GREEN GENTRIFICATION: THE HIDDEN INJUSTICE BEHIND GREENING COMMUNITIES
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Greenspaces come with many health benefits and provides an area where the members of a community can come together. With all this being said, there is a hidden environmental justice issues that lies beneath the surface of the development or improvement of greenspaces. Green gentrification is when vulnerable populations are displaced due to an improvement or development of a greenspace in a community. Often time, local governments approve of, and implement projects to build a new park, or to renovate one without working closely with the community, which leads to these complications. Currently in South Seattle, there is a controversial proposal to build a mountain bike trail in the Cheasty Greenspace, and this may lead to factors such as gentrification. The aim of this study was to directly see if residents around the Cheasty Greenspace were aware and informed about the plan of building a mountain bike trail. A survey of residents near the Cheasty Greenspace was conducted to measure both how much residents support and feel informed about the mountain bike trail. Overall, most residents seemed positive about the mountain bike trail, mentioning it would be a positive addition to the community, but only around 50% of the residents answered that they think property values would rise due to this change. There needs to be more awareness put around the possibility of a higher price of living due to improvements to greenspaces. Parks and urban forests should be an asset everyone has access to!