

# Gentrification and Social Mixing: Towards an Inclusive Urban Renaissance?

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## Abstract

Nearly 30 years ago now, Holcomb and Beauregard were critical of the way that it was assumed that the benefits of gentrification would ‘trickle down’ to the lower classes in a manner similar to that hypothesised in the housing market. Nevertheless, despite fierce academic debate about whether or not gentrification leads to displacement, segregation and social polarisation, it is increasingly promoted in policy circles both in Europe and North America on the assumption that it will lead to less segregated and more sustainable communities. Yet there is a poor evidence base for this policy of ‘positive gentrification’—for, as the gentrification literature tells us, despite the new middle classes’ desire for diversity and difference they tend to self-segregate and, far from being tolerant, gentrification is part of an aggressive, revanchist ideology designed to retake the inner city for the middle classes. In light of this, it is argued that these new policies of social mixing require critical attention with regard to their ability to produce an inclusive urban renaissance and the potentially detrimental gentrifying effects they may inflict on the communities they intend to help.

## Introduction

Nearly 30 years ago now, Briavel Holcomb and Robert Beauregard (1981, p. 3) were critical of the way that it was assumed by authors like Altshuler (1969), Lowry (1960) and Smith (1971) that the benefits of urban revitalisation/gentrification would ‘trickle down’ to the lower and working classes in a manner similar to that hypothesised in the housing market. Nevertheless, despite fierce academic debate about whether or

not gentrification leads to displacement, segregation and social polarisation, it is increasingly promoted in policy circles on the assumption that it will lead to more socially mixed, less segregated, more liveable and sustainable communities. In keeping with a longstanding strand of research that has identified the liberal desires of the new middle classes for difference and diversity in the city as key to the process of gentrification and to the creation of a more diverse and tolerant city (see Lees, 2000; and Lees *et al.*, 2008, on

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‘the emancipatory city thesis’), the benefits of functionally as well as socially mixed urban communities have become something of an unquestioned gospel in policy discourse (Lees, 2003a, 2003b). Yet there is a poor evidence base for the widespread policy assumption that gentrification will help increase the social mix, foster social mixing and thereby increase the social capital and social cohesion of inner-city communities. As Damaris Rose (2004, p. 280) says, there is an “uneasy cohabitation” between gentrification and social mix. It is this uneasy cohabitation that this paper investigates.

## Gentrification and Social Mixing

Gentrification has long been associated with appeals to diversity and difference, to social mixing. As Irving Allen argued, some time ago now, in an essay titled ‘The ideology of dense neighbourhood redevelopment’

Sociocultural diversity is a leitmotif in the new tastes for central city housing and neighbourhood. One of the great amenities of dense city living, it is said, is exposure to such social and cultural diversity as ethnicity. A composite statement of the idea made up from many fragments is as follows: A milieu of diversity represents a childrearing advantage over ‘homogeneous suburbs’, because children are exposed to social ‘reality’ and to the give and take of social and cultural accommodation with those who are different. For adults the urban ambience of diversity is a continual source of stimulation and renewal and a reminder of the cultural relativity of one’s own style of life. It is said to be a relief from the subcultural sameness and ‘boredom’ of many suburban communities (Allen, 1984, pp. 31–32).

In research undertaken in one of the first neighbourhoods in London to gentrify, Barnsbury in Islington (see Butler and Lees, 2006; Lees *et al.*, 2008, ch. 1), such a *leitmotif* is certainly to be found. Pioneer gentrifiers in Barnsbury were part of a left liberal new

middle class who actively sought social mixing, as seen in the fact that they were champions of the comprehensive school revolution of which Margaret Malden’s Islington Green was a prototype. As one Barnsbury gentrifier Mary Hall said in a letter to *The Times* (1977)

Sir, the Socialists are determined that we should sit side by side to be educated and lie side by side when ill. Why on earth, then, should we not also live side by side?.

And as Ken Pring, architect and pioneer Barnsbury gentrifier, said

The present trend towards a rising proportion of the middle classes in the population will continue. This will help create a better social balance in the structure of the community, and the professional expertise of the articulate few will ultimately benefit the underprivileged population (in Pitt, 1977, p. 1).

Such words virtually echo current policy rhetoric on social mixing as we shall see later in this paper.

Anti-gentrification groups active at the time, such as the Barnsbury People’s Forum, however, were much more sceptical about the merits of social mix/ing

Social balance or ‘mix’ is an argument about the consequences of social class patterns. It rests on the belief that there is an ideal composition of social and income groups which, when achieved, produces optimum individual and community well being. The assumed social advantages of the balanced community have been at the heart of nearly all debate on new towns and urban renewal ... The difficulty with the concept is that, despite numerous empirical investigations, very little is known about the advantages and disadvantages of different kinds of mix, nor at what level—street, neighbourhood, district, community—social balance would be a worthwhile goal for policy objectives (Pitt, 1977, p. 16).

Some early authors on gentrification also questioned whether the gentrifying middle

classes and the pre-existing low-income communities could live side by side

whether policy can promote population mixes of different socioeconomic and racial groups while simultaneously enhancing the civil class domination of the neighbourhood. In the past new people and incumbents have often not mixed well when they were of different races or socioeconomic statuses. The normative integration that is a prerequisite for upgrading does not develop ... This probably becomes more serious when racial mix is combined with socioeconomic mix (Clay, 1979, p. 70).

In this paper, I question whether social mixing—moving middle-income people into low-income inner-city neighbourhoods—is a positive thing. There has been a large volume of work that has investigated the concept of social mixing or mixed communities, from detailed literature reviews (such as Goodchild and Cole, 2001; Atkinson, 2005; Tunstall and Fenton, 2006; Cheshire, 2007); to empirical research on tenurial diversification on public housing estates (such as Atkinson and Kintrea, 2000; Tunstall, 2003); to empirical work on mixed communities in new-build developments (Rowlands *et al.*, 2006); and new work questioning social mixing policies (Galster, 2007). In this paper I bring together this work and the newly emerging work on gentrification and social mixing (for example, Davidson, under review; Freeman, 2006; Lees *et al.*, 2008; Rose, 2004; Uitermark *et al.*, 2007; Walks and Maaranen, 2008) to question the current policies on social mixing that are a central part of urban renaissance agendas in much of the developed world. In so doing, I develop a detailed critique of current policies on social mixing that seek to use gentrification as a ‘positive public policy tool’ to revitalise inner urban neighbourhoods (see Cameron, 2003, on gentrification as a ‘positive public policy tool’; and Lees *et al.*, 2008, on state-led ‘positive’ gentrification).

## Policies of Gentrification and Social Mixing

In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest among national and local governments, urban policy-makers and urban scholars in the concept of social mixing. Encouraging socially mixed neighbourhoods and communities has become a major urban policy and planning goal in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Australia, Canada and the United States. As Rose argues

since the image of the ‘livable city’ has become a key aspect of a city’s ability to compete in a globalized, knowledge-based economy (Florida, 2003), post-industrial cities have a growing interest in marketing themselves as being built on a foundation of ‘inclusive’ neighbourhoods capable of harmoniously supporting a blend of incomes, cultures, age-groups and lifestyles (Rose, 2004, p. 281).

Schoon (2001) identifies three distinct rationales in policy debates for social mixing. First, the ‘defending the neighbourhood’ argument claims that since middle-class people are stronger advocates for public resources, socially mixed neighbourhoods will fare better than those without middle-class households. Secondly, the ‘money-go-round’ argument claims that tenurially and socioeconomically mixed neighbourhoods are able to support a stronger local economy than areas of concentrated poverty. Finally, the ‘networks and contacts’ argument draws on Putnam’s (1995) influential account of bridging and bonding social capital to promote social mixing as the way to generate social cohesion and economic opportunity. However, the rhetoric of ‘social mix’ hides a gentrification strategy and in that a hidden social cleansing agenda (Cameron, 2003; Uitermark *et al.*, 2007). Blomley demonstrates how the concept of social mix has been operationalised through gentrification in order to address—that is,

cleanse—the long-term disinvestment and poverty in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside

Programs of renewal often seek to encourage homeownership, given its supposed effects on economic self-reliance, entrepreneurship, and community pride. Gentrification, on this account, is to be encouraged, because it will mean the replacement of a marginal anti-community (nonproperty owning, transitory, and problematized) by an active, responsible, and improving population of homeowners (Blomley, 2004, p. 89).

It is a policy language that never uses the word 'gentrification' and thus consistently deflects criticism and resistance. Terms like urban renaissance, urban revitalisation, urban regeneration and urban sustainability are used instead, avoiding the class constitution of the processes involved and neutralising the negative image that the process of gentrification brings with it (Lees, 2003a; Lees *et al.*, 2008). Criticism is also deflected through the construction of social mixing as a moralistic discourse that is about helping the poor (Blomley, 2004; Slater, 2005, 2006). It is difficult to be for gentrification, but who would oppose 'social mixing'?

Although authors have written about Ireland (for example, Norris, 2006), Scandinavia (for example, Musterd and Andersson, 2005), Australia (for example, Rumig *et al.*, 2004), and the literature on Canada is growing (much of which is used later in this paper—see references there), the bulk of the literature on social mixing has focused on the UK, the US and the Netherlands. These three countries have enacted similar but different ways of promoting social mixing as part of their urban renaissance agendas. The UK has promoted the state-led gentrification of public housing through a mixed communities policy and the housing market renewal of areas of supposedly failing owner-occupied housing (usually working-class). The US has promoted social mixing through policies that seek the

spatial deconcentration of poverty. And the Netherlands has pursued policies of breaking up, through demolition and rebuilding, significant areas of low-income housing. In similar vein to the UK, it has also enacted policy that regulates new developments by requiring mixed occupancy as a condition for planning approval and/or funding.

### The United Kingdom

The UK's New Labour government (under Tony Blair and now Gordon Brown) is as committed to social diversity and mixing as were Barnsbury's pioneer gentrifiers, some of whom were quoted earlier. It is perhaps no surprise that Tony Blair and a number of other cabinet members have lived in Barnsbury! Their pro-urban and pro-social-mixing ideologies are those of classic gentrification texts. In recent policy statements<sup>1</sup> they sell gentrification, which they prefer to call 'urban renaissance', to us through the neutralising vein of social mixing (Lees, 2003a; Lees *et al.*, 2008). As stated earlier, the benefits of diversity and of functionally as well as socially mixed urban communities stand central to, and unquestioned in, these policy documents.<sup>2</sup> The British government's stated intention to bring the middle classes back to the central city, read gentrification, is motivated by, and indeed sold to us, as an attempt to reduce socio-spatial segregation and strengthen the 'social tissue' of deprived neighbourhoods. Social mixing and improved social balance are viewed as key to reducing what they term 'neighbourhood effects'. This was the ODPM's<sup>3</sup> argument

People living in deprived neighbourhoods are less likely to work, more likely to be poor and have lower life expectancy, more likely to live in poorer housing in unattractive local environments with high levels of anti-social behaviour and lawlessness and more likely to receive poorer education and health services. Living in a deprived area adversely affects individual's life chances over and above what would

be predicted by their personal circumstances and characteristics (ODPM, 2005, p. 6).

Randolph and Wood explain the thinking behind this approach

The idea that social disadvantage is exacerbated by spatial concentration of disadvantaged populations is often now referred to in terms of 'neighbourhood' or 'area effects'. Put simply, the concentration of poverty in local areas creates a social milieu that reinforces aspects of disadvantage and actively reduces an individual's ability to move out of poverty or disadvantage (Randolph and Wood, 2003, p. iii).

The Social Exclusion Unit (1998) argued that social capital in excluded communities could be rebuilt if they socially mix

it often brings people into contact with those outside their normal circle, broadening horizons and raising expectations, and can link people into informal networks through which work is more easily found (SEU, 1998, p. 53).

As Uitermark argues

It is frequently suggested by planners and politicians alike, that a policy that promotes 'social mixing' could strengthen the social tissue of a disadvantaged neighbourhood, thus saving its inhabitants from living in an environment that allegedly inhibits social and economic integration (Uitermark, 2003, p. 531).

Through producing more socially balanced neighbourhoods via gentrification and thus reducing socio-spatial segregation, the British government expects to increase the stocks of social capital in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The mixing of low-income and middle-income communities is therefore a necessary part of the British government's programme to reduce social exclusion. The echoes of poverty deconcentration policies from the US (see next section) are quite apparent.

Following the national lead, local urban renaissance initiatives are seeking to entice more affluent populations into low-income

areas—what Stuart Cameron (2003, p. 2373) calls a policy of 'positive gentrification' or 'gentrification as a positive public policy tool'—in order to diversify the social mix and dilute concentrations of poverty in the inner city.

Davidson and Lees (under review) discuss the example of the Aylesbury estate near Elephant and Castle, one of the largest public housing estates in Europe, which is in the process of being demolished and replaced with mixed-income new-build housing. As the current Housing Green Paper states

The purpose of an estate transformation venture would be the creation of a sustainable mixed community. This would be likely to involve selective demolition; provision of new housing supply for homeownership, market sale and low-cost homeownership; social rented and possibly council housing (DCLG, 2007, p. 111).

The current strategy for the demolition and rebuilding of the Aylesbury estate lists the construction of 3200 private new-build homes and only 2000 social rented new-build homes. This fulfils the UDP requirement for 40 per cent social housing. In essence, they seek to demolish the vast majority of the Aylesbury estate (despite much of it being structurally sound) and to create a new-build development for a privileged middle class. This plan does not acknowledge the current mix already in the area (which is already very socially and ethnically diverse), nor does it address issues of social sustainability. As Chris Allen (2008) says, demolishing low-cost working-class houses in order to build high-value products that middle-class people will allegedly buy violates a whole way of working class 'being' towards houses (as places to dwell rather than a position within the space of positions).

### The United States

Gentrification, marketed as poverty deconcentration in the US, is seen to be a spatial

fix for the poor tax bases and concentrations of poverty in American inner cities. In cities that are highly dependent on property taxes as a source of revenue, seeking to increase your tax base by increasing the percentage of middle-class homeowners in the central city is seen to be fiscal pragmatism (Lees *et al.*, 2008). Significant spatial concentrations of poverty are seen to produce certain pathologies

While debate on these questions persists, the consensus among policy-makers is that poverty is fundamentally transformed by its spatial concentration: When [*sic*] neighbourhood poverty rates exceed some critical threshold, contagion effects spread behavioural pathologies through peer groups, while collective socialisation erodes because children no longer see adults in positive role models as educated workers and married parents (Wyly and Hammel, 1999, p. 740).

The solution to this is to socially mix, in reality gentrify, such concentrations of poverty. The current trend in US housing redevelopment is to replace existing high-density social housing 'projects' with new lower-density mixed-income communities. This is the central thrust of the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development's HOPE VI programme which has been used to socially mix, and gentrify, public housing.

One infamous example is Cabrini Green in Chicago. In 1994, despite being located next to some of the most expensive real estate in Chicago, Cabrini Green qualified under HUD guidelines as the worst case of public housing in the US and received \$50 million to redevelop a portion of the site (Lees *et al.*, 2008). The reduction of densities from the demolition of units and the 'vouchering out' (for example, where residents were given vouchers for mainly private rented accommodation) of public housing tenants led to significant displacement of low-income tenants and gentrification (see Smith, 2001). By 'manufacturing' a socially mixed

community in areas of poverty concentration, such as Cabrini Green, US policy-makers think that gentrification

can ameliorate the social isolation of the poor. New more affluent residents will rub shoulders with poorer existing residents on the streets, in shops, and within local institutions, such as public schools. Such newcomers may exhibit possibilities of social mobility and a determination to secure adequate public services that provide existing residents with the kind of role models and contacts the absence of which Wilson [W. J. Wilson, 1987] finds debilitating in the ghetto (Byrne, 2003, p. 422).

By the end of 2004, the HOPE VI programme had demolished approximately 63 000 units and more than 20 300 units were redeveloped (Atkinson, 2005). Cunningham (2001), however, in his critique of HOPE VI in Washington DC, argues that HOPE VI has not aided the revitalisation of depressed neighbourhoods, rather it has reduced affordable housing and caused spiralling rents and prices. Gotham is on the ball when he states:

the redevelopment of public housing [in the US] is a form of 'exclusive' development that is designed to exclude the very poor from the revitalized spaces and render them safe for resettlement by the wealthy and affluent (Gotham, 2001, p. 437).

This neo-liberal formula of social mixing, that promotes gentrification, can be seen operating at perhaps a more disturbing level in post-Katrina New Orleans. There conservative commentators and public officials have blamed the urban poverty in New Orleans on the failures of the liberal welfare state. Their aim is to lure middle-class families back into New Orleans and to build over, displace or 'culturally integrate' the African American/low-income communities (see Lees *et al.*, 2008). As the National Housing Law Project *et al.* have argued



While the scale of urban renewal clearance was larger than that of HOPE VI, both programs involve the displacement of very large numbers of low income households of color (National Housing Law Project *et al.*, 2002, p. 38).

### The Netherlands

Compared with the US and the UK, spatial segregation is comparatively low in the Netherlands (van Kempen *et al.*, 1992) due to the different composition of the housing market, where over half the housing is owned and rented out by public housing corporations. Traditionally, all sections of society have made use of this public housing regardless of income (Murie and Musterd, 1996), although this is now changing with higher-income households now almost entirely absent from publically provided housing. Nevertheless, despite the low levels of spatial segregation, social segregation and social mixing are high on governmental agendas. In the Netherlands, a policy of 'housing re-differentiation' (see Hulsbergen and Stouten, 2001; Musterd *et al.*, 1999; Priemus, 1995, 1998, 2001; Uitermark, 2003) as they call it, has been underway since 1996. The British Urban Task Force were especially excited by this policy. Housing re-differentiation is a policy of adding more expensive dwellings to low-income areas by removing inexpensive dwellings through demolition, together with the sale and upgrading of existing dwellings—the idea being to create a more socially mixed population in neighbourhoods via gentrification.

The motivation for promoting such policies is not about the social well-being of disadvantaged individuals, rather it is about the need to strengthen the economic position of Dutch cities overall (Uitermark, 2003). Aalbers *et al.* outline the rationales behind a series of interlinked policy shifts in the Netherlands

At the end of the 1980s it was realised that the urban economy had lost much of its strength

due to suburbanization and due to the focus on poor residents and on their housing provision as a leading principle. Policy concentrating on areas with multiple problems (problem accumulation areas) and in a later stage the policy of social renewal had to respond to this: the civic society had to be activated. The role of the policy was to increase participation in society. This was done under the name of "stedelijke vernieuwing", which also means "urban renewal" but should be translated as "urban revitalization" because the goals were very different: not housing needs, but the reinforcement of the urban economy was most important (Aalbers *et al.*, 2004, p. 11).

As in the US, city governments in the Netherlands see the facilitation of social mix as a way of attracting higher-income residents who will improve the tax-base, support local businesses and improve the governability of the city—for well educated, middle-class urbanites are less of a burden on social services and are likely to play an active part in neighbourhood revitalisations. These ideas about social mix in the Netherlands, and especially in Rotterdam, have gained new intensity since 2002 related to the political turbulence due to the rise of the Pim Fortuyn Party and their 'Leefbaar Rotterdam' (Liveable Rotterdam). There are now strong calls in the Netherlands for the dispersal of the poor and immigrant inhabitants and the creation of mixed communities. In Rotterdam, Uitermark *et al.* argue that

The city now actively markets itself as a good place for affluent residents and especially targets the so-called creative class (cf. Florida, 2005). The city has boosted both the construction of owner-occupied dwellings and the demolition of social rented housing. Each year, developers add about 3,000 new owner-occupied dwellings to the total of 250,000 dwellings, while demolishers destroy about 4,000 social houses ... In language that hardly requires textual deconstruction, the government of Rotterdam declares that it aims to attract 'desired households' to 'problem areas'

... therefore reinforcing and politicizing the connection between owner-occupied housing and liveability. This discourse no longer only involves the right-wing parties that were in office since 2002. The Labour Party that won the local elections of February 2006 supports similar policies. A document produced by top civil servants to define the communis opinio after Labour's victory explicitly argues that gentrification needs to be 'enhanced' (Uitermark *et al.*, 2007, p. 129).

There have been a number of studies of social interaction in these restructured Dutch neighbourhoods and these have found that the social networks amongst neighbours tend to be socially segregated, especially in terms of socioeconomic status and ethnicity. Uitermark *et al.* (2007) are clear that an influx of middle-class residents into a disadvantaged neighbourhood does not increase social cohesion, rather the contacts between low-income and higher-income households tend to be superficial at best and downright hostile at worst (for comparison of some successes and failures, see Aalbers, 2006, on the Bijlmermeer on the outskirts of Amsterdam).<sup>4</sup>

## Gentrification and Social Mixing: A Critique

As of yet ... there is little systematic evidence that gentrification actually leads to greater levels of social mix at the neighbourhood scale. Indeed, it is not even apparent that social mix can achieve the goals hoped of it ... Moreover, it is not clear exactly what kind of 'mix' is most desirable, or what sort of mix matters most in producing the expected positive outcomes ... (Walks and Maaranen, 2008, p. 294).

Conceptually, policy claims about the causal links between more socially mixed communities, increased social mixing, the development of social capital and cohesion, and decreased social exclusion and deprivation, have been criticised as something of an

"analytical sack of potatoes" (Fine, 2001, p. 190; see also Kearns, 2003). Randolph and Wood (2003) note there has been only limited research into the causes and consequences of social mixing, and most of that has been on public housing estates (see for example, Cole and Shayer, 1998; Atkinson and Kintrea, 2000). By way of contrast, Butler with Robson (2003) suggest that higher levels of social mixing, and thus conceivably also of social capital and cohesion, are more likely to be achieved in socially homogeneous, rather than socially mixed, areas. Moreover, researchers have cautioned against the artificial imposition of social mixing at too fine a spatial scale. At too local a scale, it can create tensions—especially when there are marked economic, social and cultural differences between residents—and residents may withdraw rather than mix (Rose, 2004, p. 281). All this suggests that Randolph and Wood (2003, p. 40) are correct in claiming that there is a "weak evidence base for the principles upon which social mix policies are based".

However, much of the policy literature supports the types of tenure dilutions via gentrification and the construction of market housing in low-income areas outlined in the discussions earlier, in the hopes of creating more socially heterogeneous and balanced neighbourhoods (Kearns and Mason, 2007). Tunstall and Fenton (2006), for example, who claim to bring together the best UK research to date on the subject (p. 2), conclude that although there are some gaps in knowledge "the most common rationales for mixed communities remain valid" (p. 3). By way of contrast, geographers reviewing social mix policies have concluded that there is a lack of real evidence to support them. Doherty *et al.* (2006, p. 60), for example, who undertook a large quantitative study using data from the UK census and the Scottish longitudinal study, were forced to "conclude that the policy of deliberately mixing tenures in housing



developments in order to improve social well-being remains largely unsupported by the research evidence so far available". In addition, Cheshire (2007) offers a sceptical view about the possibility of securing social mixing at the neighbourhood level. Moreover, in recent years, as I indicate in the earlier sections, the idea of social mixing has begun to be subjected to some important academic criticism from those researching gentrification. In this substantive section of the paper, I draw on that body of work and on the wider, critical literature on social mixing, to develop six somewhat interrelated critiques of social mixing policy.

### **Gentrification Causes Overwhelmingly Negative Effects**

Social mixing is being promoted through gentrification in the face of evidence that gentrification leads to social segregation, social polarisation and displacement. The movement of middle-income groups into low-income areas creates overwhelmingly negative effects, the most significant of which is the displacement of low-income groups (Atkinson, 2004). Far from being tolerant, gentrification is part of an aggressive, revanchist ideology designed to retake the inner city for the middle classes (Smith, 1996). There are long-standing claims, mostly from the US, that gentrification leads to displacement and socio-spatial segregation, rather than alleviating social segregation, as working-class and minority residents are steadily priced out of gentrified areas (for example, Marcuse, 1986; Smith, 1996; Wylie and Hammel, 2004). In the UK, Lyons (1996) and Atkinson (2000) both used the longitudinal survey and found evidence suggesting gentrification-induced displacement in London. Davidson and Lees (2005) also found evidence of gentrification-induced displacement in riverside wards along the Thames that had experienced new-build

gentrification. The spatially based mechanisms designed to increase social mixing—such as reduced spatial segregation, better urban design and compact cities (the exact policy ingredients in the case of new-build gentrification along the Thames)—have been ineffective in increasing social mixing at the neighbourhood/community level.

As Williams and Smith argued some time ago now

It is often argued that the benefits of gentrification are far greater than the costs (Schill and Nathan, 1983). Whether this is true is doubtful, but more important it is beside the point. The benefits and costs are so unevenly distributed that one has to look not at some overall equation but at different segments of the population. There are distinct losers as well as winners, and the consistent losers are the poor and the working class who will be displaced as gentrification proceeds, and who will confront higher housing costs in tight markets (Williams and Smith, 1986, p. 220).

Slater (2004) has shown that Canadian policies of social mixing have had such negative consequences, for in South Parkdale, Toronto, where a deliberate policy of social mixing was initiated in 1999, the fall-out was homeowner NIMBYism, significant rent increases and tenant displacement.

Walks and Maaranen (2008) have investigated the relationship between the timing of gentrification, changes in income structure and shifts in immigrant concentration and ethnic diversity in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver from 1971 to 2001. They concluded that gentrification in these cities was followed by declining, rather than improving, levels of social mix, ethnic diversity and immigrant concentration within affected neighbourhoods. Indeed, gentrification was implicated in a growth in neighbourhood polarisation and inequality: "the more that gentrification has progressed in a neighbourhood, the greater

the reduction in levels of social mix, and the less ‘mixed’ the local social structure in 2001” (pp. 319–320). Importantly, gentrification was also found to have a deleterious impact on the immigrant-reception function of inner-city neighbourhoods. They are very clear about the implications of this for policy

Contrary to the assumptions linking gentrification to social mix, these results suggest that if allowed to run its course, gentrification is likely to *reduce* neighbourhood levels of social mix and ethnic diversity...the lesson for policy-makers is that if they want to intervene to ensure proportionate levels of social mix and retain a more balanced social structure, they should be aiming to limit, rather than promote, gentrification (Walks and Maaranen, 2008, p. 320; original emphasis).

### **Gentrification does not engender social mixing**

Work which has been sceptical about the voyeuristic and appropriative relationship of gentrification to difference by authors such as May (1996) and Merrifield (2000) has been given new impetus by recent empirical research into the social interactions of actual gentrifiers. The middle-class gentrifiers interviewed by Butler (1997), Butler and Robson (2001) and Butler with Robson (2003), engaged in little social mixing with local low-income groups. Social interaction was greatest in areas where other groups had been largely pushed aside and, where they had not, gentrification tended to result in ‘tectonic’ juxtapositions of polarised socio-economic groups rather than in socially cohesive communities. Butler (1997) found that Hackney’s gentrifiers sought out people with similar cultural and political values, ones attuned to what inner-city living had to offer, such as social and cultural diversity. His interviewees had similar pro-social-mixing views to the pioneer gentrifiers in Barnsbury quoted at the beginning of this paper. As one of his interviewees said

There’s a great social mix here, we’ve got an orthodox Jewish family that side, an English family two doors down who have become great mates. We’ve got a Black family this side who we are very friendly with and an Anglo-French family the other side up there, a New Zealander over there and there’s no tension at all in the street. ... I don’t like to be set in an enclave of all middle class or all anything because I think that as soon as you get all anything the same frictions start, you get the ‘one upmanships’, the silly, petty ‘I have got to be better than the next door’ (Butler, 1997, p. 117).

Yet Butler points to some interesting contradictions. He argues that “there appears to be an increasing tendency towards spatial segmentation within the middle class both occupationally and residentially” (Butler, 1997, p.161). So, despite the Hackney ‘new’ middle classes’ desire for diversity and difference, they tended to self-segregate. Notions of diversity were more in the minds of these gentrifiers, rather than in their actions, reflecting one way in which they defined themselves as a specific class fraction and, in particular, as cosmopolitan citizens (Butler and Robson, 2001). This has resonances with Irving Allen’s (1984, p. 38) perceptive argument that “The willingness of the new urbanites to live cheek by jowl with low-status communities may testify to the apartness that some feel from those communities”.

In later research, Butler and Robson (2001) and Butler with Robson (2003) supported these earlier findings about social interaction and found that middle-class gentrifiers tended to associate with other middle-class people in their neighbourhood, primarily through their children. They were clear: “There is little evidence of numbers of cross class friendships” (Butler with Robson, 2003, p. 127). The data on the children of gentrifiers and their social networks were the most telling: “There was no evidence that the children played outside these middle-class networks and our

fieldwork strongly suggests that the middle-class pre-school clubs were, and remain, highly exclusionary of non-middle-class children" (Butler with Robson, 2003, p. 128). Gentrification-induced social mix did not then engender social mixing for either adults or children.

With their focus on middle-class reproduction, Butler and Robson did not consider the experiences of non-gentrifiers; nevertheless, their findings raise important questions about the role of gentrification in fostering an inclusive urban renaissance. Yet once you include the experiences of non-gentrifiers, the inadequacies of arguments about the influence of residence on class relations in gentrifying neighbourhoods become apparent (see Bridge, 1994; also Freeman, 2006). Davidson (under review) surveyed and interviewed both gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers and found little evidence of social interaction between the residents in the newly built middle-income developments along the Thames and the lower-income residents living in the adjacent neighbourhoods. There was no transference of social capital from high- to low-income groups nor any of the other desired outcomes from the introduction of a middle-class population into these central-city riverside locations. In part this was due to the transitory nature of the new-build residents and in part it was due to the spatially segregated nature of the new-build developments with respect to the adjacent low-income communities. As Davidson argues

the lifeworlds of the two populations rarely intersect. [They] did not work in the same places or use the same means of transport. They did not frequent the same restaurants or public houses. They had different household structures. They had different expectations and aspirations about community and mixing (Davidson, under review).

Freeman (2006) investigated the impact of gentrification on the indigenous residents

in two Black gentrifying neighbourhoods, Harlem and Clinton Hill in New York City. Like Davidson (under review), he consulted both gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers living in the same neighbourhood. He concludes

This book shows that the gentry do indeed hold forth the promise to bring benefits to the indigenous residents, but in ways more limited than the poverty deconcentration thesis would suggest. In addition, the income mixing concomitant with gentrification is no guarantee for upward mobility (Freeman, 2006, p. 2).

In his ethnography of the localised relationships between the incoming gentry and the long-term residents in the two neighbourhoods, he found that social ties rarely crossed class and racial lines, that the social networks in the neighbourhoods seemed impervious to the changes taking place around them and that there were clashes between the norms of gentrifiers and those of the longer-term residents. Like Davidson (under review), Freeman (2006) found that the gentry and the long-term residents moved in different spaces, as this commentary (in reference to a new restaurant) from a long-term resident of Harlem (in his 50s and living in a public housing project) captures

We don't eat there. I went in there for a piece of cake and it was like four bucks! I can get a whole cake for four bucks. Obviously they don't want too many of us in there (Freeman, 2006, p. 64).

Like Rose (2004), he also found that the incoming gentry and the long-term residents were fairly ambivalent about social diversity—few spoke in overall positive or negative tones about it. And the two groups did not interact, as this interview with two indigenous residents reveals

*Lance:* Do you see in general how they [the gentry] interact with the rest of the community or—?

*Ms Tate*: Well, they don't. You know, they just whatever, might walk by, and, and, and the people that are moving in here are younger people. When I say younger they might be in their late twenties, early thirties, in that range. Not much interaction at all. You know, you might see one 'hi', walk by, that's it, but it's no real communication going on (Freeman, 2006, pp. 131–132).

Rose (2004) undertook empirical research into gentrification and social mixing in downtown Montreal. She focused, in similar vein to Butler (1997), on the actual experiences of diversity drawn out in interviews with gentrifiers, but unlike Butler she focused on areas that had been deliberately socially mixed by municipal programmes designed to repopulate the central city in Montreal. The gentrifiers who had moved into the infill condominiums adjacent to social housing were asked questions about social diversity and about living next to social housing. Rose found a relatively large selection of viewpoints “running the gamut from ‘egalitarian’ through ‘tolerant’ to ‘NIMBY’, as well as ‘ignorant/indifferent’” (Rose, 2004, p. 300). Overall her findings were ambivalent.

It seems then that it is not realistic to assume that people from different social class backgrounds or income bands living cheek-by-jowl will actually mix, let alone integrate. The evidence from the gentrification literature then tallies with Cole and Shayer's (1998) research which has shown that a greater amount of neighbourhood social diversity does not correlate with increased interaction between different social groups within neighbourhoods. Indeed, some authors have pointed out that socially mixed communities are just as likely to engender social conflict as social harmony, due to the clash of different cultures, classes and socioeconomic groups (Goodchild and Cole, 2001). Freeman (2006) found conflict between the gentrifiers and the more established residents, and resentment

stemming from feelings of irrelevance that the neighbourhood improvements were not being made for them. As Atkinson (2006, pp. 829–830) argues, “If diversity is to be encouraged, it may be possible only through a vision of a vibrant *city*, rather than an enforced social blend at the *neighbourhood* scale”. As Galster says

precisely *how* and *why* neighbourhoods matter must be unpacked carefully before one can leap to any policy implications regarding neighbourhood mixing (Galster, 2007, p. 35; original emphasis).

### **Social Mixing is a One-sided Strategy that is Seldom Advocated in Wealthier Neighbourhoods**

As Atkinson argues

higher-income households have largely been absent from contemporary academic and public policy discussions about how to achieve a socially just or inclusive residential patterning, even though aspirations of social balance and diversity clearly pre-occupy a returning government's urban agenda (Atkinson, 2006, pp. 819–820).

Social mixing is a one-sided strategy that is seldom advocated in wealthier neighbourhoods that may be just as socially homogeneous—for example, poor people are not being moved/attracted to middle-income suburbs (see Blomley, 2004). Saying that, it is probably worth stating that gentrifiers are “presumably more amenable than the suburban middle class to having the poor as neighbours” (Freeman, 2006, p. 206). On the rare occasions when poor people have been moved to wealthier neighbourhoods—for example, the pilot programme Moving to Opportunity (MTO) in the US—the social and economic mobility expected did not happen. The MTO programme was set up in 1992 to assist low-income families to move out of areas with high concentrations of poor

people into areas with low concentrations of poor people. Like HOPE VI, it was premised on the notion that introducing the poor to the more affluent will be beneficial to the poor. It was set up as a pilot policy experiment in five US cities to test (or demonstrate) the benefits of achieving more mixed communities. However, as Atkinson (2005) argues, only 'good' tenants, who were likely to have better employment and educational performances anyway, were selected to take part in this experiment. Cheshire (2007, 2008) provides a useful summary of the findings, both in the short term and the long term. The policy was not a success, it did not bring the social and economic benefits claimed (such as increased economic and social mobility) and was not a cost-effective programme either (see Kling and Liebman, 2004; Kling *et al.*, 2005, 2007). Katz *et al.* (2001) looked at the MTO programme in Boston and found no significant improvement in employment, earnings and welfare dependence. This evidence is important because, if poor people's lives do not improve as a result of being moved into more affluent areas, it is unlikely to say the least that their lives would be improved by an influx of middle-income people into their neighbourhood.

### **Gentrification-induced Social Mix Threatens the Benefits Accrued from Social Segregation**

Gentrification research has shown that increased social mix within declining neighbourhoods can worsen the quality of life for existing residents (Smith, 1996; Atkinson, 2000). Moreover, gentrification-induced social mix threatens the welfare benefits and supportive networks that emerge from living in neighbourhoods with complementary and similar households (Cheshire, 2006). It destroys one kind of social capital to try and create another. Here, social mixing is seen to threaten the benefits accrued from social segregation. University of Chicago policy

analyst John Betancur found that gentrification had indeed destroyed neighbourhood support networks and institutions in West Town, Chicago

Much of West Town is now gentrified. Even entrenched minority, low-income clusters have seen gentrification push through their borders. Churches, service organizations, schools and institutions have been affected by it. Their numbers have dwindled or their constituencies changed. Many small churches have closed; public school enrolment has decreased in the most gentrified sections, and higher-income children are taking over local private schools (Betancur, 2002, p. 792).

Peach (1996, p. 387) has argued that segregation can play an important role in sustaining groups, whether deprived or affluent, for "Segregation and concentration fulfils a protective role, like that of a herd of buffalo, holding off wolves". He suggests that a positive aspect of segregation may be that politically disenfranchised groups might find a sanctuary and an inversion of the kinds of power relations found outside areas of low-income or ethnic concentration. The positive aspects of social segregation are dismissed in policy discussions on social mixing. That evidence base needs to be re-evaluated and/or created for, as Cheshire (2008, p. 17) argues, people's welfare does not depend on their own income as much as their own income relative to other people's income living near to them. Luttmer (2005) points to this as a powerful reason why people choose to live in neighbourhoods segregated by income. As Cheshire (2008, p. 17) states: "This suggests the very reverse of a policy of 'mixed neighbourhoods'".

### **What Kinds and How Much Social Mixing are Best for Fostering an Inclusive Urban Renaissance—And Why—Are Often Poorly Specified in the Policy Literature**

The policy documents on social mixing (certainly in the UK) make it difficult to



identify how the rhetoric of social mixing via gentrification will be converted into a strong neighbourhood social tissue. Precisely what kinds and how much social mixing are best for fostering an inclusive urban renaissance—and why—are often poorly specified in the policy literature (Randolph and Wood, 2003). For instance, in his testimony to the Select Committee on Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs (2001, para 33), Labour MP Nick Raynsford maintained that

the division between areas exclusively of owner occupation and exclusively of renting, which was very much a creation of the 20th Century, has not been a happy one in our view, and led to social polarisation and social exclusion. We believe that new developments should contain a mix of housing.<sup>5</sup>

The then Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott signed approvingly: “Our social mix is geared to achieve that” (para 33). However, empirical research suggests that the effects of tenurial diversification (mixing) are often disappointing and always context-dependent (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001; Wood, 2003). In addition, policy documents that promote social mixing fail to define what a ‘good’ social mix is, or what kinds of communities are well balanced

social mix is merely a description that may apply to virtually any urban neighbourhood. No neighbourhood has a completely homogeneous population (Goodchild and Cole, 2001, pp. 103–104).

Without governments asserting what kinds of social mix are required (for example, percentages and types—such as income, class, age, ethnicity, tenure) in urban communities, it is difficult to assess just what kinds of change in neighbourhood character—such as changing ethnicity or class composition—are intended to aid neighbourhood communities in bringing about an urban renaissance.

### **Social Mix Policy Fails to Demonstrate How ‘Social Mixing’ between Diverse Neighbourhood Groups is Going to be Achieved**

Social mix policies fail to demonstrate how ‘social mixing’ between diverse neighbourhood groups is actually going to be achieved. The assumption is that if you place middle-class people side-by-side with poor people, they will make the decision to mix and thereby start mixing. Yet, as discussed earlier, Butler with Robson (2003) have argued that the spatial proximity of middle-class and working-class groups in gentrified/fying neighbourhoods does not automatically generate neighbourhood-level social mixing (see also Freeman, 2006; Davidson, under review). Other, much earlier, sociological literature seems to back this up. Much of the sociological literature in the 1960s/1970s was concerned with the consequences of ‘affluence’ on the class structure and specifically whether the working-class were becoming middle-class. In a definitive critique of the affluence debate, Goldthorpe *et al.* (1969) dismissed any simple economically assimilationist explanation. They argued that not only would the working class have to acquire middle-class economic status, but they would also have to demonstrate similar cultural and social behaviours. Critically, they argued the working class would have to be accepted by the middle class—i.e. there would need to be a normative as well as a social and economic dimension to social mixing. They concluded that, while there was evidence of economic convergence, there was little evidence of social and normative convergence. It was not simply that the middle class did not want to accept the affluent working classes into their communities, there was little evidence that the affluent workers wanted to join them. The community studies literature of the same period pointed to a similar social, cultural and spatial segregation. The government’s mechanisms designed



to increase social mixing, placing poor and middle-class people cheek-by-jowl, may therefore prove ineffective in increasing social mixing.

These six critiques force us to ask the question: is, gentrification-induced social mixing a good thing? Goodchild and Cole (2001) considered the question whether social mixing was a good thing by asking whether greater neighbourhood social diversity actually increased interaction between the rich and poor, and whether social mix improved the quality of life for neighbourhood residents. If we ask these same questions of gentrification-induced social mixing, then the evidence discussed here says no.

## Conclusion

Socially mixed urban communities created by the in-movement of middle-class people into poor, marginal areas of the inner city are being posited, under the rubric of urban renaissance, as the desegregating answer to lives that are lived in parallel or in isolation along class, income, ethnic and tenurial fault lines. It is ironic that a process that results in segregation and polarisation—gentrification—is being promoted via social mix policies as the ‘positive’ solution to segregation. By abstractly celebrating formal equality under the law, the rhetoric of social mixing tends to conceal the inequalities of fortune and economic circumstance that are produced through the process of gentrification. Thus the policies of social mixing discussed here require critical attention with regard to their ability to produce an inclusive urban renaissance.

Social mix policies rely on a common set of beliefs about the benefits of mixed communities, with little evidence to support them, and a growing evidence base that contradicts the precepts embedded in social mix policies that should make policy-makers sit up and

take note. As Cheshire (2008) argues, a mixed communities policy is essentially a faith-based policy since there is scant real evidence that making communities more mixed makes the life-chances of the poor any better. Indeed, social mix policies push against evidence that suggests an increasing trend towards segregation world-wide (see Atkinson and Blandy, 2006) and towards evidence that gentrification-induced social mixing is a misnomer because, quite simply, gentrification causes social segregation and polarisation (Lees *et al.* 2008).

Social mix policies are cosmetic policies rather than ones prepared to deal with the whole host of complex social, economic and cultural reasons as to why there are concentrations of poor, economically inactive people in our central cities. As Cheshire (2006, p. 1241) argues “forcing neighbourhoods to be mixed in social and economic terms is treating the symptoms of inequality, not the cause ... on a par with applying leeches to lower a fever”. Deprivation, like gentrification and social exclusion, is a process, not a condition. And the evidence outlined earlier suggests that over the longer term poor people suffer more from the loss of benefits of living in a poor neighbourhood, than they gain from living in a more affluent one. This leads Cheshire (2008) to suggest that efforts to improve social equity would be more effective if directed towards people themselves rather than moving people around to mix neighbourhoods. Indeed, the neighbourhood itself needs to be re-evaluated (see also Galster, 2007) as the locus of these policies; neighbourhoods are not static but dynamic entities.

Social mix policies also destroy, in my mind, their moral authority (see Blomley, 2004) because they socially construct the middle class or middle-income groups as a natural category in contrast to a demonised working class or low-income groups (and this is done spatially). They push the idea that

we all should somehow be/become middle class and that we all want to be middle class. They are about social engineering (social cleansing) and all the problematic connotations that go with that. They forge a relationship between property and propriety, owner-occupiers are well behaved and 'normal', whilst social tenants are problematic and abnormal—they are 'othered'.

In this paper, I have forged the beginnings of an evidence base from which to reject the policy ideas about gentrification and social mixing outlined in this paper, but further research is needed. For those who find it difficult to throw the concept of social mixing overboard, future research needs to compare more systematically, interviewing or surveying *both* gentrifiers and non-gentrifiers living in the same neighbourhoods, social mixing in neighbourhoods at different stages of gentrification (see Rose, 2004). For, as Butler and Lees (2006) have suggested, pioneer gentrifiers tend to be pro-social-mixing whilst contemporary (third- or fourth-wave) gentrifiers tend not to be of the left liberal variety; they are more individualistic and prefer sanitised and relatively homogeneous neighbourhoods. If these are the middle-class people through whom New Labour (and other governments) want to promote social mixing, then it will be stonewalled. We also need to look at neighbourhoods that demonstrate different types of gentrification, for as Butler with Robson (2003) have shown neighbourhood context can be directly correlated with typologies of gentrifiers (in terms of politics, lifestyles, etc.)—a gentrifier in Brixton is quite different from a gentrifier in Barnsbury or Docklands, and their views on social mixing will be quite different too. Debates are taking place in the absence of a significant knowledge base as to how social mix is experienced on a day-to-day basis within the different contexts of gentrification in our cities. It is our responsibility as gentrification researchers to create the evidence base needed

to refute or revise the claims of policy-makers about gentrification and social mixing as an inclusive form of urban renaissance. It is worth mulling over Susan Fainstein's ideas about 'the just city' here

The new urbanist approach of intermixing a variety of building types and levels of affordability ... is not the panacea that some of its supporters assume. If, however, it becomes the template for infill development (rather than the formula to justify the destruction of public housing) it can provide a physical framework for a city that offers a higher quality of life to residents and visitors. Developing an appropriate physical setting for a heterogeneous urbanity, however, can go only so far in the generation of a just city. Most crucial is a political consciousness that supports progressive moves at national and local levels towards respectfulness to others and greater equality (Fainstein, 2005, p. 16).

For those committed to throwing neighbourhood-based social mix policies overboard, as they are currently framed, we need to come up with some alternative ideas. How can we frame a socially inclusive urban renaissance? We can learn some things from the work on the just and the ideal city, work that seems to have been forgotten along the way. Iris Marion Young's (1990) defence of the politics of difference is important in the face of the above critiques of social mix policies. Young accepts the domination of specific neighbourhoods by single groups, as long as the boundaries between these neighbourhoods remain blurred (fuzzy borders or fuzzy boundaries). In her ideal of city life, there is group differentiation and the interfusion of these groups occurs through social space. It is an openness to unassimilated otherness (see Lees, 2004, ch. 1). She highlights the need to provide spaces (not neighbourhoods) that offer opportunities for social interaction amongst people from different social backgrounds (see also Lofland, 1998). The problem with this is that on the surface

it accepts the gentrified neighbourhood in its own right.

My feeling is that if people prefer to live with people like themselves we should not be forcing them to mix, because ultimately this will fail; rather, we should be keeping the possibility for mixing open to them. This means a refocus on urban design, disallowing fortress-style architecture and gated communities and rethinking the architecture of insecurity and fear. For as Atkinson (2006, p. 831) argues, it would appear that governments espouse social mix policies that “preach the value of integration” at the same time as they facilitate “residential changes of voluntary disaffiliation” that “surely damage” future prospects for civic vitality in cities. Yet it also means remaining critical of the process of gentrification and in particular of state-led policies of gentrification that are trying to socially engineer, dare I say socially cleanse, our central cities (see Lees *et al.*, 2008).

## Notes

1. The following is a list of national policy prescriptions that push the dual medicines of social mixing and gentrification, some more so than others:
  - the Urban Task Force report *Towards an urban renaissance* (DETR, 1999).
  - the Urban White Paper *Our towns and cities: the future: delivering an urban renaissance* (DETR, 2000a).
  - the Housing Green Paper *Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable* (DCLG, 2007).
  - the Housing Green Paper *Quality and choice: a decent home for all* (DETR, 2000b).
  - the Social Exclusion Unit’s *Bringing Britain Together: A National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal* (1998) and *A new commitment to neighbourhood renewal: national strategy action plan* (2001).
  - ODPM’s *Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity* (2005).
  - The use of section 106 agreements requiring a proportion of affordable housing on new private developments is leading to a new generation of mixed tenure/income developments.
  - The Market Renewal Pathfinders policy contains explicit proposals to demolish low-cost and social housing and to replace it with owner-occupied housing for a more affluent population (see Allen, 2008).
- A number of regional development plans at the sub-national scale such as the GLA’s *The London Plan* (2004) and housing strategies such as the North London Subregion (2003) do likewise.
2. This idealisation of mixed communities echoes a long history of British thought and social policy connecting pastoral nostalgia about the community harmony of pre-industrial village life (Williams, 1973) to the 19th-century utopian experiments of Cadbury, Howard’s Garden City Movement and the New Towns of the 1950s and 1960s (Sarkissian, 1976).
3. ODPM is now DCLG.
4. The Bijlmermeer on the outskirts of Amsterdam, a single-class, low-income, multiethnic ‘problem estate’ with drug problems and a high crime and unemployment rate (see Blair and Hulsbergen, 1993; van Kempen and Wassenberg, 1996), in the process of being mostly demolished, stands out as a leading example of Dutch policies of social mixing. Radical plans drawn up in the 1990s and extended in the 2002 ‘Final Plan of Approach’ have sought to demolish 25 per cent of the estate, sell off another 25 per cent, upgrade 25 per cent and build new low-rise housing for the remaining 25 per cent at a cost of approximately two billion euros. Differentiating the population structure in this way is seen to be a solution to the poverty concentration. By 2012, approximately 70 per cent of the high-rises in the Bijlmermeer will have been demolished. The evidence to date suggests that, although the ‘regeneration’ has had some successes such as integrating the estate into the city better and improved liveability on the estate, there have been failures too. Economic growth at the neighbourhood level has not occurred and the social problems have not been erased. Although the mixing of different ethnic groups seems to have been a success,

so that 'ethnic othering' is no longer an issue (the Bijlmermeer changed from being a Dutch ghetto to "the oasis amidst the so-called 'multi-cultural drama'"—see Aalbers, 2006, p. 11) and the Black middle class have found a relatively emancipatory space in the Bijlmermeer, other forms of othering are overt, such as of drug users, homeless people and undocumented immigrants. As Aalbers (2006, p. 11) concludes: "Yet, while degeneration is 'planned out', the results are not an unqualified success" (see the wider paper for more detail).

5. See: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200001/cmselect/cmenvtra/166/1012403.htm>.

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