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Social Mixing: A Life of Fear

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Neo-liberal trickle-down gentrification policies profess to have the bipartite ability to regenerate areas of urban decay for an affluent incoming populace, whilst concurrently benefiting the lower classes. These policies have attracted scepticism from some sections of academia as to the reality of such claims. However, few have conducted ethnographic research into the experiential outcomes of such policies, which posit that urban decay is remedied through the reclamation of valuable land, leading to regeneration and wealth and prosperity for the benefit of all. Those who inhabit *realms of decay* are vilified during this process, and it is assumed that their *wayward* lifestyles will be redirected through inter-mixing with a more *productive* class of citizen. This scheme perpetuates the belief that the brave urban pioneers that take up residence in previously deprived locales must be protected from the perceived instigators of urban decay via highly securitised colonies. It is argued here that the outcome of these policies creates a fear that affects both sides of the class divide in vastly different ways, via the implementation of a security-obsessed environment that perpetuates anxiety. This paper aims to give a voice to those who experience such policy outcomes with the overriding objective of illustrating the realities of social mixing through a 'reversal of the spectacle'. The discussion addresses everyday life in a socially mixed London housing estate with statistically higher than average levels of crime where the majority of residents from both sides of the demographic divide lived in daily fear of each other.
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Introduction

'Nearly 30 years ago, Holcomb and Beauregard were critical of the way that it was assumed the benefits of gentrification would "trickle down" to the lower classes in a manner similar to that hypothesised in the housing market. 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' (Lees 2008: 2449).

This paper provides a contemporary example of gentrification and social mixing, that supports the above statement that such policies can lead to greater segregation. These policies are built upon the premise that to reclaim valuable inner city real estate there is an initial requirement to *civilise* these urban contexts (Atkinson & Helms 2007). This mantra advocates overly simplistic solutions to highly complex sociological issues, such as the belief that an injection of wealth into locales of high crime and deprivation will remedy the underlying causes. We shall see that such a regeneration policy facilitated a complex re-negotiation of place in a recently socially mixed London housing estate. The communities living there (private and socially housed) came from both sides of the class divide and populated a shared post-regeneration landscape. Observations of the everyday-life on this estate supported the argument that such regeneration, oriented towards creating 'sustainable communities', is underpinned by the safety and security concerns of the private residents (Raco 2003), the outcomes of which

held significant consequences for the estate's residents and has applicability to the wider gentrification discourse.

I shall explore the belief that instances of crime and anti-social behaviour intimated a re-emergence of urban decay that threatened the hegemony of the private residents' way of life. Such instances increased the private residents' desire to secure the locale from a conceptual criminal *other*, which created what Sibley called geographies of exclusion (1995). The findings resonate with wider processes where residents of deprived neighbourhoods become vilified as undeserving lazy minorities who have been given too much public assistance (Omi and Winant 1994), and the valuable space they inhabit becomes characterised as misused and abused (Smith 1996). We rarely hear from those who suffer this vilification, we know little of their fears or their concerns. The analysis offered here seeks to redress this balance by providing an ethnography[1] of everyday life in a socially mixed 'urban village' from the perspective of both the socially and the privately housed.

What follows is an ethnographically-based consideration of Bourdieu's concept of habitus in a housing estate in East London, hereafter referred to as Newham Village (NV). In this context, habitus is defined as the means through which the individual makes sense of their identity in relation to the physical and social particularities of their lived environment. It is both an embodied and cognitive sense of place that guides expectations of behaviour, action and sociological intercourse. I explore the role of symbolic capital[2] in NV, as 'a form of power that is not necessarily perceived as power as such, but as legitimate demands for recognition, deference, obedience or the service of others' (Schwartz 1997: 90). The analysis begins with a demographic overview of the location.

Welcome to the Village

[1] The ethnographic research, which underpins the findings of this paper, formed part of a larger research project that explored urban regeneration within the London borough of Newham. This ethnography occurred between 2007 – 2012 (see Armstrong, Hobbs & Lindsay, 2011; Lindsay 2011, 2012a, 2012b).

[2] Bourdieu recognizes the importance of the symbolic dimensions of capital. His term, symbolic capital, incorporates three forms of capital (economic, social and cultural capital) and represents 'the form that the various species of capital assume when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate' (Bourdieu, 1989, P.17).

An 'urban village' has very specific characteristics, as succinctly defined by Aldous (1992 1995). These include housing 3-5,000 residents inside a well-defined urban space. Urban villages have a focal village square and are small enough for everything in 'the village' to be within walking distance of everything else. They include a mix of housing tenures, ages and social groups, and host a primary school. Perhaps most crucially, they are assumed by bureaucrats to be sites capable of being used for social mixing. Despite being written over 30 years previously, Pitt's study of *Gentrification in Islington* continues to resonate in the contemporary socially mixed 'urban village'. Pitt argued that social mixing rests upon the belief that there is an ideal composition of social and income groups which, when achieved, produce optimum individual and community well-being (Pitt 1977: 16). The objectives behind the modification of NV's urban geography offered a compelling illustration of Pitt's argument, whereas the outcomes may be referred to as a splintering post-metropolitan landscape. The NV landscape had 'become filled with many kinds of protected and fortified spaces, islands of enclosure and anticipated protection against the real and imagined dangers of daily life. Borrowing from Foucault, postmetropolis is represented as . . . an archipelago of "normalised enclosures" and fortified spaces that both voluntarily and involuntarily barricade individuals and communities in visible and not-so-visible urban islands, overseen by restructured forms of public and private power and authority' (Soja 2000: 299).

To understand the resonance of protected and fortified space in this urban location it is important to consider the demographics of the surrounding area. NV was located within the London borough of Newham, a highly deprived part of London, as demonstrated by the official statistics released in October 2010[3]. The population of Newham is rising and is projected to continue to rise significantly. Compared to London as a whole, the borough has a very young and highly diverse population and high levels of population churn.[4] Newham is a highly

[3] http://www.newham.info/Custom/LEA/Demographics.pdf

[4] The word 'churn' refers to the movement of residents in and out of the borough. In 2007/2008 almost one fifth of the Newham population (19.5%) either left or entered the area. Such churn is evidenced in National Insurance (NI) registrations, which are necessary for legal employment in the UK. In 2007/2008 more foreign nationals registered for NI numbers in Newham than anywhere else in the UK. Of these 15% were Indian, 14% Polish, 11% Romanian, 9% Lithuanian, 7% Bangladeshi and 4% Bulgarian. A 2007/2008 Mayhew report estimated that 12,000 people entered the borough from outside the UK with an average stay of 14 months. Furthermore, the Greater London Authority predicted in 2008 (GLA Round Low Population Projections (2008)) that Newham was forecast to see a population

deprived borough with especially high rates of deprivation affecting children and older people. Poverty is high and life expectancy is lower than the London average.

Accurate population figures for Newham are illusive, due to large numbers of unregistered residents living in the borough, with estimates varying between 265,688[5] and 320,000 (Bagehot 2012). The link between crime and poverty is well documented and statistics prove that those living in the poorest estates in Britain are the most likely to be victims of crime (Hope & Hough 1988), making parts of Newham particularly tough places to live. Clearly, the borough had many endemic social issues that needed to be addressed. One way that Newham attempted to remedy its deprivation was to attempt to attract more affluent residents. Gentrification is clearly not synonymous with socialism but urban policy plans for this Labour-led London borough clearly resonated with this scheme. The introduction of 'urban villages' was to provide better-quality luxury properties for a new generation of Newham resident. I contend that the primary outcome can be seen a means of redressing the 'Rent Gap'[6] of this deprived but potentially valuable location. Simply put, gentrifying Newham ensured that the area would yield higher returns in the form of rents and property value, and that as a result it has and will continue to attract new residents to the area.

NV was constructed between 1995 and 2004 and was a prime example of what Hackworth and Smith (2001) define as third-wave gentrification (Davidson & Lees 2005). The Village was conceived as a waterside development comprising 991 flats and houses with an even mix of socially and privately housed residents. A solitary road — Wesley Avenue — ran horizontally through the village segregating the private and social housing sectors within. This road divided the estate literally and symbolically. From the very first research visit, right up until the last, it was readily apparent that many NV inhabitants were fearful of dangers — the

increase of 46.6% between 2006 and 2031 as a result of regeneration, which translated into an increase two and a half times that of the London average.

[5] GLA Round Low Population Projections (2008)

[6] The term 'Rent Gap' refers to the shortfall between the actual economic return taken from an area of land given its present land use (capitalised ground rent) and the potential return it would yield if it were put to its optimal, highest and best use (potential ground rent). As a rent gap increases, it creates lucrative opportunities for developers, investors, home-buyers and local governments to orchestrate a shift in land use — for instance, from working-class residential to middle or upper-class residential or high-end commercial (Smith, 1979; Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2008, p.52).

local environment was saturated by fear. For the private residents it was generically the fear of disorder; more specifically, it was the fear of those that were deemed to be the producers of disorder. These were the, predominantly black, local youths or '*the poor'*. It appeared that even in the diversity of 21st Century Newham,[7] 'the sight of a young black man evoked an image of someone dangerous, destructive, or deviant' (Monroe and Goldman 1989: 27). The discourse of those that comprised the social housing was also permeated with fear; it was generically a fear of vilification, more specifically, it was the fear of those who were deemed to be its perpetrators — the predominantly white city workers, or '*the rich'*.

Arguably, NV was the embodiment of regeneration programmes that target mobile, high-income, professional groups or the 'creative classes' (Florida 2002, 2005). Such 'creative classes' require high-quality secure environments, free from the threat of intrusion and from violent crime (Raco 2007: 41). However, as research conducted by Robson and Butler (2004) has demonstrated, these requirements promised to prove problematic within socially mixed locations, finding that spaces that make inequality manifest result in greater incidences of crime, particularly that of robbery and burglary. NV's social mixing did little to separate the stigma of a *lawless problem estate* from the socially housed tenants that occupied the hinterlands surrounding the highly securitised, gated private enclaves. This led to an uneasy détente between the two NV communities that was saturated with the perception of criminality and occasionally broken by instances of such criminality. The uneasy negotiation of place ownership and identity that ensued between NV's two distinct groups evoked a bipartite regime of socio-spatial relegation and exclusionary closure (in the Weberian sense).[8] This begs the questions, where does the cycle of crime and security in socially mixed locales begin and end and what are the implications of this perceptibly unending cycle?

Habitus governed perceptions of urban decay in this location and, indeed, perceptions of the social role therein, be that of *fully functioning citizen* or *vilified product of and / or*

[7] Newham is consistently referred to as one of the most ethnically diverse places on the planet, with over 300 languages spoken in the borough (Newham Language Shop 2005).

[8] By closure, Weber (1968, pp. 32-33) designated a set of processes whereby a specific collective restricts 'access to the opportunities (social or economic) that exist in a given domain': It's members 'draw on certain characteristics of their real or virtual adversaries to try and exclude them from competition. These characteristics may be race, language, confession, place of origin or social background, descent, place of domicile, etc'. See Wacquant (2008) for more.

producer of decay. In NV, where two vastly different social groups with vastly different habitus were forced to live alongside each other in a confined location, conflict was inevitable. As a result, fear of the *other* permeated everyday NV life, which produced a dichotomy of the social and physical structure of the estate. Following Wacquant (2008: 25), one of the outcomes of social marginality prevalent amongst the socially housed could be the heightened stigmatisation related to degradation of place and class. This conspired to generate fear and distrust between these two NV communities, which increased the likelihood of conflict. Thus, private residents became increasingly concerned about crime and how such perceptions would influence property prices. Although in this case fear of crime was legitimate, it was linked to a larger scheme of anxiety perceived in relation to habitus. This was considered a core component of NV, where life was evaluated through the prism of class.

Who Owns the Village?

Place and identity played a key role in NV, where the quest for place-related identity encompassed many levels, including the political, the economic and the social. As we will see, both communities sought to assert dominance and legitimise their place-related identity in different ways. The socially housed tended to be longer-term residents that used community facilities, such as the community centre, most frequently. The private residents tended to be more transient and reluctant to engage socially. According to the community centre manager, whose role it was to provide a space accessible for both community groups, 'the private residents tend not to get involved in the community because they don't stay here long. They are often only here for 6 months or a year. There is no community 'involvement' or 'ownership'. Once, they have finished their contracts they move away. Those that own their homes stay a bit longer but ultimately move away when they have kids' (Fieldwork Notes, Community Centre Manager, May 2012).

This perception intimated that the private residents considered NV a temporary home and were reluctant to engage with the 'community'. This generalised perception of the private residents can be considered in relation to Berry's (1985) 'residential choice theory', which presumed that those with the ability to choose where they wish to live evaluate prospective locales in relation to a number of key criteria, such as value for money and local amenities, and will have specific expectations of what life will entail there. This theory suggests that the introduction of children necessitates a re-evaluation of the criteria leading to an inevitable prioritising of safety and education. Such re-evaluation often results in private residents

moving from recently gentrified areas to locales with a more highly regarded education system (Berry 1985). Research also suggests a direct correlation between a school's proximity to social disadvantage and lower school performance, and provides barriers to children's improvement (Woods and Levacic 2002; Levacic and Woods 2002; Clark, Dyson and Millward 1999). These facts ensured that many of NV's private residents were unwilling to *risk* their child's education by continuing to live in NV, as is exemplified by the case of Blair, a 27-year-old white Scotsman married to Vic, a white 26-year-old East Londoner. Blair was a Lawyer working for a Fleet Street Law firm; Vic worked in London as a freelance decorator. In 2009 they were looking to buy their first property. They wished to remain in Lambeth, where they rented their house, but eventually moved to a two-bedroom flat in NV because they 'got more for our money and it was just as quick to get to work from there'. Blair remembers that when they moved to NV many friends questioned why they would move to such an 'unsafe' place that was 'full of foreigners'. Vic's family were particularly opposed to the idea because she had been brought up in Newham until, when she was 10, they moved to Essex because the area was 'getting run down and full of immigrants'. Undeterred, Blair and Vic bought their flat and moved in late July 2009. The couple predominantly used their flat as a hub from which to travel outside their local environs; they rarely spent time in and around NV. They commented that when walking home from the DLR station they walked past Wesley Avenue and couldn't help but rue the fact that on one side it had 'nice homes' and on the other there were run-down homes that 'were council'. The couple commented that they would 'hate to live there and have to look out their windows at homes that aren't taken care of, the people living there are just Chavy'.[9] Their life in NV was one of seclusion and isolation from the socially housed. Those that they shared their block of flats with were 'people like us, young professionals from outside the local area'. Their perspective of NV life changed in 2011 when Vic fell pregnant. They decided that NV was not the place to bring up their daughter and planned to move to Essex. Blair stated that NV had become 'more attractive' as a result of regeneration 'it's not a shit-hole anymore'. However, the modifications had not, in his opinion, fixed the fundamental problems of the area and he wanted a 'cleaner and safer area' to bring up his daughter where English was the predominant language heard and the schools were much better. He added that, in this regard, 'suburban life was much more appealing' (Fieldwork notes, July 2012).

[9] The term CHAV is a term of denigration that stands for Council Housed And Violent.

This case-study emphasises Berry's (1985) consideration that parenthood is a key factor regarding continued occupancy of post-gentrified areas that have low-quality schools. This assumption is in congruence with the findings of Butler and Robson (2001), whose gentrification-related research of another London borough (Lambeth) demonstrated that middle-class families left the area after having children, due to the poor standards of its schools. This intimates that private residents with children are unlikely to ever consider socially mixed locations long-term homes if the schools cannot compete with those in the suburbia. However, the private residents' 'reluctance to engage' is a complex issue that speaks to more than a lack of schools. The very acknowledgement of such raises questions as to who determines what is community 'involvement' and 'ownership' of place in socially mixed communities. It seems feasible that the perceptions and demands of the privately housed, young, child-free professional would be vastly different from those of socially housed single-parent families and that perceptions of what constitutes 'community involvement' will differ accordingly. In this regard, it is crucial to explore other pertinent examples of the dichotomy of socially mixed NV life to see whether consensus on any level was ever a possibility in this location.

The Voice of the Vilified

According to my research, those socially housed in NV confirmed many stereotypes used to signify urban decay. This community was extremely diverse ethnically and culturally and included a large proportion of single mothers, some working, many not. Drug use and alcoholism were common, as was domestic abuse. Large extended families were frequent (one youth commented that he {literally} had 80 brothers and sisters, although these included siblings from other mothers). Education levels were low and unemployment high. Crime levels were comparatively high and in the evenings groups of youths were a common sight on the streets of the estate. These statistics were signifiers of fear for those that lived in the private residences and threatened their perceptions of propriety. My research sought to study the realities behind these statistics in line with Bourdieu's argument that 'one cannot grasp the most profound logic of the social world unless one becomes immersed in the specificity of an empirical reality' (Bourdieu 1993: 271). I engaged in investigating the reality behind these stereotypes by spending time with the relevant groups.

The following case study is indicative of my ethnographic findings, as brings out the realities of life for many socially housed young men growing up in this location. One common narrative was the quest for personal discovery through socialisation, which is exemplified by

the account given by a 21-year-old black man who claimed he had been involved in the *road life,* as he phrased it, for many years. He described *road life* as the life that young people become involved in when they opt out of society for a myriad of reasons. Traditionally, entry into this way of life is facilitated in childhood and those involved are referred to as *youngers.* These *youngers* establish themselves through a variety of means, including drug dealing and violence. The *road life* is hierarchical with the *youngers* at the lower end of the scale. At the other end of the hierarchy are the *olders*. The *olders* are comparable to C.E.O.'s in business organisations, who maintain hegemonic order within their group and profit accordingly. 'Life for kids is hard, man', my informant said. 'No-one looks after the kids round here, not their parents, no-one. So when they need food or something it's the olders that look after them. They are nice to them. The olders treat everyone well. If kids are homeless they give them shelter, a job, it's a nice life. They feel accepted, protected. Some kids are kicked out of their homes when their mums move in a new man and they don't get on with them. The mums chose the man over the son. So they enter the road life. In the road life the young kids look up to the older ones, they see the clothes they wear and the respect they get. They look up to them, so they go robbing to get money and buy clothes to be like them. People think they spend it on drugs but they don't. The crews[10] treat the communities well. They help people out, you'll hear Mr. X, oh he gave money to so and so, he's a good guy, because really, they want to be good. That's the reason why they get away with so much; when something happens, no-one talks to the police. Not because of fear, because of loyalty' (Private Interview, February 2012).

It is important to avoid categorising all socially housed as criminal and to emphasise that not all socially housed young men enter the *road life*. However, this demographic does play a role in NV life wherein there exists a consistent re-negotiation of place among all residents. The following example indicates that, although all residents believe in the legitimacy of authority figures and in the power they wield, fundamentally, authority in this locale is situation specific and transferable. In NV 'the person of real practical wisdom is marked out less by the ability to formulate rules than by knowing how to act in each particular situation' (Taylor 1999: 41). The following remarks highlight the complexities of living in socially mixed locales. An informant said, 'What would you do if you were walking down a street and you saw 20 hoodies? Would you keep walking towards them? . . No? . . Then you're a victim. We

[10] The term Crew was a colloquialism that, in this context, represented a group of young men that formed a collective that socialised and 'worked' together.

know that just by looking. We're like dogs, we can sense it. Your body language: your walk quickens, don't know what to do with your hands, you pat your pockets, walk in zig-zags, cross the road. You're a victim . . . That's good. We do it (mugging) because we're bullies. Imagine you've been bullied all your life. You feel bad about yourself. You want to make others feel bad to make yourself feel better. It doesn't really help though. The media create this image that it's all unsafe, of knife crime but it's not all like that. The truth is the road way is a nice life. You get treated well, you get money. Every-one understands you they know what you're going through. You get respect' (Private interview, March 2012).

The outcome of this reality was fear, particularly among the private residents, who generally lacked practical NV wisdom. To apply Sparks' (1992) perspective to this situation, fear is the product of uncertainty, which is itself the product of moral and political intuition. This point is crucial to understanding the importance of habitus in a socially mixed location. Habitus is understood as the internalised generative and durable dispositions that guide perception, representation and action in human beings. This is in large part the product of how social positions structure the individual's earliest experiences. It follows that similar conditions of existence result in common habitus (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1999) and oppositional conditions of existence result in conflicting habitus. The private residents specifically feared the habitus of those engaged in the *road life*, which generally extended to the socially housed, who appeared to them to share such a habitus; socialisation was, thus, limited by fear. This limitation, however, paradoxically perpetuated the cycle of fear and crime, which may have been otherwise reduced through relationality and a concomitant evolution of habitus. In this regard, the negotiation of ownership of NV became hierarchical; such negotiation was grounded in fear, both between the social and private residents and within the groups themselves. As the above example indicates, those engaged in the *road life* feared feeling insecure and insignificant and appeared to have an innate desire for belonging and acceptance. They believed they would never attain acceptance from private residents and so became ambivalent about the private residents' fears and concerns and engaged in behaviour that they felt would facilitate acceptance within their own social structures — namely, criminality. The *victims*, both real and imagined, feared crime and condemned criminality, they also vilified those whom they perceived *likely to commit a crime*, an action that led to many socially housed to become guilty by association, which further perpetuated this cycle of fear.

Why Can't Everyone Just Be Like Us?

The interplay that follows represents life in this NV cycle. Within the estate, the route that linked the private residences to the closest train station (DLR) cut through the heart of the estate and the 'village green'. This meant that the private residents needed to walk through the social housing to get to and from work. This path that cut through both communities could be considered 'micro-public' (Amin 2003); that is, a social space in which individuals regularly come into contact. This micro-public space was highly contested because, in accordance with Amin's definition, both communities used this communal land for their own purposes. The socially housed predominantly used the space socially, whereas the privately housed used it as a route to work. As instances of opportunistic crime on this route through the estate, such as robberies for highly visible items including mobile phones and laptops, were common, this space became a symbolic and literal confrontational locale. Consequently, the private residents saw this route as representative of the physical and moral decay that existed outside their private enclaves. Such a perception instigated an ever-increasing demand for *protection* in the *criminally inclined* spaces between the DLR and the *safety* of their securitised homes. This was exemplified by the following exchange taken from the estate's on-line forum that was used, almost exclusively, by the private residents. Mark, a member of the Community Forum, said, 'Just passing through NV and there has been another mugging. I was walking along Wesley Road and heard some screaming. My initial thought was "it's kids" but I stopped to see if I could work out where it was coming from. A young woman ahead of me turned and walked back to me and I asked her if she too had heard screaming. She said she had, and that she was the woman who was mugged three weeks ago. We had a look around. At the front of the surgery, we found a young woman who had been mugged by two black guys. They grabbed her from behind and made off with her handbag. They apparently ran back down towards the green. She called the police who were on their way. I went to find the OMNI security guards (private security hired by private residents) but could not find them — just their empty vehicles parked up on the dockside (the vans are usually parked there, empty!). Obviously they cannot be everywhere at the same time, but they never seem to be in the right place' (Mark, Community forum, May 2011).

The quote given above illustrates how the private residents considered security guards and CCTV cameras as precursors to *safety* within the areas surrounding their gated enclaves and the fact that these crimes were not being prevented was believed to be due to the deficiency of these methods. The ironic reality of social mixing appeared to be that this policy, intent on increasing social interaction and breaking down social divides, seemed to produce ever-

increasing isolation and segregation in NV. As Robert Ezra Park argued (1967), the fundamental cause of prejudice can be inferred to be insecurity originated by *unfamiliarity*; we fear the *other* simply because they are *unknown*. This view was validated in NV during my research, from both sides of the social divide. The language used in response to the aforementioned mugging was saturated with the kind of highly emotive discourse that exemplified the vilification of the *other* and the belief that security was the only way to keep safe from such an *unknown* and *unknowable* threat (Stenson 2001, Wilkins 1991). Tom, a member of the Community Forum, remarked, 'Gosh, aren't we sitting ducks around here? Given the recession, it does not surprise me that these incidents are becoming more frequent. Mark quite rightly said that the OMNI guys cannot be everywhere at the same time but the fact that there has now been a number of muggings in the past month strongly indicates that OMNI is not doing their job properly. They need to increase their numbers (my ex-flatmate saw these guys being attacked back in April, which proves that they lack manpower or are not an effective deterrent) their strategy of keeping the area safe is clearly not working. There needs to be an urgent review of the situation. We are sitting ducks...' (Tom, Community forum, May 2011).

Tom's remarks are indicative of the generic findings of this research, which, I stress, indicates that the private residents' perception of security depended upon the ability of private security measures to protect them from the dangerous *other*. Instances of criminality were perceived by the private tenants as pathologies of the lower classes and signifiers of societal breakdown (Banfield 1970). The intimation was that greater securitisation was required in order to increase perceptions of safety in this 'urban village'. The above interchange suggests that on a day-to-day basis affluent groups sought protection via the private market in security (Hope 1999, 2001). As Young (2001: pp. 30-31) has illustrated, ontological insecurity is a primary means of creating a sense of self and outlining 'acceptable' community principles. In NV, this became evident through the denigration of the socially housed and a generalisation of their behaviour and of their tendency to engage in crime. The private residents of NV formed pockets of intolerance and prejudice. They were intrinsically exclusive in their views and inward looking in their perspective of how life should be lived in NV (Johnstone 2004, Herbert 2005). The realities of NV life exemplify dualisms that consign those socially housed to economic redundancy and social marginality (Sassen 1991; Mollenkopf and Castells 1991; Fainstein, Gordon and Harloe 1992; Wacquant 2008).

Looking at NV in the wider urban renaissance context, it appears that 'normality' is emphatically middle-class in its norms and values (Lees 2003, Jones and Wilks-Heeg 2004;

Mooney 2004). It seems cogent to suggest that, although NV identity was imagined, it was an imaginary that was embodied in the context of everyday life and perceived through the prism of class. NV identity was relational and formed, negotiated and renegotiated in the houses, streets, communal spaces and, indeed, the cyber-space of this estate. It appeared that both communities aimed to fulfil the fundamental human need for belonging, which in this location seemed mutually exclusive.

Conclusion

The proposition for the implementation of social mixing was that the urban poor were isolated from the wider society and were unable to exist within mainstream value systems. Consequently, mainstream value systems needed to be brought to the urban poor through the colonisation of their lands by urban pioneers; a project that has unmistakable paternalistic and neo-colonial overtones. The perceived necessity to modify the habitus of these urban areas through gentrification was the product of the narrative of fear. This was seen to be an outcome of too little law and order in urban ghettos, a belief that led Zukin to define such schema as the 'institutionalisation of fear' and as a defining principle of urbanism (1995: 35). The dispositions that incline society towards complicity in social mixing policies are lodged deeply inside wider notions of socialisation. In NV, the socially housed were symbolically and literally vilified as a result of their habitus and inability to rapidly conform to a *foreign* way of being. The privately housed feared the consequences of their logic of order and identity failing to be implemented to its fullest and expected degree; not to mention that they also feared being mugged. These competing narratives raised tension and anxiety throughout the local everyday life, with significant social consequences. Reminiscent of contestations between native people and immigrants in other contexts (See Pardo 2009), this was less a diplomatic evolution of habitus and more a battle for place ownership and ideological dominance.

NV segregation emphasises the importance of acknowledging the divergent habitus of those living in social mixed locales. NV's social mixing polarised rather than united the disparate NV communities; life therein was one of an incredible, inescapable contrast that led to significant ramifications for those that resided there. On one side of the road there was a two bedroom flat for sale for £425,000;[11] on the other, was a smiling young black girl proudly talking about how she had managed to get a job serving food for £8.25 an hour, double what

[11]http://www.nestoria.co.uk/britannia-village/flat/sale#dyn:/coord_51.506799,0.025438,51.504128,0.017971/flat/sale/sortby-price_highlow

other socially housed residents may earn per hour. On one side of the road a 4 bedroom flat was available for rent at £555 per week;[12] on the other, 15 people recently over from Nigeria illegally slept in a one-bedroom flat. These were the rhythms of NV life and they resonated to the beat of inequality, division and distrust. The paradoxes of poverty and affluence that co-existed in this urban location ignited contestations of identity, place and lifestyle. The underlying logic of this estate can be succinctly delineated by applying Beck's perception to both NV groups; that is; 'we' must secure our centrality and 'they', those that disrupt our homely place, must be pushed out from the centre. Difference is an attribute of 'them'. They are not 'like us' and therefore they are threatening (1998: 130).

It appeared that those on both sides of the NV class divide were concerned with similar issues — fear, safety and belonging. The private residents lived together, thought similarly, shared history, territory, interests, ambitions, customs and, perhaps most importantly, they feared the same *other*. Fundamentally, this shared fear of the *criminal other* created an accessible shared identity whose defining characteristic was the desire to be protected from such a threat. Those who constituted this *other*, the urban poor, lived together too, thought similarly, shared history, territory, interests, ambitions, customs and the fear of the same *other* – this time, the private residents. For them, life was a struggle for opportunity, resources and identity. In spite of the assertion that living cheek-to-jowl with affluence would increase opportunity, in NV, such a policy appeared to have done little more than to re-enforce the belief that opportunity was not something one could earn.

The analysis given here suggests that within NV social mixing was not a cure for urban decay; instead, it was a re-configuration of the generic class struggle and all that that entails. This conceptualisation is in agreement with the contention that such considerations on class in contemporary research are 'especially significant at a time when "the death of class" is announced across a range of academic and political sites. However, as I (we) argue, class divisions, class distinctions and class inequalities have not 'died': neither has class ceased to be a meaningful category of analysis' (Lawler 2004: 110).

To summarise, this article aimed to illustrate the outcomes of social mixing from the perspectives of both sides of the housing divide within a specific estate. Empirical research found that NV's social mixing produced a kind of urban community that failed in the objective

[12]http://homes.trovit.co.uk/index.php/cod.ad/type.2/what_d.house%20britannia%20village/id.71691h1yxTt/pos.1/pop.0/

to stitch together the fabric of a *damaged* society. Consequently, to generalise these findings, it seems appropriate to suggest that social mixing brings about segregation by exposing middle class residents to the habitus of poor inner-urban areas, which ensures a retreat to the *safety* of highly securitised colonies. It seems logical that, as I witnessed in NV, placing two diverse communities in one small area of land, geographically segregating both communities from each other and then leaving them to compete for place dominance will inevitably result in conflict, both ideological and very real. It is ironic that a process that claims to challenge segregation not only perpetuates the problem, but exasperates it. I would, therefore, argue that the policy of social mixing requires further scrutiny and evolution, particularly in relation to the claims that it will address the causes of urban decay in a positive, inclusive, unifying manner for all communities involved.

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