



B4G Talking Points as of 4/2017

BEFORE IT'S GONE //TAKE IT BACK: Documenting Brooklyn - Fighting Gentrification (B4G) is a neighborhood and web-based response to the crisis of gentrification of Brooklyn, NY. www.beforeitsgone.co Conceived in 2014, B4G is the first Brooklyn-wide organizing campaign and social media platform created to fight gentrification in Brooklyn, NY. **BEFORE IT'S GONE // TAKE IT BACK (B4G)** is a project of [Equality for Flatbush \(E4F\)](http://www.equalityforflatbush.org) If you are a **BROOKLYN** residential or commercial **TENANT** or **HOMEOWNER** experiencing harassment or need housing, legal or organizing resources Contact : B4G@equalityforflatbush.org or call /text (646)820-6039

Our main goals are to:

1. Organize “[No Eviction Zones](#)” throughout Brooklyn - block by block, building by building. As of February 2017, we have “No Eviction Zone” organizing within multiple buildings or blocks in 9 neighborhoods in Brooklyn -- including Bedford-Stuyvesant/Clinton Hill, Bushwick, Crown Heights, East Flatbush, East New York, Flatbush, Park Slope, Prospect Heights and Sunset Park with literature in Russian, Japanese, Haitian Kreyol, Bangla, Spanish and English . Currently have 10 active No Eviction Zone campaigns including 2 commercial tenants , 1 homeowner , and 4 buildings in 2 different neighborhoods owned by the same landlord. In 2016, we have been able to win repairs, build a ramp, get a tenant moved to a new apartment, as well as secure 2 commercial leases all through public direct action campaigns
2. Maintain the 1st ever social media platform to resist gentrification by amplifying the stories of low-to-middle income Brooklyn residents
3. Provide vital legal, housing and community organizing resources to help keep Brooklyn residents in their homes and small businesses in our communities

What is gentrification?

Equality for Flatbush, defines 'gentrification' as the concerted, deliberate effort to price out low-to-middle income residents from neighborhoods by city government, corporations, real estate developers, and landlords in favor of renting, selling, and catering to people of higher and/or more flexible incomes. We see gentrification as an intersectional issue that is deeply connected to the ways that race, class, gender, sexuality, gender identity, age, ability, nation of origin, immigration status, physical and mental capacity, etc. impact individuals and our communities.

We also see a distinct difference between the historic voluntary migration of working and middle class families from cities to the suburbs as opposed to the current situation where existing communities are being involuntarily priced out, bought out and forcibly removed from their neighborhoods by corporate developers and landlords.

We know from first-hand experience that the same unscrupulous property owners who use tactics to force long-time older tenants of color out of their rent-stabilized apartments will turn around and illegally overcharge incoming younger white tenants for the same apartment.

For this very reason, we believe that all of us-long-time and new residents, communities of color and white communities, low-income and middle-class people - have a stake in the urgent struggle to save affordable housing in Brooklyn.

What is BEFORE IT'S GONE // TAKE IT BACK all about?

BEFORE IT'S GONE // TAKE IT BACK: Documenting Brooklyn - Fighting Gentrification (B4G) is a celebration of Brooklyn life as it is now with all its rich diversity and history. We're not interested in a Brooklyn that is homogeneous, without flavor, texture or color. Where only rich white people who can afford luxury condos can dwell. Gentrification destroys culture, displaces low-to-middle income people of all nationalities, takes away all that is uniquely beautiful about New York .

This website is a way for every day New Yorkers to tell their stories about what is happening to them right now, on the ground. This is the place to share pictures and videos of OUR BROOKLYN. For us to meet your family - birth and chosen. It is the place to tell the stories about what it was like to grow up in Brooklyn or when you first arrived from Haiti, Bangladesh, Puerto Rico, Italy, Korea or wherever else. We want

your footage of Old-Timers events in Red Hook, Brownsville and Bushwick. We want you to post pictures from your Quinceañeras, bar/bat mitzvahs, high school graduations, weddings, baby showers, Brooklyn LGBTQ Pride and Lunar New Year celebrations. This is the site that CELEBRATES the cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, social and economic diversity of Brooklyn.

We plan to be intentional about intersectionality on this site. We want to tell the truth about how gentrification uniquely impacts people of color, women, migrants, elders, young people, differently-abled people, families, people living with HIV/AIDS, lesbian, gay, bi, trans and Queer people, people living on governmental subsidies or in public housing. We also want to expose the ways that gentrification is our common enemy and why low-to-middle income people must unite.

This is the place to post about the community meeting to save your supermarket in Park Slope. This is place to post about your march to stop police violence in Sunset Park. This is also the website to post about those repairs that your landlord is refusing to make or how you just learned that you being overcharged for a rent stabilized apartment.

We want this page to help low-to-middle income people stay in Brooklyn . We want people to get connected to vital legal, housing and community organizing resources. We want to help break through our isolation and fear. We want to beat back the belief that displacement is inevitable and there is nothing we can do. We want to help stop foreclosures, spark tenant organizing , save small businesses, and coordinate #NoEvictionZones. We want www.beforeitsgone.co to create hope, “big up” our victories , let them know when #WEAREWINNING

BEFORE IT'S GONE // TAKE IT BACK: Documenting Brooklyn - Fighting Gentrification (B4G) is a labor of love . We truly love Brooklyn - our peoples, our working to middle class communities, and our vibrant cultures. So it is our duty to fight to stop gentrification and save affordable housing. We do not want to see one more family or elder displaced. We will not allow another greedy landlord or developer to push our people out. We refuse to allow Brooklyn to become merely a playground for the rich. We say, “Before it's gone! Take it back!” and together, united, we believe that we will win. #BrooklynIsNotForSale

How was BEFORE IT'S GONE // TAKE IT BACK conceived?

BEFORE IT'S GONE // TAKE IT BACK (B4G) was inspired by the 25-year anniversary of Spike Lee’s [Do The Right Thing](#) in 2014. Like many young people, Imani Henry was deeply impacted by the film when he first watched it in a movie theater in 1989. Upon moving to NYC in 1993, Bedford-Stuyvesant, along with Park Slope and Flatbush have been Brooklyn neighborhoods that played significant roles in his life. Re-watching the film in 2014, Imani remarked to friends how the movie, could serve as a “historical documentation of Bedford-Stuyvesant in the 1980’s”. Fearing the permanent loss of

Black, Latinx and working class LGBTQ culture of these three neighborhoods due to gentrification, B4G was initially conceived as documentary film and performance art project. In its current evolution B4G is the first Brooklyn-wide organizing campaign and social media platform created to fight the gentrification Brooklyn, NY. [Do The Right Thing](#) was released in theaters on June 30 1989.

What is the Equality for Flatbush?

BEFORE IT'S GONE // TAKE IT BACK (B4G) is a Brooklyn-wide project of The [Equality for Flatbush Project, \(E4F\)](#), a people of color-led, multi-national grassroots organization that does anti-police repression, affordable housing and anti-gentrification organizing in the Flatbush and East Flatbush communities of Brooklyn, NY. Ultimately our 2 goals are to stop NYPD murders and the displacement of low to middle income people of from our community. Founded in June of 2013, Equality for Flatbush currently has 12 campaigns and is a volunteer-run organization. We seek to organize our communities for social change and justice through street outreach, social media campaigns, political advocacy and direct action.

Equality for Flatbush also initiated the [The Brooklyn Anti-Gentrification Network \(BAN\)](#), a people of color-led, mass-based coalition of tenants, homeowners, block associations, anti-police brutality groups, legal and grassroots organizations working together to end the rampant gentrification and displacement of low to middle income residents of Brooklyn, New York.

E4F 's Current Campaigns

*= Brooklyn-wide campaign ** =City-wide Campaign

Anti-Police Repression: Coordinated by E4F's Police Accountability Working Group

- [NYPD Traffic Stop and Checkpoint Surveillance*](#)
- Dollar Van and Cab Drivers Community Solidarity Campaign
- Community Patrol with East Flatbush Cop Watch Team
- Supporting the call for Justice for the families of Kimani Gray, Shantel Davis, Kyam Livingston, Akai Gurley and others who have endured police terror/murders**
- Flatbush/ East Flatbush Street Vendor Organizing in collaboration with [The Street Vendor's Project](#)

Affordable Housing:

- The Compiling and Sharing of Housing, Legal and Community [Resources](#) with Brooklyn residents*
- Supporting the campaigns of [Flatbush Tenants Coalition \(FTC\)](#), [Crown Heights Tenants Union \(CHTU\)](#) and others NYC tenant organizing groups**

Anti-Gentrification:

- BEFORE IT'S GONE // TAKE IT BACK: Documenting Brooklyn - Fighting Gentrification is a Brooklyn-wide neighborhood and web-based response to the crisis of gentrification of Brooklyn, NY. www.beforeitsgone.co *
 - B4G Tenant Harassment *Documentation Team**
- Initiating organization of The [Brooklyn Anti-gentrification Network \(BAN\)](#) **
- Real Estate Watch is the E4F investigative Research Team that works to hold greedy landlords and developers accountable by providing information and tools to empower residents.**
 - The MySpace Project (anti-gentrification) is a sub committee of Real Estate Watch - launched August 2016*
- Participating organization of The Empire Boulevard Study Group. In coalition with [Movement To Protect the People \(MTOPP\)](#) and other groups against the up-zoning of Empire Blvd
- New Flatbush Resident Community Project

Who is Imani Keith Henry?

Imani Keith Henry is a longtime activist in the anti-police brutality, anti-war and LGBTQ movements in the US. He is a #BlackLivesMatter organizer with [The Peoples Power Assembly](#). In 2013, Imani founded [The Equality for Flatbush Project \(E4F\)](#), which does grassroots anti-police repression, affordable housing and anti-gentrification organizing in the East Flatbush and Flatbush communities of Brooklyn, NY. Imani is also a writer and playwright/performer who was in residency at the Brooklyn Arts Exchange. From 2002-2007, Imani toured across the US, Canada and Europe with his multi-media one-person show, B4T (before testosterone).

Raised in Boston, MA, Imani is the first to be born in the US of either side of his working class Jamaican family. At 22 years old, Imani moved to New York City in 1993, with \$200 to his name and no job into a 2-bedroom apartment on the border of Bedford Stuyvesant and Bushwick at the Kosciuszko Street stop on the J-Train. Like many working class people, Imani was forced to move frequently and has experienced homelessness. As a result of having an unstable living situation, Imani has lived in various neighborhoods in Brooklyn, Manhattan, The Bronx, Queens, Jersey City and Union City NJ. Fortunately in 1998, Imani was able to a secure stable housing situation in Brooklyn, then finally established a home in the neighborhood of Flatbush in 2002.

Imani has a Masters in Social Work from New York University Silver School of Social Work and a Masters in Public Administration from The Wagner School of Public Service. Under the brand, [OD For the People](#), Imani is an Organizational Development Consultant and Diversity Trainer who provides change management services specifically for nonprofits and universities.