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Armando Porras
Utah State University

Aaron Wyatt
Utah State University

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The Urban Prison: Socioeconomic Vortexes in Latino Neighborhoods

Armando Porras
Utah State University

Aaron Wyatt
Utah State University

Abstract

This research shows how metropolitan cities throughout the United States are continuously impacting the lives of ethnic minorities.

In the United States, Latina/o individuals have been born into socioeconomic vortexes. In other words, they have grown up in areas where secure jobs have disappeared and a variety of other factors force them to live in damaged communities that do not foster economic and social progression.

By analyzing several works of literature written by Latina/o authors who lived in barrios that faced these challenges, as well as research addressing crime and the lack of law enforcement in marginalized neighborhoods, we have come to several conclusions. Primarily, there have been purposeful decisions to abandon Latino urban spaces by removing public services and neglecting educational needs.

In addition, individuals as well as corporations that offer secure and legitimate jobs have coordinated a systematic departure from low-income Latino neighborhoods. All these factors contribute to the socioeconomic vortex previously mentioned and inflict substantial psychological and sociological harm and economic hardship on the families living in these areas.

Latina/o Urban Literature



Theoretical Framework

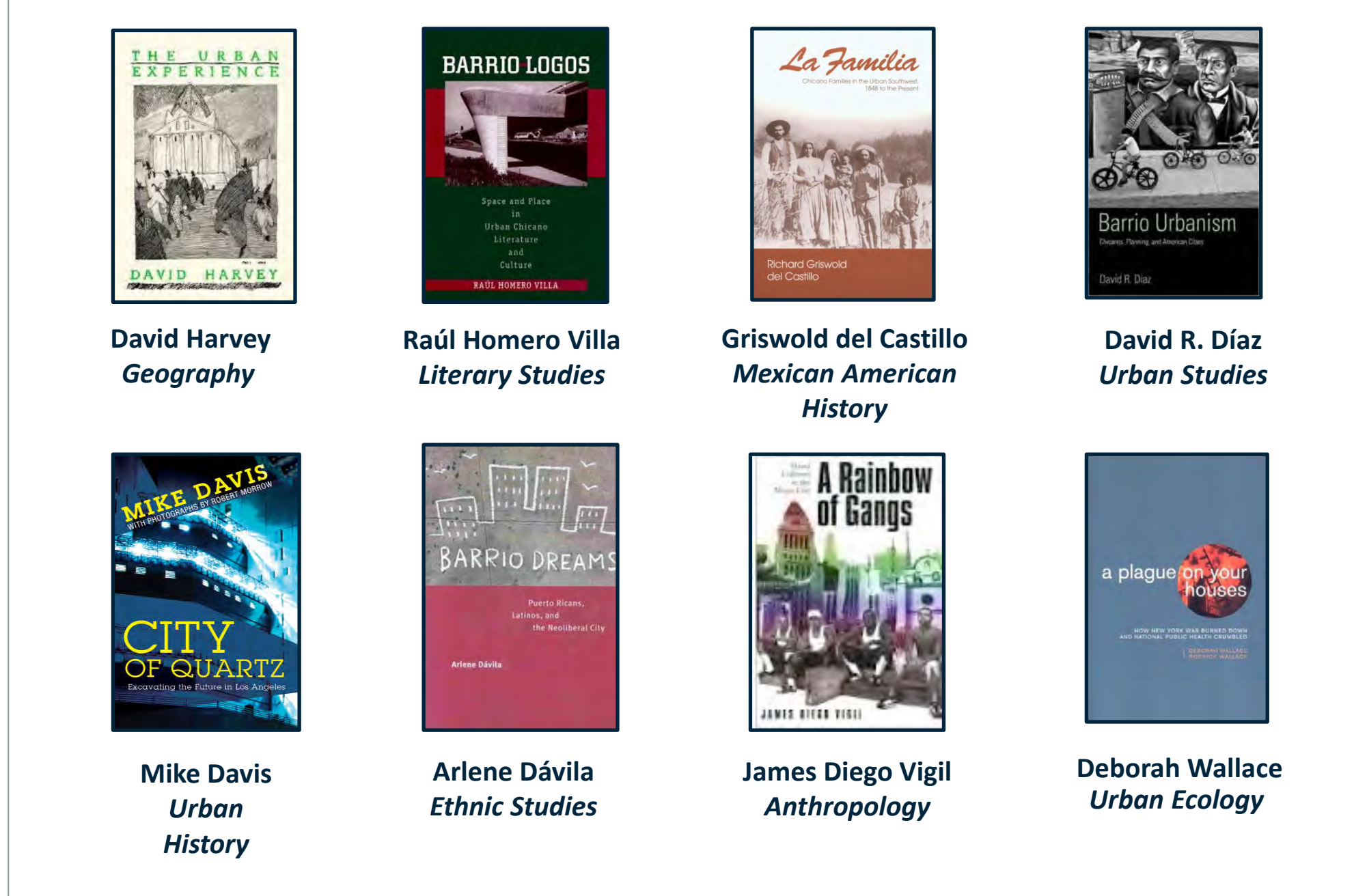
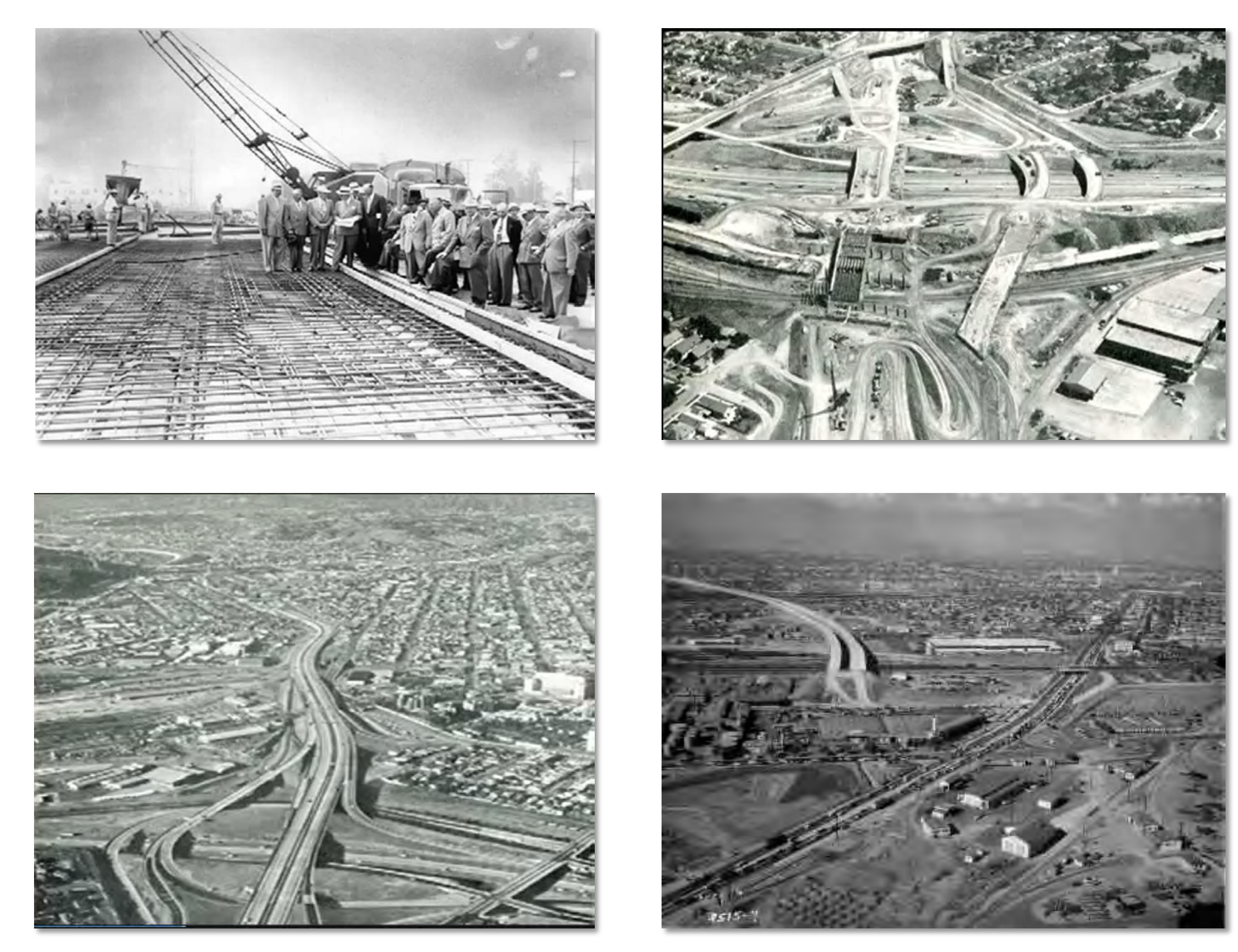
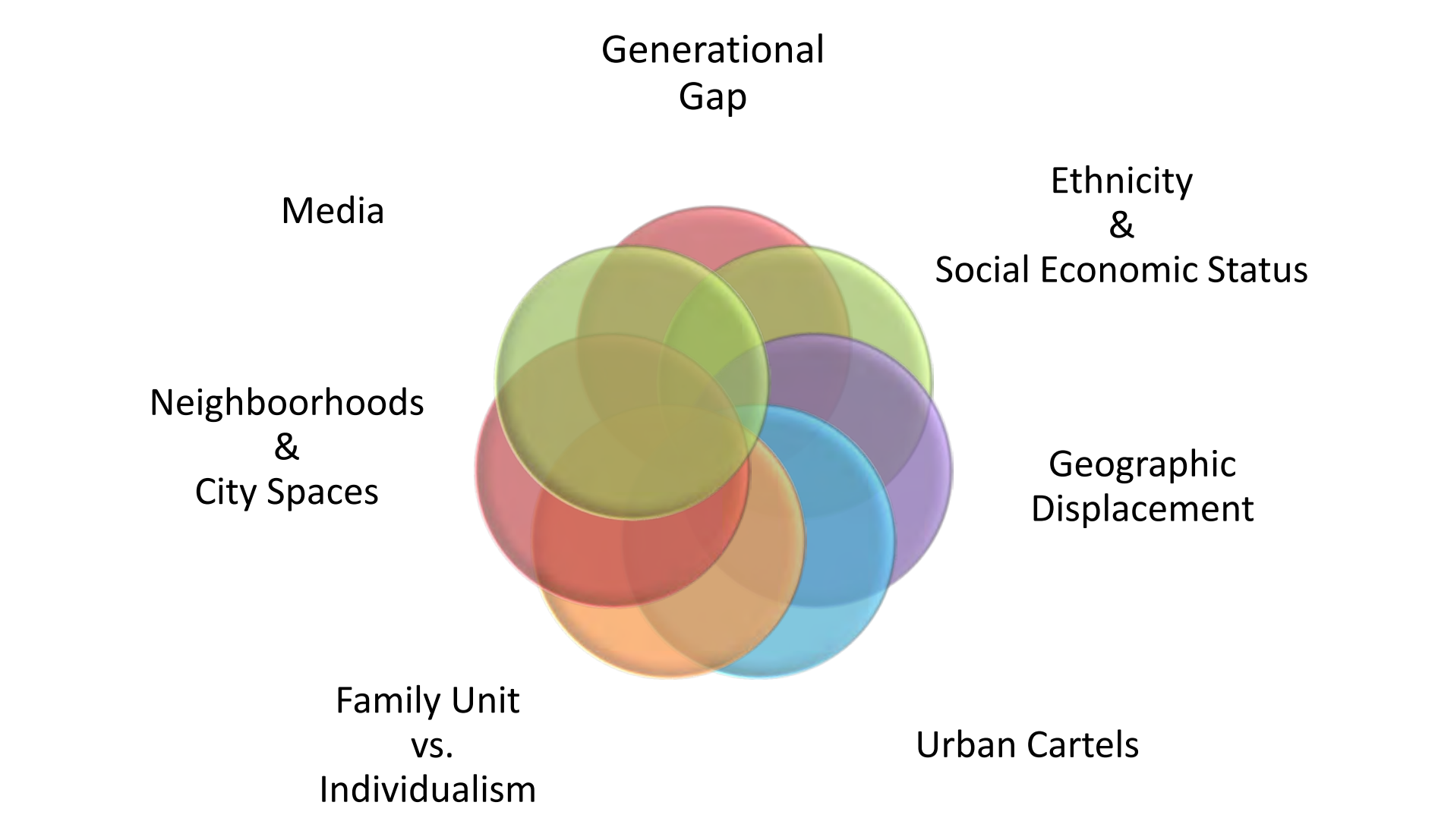


Figure 1 – The Latino Urban Experience and images depicting effects of urban prison



Boyle Heights, California

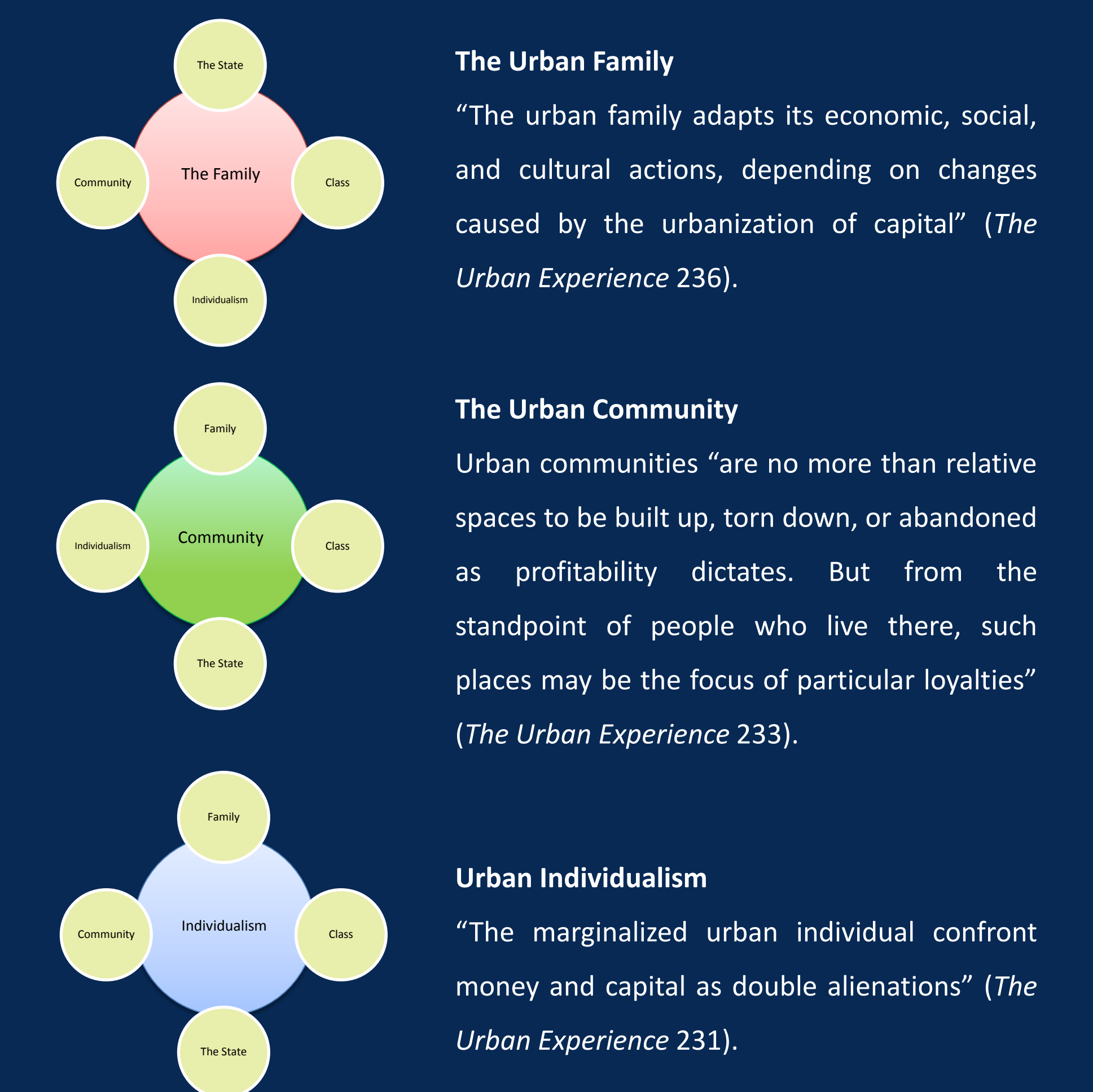


Spanish Harlem, New York



Tucson, Arizona

Figure 2 - The Urban Experience



Conclusion

The community became urbanized when its members began to mirror the destruction of the environment and when they began to see themselves as wage workers.

Future Investigation: A possible solution to the socioeconomic vortexes is to interrupt the repetitive cycle of violence and poverty by removing families from these deteriorating neighborhoods and relocating them to non-urbanized communities that foster prosperity.

Study conducted with assistance from USU Assistant Professor of Spanish, Dr. Crescencio López-González.

