4-18-2018

Changing Neighborhoods

Mama Nozipo Glenn

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/facing_stories

Part of the Civic and Community Engagement Commons, Community-Based Research Commons, and the Place and Environment Commons

DAYTON VIEW TRIANGLE

STORYTELLER: Mama Nozipo Glenn

I lived in Africa until '72, lived in Nashville, Tennessee until '75, and then I moved here to Dayton View. I've lived in the same house for 40 years, so as you can see, I don't like to move. But this neighborhood is not what it used to be, it has changed a lot, *a lot*.

I remember in the olden days there were a lot of people, every house was occupied by families. Every family worked together, neighbors knew one another; they looked out for one another. Elders were respected by the younger people, and it was just different. If you were young you could go sit at the neighbor's porch and listen to the stories of the elders, just like in Africa. For example, I have four grandchildren, and I remember I used to walk three of them to

school, but by the time I would get to the school I would look like a mother goose with her goslings following behind me. I would have half the kids in the neighborhood with me because when the neighbors saw me they would say, "Ohh can you take mine too?" I remember how much we helped each other out.

That street I used to walk down is called Lexington, and now it just breaks my heart when I go down Lexington because all you see is boarded up houses or homeless people who are cold, or green spaces. Green spaces. Other people like the idea of green spaces. To me, green spaces make me cringe because I think about how that used to be a home not just a house. It used to be a home, people used to live there, people had a history there, people raised their children there, people had good and bad experiences there. So that is what I see, I see a loss. I always wonder what happened to those people? Are they okay? Were they able to move to another place or are they homeless?

Another thing that changed is the economic face of Dayton and especially my neighborhood. Dayton used to be a flourishing city, you know. NCR had its headquarters over by UD. They had buildings and buildings and buildings. GM used to have all kinds of factories, too. We didn't

have to go downtown. We had everything we needed right here. But then the factories moved one by one to other countries. The businesses in our neighborhood closed. It was sad to watch, people losing their jobs, houses being abandoned. The neighborhood was flourishing and now it's dilapidated. **WE ONLY HAVE ONE CORNER STORE—THE PRICES ARE SKY HIGH. AND GROCERY STORES, FORGET ABOUT GROCERY STORES AROUND HERE. WE HAVE TO GO ALL THE WAY TO KROGER'S BECAUSE THAT'S THE ONLY PLACE THE BUS WILL DROP YOU OFF RIGHT BY IT.**

But I have hope for the future. My grandmother always told me, "The glass is half full." My hope is in your generation, the young people. Your parents' generation, they blew it. But the young people, the young people are gonna bail us out of this mess that we made. I'm excited for the Gem City grocery store—it's gonna bring neighbors back together. **THERE'S THIS SAYING IN SOUTH AFRICA: UBUNTU—"I AM BECAUSE YOU ARE." THAT'S HOW IT USED TO BE, AND I BELIEVE THE YOUNG PEOPLE SEE THAT.** Like I said, I have hope for the future because of your generation, because of the young people.