

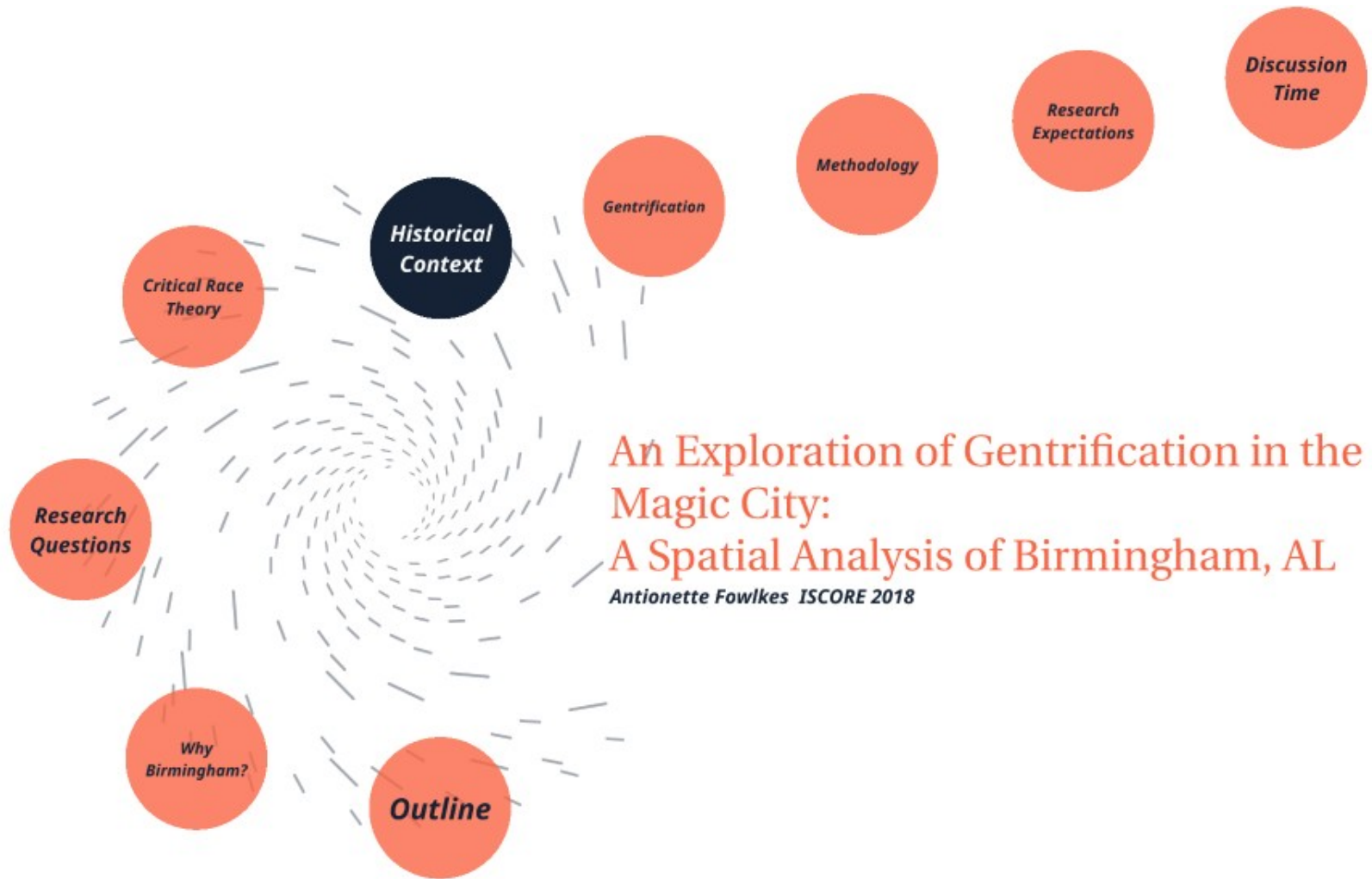
## ***Outline***

- Gentrification Pre-Assessment
  - Introduction (Abstract)
  - Why Birmingham, Alabama
    - Research Questions
      - Hypothesis
  - Historical Context of *The Magic City*
    - Gentrification
  - Research Expectations
  - Methodology
  - Discussion

***Pre-  
Assessment***

# ***Pre-Assessment***

1. What is gentrification?
2. Who is Ruth Glass?
3. What is Critical Race Theory?
4. What is "The Magic City"?
5. How many phases are a part of the gentrification process?
6. What is displacement?
7. True or False: There are 4 types of displacement?
8. True or False: Gentrification increases crime rates?
9. True or False: Gentrification creates diversity.
10. True or False: Gentrification is an economic, cultural, political, social and institutional phenomenon



## ***Why Birmingham?***

- Most studies of gentrification focus on **large global cities** like New York, London, etc. **Mid-sized** regional cities are overlooked.
- **Few studies** on Birmingham include spatial combinations using socioeconomic changes to capture neighborhood changes from 1980 to 2010
- **Birmingham is home!**

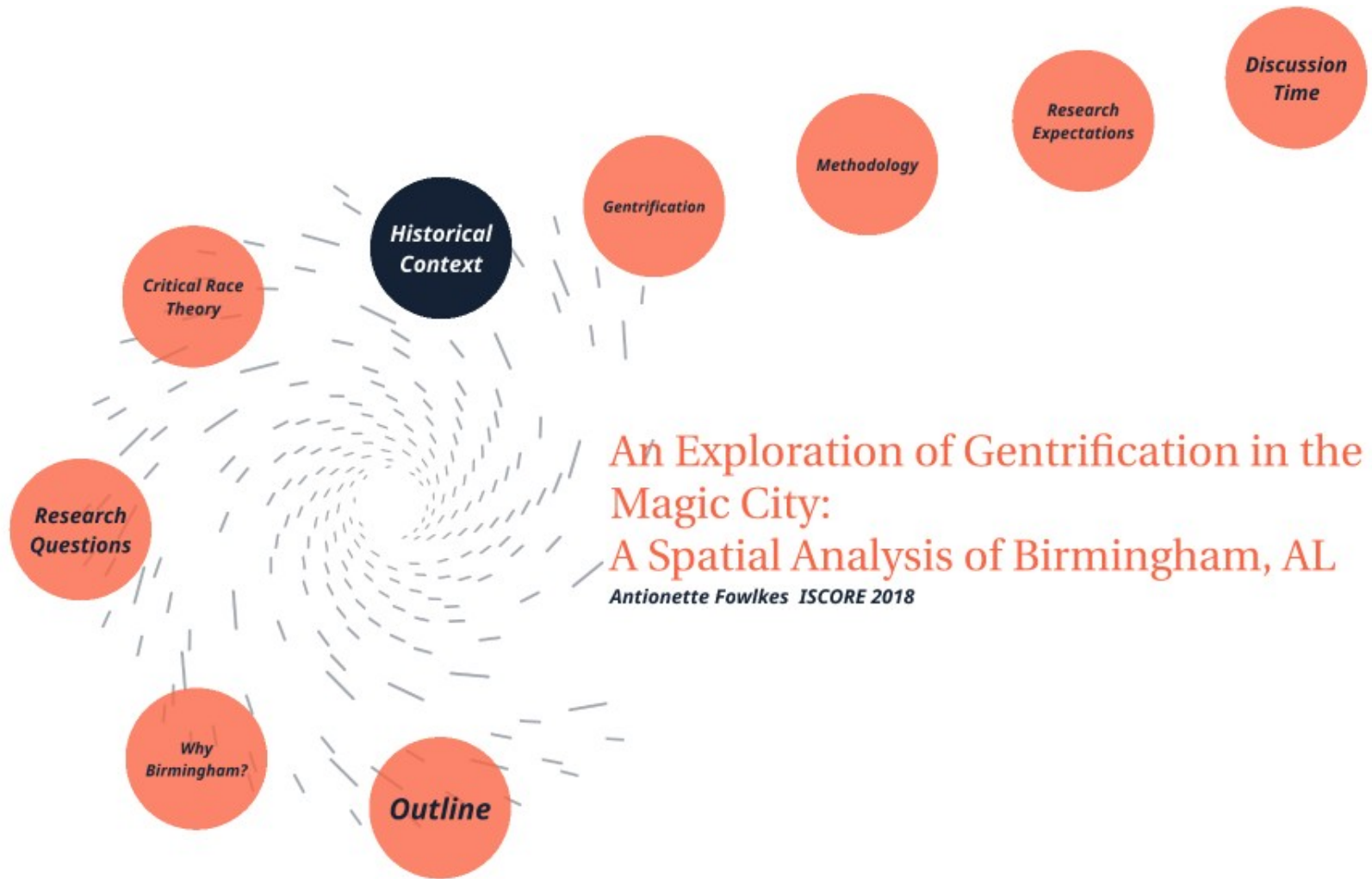
***Abstract***

# ***Abstract***

Birmingham, Alabama, once the most **segregated city** in the nation, is now experiencing an **economic revival** driven by **capital reinvestment** and an **influx of high-income residents**. This has resulted in the **displacement** of some low-income groups, many of them minority. These **physical** and **social changes** suggest the ongoing gentrification of the city. My **goal** in this study is to **explore the processes** that have led to this change through the lens of **critical race theory**. I will analyze the city's **socioeconomic characteristics** and **transportation trends** from **1980-2010** and explore how **changing neighborhoods** impact, and are impacted by, access to public transportation.

Using a case study approach, I will:

(1) provide **historical context** of the city; (2) ascertain **changes in socioeconomic characteristics** associated with gentrification in minority neighborhoods; (3) determine the **economic development** strategies at work in the urban core; and (4) utilize **transportation data** from 1980-2010 to visualize changes in public transportation networks and how this relates to socioeconomics.



## ***Research Questions***

- (1) What is the **percentage** of neighborhoods that have experienced gentrification in Birmingham from 1980-2010?
- (2) To what **extent** are **neighborhoods** experiencing gentrification with regards to socio-economic characteristics and public transportation?
- (3) What is the city's **economic growth strategy** that will create neighborhood gentrification?
- (4) Are gentrified and potential gentrifiable neighborhoods increasing or decreasing in **public transportation ridership**?

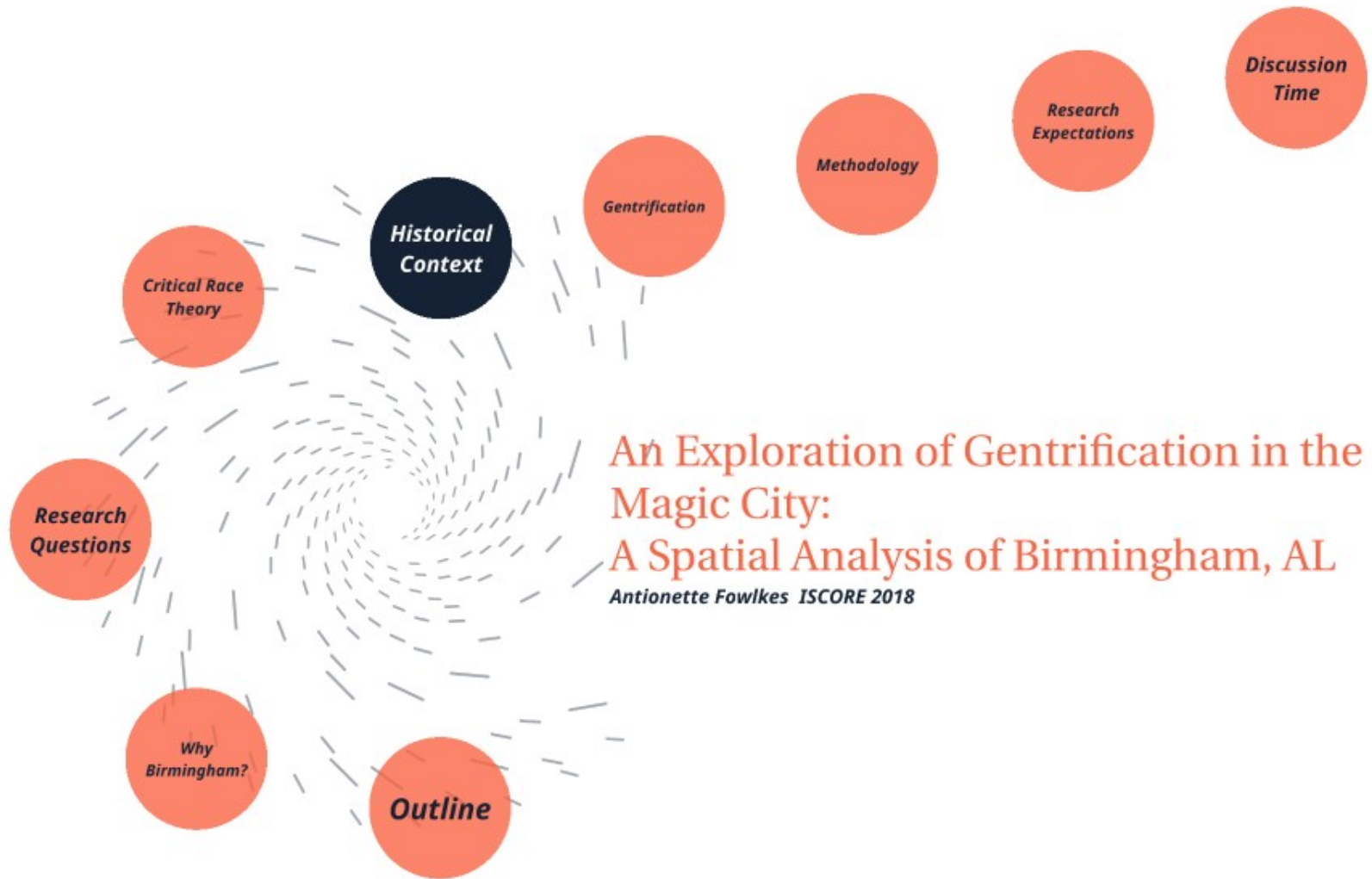
***Hypothesis***



# *Hypothesis*

I hypothesize that by focusing on a single city, we can;

- (1) identify a **relationship** between socioeconomic characteristics
- (2) identify if **access** to **public transportation** and gentrification in the urban core and neighborhoods closer to transportation lines saw or will see **reduced** numbers in **ridership** and
- (3) identify what and if communities are facing public **transportation barriers** regarding **allocation of funding** received by the city to the Birmingham Transit Authority to meet the needs of communities



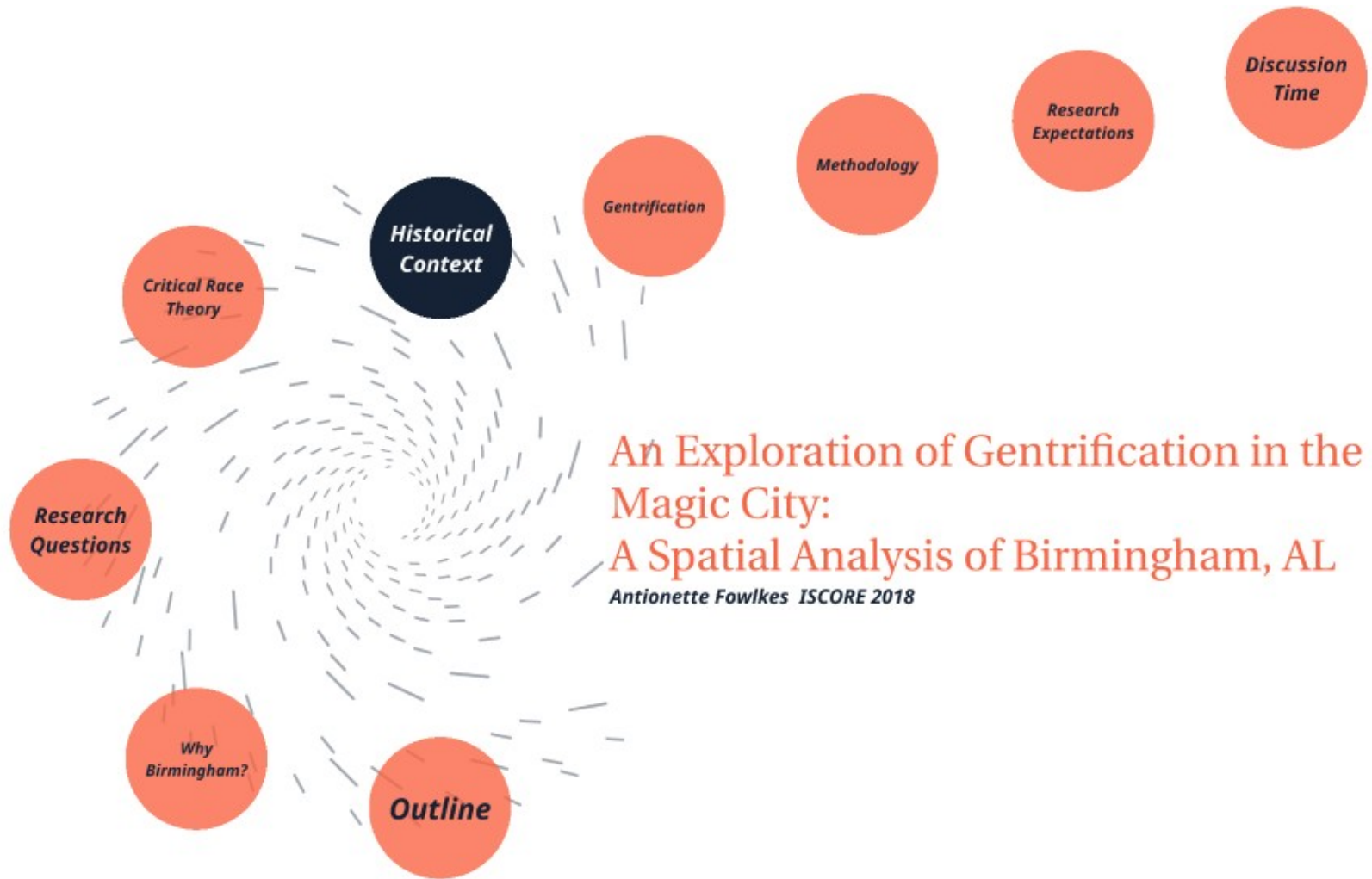
## ***Critical Race Theory***

- Critical race theory (CRT) is a **lens** to view the ways in which **race** and **racial structures** impact society
- Initially **utilized in legal studies**, CRT has been extended to areas such as education, sociology and women studies
- Purpose introduce some of the **tenets of CRT** to the discussion of gentrification, as it represents a paradigm shift in the discussion about race and racism in communities

***Critical  
Race Theory  
continued***

# ***Critical Race Theory continued***

- The basic CRT model **consists of five elements**: Counter-storytelling
- Focuses on the **racialized, gendered, and classed** experiences of **communities of color** and offers a transformative method for examining racial/ethnic, gender, and class **discrimination**





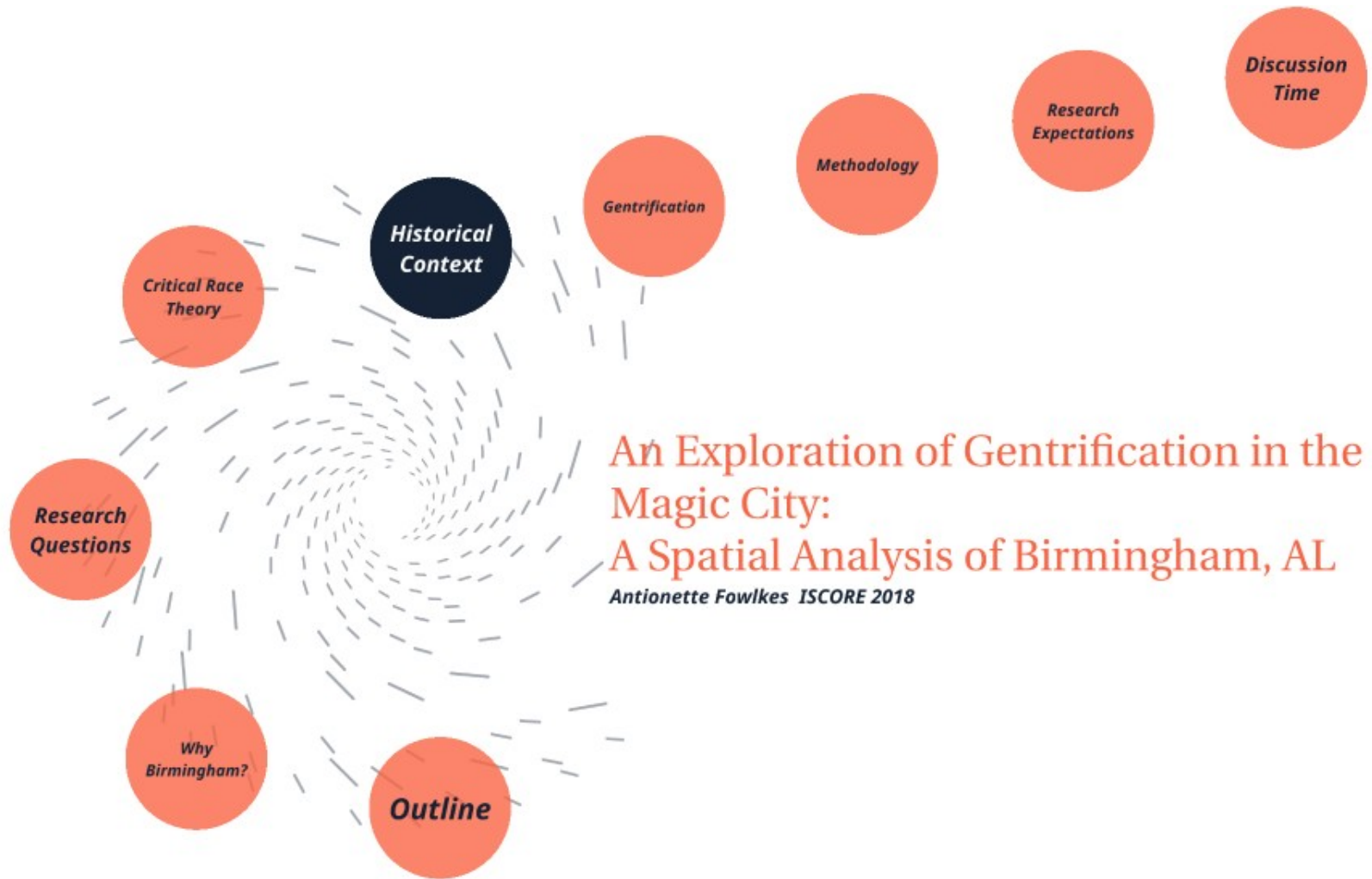
# ***Historical Context***

***Birmingham  
, Alabama***



## *Birmingham, Alabama*







# Gentrification

- Coined by British sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964 after the observation of **social class transformation** in London
- Gentrification is an **inexact concept** and often **difficult to detect** and measure
- Gentrification is **felt and seen** in multiple ways such as **political, socioeconomic, demographic, cultural, and economic**



Definition

Gentrification  
in America

Causes of  
Gentrification

Stages of  
Gentrification

Results of  
Gentrification

Impacts:  
Minority & Low  
Income Groups

Geographic  
Information  
Systems (GIS)

## Definition

*Journal of Urban Health* defines gentrification as :

*“reflects **growth in affluence** in places that is connected with changes in the **local infrastructure, housing cost** and availability, and the potential **displacement** of long-term residents who were often of **lower social status.**”*



## ***Gentrification in America***

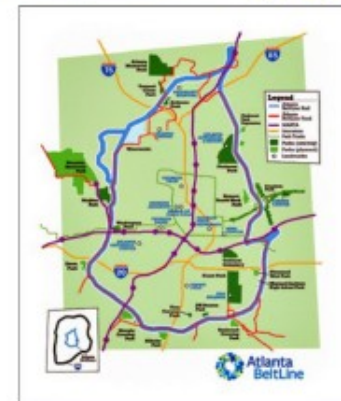
- Changes are **playing out across** parts of **urban America**
- New **class of affluent residents** moving into underinvested and **predominately-poor communities** are these areas followed by the demands of development and **housing price increase** that displace “neighborhood pioneers”
- **Growing dilemma** for many American communities such as Atlanta, GA, & Durham, NC

***Atlanta  
Beltline  
Project***

***Durham  
, NC***

## Atlanta Beltline Project

- 22-miles of mixed-used pedestrian transit trails around the outskirts of the city (4.8 Billion)
- Goal is that the trail will help with **make Atlanta greener** and reduce its traffic problems
- ATL Beltline **increasing housing values** in predominantly low-income African American neighborhoods.
- **1 out of 4 people** in Atlanta are paying half their income on housing
- Without intervention, it will lead to the **economic** and possibly **racial re-segregation** of the city as well as racial divides in the city of Atlanta, through the lack of **affordable housing** associated with the growing Beltline



## ***Durham, NC***

- Predominantly African American city that experienced **abandonment** and **disinvested** over a decade ago
- Durham's historic African American **Walltown** neighborhood, just east of Duke University's campus, has experienced demographic and socioeconomic changes
- Community demographics once comprised of men and women who worked **service jobs at Duke University** have shifted
- Walltown is **prime real estate** because of its proximity to downtown and the University
- Creates **opportunities for certain socioeconomic groups** to maximize these opportunities



## Causes of Gentrification

# Causes of Gentrification

- Begins with the “**disinvestment** in certain central cities, disinvestment paralleling local investment and further exacerbated by the financial dynamics of construction and land interest” (Neil Smith 1979)
- Simply not a facet of **capital accumulation** of cities through the purchasing of buildings by affluent households or by intermediaries but rather it is a form of **organic social formation** (Hartman 1979, Sumka 1979, LeGates and Hartman 1981)
- “ Rents are cheap, the **location** may hold historical and **emotional significance**, there may be **spatial advantages** regarding private and public services for reproduction and consumption, or **employment opportunities** may be nearby” (Beauregard)
- **Gentrifiers** reproduction and consumption take on new directions such as choosing to pursue an urban lifestyle rather than a suburban lifestyle



## ***Causes of Gentrification***

- **"Afamilia household"** in American cities is becoming less prevalent
- **Historically transformations** in the industrial and occupational structure of the United States brought about the reshaping of capital and economic changes in declining cities (Bluestone and Harrison 1982: 140-90).
- **Shift in the demand for manufacturing jobs** to personal service, administrative, governmental and professional occupations has reshaped the demographics of cities to suburban life
- **Increasing cost** in metropolitan areas rising energy cost, increased operating cost of automobiles and transit systems are part of the decision-making

## ***Stages of Gentrification***

- Phase 1 of the process according to **Phillip L. Clay** states that a **small group** of people move into an area and renovate their properties
- Phase 2 creates an opportunity for similar individuals to purchase property within the neighborhood and begin fixing up their property. **Subtle increase** in movement to the community creates indirect promotion of the area, which garners the attention of **real estate agents**. Often **minimal displacement** occurs in this phase as some vacant housing becomes scarce

***Stages  
continued***



## ***Stages continued***

- Phase 3 is a **crucial phase** because it garners the attention of the media and public. In phase three, **physical improvements** become visible and general improvements **increase housing prices** in the area that create displacement
- Phase 4 consists of more middle and upper-middle-class residents moving into the area who are from the business and **professional middle class**. During this phase of the process, **displacement affects everyone**, not only renters but also homeowners as they are faced with increased mortgage payments.



## Results of Gentrification



- Beaugard, the ideology of gentrification focuses on the **image of the city** and its neighborhoods that are manipulated over the years to encourage investment later down the road
- Gentrification results in the **uneven development** of metropolitan land markets” (Beaugard)
- Decreasing **“affordability** of housing in these neighborhoods has raised concerns surrounding the residential displacement of existing residents and the lack of affordable housing for potential new movers” (Fouch, 2012)

## ***Impacts: Minority & Low Income Groups***

- Unfairly displaces the **marginalized groups**
- Displacement as defined by **George and Eunice Grier** happens when any household is forced to move from its residence by conditions that affect the dwelling or its immediate surroundings, and
  - 1) are beyond the household's **reasonable ability to control** or prevent
  - 2) occur despite the household's having met all **previously imposed conditions** of occupancy
  - 3) make continued occupancy by that household **impossible, hazardous, or unaffordable**

***Impacts:  
Minority & Low  
Income Groups***

***Impacts:  
Displacement***



## ***Impacts: Minority & Low Income Groups***

- Glaeser, Kahn and Rappaport year 2000 census tract data, shows that the average poverty rate for people living within 25 miles from a Central Business District is 11.7%
- Average poverty rate for people living **zero to ten miles from the CBD is 14.5%**
- People living **10 to 25 miles from the CBD, the average poverty rate is 8.3%**
- In **2000**, 19.9 percent of the population in the central cities of Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) lived in poverty
- In **2000** 7.5 percent of the suburban population was poor
- Substantial rural poverty, however, the **poor live closer to the city center** than the rich

## ***Impacts: Displacement***

- Rowland Atkinson recognized that displacement resulting from gentrification is **notoriously difficult to measure** and trace to the degree that gentrification literature has moved away from even attempting to document it
- **Types of Displacement** that often occur in cities takes on two forms: physical and economic.
  - **Physical displacement** is when property owners cut off heat in a building, thereby forcing the occupants to move out.
  - **Economic displacement** is when the property owner raises the rent beyond the occupants' ability to pay, and forces them to move.

***Displacement  
cont.***

***Impacts:  
Transportation***

*Displacement  
cont.*

## ***Displacement cont.***

- **UCLA study** of displacement conducted in the 1980s generated widely **varying estimates** of how many people are displaced by gentrification
- 1982 study found:
  - **1%** of all Americans
  - **5%** of families
  - **8.5%** of urban families displaced 1970-1977
    - Causes **eviction, public action, sale or reoccupation, or the changing state of their neighborhood**
- 1983 study found that **23%** of residents were displaced due to eviction, increased rent

## ***Displacement cont.***

- Vigdor 2001 study found **heightened housing turnover** in gentrifying neighborhoods
- Freeman 2009 found that gentrifying neighborhoods are becoming more **racially diverse** by tracking neighborhood change from 1970-2000
- Residents were displaced from 1970-2000, gentrifying neighborhoods were generally more **diverse** when it came to **income, race, and education** as opposed to non-gentrifying neighborhoods

***Displacement  
cont.***

## ***Displacement cont.***

- Mckinnish 2010 found that the impact of gentrification on **black residents** varies based on **level of education**
- Examining around 15,000 **census tracts** in 64 metros from 1990-2000
- **One-third** of the increase in income among gentrifying neighborhoods during this period came from the progress of this specific demographic
- **Negative effect** on less educated black households, by pushing those who did not complete **high school** out of gentrifying neighborhoods

***Displacement  
cont.***



## ***Displacement cont.***

- 2014 Mahmoudi found that for every gentrified neighborhood across 51 U.S. metro areas, 10 others remained poor and 12 formerly stable neighborhoods fell into **concentrated disadvantage**
- 2014 Harvard study found that the gentrification **process continues** for neighborhoods with over 35 percent of **white residents**, and either slows or stops if the neighborhood is 40 percent **black residents**
- **Reality Check:**
  - Displaced are getting pushed out of working class neighborhoods that are “**good enough**” to attract people and investment, while the **poorest** and **most vulnerable** neighborhoods remain mired in **persistent poverty** and **concentrated disadvantage**

## ***Impacts: Transportation***

- Urban development **returns to cities**, neighborhoods near the central business districts
- **Emerging issues:** gentrification **displacement** of low-income minority groups and their **accessibility** to public transportation and public services
- Public transportation, a **crucial component** of a city's transportation network
- “ **Enables the mobility and flow of people and goods that make cities livable and ...shapes and constrains opportunity and socio-spatial relations into the built environment. In many places, public transportation is an instrument of power, dominance, and social control, entrenching the privileges of the affluent and the disadvantages of working people into the built environment (Graham and Marvin, 2001)**”

## ***Impacts: Transportation***

## ***Impacts: Health***

- **Thomas Waters**, a housing policy analyst at Community Service Society states

“that on the one hand, **gentrification can trigger rising rents** that threaten long-term residents’ ability to stay in their homes and neighborhoods. Meanwhile on the other hand, **rising rents can make it hard to leave**. If your apartment is infested with mold or it’s not adequately heated or there are vermin, moving is something you need to do for your health” however this is not something that all poor and low-income people can do”

- Displacement from gentrification health related issues according to the Center for Disease Control reports that there are quantifiable public health problems that can be linked to displacement and gentrification
- **Pre-term Birth and Gentrification Study (2008-2010)** reveal an association between gentrification and pre-term birth
- **High gentrification** adversely associated with preterm birth for African Americans whereas for Whites it was protective in regards to pre-term labor
- Provides evidence that **neighborhood level economic transition** has effects on pre-term birth and has differential effects on race/ethnicity

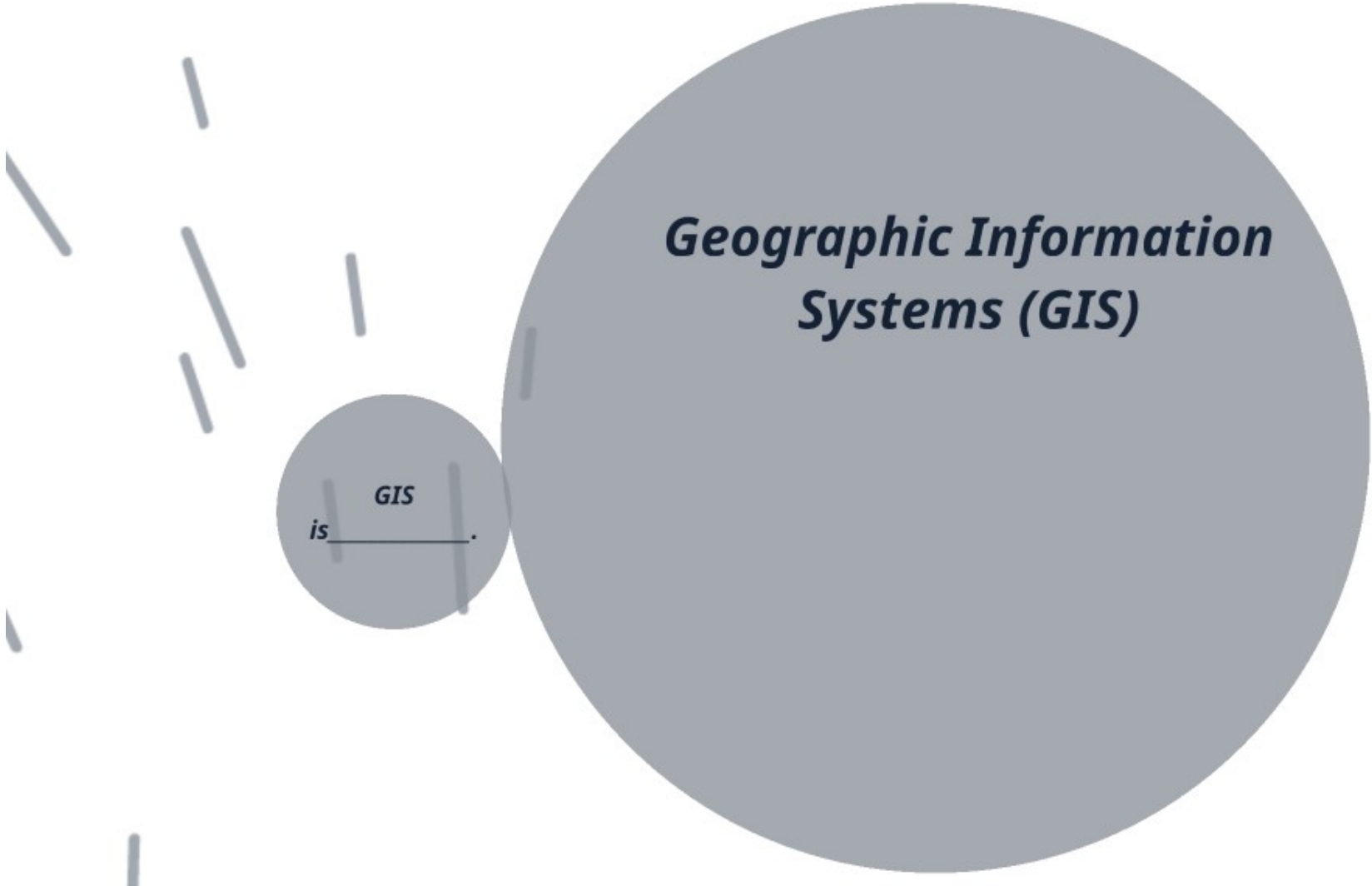
## ***Impacts : Crime***

## ***Impacts: Crime***

- Urban **crime rates decrease** not because of gentrification
- **Covington and Taylor study** shows the negative relationship between crime and gentrification
- **Larceny and robbery** increased across the country

Pattern Explanations:

1. Wealthier residents are seen as **lucrative targets** for burglars
2. Crime thrives on **instabilty** and **anonymity** and **weaker social ties**



# ***Geographic Information Systems (GIS)***

*GIS*

*is*

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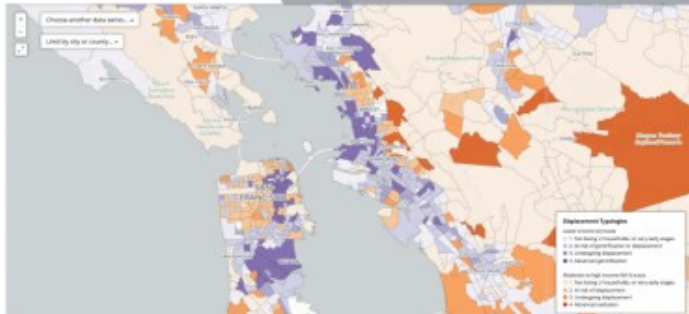
*GIS Empirical  
Study*

## **GIS is \_\_\_\_\_.**

- Tool used “for **collecting, storing retrieving, transforming** and **displaying spatial data** from the real world for a particular set of purposes”
- **Synthesizes** value **information** with locational and topological information into a searchable database
- Value information, or attributes, include the price or size of a housing unit. Locational and topological information includes the address or census block where the unit is located
- **Benefits**
  - communities by inventorying the neighborhood’s assets and needs

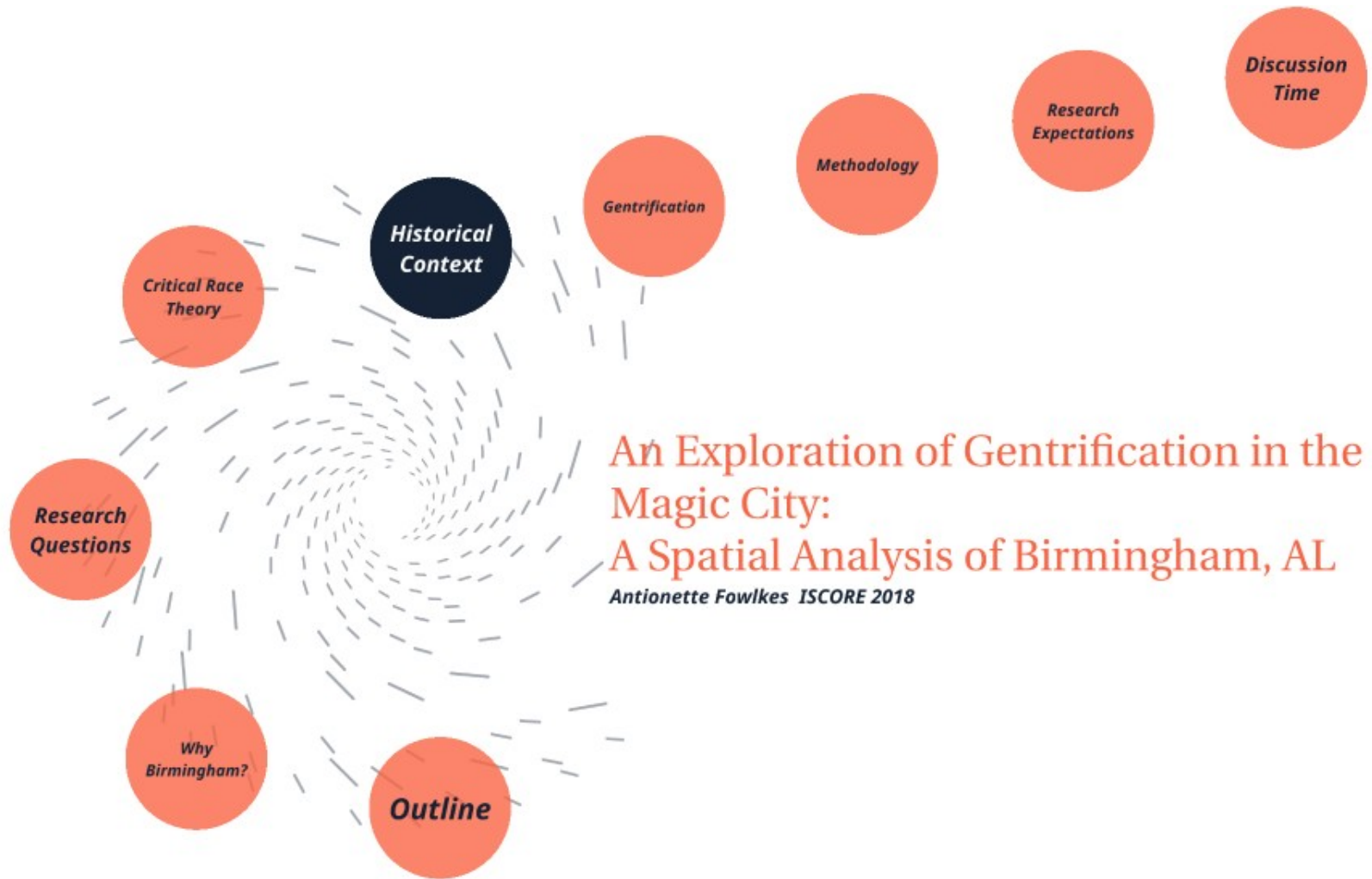
## GIS Empirical Study

- San Francisco South Market neighborhood aka **SoMa**
- **Neighborhood collaboration** through the use of GIS-based “living neighborhood maps” to initiate conversations with policymakers
- **Information-based maps** helped to educate a variety of neighborhoods about powerful and rapid forces of change and empowered the community to act
- Neighborhood was going to change from a blue-collar neighborhood to a chic residential and retail district



• Pairing GIS mapping and community organizing resulted in **alternative visions** that embraced the existing character and flavor of the neighborhood accomplished (C. Parker and A. Pascual)

• The process of working with communities and local government to establish a **shared vision** of the future of communities to ensure the low-income minority groups that occupy the area is not left behind is the goal







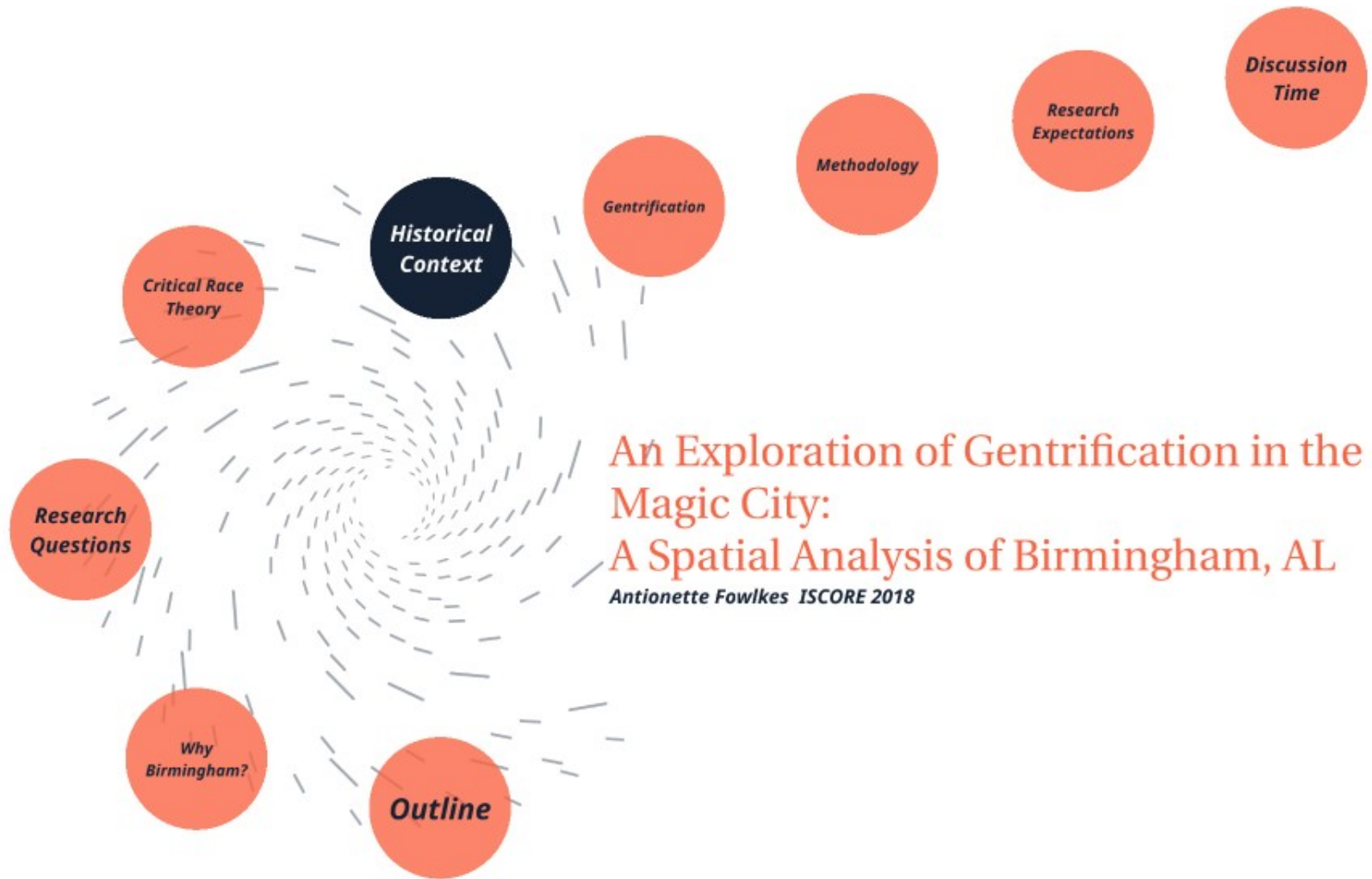
***Methodology***

***Proposed  
Methology***



## ***Proposed Methodology***

- Modeling the **Los Angeles Neighborhood Change and Displacement Pressure Project**
- I propose
  - Using publicly-available data (Census and American Community Survey) databases
  - Using a mixed **quantitative and qualitative** approach
  - Calculating **index scores for each zip code** based on six demographic measures indicative of gentrification
    - including changes in income, education, race, rent, car dependency and household size



## ***Research Expectations***

### **Expectations:**

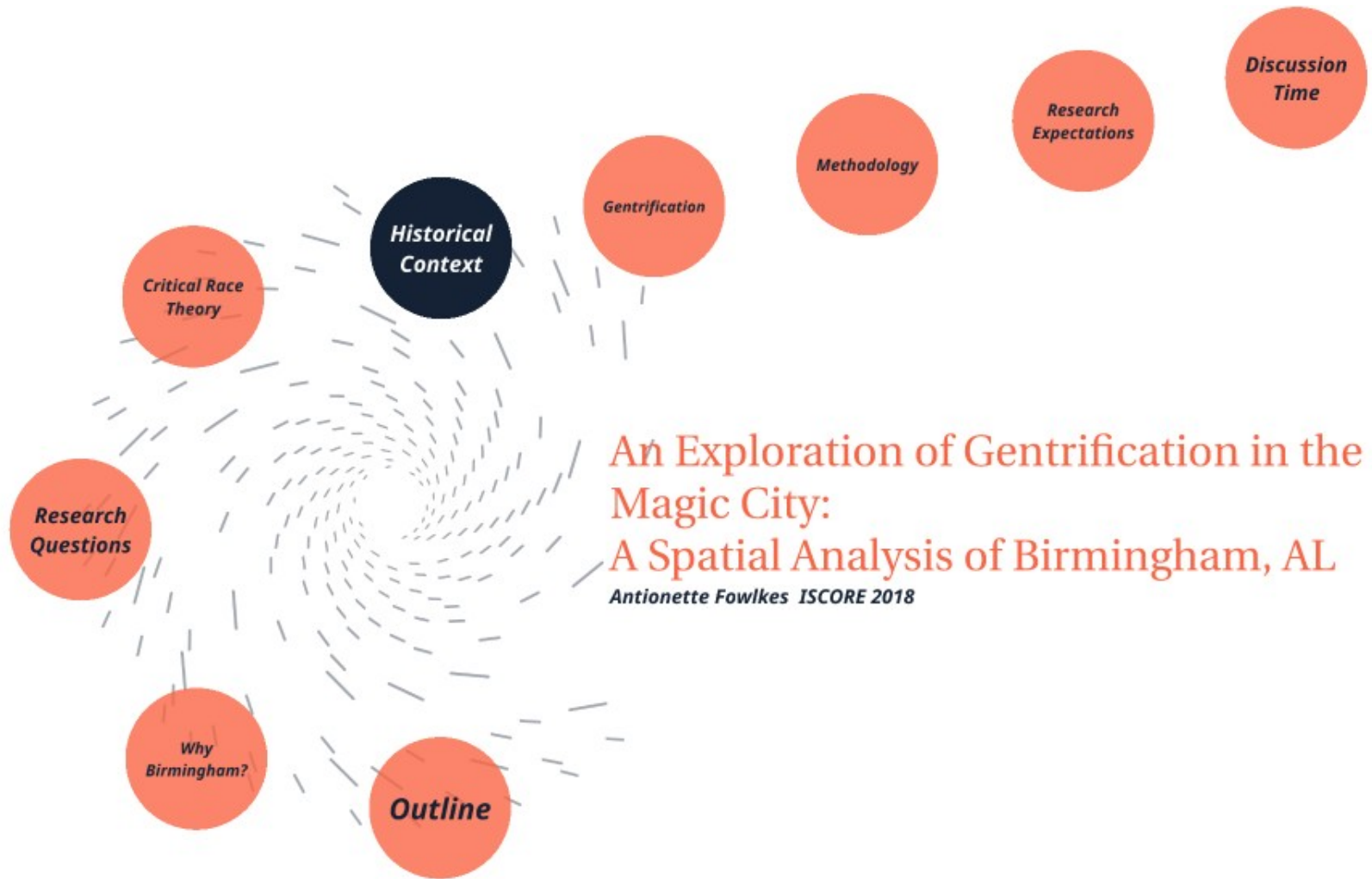
- Create **solutions** to the symptoms of gentrification and displacement that create **scarcity** of **quality** urbanism
- Identify **driving forces** behind the far larger process of spiky reurbanization—itsself propelled by large-scale public and private investment in everything from transit, schools, and parks to private research institutions and housing redevelopment
- Aid the Birmingham Planning Department and Transit Authority in creating more **inclusive cities, neighborhoods** and **transportation networks** that can meet the needs of all urbanites

***Research  
Significance***



## **Research Significance**

- Birmingham is **HOME!**
- Historically **racially divided** city
- **Advocating** and **teaching** “social justice” must occur because it’s relevant, in order for individuals to explore how their stories and others fit into the **larger tapestry** of a national and global story that impacts all communities
- Understand the **role of social structures in limiting options**
- Learn to **listen, understand** and create solutions based on stories of marginalized groups in order for **progress** and **change** to occur
- It is my **“Kuleana”** one’s personal sense of responsibility





***Discussion Time***

