

A bi-weekly podcast hosted by Alice Bradley and Deanna Zandt. Are you mentally ill? Yes, you are.

When I moved to Austin in , I lucked into finding a small, dog-run style house that must have had a lot of dogs running through it over the years, for it was pretty run down. That was good, though, because it meant I could afford it on my minimalist salary. Located in a working-class neighborhood just off of South Congress Avenue, the house was about years old and needed a lot of work, but it suited me just fine. As did the mixed-race neighborhood of striving musicians, retirees, ex-hippies, unemployed writers, cab drivers, and several marijuana peddlers. It was an unpretentious, genuinely eclectic community of laid-back, free-spirited Austinites. The family smartly chose to market Mr. Our H-E-B was widely popular because its workers paid attention to the community they were in, stocking staples like pound bags of frijoles, smoked ham hocks, and cornmeal-breaded catfish, as well as auto-repair parts and low-priced barbeque grills made from barrels. How about a weekly email that gives you the full scoop? The neighborhood was fundamentally changing. My wake-up call came from my friend Molly Ivins, the bigger-than-life Texas populist and gloriously talented writer who also lived in our offbeat, Southside habitat. Soon after, the gentry were spreading all around us. Likewise, the collection of inexpensive, fun-and-funky shops strung along a couple of main corridors has been thinned out by skyrocketing rents and escalating property taxes, and replaced by chic boutiques and pricey restaurants. As money poured in, many longtime friends, neighbors, and much of the funkiness were squeezed out. Nonetheless, I hasten to add that the neighborhood retains enough of a sprinkling of the uncommon places and unorthodox characters to remain a delightful place to live and enjoy. If, that is, you can afford it. Sure enough, in the wee hours of a February morning, it proceeded to crush the little shop. Alas, the gentrifiers had not bothered to notify Sergio and Monica Lejarazu, who rented the store, about the imminent destruction. All of their merchandise and business equipment were also crushed. You have to clean that up. To the amazement of longtime locals in many parts of America, gentrification has surged in recent years, suddenly swamping whole communities in US urban centers, as well as in close-in suburbs and quaint small towns. In fact, though, it has nearly always been a code word for a particularly ugly form of class war. The rationalization for this taking and displacement rests on four wobbly pillars of conventional wisdom perpetuated, of course, by the gentrifiers, not those gentrified upon. Gentrification is a function of power, not natural law or economic inevitability. It occurs when wealthy, politically connected interests make decisions in closed-door meetings to take over the neighborhoods of people who have little money and power, thus no effective voice or recourse in the taking. The takers usually make a pretense of negotiating with longtime property owners. Renters are worse off, rarely even getting fair notice that a hellish Dickensian disruption is coming at them. In one of many recent examples here in Austin, more than working-class families including children were abruptly ejected two years ago from an affordable apartment complex. Their lives were thrown into a tailspin when the mega-developer that bought the complex summarily cancelled their leases. In a backroom deal tenants were unaware of, much less involved in, the city had given special zoning exemptions that allowed the new corporate owner to bulldoze the long-standing family homes of these mostly Latinx residents and to erect high-end luxury apartments on top of the detritus. They treated us like dirt. All they gave us was a kick in the ass. So start where you live! Find one near you. Mark Horvath of InvisiblePeople. Millions of middle-income previously secure in homes they owned or rented have had to move out of their neighborhoods and even out of their cities, because gentrification has drastically raised home prices, property taxes, and rents. When one Oakland, California, school principal started teaching in , the story was: Teachers are never going to afford a house. In metro areas across the country, consumer demand for affordable apartments is huge and fast growing, but that mass market goes begging because developers can make far greater profits by building upscale units for wealthy people seeking trendy neighborhoods. And so it goes: In fact, in , according to rentcafe. You might expect that skew toward housing for the affluent in the Northeast and California, with such super-pricey cities as New York and San Francisco, so I was surprised to see that luxury construction was most dominant in the South, where 78 percent of all apartments were upscale and in the Southwest where the

number reached an appalling 88 percent. For poverty-income families, being gentrified out of an affordable space can mean more than a long commute. The toll lands heavily on children since they make up a third of Americans without homes—astonishingly, the average age of a homeless person is 9! Meanwhile, here comes Team Trump heaping scorn on poor people even as it callously slashes budgets for pro-grams aimed at giving them a chance for decent housing. Indeed, Ben Carson, the incompetent US housing secretary, is pushing a vicious Trump proposal to triple the rent that the lowest-income residents pay for apartments in public housing projects. Wobbly Pillar 3 Gentrification is good for society at large, reducing blight while lifting low-value properties to their highest and best use. While predatory developers know the minute details of zoning codes, campaign donation laws, and foreclosure loopholes, they know little and care less about unique cultures, Abandoned row houses in Baltimore, MD. So they use the former to tear down or plasticize the latter and call it progress. Such blatant robbery would make even Jesse James blush. Wobbly Pillar 4 Okay, there is a bit of downside to gentrification, but we should accept a little human displacement as a reasonable price for the financial gains the process produces in the overall economy—and we definitely must not tamper with the structural forces at work. With gentrification, the answer almost always is that the moneyed few gain at the expense of the struggling many. Second, financial gain at the price of fairness, diversity, and social harmony is a bottom-line loss for any community. Third, gentrification is a direct cause of the gaping inequality dividing America, intentionally used by the affluent as a wedge to further separate their individual good fortunes from the Common Good. But far from accepting gentrification as an untouchable economic force, We the People must organize to protect ourselves from the predatory powers that are literally invading our cities. After all, even a dog knows the difference between being stumbled over and being kicked. To help, check out the Do Something Box.

Chapter 2 : NPR Choice page

See all of Deanna Z.'s photos, tips, lists, and friends.

Chapter 3 : Latest — Page 23 of 26 — Deanna Zandt

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Chapter 4 : Table of contents for Start making sense

Visit Author Page - Deanna Zandt Deanna Zandt is a media technologist, the co-founder of and partner at Lux Digital, and the author of Share This! How You Will Change the World with Social Networking (Berrett-Koehler).

Chapter 5 : quilt | Rat Terrier ResQ

Deanna Zandt is a media technologist, the co-founder of and partner at Lux Digital, and the author of Share This! How You Will Change the World with Social Networking (Berrett-Koehler). She is a consultant to key media and advocacy organizations, and her clients have included The Ford Foundation, The Daily Beast/Newsweek, and Jim.

Chapter 6 : Share This! How You Will Change the World with Social Networking

Deanna Zandt is one of the smartest, savviest, and sharpest observers of the new world, new media, and new ideas. —Robert Greenwald, President, Brave New Films With media, technology, and politics having essentially merged, all activists for justice need to update their attitudes and their skills.

Chapter 7 : Rudy — ADOPTED!! | Rat Terrier ResQ

Post by Deanna Zandt (@dz) on Sat, 04 Oct 14 + View Full Post I was at a dinner the other night involving a translator, and he used the word "besmirch" in one of his translations.

Chapter 8 : conference Archives â€¢ Page 2 of 2 â€¢ Deanna Zandt

Roundup: WAM!, Women Who Tech, and more. 22 June, in Media, Personal News, Pictures, Politics.