

Binghamton University

## The Open Repository @ Binghamton (The ORB)

---

Research Days Posters Spring 2020

Division of Research

---

2020

### Low Income Housing in Binghamton

Jessica O'Keefe

*Binghamton University--SUNY*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://orb.binghamton.edu/research\\_days\\_posters\\_spring2020](https://orb.binghamton.edu/research_days_posters_spring2020)

---

#### Recommended Citation

O'Keefe, Jessica, "Low Income Housing in Binghamton" (2020). *Research Days Posters Spring 2020*. 62.  
[https://orb.binghamton.edu/research\\_days\\_posters\\_spring2020/62](https://orb.binghamton.edu/research_days_posters_spring2020/62)

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Division of Research at The Open Repository @ Binghamton (The ORB). It has been accepted for inclusion in Research Days Posters Spring 2020 by an authorized administrator of The Open Repository @ Binghamton (The ORB). For more information, please contact [ORB@binghamton.edu](mailto:ORB@binghamton.edu).



Presenter:  
Jessica O’Keefe

# Low Income Housing in Binghamton

## Why is this research important?

Housing is a human right and is essential to human liberty and quality of life. Additionally, housing insecurity perpetuates the cycle of poverty of low income residents by making it harder to maintain employment and receive quality education.

## Methods

- 1. Interviews
- 2. Literature review of scholarly articles and books
- 3. Participant observation at North of Main Community Center
- 4. Local newspaper articles

## Results

Low income housing in Binghamton is often unaffordable for many residents and of poor quality. This is because much of it is privately owned by landlords who seek to maximize their profits. Local landlords, hoping to replace their previous tenants with university students who are willing to pay more, raise their rents and subsequently evict tenants who are unable to pay it. Landlords also neglect many of the quality issues associated with their housing stock to maintain profits.



Apartment buildings on Crandall St. built by the First Ward Action Council

Low income residents have difficulty affording housing because of the profit motivations of landlords and student pressure on the market



This graph compares the percentage of residents paying 50% or more of their income for rent from 2009 to 2018 in Census Tract 13, Broome County and all of New York State. Census Tract 13 includes the North of Main Neighborhood and is where I conducted most of my field research.



The North of Main Community Center  
**Potential Solutions**

Binghamton’s approach to providing low income housing has been focused on fostering private development through low income tax credits and grants. This solution, however, allows many of the problems associated with profit motivations to persist. Low income housing has also been provided through the private sector by nonprofits like The First Ward Action Council. These efforts have been largely successful in creating quality, affordable housing units. Rather than relying on private development, the city should allocate more money and resources to providing affordable housing directly through housing vouchers and other low income housing programs.

## Acknowledgements

Valerie Imbruce, Robert Holahan, George Homsy

## References

Desmond, M. (2016). *Evicted: Poverty and profit in the American city*. Crown Publishers/Random House.  
Edson, C. (2011). Affordable Housing—An Intimate History. *Journal of Affordable Housing & Community Development Law*,20(2), 193-213.  
Homsy, G. (2019, December 4). Personal Interview.  
O'Donovan, M. (2014, June 1). A Tale of One City: Creative Destruction, Spatial Fixes, and Ideology in Binghamton, New York. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, 18(2), 284-298  
US Census Bureau. Residents Paying At Least 50% of Income on Rent [Map]. In SocialExplorer.com. ACS 2018  
Waldron, J. (1993). Homelessness and the Issue of Freedom. *Liberal Rights: Collected Papers 1981-1991*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 309-325