

Evictions in Davidson County

EMILY BARRETT & K.T. WILEY ON BEHALF OF THE VANDERBILT
UNIVERSITY ACTION RESEARCH CLASS



PHOTO: NASHVILLE SCENE



VANDERBILT
UNIVERSITY

Action Research

Graduate-level class in the Department of Human and Organizational Development, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University

"Action Research aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework."
(Rapoport, 1970)

CLASS LEGACY

Class has been in existence for over 15 years.

- Worked with Reverends Bill Barnes and Don Beisswenger to help establish the Barnes Housing Trust Fund
- At the request of Council Member, Burkley Allen, explored the impact of short-term rentals on housing affordability in Nashville

CURRENT WORK

At the request of Erin Akery (United Way) and Council Member Zulfat Suara the class has been exploring eviction patterns in Davidson County for the past 1.5 years.

Topics of Exploration

01 Causes and Effects
of Evictions

02 Eviction Patterns in
Davidson, County

03 Serial Evictions

04 Approaches to
Addressing
Evictions

Underlying Issues Leading to Evictions Direct Impacts

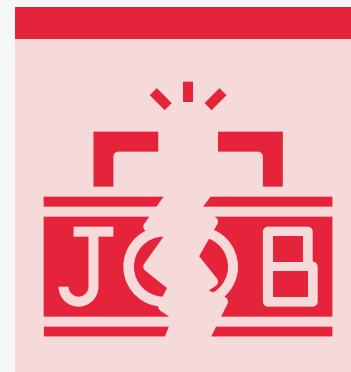
Theoretically:

Ethics vs. **Economics**

How do we value people?



HIGH HOUSING COSTS &
STAGNATING WAGES



JOB LOSS



LACK OF ACCESS TO LEGAL
REPRESENTATION



PAST EVICTION FILINGS

Underlying Issues Leading to Evictions

Indirect Impacts



TOURISM & RISE OF
SHORT-TERM RENTALS
("AIRBNBIFICATION")



GENTRIFICATION

Effects of Evictions

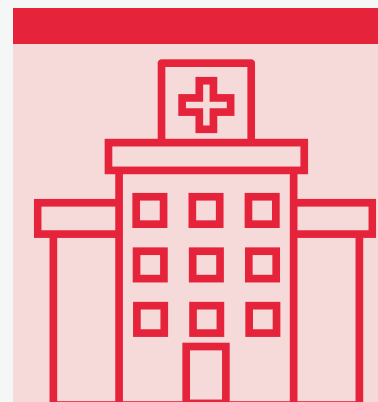


INCREASE RISK OF
HOMELESSNESS

LONG-TERM RESIDENTIAL
INSECURITY



DECREASED SCHOOL
OUTCOMES



INCREASED
EMERGENCY ROOM USE

Eviction Filings in Davidson County

Data Source: Caselink data on eviction filings in Davidson County from 2016-2021



131 unique defendant attorneys
578 unique plaintiff attorneys



6,383 unique plaintiffs



37,033 unique
defendants

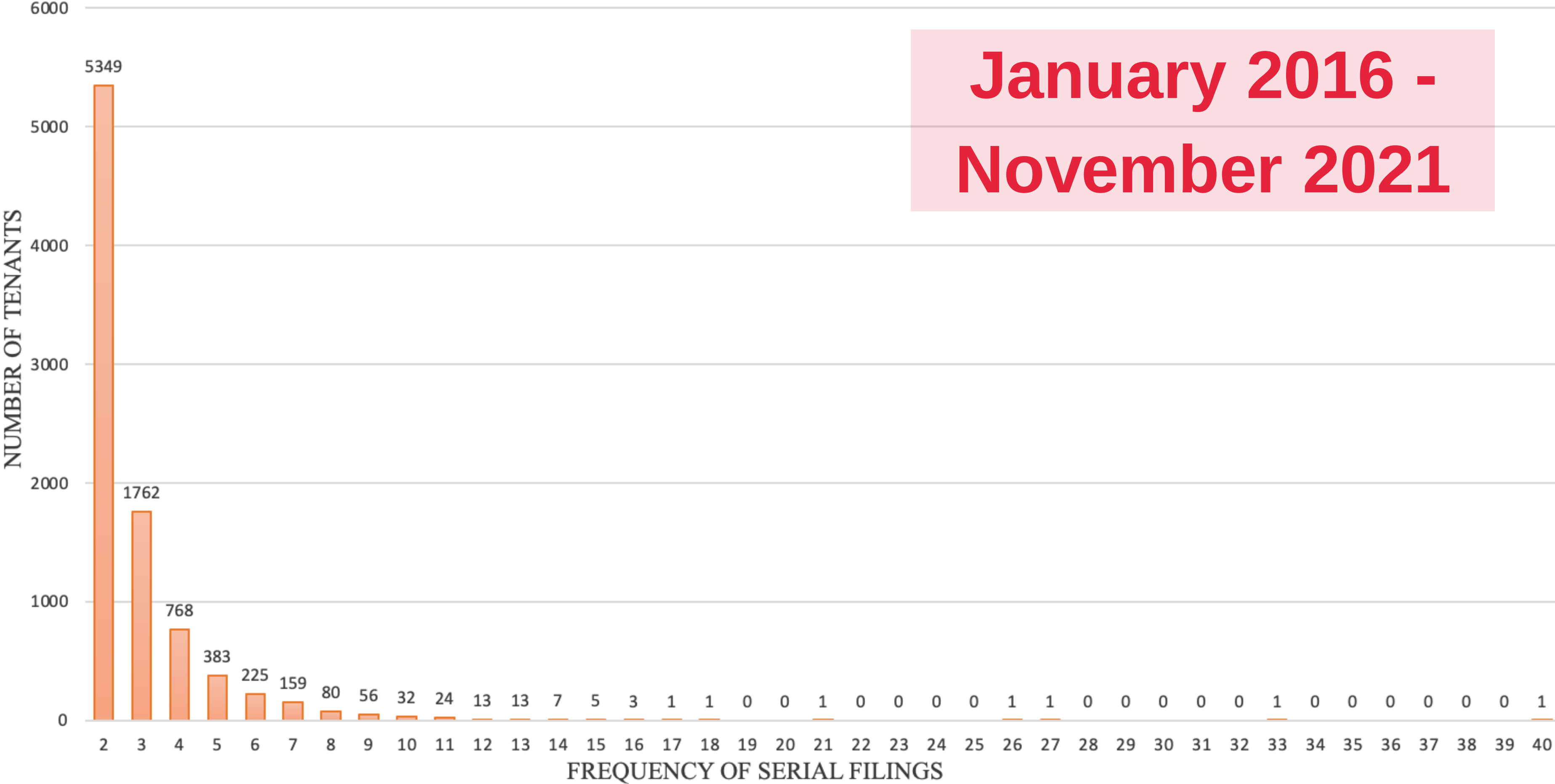
48.8%

**Of EVICTION FILINGS WERE TO REPEAT DEFENDANTS
(SERIAL EVICTIONS)**

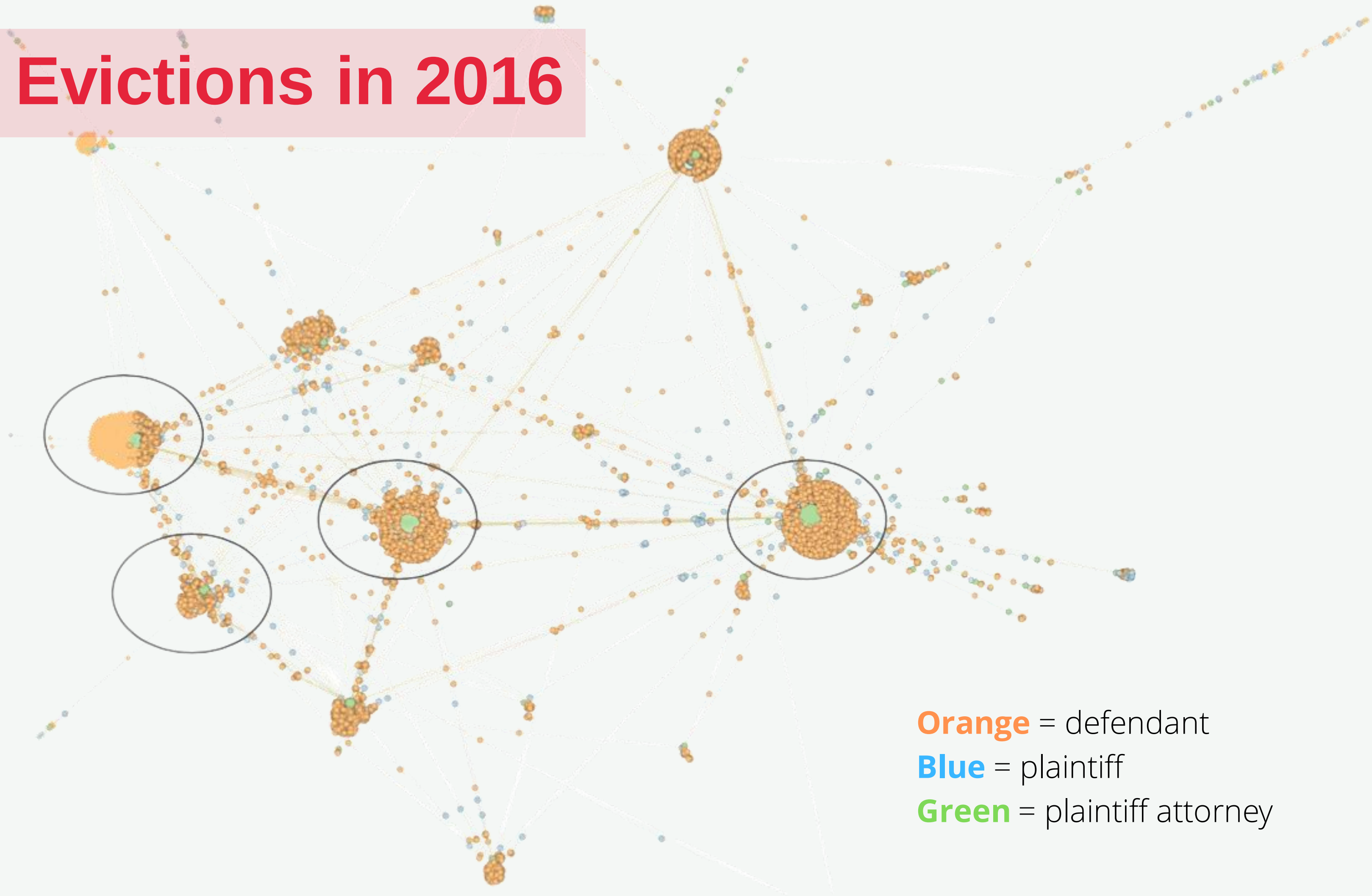
Serial Evictions in Davidson County

- Recent research has demonstrated that *landlords rely on serial eviction filings to transform the landlord-tenant relationship to a collector-debtor relationship*, rather than to remove the tenant from housing (Garboden & Rosen, 2019; Immergluck et al., 2020; Leung & Desmond, 2021).
- Of all the detainer warrant filings from 2016-2021 (53,717), almost half are repeated evictions of the same name (26,194).
- In Davidson County, if a person is serially sued for eviction, they are sued on average 2.91 times.
- In Davidson County, the highest number of detainer warrant filings against a single name (not a group, not John Doe, not “all occupants”) in the years 2016- 2020: 40 separate filings.

Frequency of serial filings against an individual in Nashville



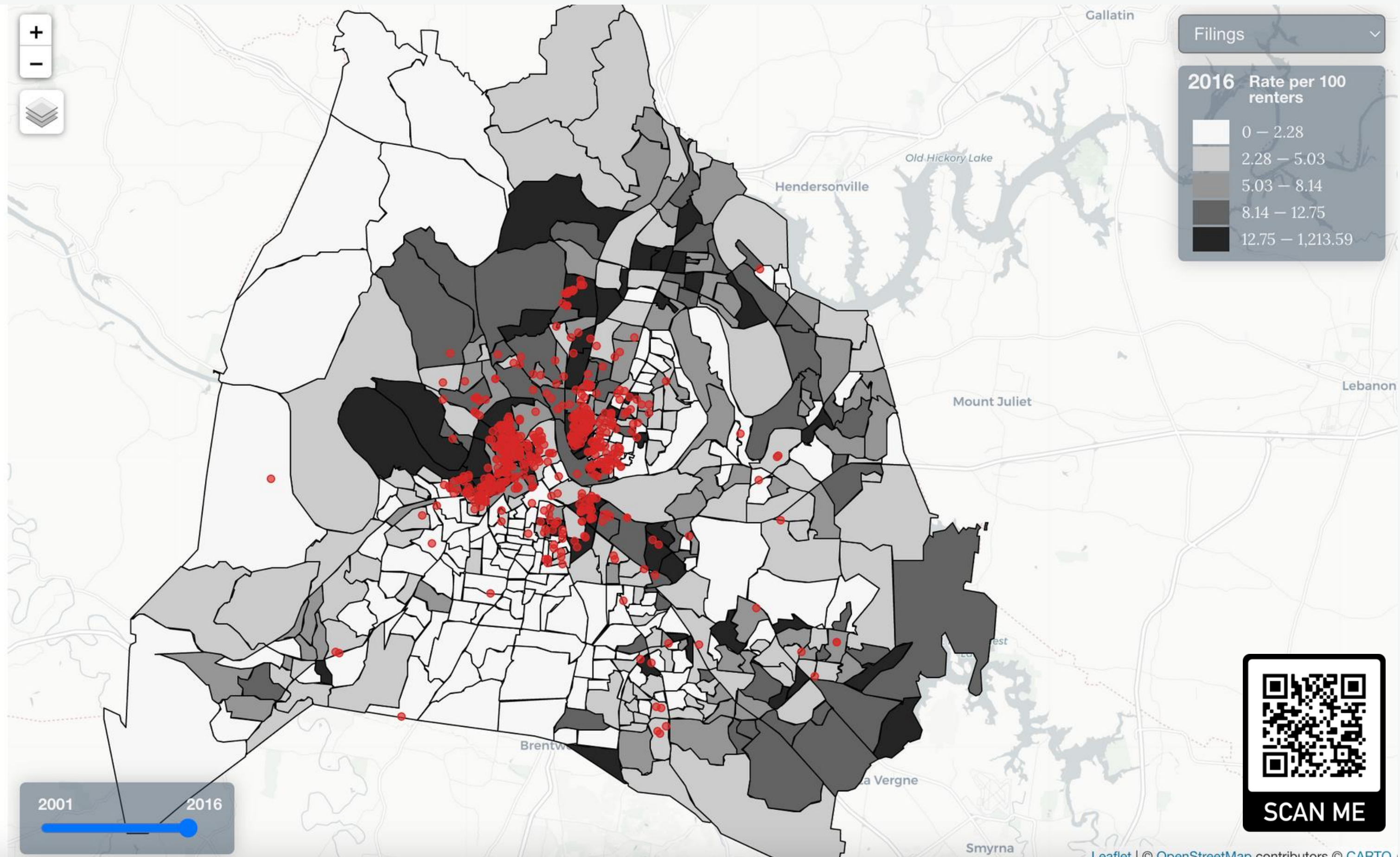
Serial Evictions in 2016



Evictions & Public Housing, Nashville, TN

This map explores the relationship between affordable housing and evictions. It depicts eviction rates and eviction filing rates, by block group, from 2001-2016, as well as the locations of public housing and subsidized housing. Click on the addresses and block groups to reveal more data.

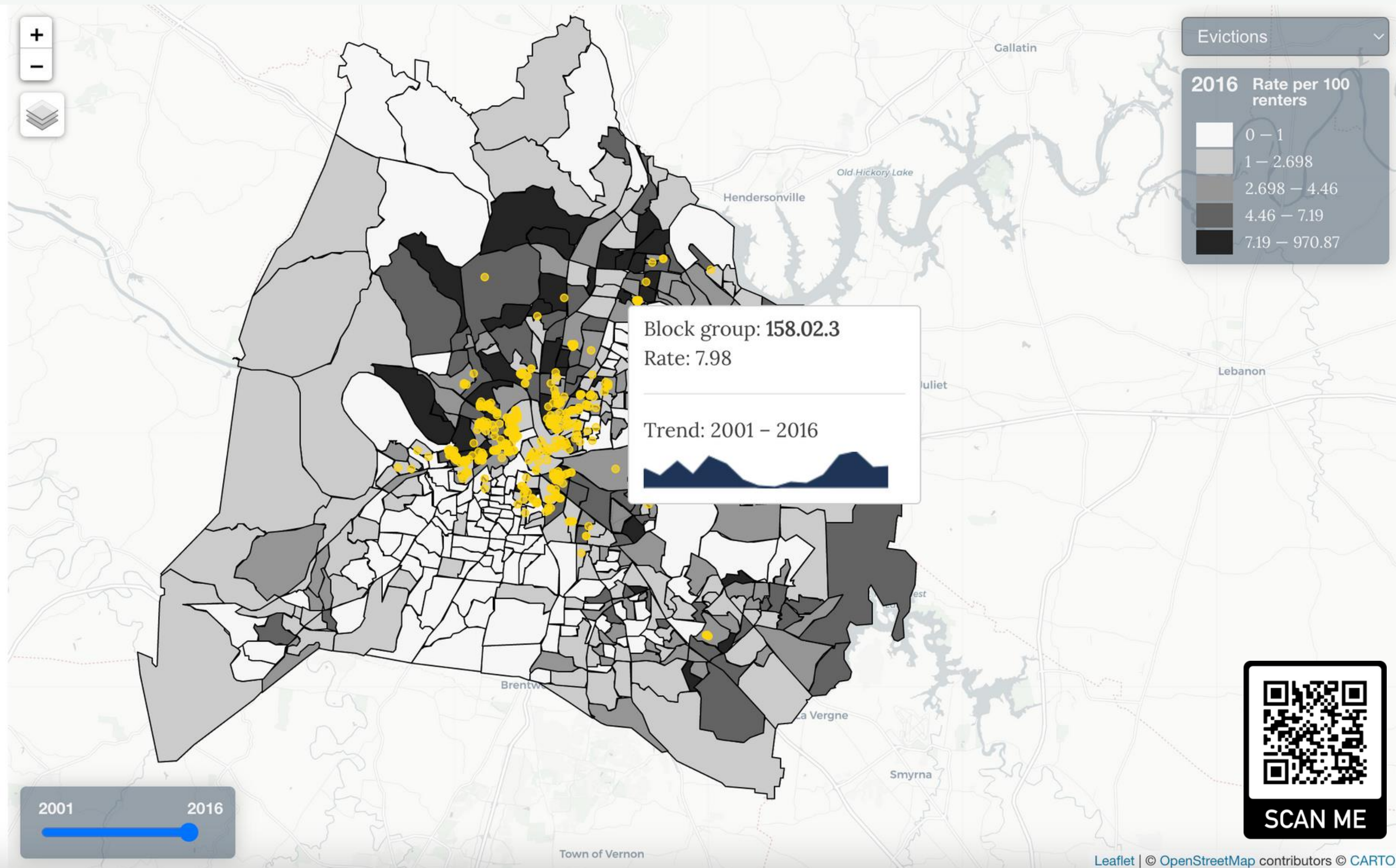
Authored by [Emily Barrett](#) & Laurel Weiss | Action Reserach Fall 2021
[Data soures & metadata](#)



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Approaches to Addressing Evictions

- **Deter power-based eviction filings**
 - Right to Counsel [in 99.8% of cases from 2016-2021, plaintiffs had an attorney; in 0.37% of cases, defendants had an attorney]
 - Defendants who currently have counsel in Nashville (e.g., businesses) are not representative of those most disadvantaged (e.g., affordability, knowledge of system)
 - Regulations around Serial Evictions
 - Holding plaintiffs accountable (including MDHA); system currently advantages landlords (e.g., filings as rent collection strategy)
- **Fund holistic eviction-reduction support approaches**
 - Legacy Court
 - Community-based mediation
 - Extend ERA funds covering back-rent
- **Cultivate a coordinated system of care for displacement**

Thank you

We thank the following individuals for their contributions:

- Dr. Brian Christens
- Dr. Paul Speer
- Dr. Sarah Suiter
- Kayla Anderson
- Rachel Hanebutt
- Maddy Lewis
- Laurel Weiss
- Mary Wojcicki
- Isla Zhu
- Students from the Vanderbilt University
Action Research Class

**Please contact us
if you have any
additional
questions.**

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