

Ten Plagues of the Lower East Side

In the tradition of Passover, and the ten plagues God is said to have brought down on the Egyptians forcing Pharaoh to liberate the Jews, we offer these ten plagues that have been visited upon the Lower East Side causing the mass displacement of longtime residents. Now is the time for the City of New York to fulfill its commitments to this community. We spill 10 drops of wine for:

1. **DISPLACEMENT** – Federal and municipal urban renewal programs in the 1960s razed many tenements and the promised replacement housing often was never built.
2. **USURPATION** – The City took many properties through eminent domain to build highways and other “public goods,” without consideration for the low-income people living in the buildings.
3. **RACISM** – Many co-ops and other housing developments offered leases only to white families through the 1970s and beyond.
4. **ABUSE OF POWER** – Politicians, business interests and other power brokers blocked community demands for affordable housing construction to replace lost homes.
5. **BROKEN PROMISES** – City officials promised to replace housing that was destroyed and to build more housing to address the perpetual shortages and the crisis of homelessness, yet seldom was the construction of mixed-income housing a political priority over the past four decades.
6. **DUPLICITY** – Many politicians have spoken platitudes in favor of low & moderate-income housing, but cut deals with developers behind closed doors.
7. **GREED** – The construction of luxury condos and market rate apartment buildings has accelerated, further limiting the potential space for mixed-income housing in Manhattan.
8. **APATHY** – Seduced by the high times of the housing bubble, few politicians have done anything to close loopholes that allow landlords to deregulate more easily and push out longtime residents.
9. **GENTRIFICATION** – Condo conversions and housing deregulation continue the pattern of displacement in the Lower East Side and throughout NYC.
10. **INTOLERANCE** – Some long-term residents have opposed construction of mixed-income housing because of its assumed negative impact on their housing values and quality of life.

At this year's Seder, we gather to bear witness to the history of displacement and struggle in this vital New York City neighborhood. We come together to acknowledge that mixed-income housing cannot become a reality without support from Jewish residents, organizations and politicians.

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