

There Is No Place Like Home: Revisiting Our Commitment to Housing the Poor

No housing program can be adequate or complete if it fails to provide for any substantial segment of our population. We can maintain neither a prosperous industry nor a prosperous nation if we do not bring better housing to more people.¹

- Pres. Harry S. Truman

Introduction

The sanctity of the home, along with the understanding that having a place to call home is an essential part of being human, has always been a core concept in American life. As a result, broader society as well as our government leaders have long understood that access to adequate housing is a basic tenet to living a productive and healthy life. When first conceptualized, public housing was created to provide this basic need to the most vulnerable in our communities. As housing of last resort for many families on the brink of economic collapse and devastation, public housing has provided shelter, safety, and the basic necessities of life throughout the years. Public housing represents our collective value system that housing — regardless of one's economic status — is such a vital component to our existence that safeguards must be established to ensure that adequate housing is available to all.

The Legacy of the New Deal: Housing for the Most Vulnerable

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's legacy is celebrated for its recognition of economic and social rights as necessary conditions for human advancement and civic participation.² New Deal programs — from the National Industrial Recovery Act, which authorized federal funding for low rent housing, to the U.S. Housing Act of 1937, which created the nation's first public housing program — demonstrated the government's commitment to ensuring adequate housing for all.³ President Roosevelt sought to "promote the general welfare of the Nation"⁴ by "remedying the unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions and the acute shortage of decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings for families of lower income."⁵ This federal commitment to adequate housing for everyone culminated in the Housing Act of 1949, which pledged to realize "as soon as feasible . . . the goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family."⁶ Subsequent administrations heeded this call.⁷

The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

- Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt¹¹

I am concerned about the whole man. I am concerned about what the people, using their government as an instrument and a tool, can do toward building the whole man, which will mean a better society and a better world.

- Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson¹²

President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society and its War on Poverty reverberated the New Deal's and larger society's demand for the recognition of the fundamental importance of adequate housing. During Johnson's administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was created, greatly expanding the number of public housing developments.⁸ Additionally, the Fair Housing Act of 1968 prohibited discrimination in public housing; while the Brooke Amendment regulated the rent paid by public housing

residents.⁹ These efforts taken together not only increased the stock of public housing but ensured the right to housing for the very poor. Through Great Society programs, by 1973 the United States had more than 1.5 million units of subsidized housing; compared to just 460,000 in 1961.¹⁰

Although government programs, including the New Deal and Great Society, could not escape the plague of

racism and racial discrimination infecting most aspects of American life at those times, these early legislative mandates and government programs had at their core the premise that housing is so integral a need that the federal government must play a role in ensuring that everyone has access to a decent place to live.

Even in 1990, when government commitment to housing the poor had already become very low, the U.S. Congress passed the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act. The Act states: "The objective of national housing policy shall be to affirm the long-established national commitment to decent, safe and sanitary housing for every American."¹³

Public Housing Provides Affordable Rental Units for Those Unable to Enter the Private Market

Public housing developments are communities where people live and raise their families. We are not just poor people living off the government. We are working people that raise our children and teach them values, sending them to school and church. We looked out for each other and loved each other. That's something they destroyed. There isn't a day that I don't think about my lost community.

*- Sharon Jasper
Former Resident of Demolished
St. Bernard Housing Development
in New Orleans, Louisiana*

Since the 1930s, national housing policy has focused on two main objectives: providing rental units for low income households and financing for middle income households to purchase homes in the private market.¹⁴ Public housing programs are designed to meet the first objective.

Although financed through HUD dollars, public housing is administered by local housing authorities, with state-appointed boards and professional staff. Residents include low income families, those with disabilities, and the elderly. **In fact, over 30% of public housing residents are elderly persons.**¹⁵ With over 1.2 million households in the United States living in public housing, it continues to assist countless families and individuals who would otherwise face homelessness, unsafe housing conditions or transient living.

¹⁶ In many instances, public housing has ensured that families remain intact.

Residents of public housing pay a monthly rent that is based on their income.¹⁷ As a housing alternative for those who have been shut out of the private market, there are no restrictions on the amount of time one can live in public housing. Residents may be required to leave only when affordable housing is available on the private market.¹⁸ Given the demand for affordable housing, the wait-list for public housing averages one to two years, and is often much longer.

Public housing developments are communities of families, neighbors, and friends. Some of the first developments were noted for their sound structures, green landscaping, and community spirit.¹⁹ In fact, early residents were proud of their community and viewed their placement in public housing as an opportunity to better themselves and their families.²⁰ Enthusiasm over public housing wasn't limited to its residents. Elected officials celebrated the opening of developments in their cities. In 1962, Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley gladly welcomed the first tenant to the Robert Taylor Homes.²¹

*Built in the 1950s and early 1960s and located in the heart of the black ghetto, large public housing developments ... held the hopes of an urban citizenry seeking to revitalize its neighborhoods ... public housing represented a demonstrable advance of ghetto dwellers in desperate need of habitable communities.*²⁴

*- Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh
Author of American Project*

In recent years, there has been a dramatic shift in the government's commitment to house the poor through public housing. In fact, public housing has come under severe attack by government forces. Its services have slowly been eroded and its units demolished by repressive policies and punitive legislative mandates. These measures appear to punish the very poor and working class communities the program was originally intended to benefit.

How Do Current Policies Threaten Our Tradition of Providing Housing for Society's Most Vulnerable?

Beginning in the 1980s, government officials abruptly departed from longstanding policies that recognized housing as a fundamental need.²² **Between 1980 and 1988, for instance, the Reagan administration decreased HUD's funding by 76%.**²³ Predictably, once the government chose to starve public housing communities of re-

sources, they suffered inevitable deterioration.²⁵ Cuts in HUD's funding has impacted the upkeep of public housing developments and the vital social services they provide to residents in neighborhoods with scarce resources.²⁶

Government abandonment of poor families that could not enter the private housing market became increasingly severe in subsequent administrations. Legislative mandates such as the Quality Work and Housing Responsibility Act, which conditioned housing on providing labor, and "One Strike and You're Out" mandate, as well as the Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere program, which has bulldozed thousands of homes, all worked together to push the poor out of more stable homes and into the predatory hands of slumlords or homeless shelters.

- **Forced Labor as a Condition for Housing**

Enacted in 1998, the **Quality Work and Housing Responsibility Act** (QWHRA) repealed federal rules that gave preference in public housing to the homeless, those who live in substandard housing, victims of domestic violence, and residents involuntarily displaced by redevelopment projects funded by HUD.²⁷ Consequently, public housing authorities are more likely to determine who will and will not be admitted into their developments on a basis entirely unrelated to need.

The constitution doesn't stop at the threshold of someone's apartment because they're in public housing. History will test our civilization by how it cares for those who don't possess as much.

*- John Derek Norvell, Ph.D.
Resident of Abraham Lincoln Housing Development
in New York, NY*

One of the most demeaning aspects of QWHRA is its labor requirement. Under this mandate, each adult resident in a household must perform at least 8 hours of compulsory, unpaid "community service" work per month, or risk non-renewal of the entire household's lease.²⁸ This requirement is in addition to the monthly rental payment residents make.²⁹ If one household member does not comply, then the entire household runs the risk of eviction. Local public housing administrators are in charge of administering the program. This includes notifying residents of exemptions to

QWHRA's labor requirement. Even public housing administrators and elected officials have opposed the regulation and expressed reluctance to carrying out the policy.³⁰ Families are now facing eviction due to noncompliance, which many times is the result of confusion over the program's exemptions.³¹

Although called community service, which often evokes traditional volunteer activities like improving the local community garden and reading to children at the local library, QWHRA's labor requirement has included such things as cleaning city parks, maintaining government sites, and performing other types of work that could arguably be qualified as compulsory labor.³² In typical community service requirements, participants often choose how to volunteer their time, and it becomes an empowering and enabling experience.

QWHRA's requirement is far more akin to forced labor, since it makes obligatory and specifically defined work a condition of keeping one's home. Moreover, this labor requirement has been selectively created for one community — public housing residents — and is not applied to any other housing subsidy.³³ Homeowners, for instance, receive tax deductions for their mortgage interest payments, but are not required to perform compulsory work for this government benefit. Imposing "community service" requirements on public housing residents similar to those used as punitive measures when one commits a crime or misdemeanor deems this community to be less than full citizens based on nothing more than where they live. It harms and punishes people for the very poverty the program is intended to alleviate.³⁴

- **One Strike and You're Homeless**

As part of QWHRA, the Clinton administration created a legislative mandate to deny individuals access to public housing if they had criminal records, and evict entire households if one household member or guest is arrested (but not necessarily convicted) of certain crimes and misdemeanors. The catch-phrase "One Strike and You're Out" means that public housing residents can be evicted **even if** they have no idea and are completely unaware of criminal activity that has taken place in their homes.

In effect, One Strike and You're Homeless policies throw whole families into homelessness irrespective of whether they are innocent of criminal activity. Indeed, arrest and prosecution is not needed to trigger an eviction. There is instead an administrative hearing during which witnesses are called and each side makes its case.³⁵ Individuals

and families that have been evicted from public housing under these policies are barred from visiting family and friends who still live in the community.³⁶ The One Strike policy is heavy-handed, allows few exceptions, and has been abused as a retaliatory measure against tenant activists working to improving conditions for their whole community.

"Everyone deserves safe housing, but [the One Strike] polic[y] yield[s] more misery and desperation than public safety,"

*- Corinne Carey
Human Rights Watch*

One Strike's most far-reaching mandate is its applicant screening process.³⁷ Housing authorities are encouraged to develop exclusion criteria which may be entirely unrelated to safety issues, for example, consumer credit checks and other qualifiers.³⁸ To ensure compliance with the mandate, federal funding and ratings are tied to whether local administrators have sufficiently adopted screening processes. Since those who try to access public housing have limited economic resources to begin with, credit checks appear designed to reject

countless needy applicants and to serve the exclusive function of reducing the waiting lists in order to obscure the painful shortages in public and affordable housing.

The One Strike policy and the screening process have been criticized for being overboard in practice, often evicting residents with minor or long-ago offenses that have no bearing on public safety, and denying housing to those who pose no threat to the community.³⁹

- **Bulldozing Communities**

Perhaps the most damaging of recent policy shifts has been the misnamed **Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere** program (H.O.P.E. VI).⁴⁰ Enacted in 1992, the program has led to the demolition of scores of public housing communities, followed by long or indefinite delays in the construction of replacement housing. In theory, the program was to create mix-income housing to replace distressed public housing developments. But the current policy does not guarantee one-for-one replacement for the units that are destroyed (and in fact ensures that there will be fewer units as it is currently implemented) or a right to return for residents. Instead, residents are often sent to other public or Section 8 housing in neighborhoods that are just as severely distressed as their original communities. This has resulted in the same and at times worse housing conditions than residents previously experienced making a mockery of the program's stated objectives to better the living conditions and quality of life of the residents.⁴¹ Since the inception of the program, 63,100 public housing units have been demolished and another 20,300 units are slated for demolition or redevelopment. Since the program does not require one-for-one replacement, studies suggest that less than 12% of those displaced from demolished units eventually move into the replacement housing.⁴²

Even where residents find new housing, the policy of bulldozing entire communities also has significant psychological and social impacts. Many public housing complexes house families and friends that have developed tight knit communities over decades. Thus, losing social cohesion and connection while also struggling with the inevitable stress and harms associated with poverty is one of the many abuses imposed by H.O.P.E. VI on poor families.

The Chicago Housing Authority demolished 25,000 units—over 200,000 people have been displaced. The demolitions have destroyed the economic, social and cultural networks of our community. Our community was made of families, and these families were dependent on these networks. So they've basically removed one of the key elements for social sustainability.

*- J.R. Fleming
Resident of Cabrini-Green
Housing Development
in Chicago, Illinois*

The Human Right to Housing

The human right to adequate housing ... applies to everyone [and] ... is of central importance for the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights.

*- UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
General Comment 4*

The human right to housing guarantees the right to live in security, peace, and dignity. This right must be provided to all persons, irrespective of income or access to economic resources. Human rights rejects a narrow view of housing as a commodity, wholly dependent on market forces. Instead, housing is viewed as a fundamental resource indispensable to ensuring human development and civic participation.

Policies such as QWHRA and H.O.P.E. VI violate at least three core components of the Human Right to Housing for public housing residents.⁴³

- **Security of Tenure.** Residents should possess a degree of security of tenure which guarantees protection against forced evictions, harassment, and other threats, including predatory redevelopment and displacement. HUD programs, namely H.O.P.E. VI and its lack of one-for-one replacement guarantees, directly contradict security of tenure principles as do One Strike policies that leave residents vulnerable to displacement and to the whims of arbitrary decision-making regarding their tenancy.
- **Right to Participation.** Governments must ensure that individuals and communities are able to take an active role in decisions that affect their right to housing. Decision-making on national housing policy, including QWHRA and H.O.P.E. VI, rarely includes meaningful participation by those who are most directly impacted. Additionally, resident councils—designed to represent the will of residents to housing administrators—often lack the resources and support that would make real participation possible.
- **Right to Dignity.** Governments must ensure that housing policies and laws do not violate the dignity of residents. QWHRA's labor requirement directly undermines the dignity of residents. Requiring one class of residents to perform service in order to receive a government benefit while others are not subjected to the same mandate for their benefits not only calls into question the motivation behind the requirement but directly attacks the integrity and dignity of public housing residents. Regarding demolitions, during the destruction of public housing communities there have been documented instances where the dignity and personal possessions of residents have not been respected. In New Orleans, contractors emptied apartments and discarded the personal property of residents, including articles of great sentimental and emotional value such as photographs and letters, as well as significant personal identification materials such as social security cards, without their knowledge or consent.

It would thus appear to the Committee that a general decline in living and housing conditions, directly attributable to policy and legislative decisions by States parties, and in the absence of accompanying compensatory measures, would be inconsistent with the obligations under the Covenant.

- UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment 4

Recommendations

In recent decades, the federal government has adopted policies that have led to deterioration and demolition of public housing communities. Current conditions in public housing, including high crime rates, high levels of unemployment, and limited educational achievement are dismal and unacceptable. But both historical and current experiences show us that providing public housing does not create or fuel these social problems, in fact when residents are displaced these outcomes worsen.⁴⁴ A commitment to healthy and stable public housing communities must address the myriad of challenges impacting residents today. Forced labor, draconian residency requirements, and demolishing communities will not fix issues of poverty, marginalization and social isolation, but rather further punish its victims. Policy solutions must adapt holistic approaches, which include some of the following key recommendations.

- **Resident Participation**

Improving public housing communities must include direct, active and effective participation from residents. Perhaps more than any other segment of the population, residents want to live in safe, productive public housing communities that contribute to larger society, and they understand first-hand the challenges and work it will take to get there. Residents should therefore be regarded as essential partners working alongside the government in transforming public housing. Unfortunately, too often in redevelopment projects the government treats the private sector as its only partner and discounts the vital role residents should have in decision-making. Efforts should be made to ensure that residents are engaged at the start of any redevelopment planning and continue to be actively engaged throughout the process.

- **Holistic Approaches**

The challenges facing public housing will not go away by merely making it harder for people to access this resource through harsh residency requirements or by destroying these communities. The obstacles public housing faces are the result of poverty, social exclusion, and lack of resources. Demolitions will not change these underlining factors. Transformative efforts must make social service programs a vital component of any redevelopment planning. Incorporating social needs into redevelopment plans will require additional thought and effort, including baseline surveys and indicators prior to redevelopment, plans that take into account these findings, and follow-up studies after resettlement. The social costs of not incorporating these measures are too high.

- **Social Needs over Corporate Profits**

Over the past several years there has been increased private sector investment in urban centers. Private sector speculation has contributed to the rise in private/public partnerships in the demolition and redevelopment of public housing communities. The social goal of providing housing to the most economically vulnerable should not be subordinated to corporate interests. We must caution against adopting strict free market models to communities that have been shut out of the market system. The government must be responsible to its role in administering public housing and ensuring affordability in the marketplace.

Conclusion

In 2003, census data reveal that 35.9 million Americans, 12.5% of the population, live at or below the official poverty line.⁴⁹ Families are finding it increasingly more difficult to meet their housing costs and needs. In these precarious economic times, the government should be pursuing policies that increase affordable and decent housing options not reduce them. For the past several decades, our government has moved away from our long-established commitment to the right to housing, and it's time we return to our foundational values. Safe and decent housing is a basic need for functioning in our democratic society and a fundamental human right.

Holistic Solutions to Housing Poor Communities

In 2007, the Brazilian government initiated the Growth Acceleration Program (PAC).⁴⁵ The program is designed to improve the country's infrastructure and specifically make improvements to life in the *favelas*. These communities have been plagued by drug activity, gang violence, and chronic unemployment.

Through small-scale infrastructure projects the government hopes to rebuild the communities and promote social advancement.⁴⁶ The changes will allow residents better access to basic services, including job opportunities and access to commercial credit.⁴⁷ Rebuilding projects will target improving homes, constructing better roads, improving sanitation services, and providing access to water and electricity. Community residents will be employed on the projects; thus, addressing high unemployment levels.⁴⁸

ENDNOTES

1. "Truman Stresses Need for Housing"; *New York Times*; March 10, 1947; <http://select.nytimes.com/mem/archive/pdf?res=F30815FF3F5A147B93C3A81788D85F438485F9>.
2. The Second Bill of Rights: FDR's Unfinished Revolution and Why We Need It More Than Ever; Cass R. Sunstein.
3. National Recovery Act; <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=66>; See also U.S. Housing Act of 1937 as Amended by the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 as of 3/2/1999; <http://www.nhl.gov/offices/ogc/usha1937.pdf>.
4. Roosevelt, Franklin D. State of the Union Address, available at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=16518>. (January 11, 1944).
5. See *Ibid.*
6. The Housing Act of 1949, 42 U.S.C.A. § 1441.
7. In his 1960 Presidential Platform, John F. Kennedy included a major public housing program as one of his platform goals. "U.S. Housing Aid Put to Nominees"; *New York Times*; September 28, 1960; <http://select.nytimes.com/mem/archive/pdf?res=FA0C14FB38541A7A93CBAB1782D85F448685F9>.
8. "Questions and Answers about HUD"; <http://www.hud.gov/about/qaintro.cfm>.
9. Fair Housing Act; <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/housing/title8.htm>; See also "United States Housing Act of 1937"; <http://www.answers.com/topic/united-states-housing-act-of-1937>.
10. Ford Foundation: Affordable Housing; <http://www.fordfound.org/archives/item/0176/text/034>.
11. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Second Inaugural Address; <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres50.html>.
12. Quotations from Lyndon Baines Johnson; <http://www.poemhunter.com/quotations/famous.asp?people=Lyndon%20Baines%20Johnson&p=5>.
13. Pub. L. No. 101-625, 104 Stat. 4079 (1990).
14. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Programs; <http://www.huduser.org/resources/hudprgs/ProgOfHUD06.pdf>.
15. "Public Housing Image Versus Facts"; <http://www.huduser.org/periodicals/ushmc/spring95/spring95.html>.
16. "HUD's Public Housing Program"; <http://www.hud.gov/renting/phprog.cfm>.
17. See *Ibid.*
18. See *Ibid.*
19. American Project: The Rise and Fall of a Modern Ghetto; Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh; See also The Politics of Public Housing; Rhonda Y. Williams.
20. See *Ibid.*
21. See *Ibid.*, Venkatesh.
22. "A New Push for Public Housing"; *New York Times*; <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B0DEED7123BF937A25755C0A961948260&scp=98&sq=public%20housing&st=cse>; See also "Public Housing Bill Approved by House"; *New York Times*; <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B0DE6D8113FF931A25755C0A961948260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=1>; See also "Panel Recommends Sale of Public Housing"; *New York Times*; <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B0DE6D81F3DF932A25752C1A961948260&scp=8&sq=public%20housing&st=cse>.
23. See Note 19, Venkatesh.
24. *Ibid.* at 7 and 8.
25. "Public Housing Bill Approved by House"; *New York Times*; <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B0DE6D8113FF931A25755C0A961948260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=1>. New York City's Housing Authority—the largest in the country with 408,00 residents—recently announced its decision to cut programs at hundreds of community centers, senior centers and recreational, job-training and educational programs across the New York City due to budgetary constraint; "Public Housing Residents Face Loss of Their Community Centers"; *New York Times*; <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/17/nyregion/17center.html?scp=1&sq=%22public%20housing%22%20+%20%22budget%20cuts%22&st=cse>; See also "Public Housing Shows Its Age; A Crisis of Advancing Repairs and Declining Money"; *New York Times*; <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9800E5DF1139F932A25752C1A961958260&scp=65&sq=public%20housing&st=cse>.
26. See Note 19, Venkatesh.
27. "Summary of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (Title V of P.L. 105-276)"; <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/phr/about/titlev.pdf>; See also "Placed in the Discard Pile"; *Houston Press News*; <http://www.houstonpress.com/1999-10-28/news/placed-in-the-discard-pile&page=101>. In the article Ernest Etuk, interim director of Houston's Housing Authority acknowledged that QHWRA would "drastically reduce the chances that the roughly 17,000 families on the agency's waiting lists will receive assistance."
28. See *Ibid.*
29. See *Ibid.*
30. New York City Councilmember Charles Baron noted: "As long as people meet the requirements [for public housing], there shouldn't be a free labor requirement. This is setting up a catastrophe, a condition where you're going to create homelessness."; "The Community Service Requirement In Public Housing"; *Gotham Gazette*; <http://www.gothamgazette.com/article/housing/20040109/10/829>; See also "Public Housing Residents and the New Legislation: How does the law public housing law affect me?"; <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/phr/about/resident.pdf>.
31. Mark Okazaki of the Seattle Housing Authority quipped: "That's a fair deal right there. To call it volunteerism, and yet it's a condition of staying to keeping your housing, it's not really volunteerism. It's forced work."; "Public Housing Tenants Evicted If Unable to Meet Volunteer Rule"; http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/social_issues/july-dec06/housing_10-05.html.
32. Residents must perform community service until the age of 62 unless an exemption applies. Residents that are members of the armed forces must perform community service once their military services have ended. "Summary of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (Title V of P.L. 105-276)"; <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/phr/about/titlev.pdf>; See also "Public Housing Tenants Evicted If Unable to Meet Volunteer Rule"; http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/social_issues/july-dec06/housing_10-05.html.
33. In commenting on the community service requirement, New York City Councilmember Margarita Lopez noted: "If the government wanted to create a program for people to get involved in the community ... that would be fine, but it is ludicrous to legislate volunteerism." Additionally, U.S. Congressman Charles Rangel tried to block its passage; "Community Service Required for Public-Housing Tenants"; *The Independent*, Steven Wishnia; <http://www.independent.org/2004/05/13/community-service-required-for-public-housing-tenants/>; See also "Law Requires Public Housing Tenants to Perform Service"; *New York Times*; <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B0DE0DB123CF937A15750C0A9679C8B63&scp=5&sq=%22public%20housing%22%20+%20%22community%20service%22&st=cse>.
34. See *Ibid.*
35. "No Second Chance for People with Criminal Records Denied Public Housing"; Human Rights Watch; <http://hrw.org/reports/2004/usa1104/usa1104.pdf>.
36. "Barred from Public Housing, Even to See Family"; *The New York Times*; http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/01/nyregion/01banned.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

37. "Placed in the Discard Pile"; *Houston Press News*; <http://www.houstonpress.com/1999-10-28/news/placed-in-the-discard-pile&page=101>. May Cynthia was denied housing in Houston's public housing because of a default payment on a student loan for which she had been making payments.
38. See *Ibid.*
39. See Note 35.
40. "About HOPE VII"; <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/hope6/about/>.
41. See *Ibid.*
42. On August 13, 2008, Congresswoman Maxine Waters and Congressman Barney Frank sent a letter to HUD Secretary Steven Preston demanding that HUD immediately implement a moratorium on all demolitions and dispositions of public housing, citing the disastrous effects of the H.O.P.E. VI policy on communities; http://www.nesri.org/media_updates/Waters-Frank%20Letter%20to%20Preston.pdf. Through a competitive bid process, public housing authorities may be allocated up to \$50 million to "rehabilitate" developments. At the inception of its enactment, H.O.P.E. VI required administrators to replace each unit razed. However, after a 1995 repeal administrators are now able to tear down units without having to adhere to one for one replacement. This has led the way for public/private partnerships in the redevelopment of public housing. Partnering with private developers was made easier for administrators with passage of the "Public/Private Partnerships for the Mixed-Finance Development of Public Housing Units", and subsequent legislation that significantly rewrote federal underwriting criteria to accommodate the production of mixed-income developments.
43. The Human Right to Adequate Housing includes 7 Core Components; the Components can be found in General Comment 4 on the Right to Adequate Housing; <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/IHRIP/circle/gencom4.htm>.
44. "American Murder Mystery"; *Atlantic Monthly*; July/August issue; <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200807/memphis-crime>.
45. "Lula's Brazilian Growth Acceleration Program: The Best that Government Funding Can Buy?"; Council on Hemispheric Affairs; <http://www.coha.org/2008/06/lula%E2%80%99s-brazilian-growth-acceleration-program-the-best-that-government-funding-can-buy/>.
46. See *Ibid.*
47. See *Ibid.*
48. See *Ibid.*
49. U.S. Census Press Release; http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/002484.html.