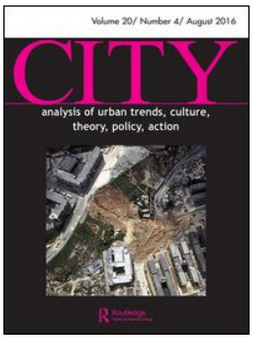

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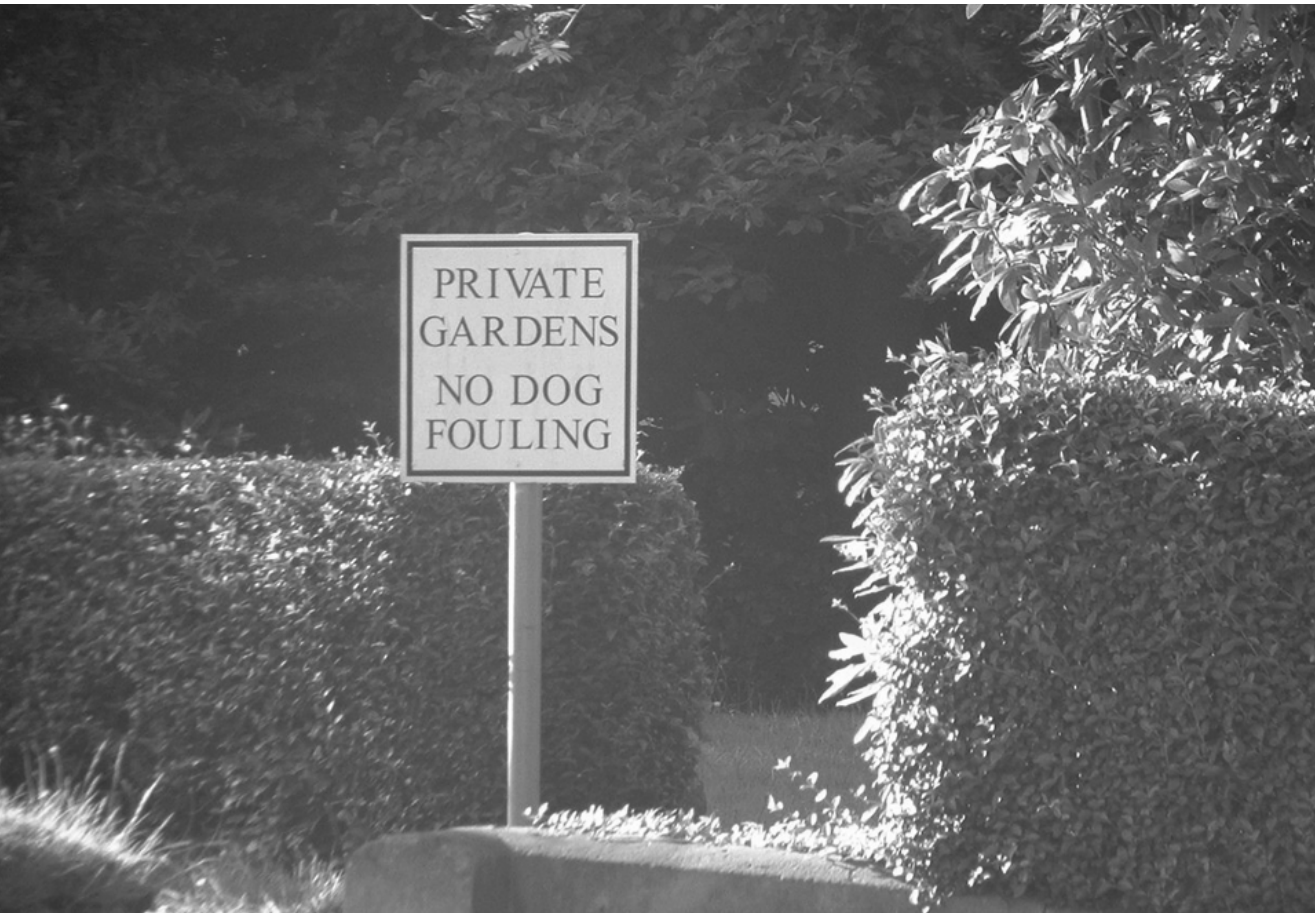
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Probing the symptomatic silences of middle-class settlement

A case study of gentrification processes in Glasgow

Kirsteen Paton

This paper critiques the use of gentrification within urban policy by examining gentrifiers' neighbourhood practices. Strategies of gentrification are increasingly used to attract people and capital to places of 'decline' in order to combat the effects of uneven development. Policy experts and governments believe middle-class settlement creates 'cohesive', socially mixed communities. However, such a strategy may have serious unintended and paradoxical consequences. Despite widespread application we know little about the outcomes of gentrification within urban policy. This paper seeks to rectify this by critically examining the hegemony of gentrification. This is explored empirically by examining the practices of gentrifiers. Hegemony normalises governance, which essentialises middle-class settlement and legitimates their residential practices, over those of working-class communities. Analysis of changes in the Park area in Glasgow reveals that incoming residents' choices and practices centre around the consumption of segregation. The paper argues that bringing middle-class groups into the debate and foregrounding their autonomy not only helps in aiding the evaluation of these policies; it elucidates how their practices actually impact upon working-class communities, the supposed beneficiaries of their arrival.

Key words: gentrification; regeneration; middle-class neighbourhoods; segregation; hegemony

Introduction

The study of gentrification has largely been confined within a specific set of literatures that tend to focus on only the process itself, or conceive it as a distinctively urban process in the built environment. This has rendered its implementation as a hegemonic process within urban–social policy largely unexplored. As the leading UK urban policy approach, regeneration is used to tackle environmental, economic and social problems in cities. It intervenes to temper the area-effects of uneven capitalist development at citywide, neighbourhood and, increasingly, individual levels, by attracting and capturing capital and people. This is particularly significant for cities like Glasgow, making the transition

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from municipal welfarism and industrialism to a highly privatised, post-industrial economy. As such, gentrification becomes pivotal (Smith, 2002; Atkinson, 2003, 2004; Lees, 2003b), used to encourage investment and middle-class settlement, to achieve economic growth and create what policy refers to as 'cohesive', 'mixed' communities through the transmission of social and economic capital into less affluent areas (Kearns and Turok, 2003; ODPM, 2003). However, there are many grounds for questioning whether gentrification is likely to be the saviour of cities (Atkinson, 2003). Not only is evidence on the success of this strategy scarce, some research indicates that middle-class resettlement in the city may be conditional on the provision of segregation (Atkinson and Flint, 2004; Atkinson, 2006). While the study of middle-class residential practices and segregation itself is not new (Zorbaugh, 1929; Wacquant, 1993; Massey, 1996), the current policy context, which may facilitate and legitimate segregation in the name of the altruistic policy of regeneration, is important and remains to be studied in detailed ways.

The key position of this paper is that the use of gentrification within urban policy is better understood as a hegemonic project. Hegemony is a form of rule that is expressed and won ideologically rather than coercively, through the mediums of political and civil society. It naturalises dominance, making the state's promotion of gentrification and middle-class settlement seemingly normal, and essentialises the values of middle-class social reproduction. Gentrifiers' practices are considered merely in relation to their lifestyles (Ley, 1996; Butler, 2003) rather than materially embedded class culture. This can obscure the wider and deeper relational and structured aspects related to social class, and the continued relevance of class-based cultural processes (Williams, 1977). Smith, in his critique of state-led gentrification, suggests that, 'probing the symptomatic silence of who is to be invited back into the city begins to reveal the class politics involved' (2002, p. 445). Although heterogeneous, the middle class[1] are defined within policy as better consumers and better citizens within a moral and financial economy (Glasgow City Council, 2003a; ODPM, 2003).

This paper seeks to challenge the seeming logic of positive outcomes of gentrification and probe such silences through investigation of processes on the ground. Foregrounding the daily practices of middle-class groups provides a valuable additional perspective. It deconstructs gentrifiers' essentialised role to examine whether their practices and actions match up to policy prescriptions. This requires research which explores social dynamics, cultural practices and interactions at the neighbourhood level. Findings, drawn from a case study of the Park area in Glasgow in 2005, demonstrate that affluent middle-class gentrifiers settling in the city displayed a tendency towards segregation and thoroughly individualised consumption practices. This challenges the epistemology of middle-class settlement and contends that this may create a perverse area-effect and, subsequently, an additional set of problems affecting class relations. That is, increased privatisation of housing, homeownership and escalating wealth disparities within cities. At the same time, segregation actually compounds the gentrification hegemony. It adds to the delegitimation and pathologisation of social housing and social reproduction within more traditionally working-class neighbourhoods. The paper is structured into two parts: the first considers the use and effects of the gentrification hegemony within urban–social policy and the second uses evidence from a case study to investigate further the realities of this strategy. It concludes by suggesting that, despite their autonomy and self-exclusion, gentrifiers still transmit the gentrification hegemony because their behaviour rejects, and therefore delegitimates, working-class social reproduction. This is followed by a discussion of how these insights can be taken forward to inform a

more complex understanding of the impacts gentrification can have on working-class neighbourhoods.

Gentrification in the neo-liberal context

Before addressing the symptom, we must first confront the root condition which necessitates middle-class settlement in the city. It is generally accepted today that gentrification plays a pivotal role in regeneration strategies (Lambert and Boddy, 2002; Smith, 2002; Cameron, 2003; Davidson and Lees, 2005). So much so that the current language of urban regeneration, 'bespeaks the generalisation of gentrification in the urban landscape' (Smith, 2002, p. 439). However, regeneration policy itself is somewhat heterogeneous, implemented 'as an organiser of new forms of investment, market regulation, new forms of control and policing and as disorganiser of old forms of welfare and social collectivity' (Savage *et al*., 2003, p. 197). In this way, regeneration expresses and helps constitute neo-liberalism (Smith, 2002; Haylett, 2003; Harvey, 2007). More than a narrow and quixotic oddity in the housing market, (Smith, 1996) gentrification is part of a larger endeavour of restructuring places and combating uneven development through pro-growth strategies, stimulating investment and consumption (Smith and Williams, 1986; Atkinson, 2003; Cameron, 2003; Lees, 2003b; Harvey, 2007). The original model of gentrification (Glass, 1964): initiation by a few 'pioneers' who move into 'less desirable' urban areas seeking out alternative lifestyles, followed by wealthier middle classes and, finally, property developers, is now thoroughly institutionalised by local and national governments as part of renewal strategies.

Declining cities are re-branded into innovative, attractive sites with a 'buzz' and vibrancy through place-marketing campaigns, physical transformation and development, involving the creation of symbols of modernity such as conference and cultural sites and structures, transport systems, consumption and leisure spaces. Like the 'Guggenheim effect' reported in Bilbao (Vicario and Martinez, 2003) and the Going for Growth strategy in Newcastle (Cameron, 2003), these policies aim to capture capital, well-qualified professionals and well-heeled visitors. In Glasgow, this is seen in the myriad of re-branding strategies—Glasgow Smiles Better, Glasgow City of Culture and, more recently, Glasgow: Scotland with Style. Seeking to lose Glasgow's old, gritty, violent reputation (Pacione, 1995; Mooney, 2004) the local council positions the city as:

> '… a creative region which harnesses the contribution which our centres of higher and further education, our creative industries, tourism, culture/leisure and the built and natural environments can make to enrich the quality of life of our citizens and visitors.' (Glasgow City Council, 2003a, p. 15)

They appear to have achieved some of these goals, as Glasgow was recently named as one of the top UK cities (Condé Nast Traveller, 2006), 'Mysteriously but dramatically Glasgow has become the kind of place that people now want to visit' (Urry, 2002 cited in Mooney, 2004, p. 328). Whether as visitors, residents or workers, the middle class are throughout pitched as the main protagonists in this process, which seeks to create space for the progressively more affluent user (Hackworth, 2002).

Gentrifying places or people?

However, the use of gentrification in policy amounts to more than this. Policy makers and governments see gentrification as a panacea:

> 'In the United Kingdom, policy makers and urban regeneration practitioners view gentrification as a model for urban renaissance that can resolve social, environmental, economic and even educational and health problems in cities.' (Davidson and Lees, 2005, p. 1186)

The middle class are conceived within policy not just as ideal labour and consumers in the

new service economy, but also as model citizens who can disseminate necessary values of production and consumption. So, despite its associated negative consequence of displacement of original working-class residents, gentrification is connected to the idea of creating 'liveability' in neighbourhoods. It is viewed as a balance, which rests upon having the right social mix, principally achieved by moving wealthier people into poor areas and not vice versa (ODPM, 2003). Policy is geared to providing insulated spaces to encourage upper-income groups. At local levels, authorities like Glasgow use planning and housing policies to realise this, as in the much vaunted Gorbals regeneration (Boyle and Rogerson, 2006). More broadly, it is seen in the attempt to end and curtail municipal housing stock and combat the trend for middle-class outmigration to insulated satellite villages, 'The city needs to offer more attractive family houses with gardens—"middle market" as well as "starter" homes—to persuade people to stay who would otherwise move beyond the city boundary' (Glasgow City Council, 2003b, p. 7).

Policy and academic literature (Wilson, 1987) support the creation of socially mixed communities to combat 'area-effects'; the additional negative effects of being poor in a poor area: lack of services, stigma, role models—in essence, a lack of cultural and social capital as well as economic. This foregrounds the cultural–material imperative of this policy. The belief is that the middle class are not just financially 'better off', they also have high stocks of cultural and social and economic capital that can be transmitted throughout neighbourhoods, having a positive, relational effect (Kearns, 2003). These are classified as: economic and service impacts, peer and social effects, community effects and overcoming social exclusion (Kearns and Turok, 2003). Thus, their settlement is socially constructed as creating 'virtuous circles' and 'opportunity effects' to provide the means for the 'degenerated' to regenerate themselves, rather than relying on traditional state welfare provisions. The crucial point for analysis is that a socially mixed community and middle-class settlement is about more than regenerating place; it is also about regenerating the people of that neighbourhood (Cochrane, 2007).

Urban–social policy focuses on spatially delimited areas, often as a coded way of referring to a concern about particular groups that occupy that area (Cochrane, 2007). State-led gentrification is no different, although it is rarely critiqued in this way. Such strategies are implemented at the cultural level so that the urban policy field acts like a 'symbolic regime partly constructed through representations of what "poor people and places" are and should be like through a modernising political imperative' (Haylett, 2003, p. 57). Haylett regards this as constituting 'a new urban social moment' in policy whereby issues of poverty, unemployment and decay are now considered almost exclusively in relation to the social and physical fabric of cities. Thus target problems become targeted places but also targeted lives. This is not new, per se (Damer, 1980), but the means used to target people are. Gentrification is used to bring places and people 'up' which signals a new approach. Viewing gentrification in this way requires improving analysis in order to understand both the process and the outcomes. Existing paradigms cannot satisfactorily explain these.

Gentrification hegemony

The concept of hegemony (Gramsci, 1971) can conceptually strengthen the gentrification heuristic in a number of crucial ways. It offers a more complex explanation of the use of gentrification within urban policy than existing production versus consumption accounts (Smith, 1996 and Ley, 1996, respectively). Hegemony is a specific form of rule that can theorise the conditions of economics and social modernisation; specifically, how the changes in production relations and effects of uneven development are managed within the current social formations, without challenging

the existing order (Morton, 2006). This is secured by the diffusion and popularisation of the view of the ruling class (Bocock, 1986). As a hegemonic project, gentrification is used to promote homeownership whilst deconstructing formerly fixed positions like working-class support for social housing. It is then used to attach this group to the 'new' set of ideas on increased privatisation of housing and neighbourhood space in general. Thus it hopes, in the end, to create a more affluent user. This involves negotiation and consent, reached ideologically, rather than through physical force.

The one particular aspect of hegemony that is most germane to the current discussion is its general normalisation of modes of governance. This has an educative influence and naturalises differences. The gentrification hegemony legitimates middle-class settlement via gentrification whilst delegitimating social housing and working-class social reproduction which is supported by welfare. This ideology has been identified in relation to processes around modernisation of social housing and the governance of anti-social behaviour, including the use of tenant participation in self-governance (Flint, 2003). The image of the working class as degenerate and immoral is used to help reconstruct the boundaries of regulation and legitimate state control, and the use of technologies of self-governance. Brought in as role models, middle-class residents' behaviour is deemed worthy and virtuous, as opposed to the problematic working class. Uitermark *et al.* (2007) attempt to shift the focus of gentrification research more in this direction, by conceiving it as the state's attempt to reassert its grip on social life, viewing gentrification as the '*means* through which governmental organisations and their partners lure the middle-classes into disadvantaged areas with the purpose of civilising and controlling these neighbourhoods' (p. 127, emphasis in original).

Although this is quite a dystopian vision, the valorisation of the middle classes in gentrification can have a symbolic and psychic effect on working-class groups (Reay, 2006). Notions of governance provide some insight into this by reconnecting the economic and the social but tend to focus on the subject, particularly how the responsible citizen is constructed via governmentality. However, I suggest hegemony encapsulates the way neo-liberalism reworks relations between the social, economic *and* political. Moreover, class relations are central to understandings of hegemony. Although class osmosis through gentrification is doubtful, analysis requires an understanding of class which moves along with but beyond the economic, conceiving it as a process which is made through cultural values based on morality (Lawler, 2000; Haylett, 2001, 2003; Skeggs, 2005). However, while middle-class settlement is likely to have an effect on working-class residents, the assumptions underlying social mix policy are that they will, first of all, mix, and second, have a positive relational effect. It is expected that the interaction amongst groups will be straightforward, with a uni-directional flow. Whether either assumption is justified or accurate remains to be demonstrated in both academic research and policy literature. In order to fully know the effects we must first understand what gentrification hegemony is communicating. Since gentrifiers are the key conduits, deconstructing their actions is the most useful starting point.

Probing the symptomatic silences

The policy-based evidence that exists (Fitzpatrick, 2004; Allen *et al.*, 2005; Silverman *et al.*, 2006) largely reflects a fixation with evaluating whether stated policy goals are met, rather than analysing the effects on class relations and subjective experiences. So far, gentrification research does not offer in-depth or longitudinal insights into the impact of middle-class settlement, with gentrifiers often examined as the end product in the process. Middle-class groups are not scrutinised as much as those subjected to the classed gaze downward. Instead they are more commonly analysed in relation to the

remaking of identities in a reflexive era, both in gentrification and wider sociological research. It is not the intention of this research to examine the nuances or newness of this group (Lambert and Boddy, 2002), whether they constitute urban colonisers (Atkinson and Bridge, 2005) or whether class measurements and analysis correlate to actual tastes and practices (Wynne and O'Connor, 1998). Rather, it is to examine the autonomy of their practices, which tend to be obscured by studies focusing solely on tastes and preferences.

Butler and Robson (2003) have made an important contribution to understanding gentrifiers' situated practices. Their investigation of gentrified London neighbourhoods found that practices were characterised by a desire to have a strong sense of place and belonging. This ontological security was enforced by finding 'people like us', those who had similar material, physical and status concerns and anxieties. This, of course, involves exclusion of Others and creates a 'them' and 'us' distinction. They found that, while the gentrifying population in neighbourhoods were small, their presence and impacts outweighed their numbers. The experience of the middle class is that of being 'culturally and economically the defining group able to dominate the area wherever it lives' (Butler and Robson, 2003, p. 21). Such resources give gentrifiers more power because they can mobilise their networks more effectively than poorer residents can. This foregrounds the autonomy of gentrifiers' practices. Wealthier residents, where they could, used private services, rather than public services, thus not contributing to the betterment of provisions for all. They can choose to deploy their economic and social capital outside of the neighbourhood, if it is in their interest to do so. Middle-class groups seem to be less concerned with *neighbouring* rather than *neighbourhood*, as a source of identity (Allen *et al*., 2007).

Since middle-class formation requires a certain exclusiveness, the construction of barriers to entry ensures their social reproduction (Kendall, 2006). This extends to spatial locations, with elite groups increasingly employing elaborate measures to occlude themselves (Atkinson and Flint, 2004). This is seen in the growing trend of gated communities, which create socially restricted enclaves, likened to 'a protective bubble' (Blandy and Lister, 2005). So, despite social mix being pitched as the optimum neighbourhood composition, mono-class communities are allowed to develop and, indeed, are facilitated if they are affluent neighbourhoods. This trend, demonstrating behaviours and practices which seek to exclude Others, suggests that the middle-class return to the city is often premised on the preconditions of fortified safety provisions:

> 'This attempt to promote a sense of safety in the city is increasingly predicated on the construction of largely enclosed and enclave-like development that enables a social imaginary of urban fear and insecurity to be tempered by prospects of middle-class solidarity and relative withdrawal. By building on such social and economic inclinations that push towards wider outcomes of segregation, urban policy is supporting residential preferences for separation in order to encourage pioneers back to the city.' (Atkinson, 2006, p. 821)

Ironically, this demonstrates a lack of widespread social and civic values amongst the middle class, which are replaced with consumer ideals, '[i]n this vision community safety is no longer a social good, but rather a local good from which individuals may be excluded' (Blandy *et al*., 2003, p. 5). The practice of citizenship is gradually being transformed to emulate consumer behaviour (Christopherson, 1994).

Gentrification as segregation

Not only do the values contained within the cultural preferences for segregation not adhere to urban policy's civic principle, but

the fact that these can be purchased in a marketised housing system means that they cannot be socially regulated. This places the behaviours of this group outside the state's grip on social life, while the working class, with fewer resources, succumb more to such regulation through targeted regeneration. Segregation itself is not necessarily the problem, but the wider market system that creates this and the unequal outcomes it generates. This effect is more than just a physical marginalisation. Through the valorisation of the middle class, the stated beneficiaries of regeneration may actually suffer. Middle-class settlement based on segregation sets them out as morally, as well as financially, distinct from surrounding working-class residents. This non-participation can have relational effects too. Segregatory practices show that these groups rarely fulfil their role as vanguards of exemplary behaviours as they do not want to mingle with the fearsome working class, which further bolsters and stigmatises the subordinate class position. The affective moral economy of class (Skeggs, 2005) adds another layer upon the economic devaluation experienced, whereby the working class can be increasingly stigmatised and degraded by the imposition of middle-class residents in their area. Research has even failed to properly document the commonly accepted negative effect of displacement, which has been 'evicted' from research (Slater, 2006).

In response to this, my research was designed as an ethnographic case study. Exploring the spatial manifestations of materially embedded cultural practices in this way foregrounds the relationship between culture, political economy and space (Burawoy *et al*., 1991). I spent as much time as I could in the Park neighbourhood, facilitated by a gatekeeper, to recruit residents for ethnographic interviews. However, the practice of segregation among residents limited this research project. It was difficult to access this private, busy, self-obscuring group. It was initially tough making any contact, as residents often worked long hours, some not returning home until 8 p.m. At the other extreme, some residents were always on extended summer vacations. Use of gatekeepers and snowball sampling presented itself as the most useful methods of accessing the residents. This resulted in ethnographic interviews with eight residents, which were one to two hours in length, mostly over two meetings at residents' homes.[2] This was supplemented with robust qualitative and observational data from neighbourhood events, conversations with other residents and also interviews with 10 key actors.[3] Such an approach is central to understanding daily practices, interactions, and the nuances of social life and subjective experiences. This is rarely pursued in policy research, which is more often pseudo-scientific. Mosse (2005) questions the efficacy of measuring the success of policy using policy goal outcomes—as the goals are manufactured and not inherent with policy itself, thus tending to dictate how 'success' is measured. Ethnographic observation revealed residents' behaviours that expressed and reinforced segregation, even seen in their unwillingness to participate in research. Analysis of interview data suggested that segregation was more than physical, it was symbolic, political and also a purchasable commodity. Probing the silences of middle-class settlement helps to decipher this hegemonic process. It can reveal a range of important impacts and how they play out. In the rest of this paper I will try to show the significance of investigating such issues.

Glasgow's Park Circus

The Park is a spatially segregated Victorian neighbourhood, situated between the West End and central city, recently converted back to residential usage having been used as a prime office location. Developed from the 1830s to house rich merchants it was the centrepiece of mid-19th-century Glasgow. It is formed around curved crescents, with the hilltop as the centre point, surrounded by an ornamental garden, which means it is

Figure 1 An aerial view of Park Circus. © Copyright TotalTravel.co.uk 2008.

relatively excluded from the surrounding Woodlands neighbourhood (Figure 1). This unique spatial topography offers a natural seclusion and mirrors the privacy provided by gated communities.

This area is one of high-end property, there is no mixed tenure or diverse housing stock, no room for socially rented housing or affordable homes—it is specifically market rate and very exclusive. The Park had never suffered much physical decline. Rather, its contemporary conversion was from prestigious commercial usage. Urban polices, such as deregulation of land use planning, were used to encourage further business and investment and affected the Park businesses, which moved out to peripheral business estates with more favourable rents. Parking restrictions were put in place in the neighbourhood to deter city-centre shoppers and workers, which made it a more resident-friendly environment. This made the area ripe for gentrification. Land value information data revealed that half of the properties were refurbished and sold by private developers. The median house price in this area for 2004 was £425,000 (ISPOLIS, 2005). The average house price for Glasgow in 2004[4] was £117,000.

A local estate agent whose company specialised in the Park area and what she called 'upper end £300,000 plus properties' revealed that they held a large database of clients who only want to move to the Park area. She accounted for its popularity:

> 'The "refurb" work is fantastic and it's right next to the city centre. And everyone says how quiet it is, nothing after 5 o'clock. You don't get that.… We've got doctors living in Helensburgh wanting to move there because they are sick of commuting … some want to be closer to the schools. It has a lot to offer, especially for families.'

This interest was not just from Glasgow residents. Land value information data revealed that 72% of the residents buying in the area were from outside Glasgow (ISPOLIS,

2005). Areas of origin included the suburbs of Newton Mearns, Giffnock, Milngavie Bearsden, other nearby towns and, further a field, Milton Keynes, London, and even Hong Kong and Singapore. Residents were predominantly wealthy, upper middle class.

Glasgow needs the gentry?

This transformation was not a case of serendipity. Although there was no specific policy on the Park, its conversion was underpinned by the epistemology of middle-class settlement and gentrification. It typifies Glasgow City Council's desire to attract and secure key new residents that would help improve the image, conviviality and economy of Glasgow (Glasgow City Council, 2003a, 2003b). It was a crucial site for the local authority as it presented a chance to attract affluent residents with minimum effort. The local middle class's proclivity for residing in the peripheral suburbs has been blamed for the hollowing out of the central city and a depleted tax base (Glasgow Economic Forum, 2003). The Park area offered the right kind of living space with the right kind of kudos to attract this group. The Park area is strategically important because of its reputation, location and as a place of 'splendid isolation'. Its situation close to the motorway allows quick and easy access to the surrounding countryside and other cities. It is the city's centrepiece once again: an iconic, residential representation of Glasgow: Scotland with Style, rather that its former mantle: No Mean City. Describing the process as neighbourhood renewal or regeneration does not convey the nature of the change and sugarcoats gentrification (Smith, 2002). It assumes favourable outcomes, de-politicises the process and avoids confrontation with issues of class and displacement.

I was challenged by local councillors and actors for calling this gentrification—because it was so loaded a term for them and it did not conform to the 'classic' model of gentrification which they understood. So I began using the term re-gentrification, akin to processes of super-gentrification (Lees, 2003a), since the Park, while always a prestigious area, was being converted to new users, commensurate with regeneration policy. The councillor and development and regeneration officer did not believe that the re-gentrification of the Park has been supported by council actions since it did not figure in regeneration policies specifically. They did not concede that gentrification was part of any *specific* neighbourhood policies or strategies but they eventually acknowledged that it was part of the regeneration process in Glasgow, and indeed it was a prerequisite:

> 'No, I don't think there is any alternative to gentrification. Of course Glasgow is way behind London and such places. When I moved up to Glasgow in the 1980's it was really an unknown place. Of course now it's not like that at all.' (Development and regeneration officer)

> 'Gentrification is not a word that worries me. The city, for 30 years now, it has been quite clear, must become and maintain itself as a place where people who have money are happy to live. We previously had concentrated on providing better houses for people with no job. Then we realized that as a result we had lost our skilled working-class to Cumbernauld and East Kilbride and we were becoming a sump of the elderly and the sick and the unemployable so the policy was changed in 1975 … *You must have the gentry*. If you don't have the money the only places that will flourish are the drink shops, the rest [of the shops] are awful.' (Local councillor. My own emphasis added)

In relation to wider neighbourhood effects, the director of the nearby community housing association demonstrated her belief in the power of gentrification, commenting 'I think one area coming up would bring the other one up. I think another thing is that it's completely changed Woodlands Road, it used to be a dump.' Woodlands is not an area of concentrated deprivation, but it contains pockets of deprivation and has been subject

to housing action plans as tenemental stock was in a state of disrepair (Figure 2). It is a core area of black and minority ethnic residence, predominantly Pakistani in origin, mainly living in owner-occupied housing, experiencing higher rates of unemployment, and less mobile than the overall population and over-represented in overcrowded dwellings (Binns, 2002). This wider area, inclusive of the Park, could potentially benefit from physical regeneration yet it was clear that local councillors, policy and housing actors believe that gentrification was a panacea. In order to critique this assessment, we must begin by looking at the gentrifiers' practices.

Neighbourhoods rather than neighbouring[5]

Characteristics and locational choices of the gentrifiers revealed identity posturing around the prestige of the neighbourhood. The residents were not a homogeneous group, stratified by age, lifestyle preferences and occupational sectors. Eighty-three per cent of residents were upper middle class, of which 66% worked in managerial, professional and associate professional occupations[6] (Scottish Census Results Online, 2001).[7] Those interviewed demonstrated high stocks of various forms of capital, and most were on the very wealthy end of the spectrum, having high-earning occupations. Two of the younger residents rented their apartment through an agency while the rest were owner-occupiers. However, the group were all 'white', relatively affluent and worked (or used to in the case of the semi-retired couple) in professional/managerial positions, mainly in arts and business sectors. The diverse group exhibited some traits and consumption patterns that match profiles of gentrifiers offered in gentrification literature: older couples who are downsizing, young service sector professionals—singles and couples. It was clear, as Savage *et al*. (2003) suggest, that it is difficult to express key characteristics of gentrifying groups because they come from different sections of the middle class—even within the same neighbourhood.

It became apparent that re-branding of Glasgow had influenced residents' decisions to locate in the Park area and all respondents expressed a desire to seek out similar (middle-class) people:

> 'There is a sense of community … you are more likely to meet like-minded souls in the West End than any other place in Glasgow, em, you know, educated, intelligent, articulate, went to university and the student bars … you don't have the large numbers of working-class people in the West End … West Endees are self-selecting providing they can afford it, to live here.' (Resident 2)

Residents attached different rationales to how they came to live there although, on the whole, locational choices reflected more 'mundane' issues and the ability to afford to make choices, rather than seeking out an alternative lifestyle. One resident said:

> 'I consider myself a Westender—that's what I am. I'm of a particular mind-set, education, interests. I might sound like a right bloody snob here. In essence it's a nice place to live and you are less likely [sic] aggravation down Byres Road than you might get in other parts in Glasgow.' (Resident 1)

As with the original development of the Park area, proximity to work and leisure is of great importance to the urban professional. For some, the Park had specific advantages over and above other locations and many were buying into what Butler and Robson (2003) would refer to as the 'idea' of the Park as a socially and culturally rich area. Some residents were particularly proud of this fact:

> 'We were in the Caribbean and we met this guy from Southampton and he was asking us where we lived. Well, when I told him Park Circus he could barely speak—"you live in Park Circus? They live in Park Circus!" to all these American guys and they were like "gee where's that?" and he started telling them all about it. He'd been here, he worked at the

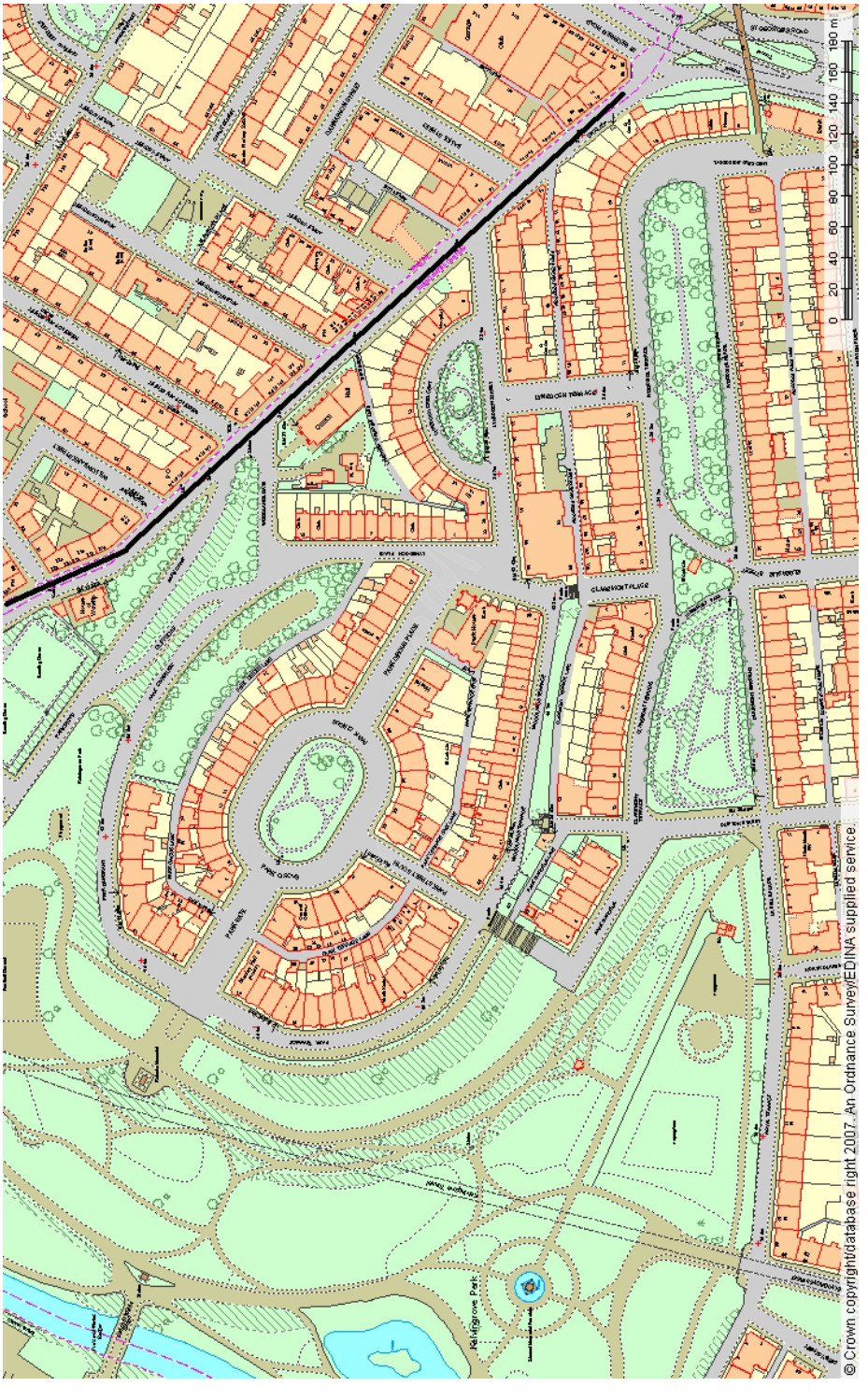

Figure 2 Map of Park Circus showing Woodlands Road (black line). The Woodlands neighbourhood is situated to the right side of Woodlands Road. © Crown Copyright/database right 2008. An Ordnance Survey/(Edina) supplied service.

> STUC he was raving about it, in the Caribbean can you imagine?' (Resident 4)

Using the neighbourhood as a source of identify and status seemed more important to these residents than the practice of neighbouring (Allen *et al*., 2007).

The city idyll

However, the 'best location' and a compelling 'idea' will not be chosen if it incurs costs to personal safety. Proximity to locations allowed gentrifiers to build protected networks. The provision of safety, seclusion and defensible space was very important to the residents, who all cited quietness and tranquillity when expressing why they liked the area. This was closely related to the segregated topography of the area, on a hill adjacent to, but isolated from, the city centre and key road routes, like a mini-Italian hill-town. All valued seclusion and lack of through-traffic. The Park area was like an idyll in the central city and suggests that the residents were not really seeking out alternative lifestyles.

The only thing that seemed to disturb the peace was the occasional tourist party taking pictures. It provides a defensible space and to the outsider, although not tourists, it shares much with the gated community message of 'sod-off' architecture (Atkinson and Flint, 2004). The segregation enabled residents to experience the city without danger (Hannigan, 1998):

> 'It had to be here. We love it here, it's just wonderful, listen, listen (laughs) nothing! It's so tranquil you would never know you were in the city centre. We love the restaurant scene and we love eating out and, of course, the golf. We can get all that here. You can enjoy all the benefits of the city without the darker elements of it. You're safe from that.' (Male, couple B)

Another resident said, '[i]t's like experiencing the city without the bad side' (Resident 3), which hardly suggests that 'urbanism as a way of life' was high on the agenda for these residents, rather the proclivity was for a city idyll.

Securing social reproduction

If suitable networks were not readily available residents would seek them out elsewhere, demonstrated by the out-migration of family gentrifiers to the entrenched privatisation of the suburbs. The majority of homes in the Park were villa conversions. Offering two bedrooms, these primarily catered for couples. The mews cottages had thee bedrooms, but overall were much smaller living spaces. Some families lived in the Park, but not many, even though it apparently offered obvious family appeal: seclusion; security; greenspace; etc. Despite council strategies this area was not attracting and not retaining families. One young family commented on their reasons for moving from the Park neighbourhood:

> 'It's like a sweet shop currently but we can't eat the sweeties because we like Ashton Lane and these things but to do that we have to take the baby down the road … We looked at Bearsden, Milngavie,[8] Jordanhill, you know, where the schools are good, so we don't need to send them to a private school really. See the problem up here, as well, is that I get up everyday and go down to Helensburgh and Balloch. And see all my friends that live up here they all like come from Helensburgh, they all do the same. It just nice because you know everyone, you go out with the baby and the pram and you catch up with people.' (Female, couple A)

Just as these residents buy into this location on the basis that they are protected from 'risk', they again will buy out of any risk towards social reproduction by moving to the suburbs. The ways they buy this assurance will not help the wider community because these parents have no interest in campaigning for improvements in schools and services. They are acting out a role as

consumer citizens rather than actively participating in the wider citizenry. Again these locational choices impact upon the wider community.

Segregation and self-exclusion

The privatised safety measures practised by these residents extended beyond residential space. Car use can become an extension of segregation in this respect. Most refurbished properties had 'secure and private' parking as extra. All the respondents were car owners. One resident said, 'I never used that garage alone until I had an internal connection. You drive in and "doof" you're safe in your house. You've got stay wise to it' (female, couple B). This can have implications for social participation as it facilitates a physical withdrawal from public space. Residents exhibited similar consumption patterns and accessed the same services. They preferred to shop at retail estates than access the wider city in general, and travelled to these by car. In classic gentrification processes gentrifiers have often placed a premium on multi-cultural communities, appropriating 'ethnically' diverse cultural shops and goods which, in turn, become commonly commodified. This was not the case with Park residents. Apart from the newly developing cafés and shops catering for the gentrifiers on Woodlands Road, the residents interviewed did not access the shops in the vicinity. They seemed oblivious or indifferent to locally provided services. One resident said the locale, 'doesn't hit my radar' (Resident 1). This type of reaction seemed unusual, since every resident would have to use Woodlands Road in order to access the Park area. Affinity with wider residents may be lost through individualised consumption and privatism, which may explain the lack of solidarity or even recognition of the existence of the Woodlands community. However, one resident was more concerned with the proximity to the Woodlands area:

> 'You can almost consider Woodlands Road to be a dividing line to it. If you live on the south of it that represents a conscious choice on your part. Likewise, if you live south of the Park, down on Kelvingrove.' (Resident 2)

Park residents had a tendency to refer to Woodlands neighbours in the somewhat denigrating way of 'those down the hill'.

The digital divide

Such tendencies were reinforced by the residents' consumption of technology. Email was one of the most common modes of communication amongst residents and with the local councillor. One resident described themselves as 'plugged in up here'. Another explained that the email group was a really useful way of maintaining a sense of community. She described it as a 'vibrant on-line community' but this was to the detriment of face-to-face interaction. Information technology can establish different patterns of social and cultural life as well as acting as a potential reorganiser of social relations themselves (Graham and Marvin, 1996). Email was especially important for those in the residents' committee and was the main mode of communication. This both created segregation through individual privatism, and further distanced the community from less privileged or technologically deprived groups, who could not command power through this medium. The gentrifiers used this technology to their advantage, lobbying the council to get refurbishment work on the pavements and lighting, and receiving a grant to assist with the maintenance of the ornamental garden. The councillor received numerous emails a day just from residents in the Park area and favoured this medium as he could and did reply instantly to their queries:

> 'You see you've got people there who are pretty clued up. They know their way around, and all credit to them and I'm delighted about this, they are prepared to do some work themselves, they are able to do it,

> so they do that … The past two years I have dealt with Park Circus people and the broader Park community erm, probably as much as all the rest put together [the other areas in the ward] in terms of correspondence. I struggle to think of any communication I have had in that time with the hundreds and hundreds of people in the new houses in Yorkhill.' (Councillor)

He attributed this to the fact that their properties were 'at the £300,000 plus end' and they 'naturally' had to ensure their investment. The responsiveness had even surprised the residents themselves:

> 'We thought, y'know, that they would have more pressing issues than our problems. But he [the councillor] has been very helpful, efficient he's been great that way. He even got the developers along to explain the planning [Park Quadrant[9] site and the church tower development] before it goes ahead.' (Couple B)

It is assumed within policy that such groups should be so self-sufficient and self-motivated that they do not require support from their councillor. Ironically, they command more and councillors appeared biased to their 'needs'.

Brave new neighbourhood[10]

'Community' in the Park neighbourhood was scripted as consumerism and concern for the protection and preservation of property values. This is demonstrated through the issue of rights and ownership to the ornamental garden (Figure 3(a) and (b)). Park Circus residents communally own this, although other Park residents and the general public currently access it. The Park Circus residents—who were all owner-occupiers—established a Gardens Committee to landscape and restore some of its original features. As part of this, gates were to be erected and access limited to the owners. Other Park area residents would have to seek permission to gain entry.

Actions such as this, and the way residents intervened and opposed new housing development in the area, suggested that 'community' was a means of securing property values rather than seeking out ontological security and a sense of belonging. This ownership created further *internal* segregation based on the same principles of consumer rights. The resident who planned to organise a barbecue in this area was renting an apartment on the street next to the Circus and was angered by this decision. She felt she would have fewer rights because she is renting and does not have the same consumer power as home owners in the area:

> '… I just feel it's putting it in everybody's face, you know the ownership … It should remain public, well I think that, but if I said it to others I don't know how they'd take I mean the place is very, very, wealthy.' (Resident 3)

For the local council, the Park had attracted the 'right kind' of resident: active, self-governing and 'participatory'. However, these qualities were used only to benefit the immediate group themselves and did not lead to wider civic and social engagement.

Conclusion and discussion

While the gentry are perceived to be crucial to the 'success' of regeneration, probing their practices indicated that there was little evidence of presumed positive regeneration outcomes like social mix. Even economic benefits were scant, as settlement seemed to be temporary and not for longer term, family, living. Having cultural and economic capital benefited the immediate group who were able to make choices to suit their identities and lifestyles. There is a certain irony here. Policy research literature casts communities who are poor in social capital as ones where people become isolated, suspicious of Others, and reluctant to participate in social economic and political life, leading to a break down in social fabric (Kearns, 2003). The

Figure 3 Ornamental garden, Park Circus. Sign warning off trespassers (left). Author's own photographs.

social fabric in the Park was based on consumption and financial interest. These insular, segregated, practices convey the residents' identity posturing in the neighbourhood setting of distinction. It was more than the architecture that was saying 'sod off', and segregated elite communities are not exclusively predicated upon the use of gates and physical boundaries. The restricted way in which middle-class groups expend their prized social, cultural and economic capital may actually impact negatively upon working-class communities. For example, these gentrifiers did not use indigenous businesses, facilities or public services so would do little to campaign for change or improved standards. Indeed, it is the *non*-participation and *non*-transference that can have direct relational impact on working-class communities. Their identities can be experienced and partly constructed in relation to these middle-class groups. And, since middle-class locational choices are facilitated by local and national government, any impact on neighbouring working classes is reinforced and legitimated. Thus the gentrification hegemony still gets ratified.

However, probing the symptomatic silences of middle-class settlement is only the beginning. It is a necessary precursory strategy. The logic of this is to confront the practices of those who seek out and enjoy the benefits of invisibility from the wider city, policy makers and even social researchers. While this case study is only small and exploratory it does offer key insights into contemporary middle-class settlement, which necessitates further research trajectories. Insights into the cultural behaviours of the middle class and their role in policy can be used to inform a deeper understanding of these impacts and shed light on contemporary class formation at the neighbourhood level. Without systematic analysis of exactly how and why local and national governments utilise gentrification, its hegemony prevails.

It still remains that the most conspicuous silence is that of the working-class communities experiencing these processes. Policy intervenes directly into issues of working-class culture although it rarely figures in discussions. Class denial or class minimisation strategies obscure and marginalise the continuing legacies of the past, in spite of the potency of class divisions in contemporary Scotland (Law and Mooney, 2006). The costs can be felt socially, psychologically and culturally but these remain to be fully explored empirically within the gentrification and related policy literature fields.[11] As this research foregrounds, the effects of gentrification are more than physical displacement. They are implemented to *purposely* affect working-class identities and social reproduction. This raises further questions: given the negative effects, why this hegemony is achieved, and to what degree this is consensual or coercive. The autonomy

of working-class residents is equally significant to the outcomes of the gentrification hegemony as middle-class autonomy is. Since hegemony is not a totality (Williams, 1977), examining precisely how this is received and negotiated highlights processes of class identity formation at the neighbourhood level. Such a research paradigm can help generate positive representations of contemporary working-class social reproduction, relations and communities. This can be usefully applied to reinvigorate the field of research by adding to the New Working Class studies approach (Russo and Linkon, 2005). Community-based studies of working-class neighbourhoods have been all but abandoned within recent research. We know little about current working-class identity formation and the hidden injuries and hidden rewards of class (Strangleman, 2008). This is an increasingly prescient task as urban policy and the gentrification hegemony are implemented to impact upon these very processes. However, more importantly, generating positive representations can help challenge the prevailing gentrification hegemony.

Notes

1 The case study focuses on a particular section—an affluent middle-class population—defined in line with National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SeC).
2 Anonymity is ensured in accordance with consent agreement obtained prior to interviews.
3 This included interviews with councillors, business owners, local estate agents, a development and regeneration officer, a property developer and a local housing association director.
4 However, a caveat is that Glasgow averages are calculated using the quality price index and comparison with the Park area is more impressionistic than reliable.
5 Allen *et al*. (2007).
6 The Scottish average for these occupational groups is 36%.
7 In the census output results for the neighbourhood, 71 of the residents are not classified. Sixty-nine of these were students living in Glasgow University MacLay halls of residence (17 Park Terrace) which was sold to developers in November 2001. These were omitted to obtain this percentage.
8 Bearsden and Milngavie are two satellite villages outside the Glasgow city boundary. They are traditionally areas where middle-class and wealthier families have chosen to reside.
9 Residents claimed to have successfully opposed proposed developments. Their grounds for this were that the plans did not 'enhance the area'. However, they have recently been overruled, with developers getting the go-ahead for a £15 million development of 107 luxury flats.
10 Kohn (2004).
11 The impact of gentrification processes on working-class community is the topic of an ESRC CASE studentship that I have undertaken. I work in collaboration with Oxfam UK and West Glasgow against Poverty (Westgap). The latter is a grassroots antipoverty and advocacy group based in Partick, Glasgow.

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