kiplinger.com*, May 2017, <http://www.kiplinger.com/slideshow/real-estate/T006-S001-most-expensive-u-s-cities-to-live-in-2017/index.html>

⁵ Realty.com, January 2016, www.Realty.com; “Inglewood, California (CA) Zip Code Map- Locations and Demographics 90301”, City-data.com, <http://www.city-data.com/zips/90301.html>; <http://www.city-data.com/city/Inglewood-California.html>

⁶ The author of this article, Katherine Burns, is an attorney. My father was also an attorney. My mother has a master’s degree in pedagogy and curriculum building.

⁷ Demand is how much people are willing to pay to live in a place, which depends on how desirable and economically productive a place is. Some factors that affect demand like a good climate or an educated workforce change very slowly over time...housing demand alone does not determine home prices. Supply is crucial too. Jed Kolko, “Top 10 Least and Most Expensive Housing Markets for Today’s Middle Class”, *Forbes online*, May 14, 2014, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/trulia/2014/05/14/top-10-least-and-most-expensive-housing-markets-for-todays-middle-class/#5221ee3f63f6>.

⁸ Which groups are moving in large numbers into the “renewed” urban areas? According to the US Census Bureau, countless mainstream media articles and personal observation it is a combination of groups that are moving into the urban areas at “unanticipated proportions” looking for cheap housing, including but not limited to, the white hipster/techies, white millennials and their parents, white homosexuals of both genders and other groups and white heterosexuals of both genders and political groups- sometimes called “young professionals”. See e.g., “The New American Dream Is Living In A City, Not Owning A House In The Suburbs”, *Time*, April 25, 2014, <http://time.com/72281/american-housing/>.

⁹ In 2010 only 2.9% of Inglewood residents consisted of White alone, Non-Hispanic persons. US Census 2010. US Census Bureau. www.census.gov.

¹⁰ The 1955 Alabama Montgomery Bus Boycott is an excellent example of the power for systemic change when the activist branches and the economic branches come together for black empowerment. Petitions are good but not enough for these problems. The boycott showed blacks meant business and could back their demands with dollars. As a result, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the AL state statute requiring segregation of the buses was unconstitutional in *Browder v Gayle*, 352 US 903 (1956). This event served as a pivotal beginning moment for the black civil rights movement.

¹¹ Natalie Hopskinson “Farewell, Chocolate City”, *New York Times*, June 3, 2012; “San Francisco’s Black Population Dwindling”, *The Seattle Times*, May 11, 2015, <http://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/san-franciscos-black-population-dwindling/>; Nadre Nittle, “Will San Francisco’s Black Population Vanish as City’s Wealth Rises?”, *Atlanta Black Star*, October 13, 2015, <http://atlantablackstar.com/2015/10/13/will-san-franciscos-black-population-vanish-citys-wealth-rises/>; Jaithe Har, “San Francisco’s Housing Shortage Threatens African Americans”, *Seattle Times*, December 28, 2015, <http://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/san-franciscos-housing-shortage-threatens-african-americans>; Sam Roberts “White Population Rises in Manhattan”, *New York Times*, July 4, 2010. <https://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/07/04/white-population-rises-in-manhattan/>; Sam Roberts, “No Longer Majority Black, Harlem in Transition”, *New York Times*, January 5, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/06/nyregion/06harlem.html>. See also Gene Balk, “As Seattle Gets Richer, the City’s Black Households Get Poorer”, *The Seattle Times*, November 12, 2014, <http://blogs.seattletimes.com/fyi-guy/2014/11/12/as-seattle-gets-richer-the-citys-black-households-get-poorer/>. See e.g., “The New American Dream Is Living In A City, Not Owning A House In The Suburbs”, *Time*, April 25, 2014, <http://time.com/72281/american-housing/>.

¹² For example the NYPD stop and frisk policy- Beginning 15 years ago, NYPD terrorized mostly Blacks (54-57%), where the black population was continuously decreasing. “Stop and Frisk Data”, *New York Civil Liberties Union*, <https://www.nyclu.org/en/stop-and-frisk-data>. Between 2003 and 2012, NYPD targeted Harlem’s and Central Brooklyn’s black populations. The number of stop and frisks of residents for “suspicious” behavior drastically increased, and peaked in January 2012. Mike Bostock and Ford Fersseden, “Stop and Frisk Is All But Gone From New York”, *New York Times*, September 19, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/09/19/nyregion/stop-and-frisk-is-all-but-gone-from-new-york.html>. In January 2012 NYPD performed over 15,000 stops per week. Ibid. Most persons stopped were Black and innocent. In 2003, 87% of persons stopped were innocent, 54% were Black, 31% were Latino, 12% were white, and 55% between the ages of 14-24. “Stop and Frisk Data”, *New York Civil Liberties Union*, <https://www.nyclu.org/en/stop-and-frisk-data>. This trend continues until today. In 2017 first quarter, 57% of the stops were Black persons. Mid-2012 saw an extreme drop in the number of stop and frisk encounters but the percentage of Blacks stopped remained the same, 54-57%. The increase and drop in the number of stops coincides with the removal of Blacks

from Harlem and Brooklyn and the transition period from a majority Black Harlem to the current majority white Harlem. By 2010, Harlem was majority white. Sam Roberts, "White Population Rises in Manhattan", *New York Times*, July 4, 2010. <https://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/07/04/white-population-rises-in-manhattan/>; Sam Roberts, "No Longer Majority Black, Harlem in in Transition", *New York Times*, January 5, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/06/nyregion/06harlem.html>. Therefore NYPD was and is increasing pressure on an ever-shrinking Black population while whites poured into the newly vacated areas. If this is not the police relocating blacks for white encroachment I don't know what is. The black population of the Bronx may be under siege now by NYPD as Brooklyn has already become too expensive. See *Copwatchers* documentary. There is also the media coverage shifting the focus of relocation to police brutality in San Francisco. See *Maura Dolan*, "San Francisco Police Scandal Focuses Attention On Dwindling Number of Blacks", *Los Angeles Times*, May 9, 2015. <http://www.latimes.com/crime>. See also Steven Rosenfeld, "Is Gentrification Fueling Police Brutality in San Francisco?", *Alternet*, May 15, 2015, <http://www.alternet.org/civil-liberties/gentrification-fueling-police-brutality-san-francisco>.