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Walling In or Walling Out: Gated Communities

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It has been four decades since the United States legally outlawed all forms of public discrimination—in housing, education, transportation, and accommodations. Yet today, we are seeing a new form of discrimination—the gated, walled, private community. Americans are electing to live behind walls with active security mechanisms to prevent intrusion into their private domains by people of different races and cultures. For the first time, through data in the American Housing Survey (AHS), we are able to examine the choices of an increasingly frightened middle class as it moves to escape school and neighborhood integration and to gain or secure the economic advantages of home appreciation.[1]

Gated communities are an increasingly popular form of residential space that restricts access so that normally public spaces are privatized. They are intentionally designed security communities with designated perimeters, usually walls or fences, and entrances controlled by gates and/or guards. They include both new suburban housing developments and older, inner-city areas retrofitted with barricades and fences.[2] These communities represent a different phenomenon than apartment or condominium buildings with security systems or a doorman. There, a doorman precludes public access only to a lobby or hallway—private space within a building. Gated communities preclude public access to roads, sidewalks, parks, open space, playgrounds—resources that usually would be open and accessible to all citizens in a locality.

Gates range from elaborate two-story guardhouses that are manned twenty-four hours a day to rollback, wrought-iron gates, to simple electronic arms. Entrances are usually built with one lane for guests and visitors and a second lane for residents, who open the gates with an electronic card, a

punched-in code, or a remote control. Some gates with round-the-clock security require all cars to pass the guard, issuing identification stickers for residents' cars. Unmanned entrances have intercom systems, some with video monitors, for visitors asking for clearance.

Security mechanisms are intended to do more than just deter crime. They are security from the shared life of the city and from such annoyances as solicitors and canvassers, mischievous teenagers, and strangers of any kind, malicious or not. The gates provide sheltered common space, open space not penetrable by outsiders, for the residents of upper-end gated communities, who already can afford to live in low-crime environments, with greater protection from crime as well as increased social status.[3] American middle-class families are electing the security screen of gates. They are "forting up" in an attempt to escape the changing social and economic face of America.

SEPARATE SPACES

Americans are suburbanizing. Over half of non-Hispanic whites and 36 percent of blacks live in the suburbs.[4] African American (black) suburbanization is income stratified in much the same way as white.[5] As blacks suburbanize, like all races, some are electing to live in gated and walled security compounds, but not as much as other minorities. More Asians and a slightly larger share of Hispanics find gates and walls to be one of their best choices at many income levels, based on housing size, costs, and other factors.

The gating phenomenon among suburban blacks takes on several different characteristics with regard to status, income, and personal security. While some middle- and upper-income blacks may be seeking different economic destinies, they have not as yet elected separate social and locational outcomes for their families. This is an important distinction: since black social and family ties cross income levels by necessity, the selection of a gated community seldom has the same social-disconnecting feature that it does for whites and even some Hispanics and Asians. In this chapter we explore some of these differences.

WHO'S IN?

The latest drive to redefine territory and protect neighborhood boundaries is being felt in communities of all income levels throughout the metropolitan world. In the last twenty years, gated communities, one of the more dramatic forms of residential boundaries, have been springing up across the United States and the developed world. According to our analysis in *Fortress America* and confirmed in the 2001 AHS, gated and controlled-access com-

munities contain almost 7 million Americans. In the United States, walling is not random. It is a highly geographic phenomenon. Most of the walled areas are in parts of the nation facing the highest influx of new immigrants: the West (11.1 percent), the South (6.8 percent), the Northeast (3.1 percent) and the Midwest (2.1 percent). In this era of dramatic demographic, economic, and social changes, there is a growing crisis of future expectation in American civic life.[6]

The AHS covered 119,116,517 housing units, 106,406,951 occupied year round, with 7,058,427 units or 5.9 percent indicating that they were surrounded by walls or fences and 4,013,665 units (3.4 percent) with controlled or guarded access. The largest, most racially volatile areas have the highest concentrations of walled communities. These metropolitan areas are usually entry points for new immigrants and places of high mobility for blacks and other minorities.

METRO-POTTING OR METRO-POLLUTING

In social justice terms, metro-potting means growing different people in different environments and metro-polluting refers to the sprawl and congestion caused by racial flight that is strangling us with polluted air and unlivable conditions. Gated communities are a response to the rising tide of fear. They can be classified in three main categories. First are the lifestyle communities, where the gates provide security and separation for the leisure activities and amenities within. These communities include retirement communities such as golf country clubs and resort developments. For prestige communities, the gates symbolize distinction; they attempt to create and protect a secure place on the social ladder. These communities include enclaves for the rich and famous, developments for the "top fifth," and executive subdivisions. Finally, there are security zones where community safety is the primary goal. They may be central city or suburban, rich or poor. In the first two community categories, the developer builds gates as an amenity along with an image that helps sell houses. In the latter category, residents build the gates, retrofitting their low-income neighborhoods to shield them from the outside world.

Rising Status Walls

Prestige communities are the fastest growing development forms around the world. These developments feed on the aspiration of exclusion and the desire to differentiate. The services of gate guards and security patrols add to the prestige of exclusivity; residents value the simple presence of a security force more than the service they actually provide. Except for the oldest

developments, prestige communities tend toward ostentatious entrances and showy facades. They differ from lifestyle communities in that they do not boast extensive recreational amenities, although they do have carefully controlled aesthetics and often enviable landscapes and locations. Here gating is motivated by a desire to project an image, protect current investments, and control housing values.

Prestige communities include the enclaves where actors and sports stars tend to locate. Rock stars, tennis pros, and other celebrities live in secluded, gated communities to ward off unwanted admirers and to lead some semblance of a regular life without dealing with unwanted photographers and other people who attempt to penetrate their privacy.

New Towns

One type of lifestyle development is the New Town. The suburban, gated New Towns are large-scale developments, with as many as several thousand housing units, that attempt to incorporate residential, commercial/industrial, and retail activities within or adjacent to the development. New Towns are not new, but the gating of their residential areas is. Living in these large, planned communities has always reflected a certain lifestyle choice; now more of them are offering the option of totally gated subdivisions or cities, particularly on the East Coast in places like Celebration, the Disney community near Orlando.

The New Town has a hard time attracting middle-class blacks because to them the New Town seems like a place of racial and income isolation. For example, Celebration had to advertise for minorities, and even after extensive campaigns in the nearby communities, failed to attract many residents from the large pool of Hispanics and blacks in the immediate area.[7] Canyon Lake, California, one of the half dozen fully gated cities, has a demographic profile very different from its surrounding areas. African Americans account for less than 1 percent, Hispanics 8 percent of the nearly 10,000 residents, where the adjacent city of Lake Elsinore, California, has a population of 5.6 percent black and over 30 percent Hispanic, and the county of Riverside is 7 percent black and over 35 percent Hispanic.

Security Zones

Security zones are places where the fear of crime and outsiders is the foremost motivation for defensive fortifications, areas where most black and Hispanic inner-city families are forced to live. Here the residents add barriers to their neighborhoods with gates or barricades, erecting fortifications to regain control or to fend off some outside threat. By marking their boundaries and restricting access, they are often trying to build and strengthen the

feeling and function of community in their neighborhood. Gating and street closures occur at all income levels and in all areas. Keeping people out or keeping them in is the major issue in inner-city gating.

In many major cities security fences have been placed around public housing units to the outrage of the inhabitants. Blacks in these public housing units see the fences as containment and prison environments rather than protection. In 2003, the Virginia Supreme Court upheld the right of public housing authorities to use fences, gates, and guards to restrict access to high-crime public housing facilities—a decision that has spawned lively debate. Some residents and their allies claim that these housing units will "have similar status at the affluent gated communities."[8] This is clearly hyperbole, but there is merit to making places safer for the residents. However, unwanted security has many detractors: Virginia public housing residents argue that the gates and guards will seem more like penitentiary guards than the community greeters in affluent neighborhoods.

METRO GATE PATTERNING

Gating is not a universal metropolitan phenomenon; it is very geographic. Even across the regional geographic landscape, gating is distinctly metropolitan. Gated communities are very common in metropolitan New York, Chicago, Phoenix, and in Miami and other southern seaboard cities. They remain rarities in the Midwest except around large cities like Chicago, St. Louis, and Detroit because these cities have large pools of minorities and rising tides of immigrants.

The AHS data suggest that gated communities are most often found in areas with certain characteristics: metropolitan regions; areas with high levels of demographic change, especially foreign immigration; areas with high median income levels; regions with extreme residential segregation patterns or without a clearly dominant white majority; areas with high crime rates and high levels of fear; and areas to which whites are moving, either for retirement or because of "white flight," for example, Californian migrants to Arizona, Nevada, and Oregon.

Gated Community Builders

For developers gated communities can be a marketing angle, another way to target specific submarkets, or a necessity to meet demand. Builders in Southern California report faster sales in gated communities, with quick turnover ensuring thousands in additional profits. The developers of gated communities also see themselves as providing security, especially to certain large, racially diverse metropolitan areas. Gated communities have targeted

the elderly since the 1970s, and gated second-home complexes are also well established, but those in need of walls now include empty-nesters, who are likely to take frequent, long vacations, and young double-income families in which no one is home during the day. Security systems such as gates are viewed by seniors as freedom not only from crime but from such annoyances as noisy children and teenagers.

Most developers, with the exception of some apartment complexes, don't prominently advertise, nor do they promise absolute security in their promotional brochures. Even the most advanced security system cannot guarantee a crime-free community, and developers fear liability if they make such claims.[9]

There is little doubt that metropolitan urban problems are the stimuli for this wave of gating. In many of the metropolitan areas with large numbers of gated communities, the drive for separation, distinction, exclusion, and protection is fueled in part by dramatic demographic change. A high level of foreign immigration, a growing underclass, and a restructured economy are changing the face of metropolitan areas like Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, and New York at a rapid pace. Southern California's San Fernando Valley, for example, was 95 percent white in 1950, but today it is barely half white.[10] Many of the states with large numbers of gated communities, such as Oregon, Arizona, Montana, and Nevada, are destination states for increasing numbers of white Californians fleeing the state.

The need for gates and walls is created and encouraged by widespread changes in the social and physical structure of the suburbs. U.S. suburbs are becoming urbanized, such that many might now be called, in Mike Davis's term, "outer cities," places with many of the problems and pathologies traditionally thought to be restricted to big cities.[11] Gates reflect increasing separation by income, race, and economic opportunity. For example, the largest metropolitan areas were in general only slightly less segregated in 2000 than in 1990.[12]

Suburbanization has not meant a lessening of segregation, but only a redistribution of the urban patterns of discrimination. Minority suburbanization is concentrated in the inner-ring and old manufacturing suburbs.[13] In Chicago, as in many metropolitan areas, the inner-ring suburbs are attracting increasing numbers of minorities and immigrants. During the 1980s, nearly as many whites moved out of suburban Cook County as moved out of the city of Chicago, with African Americans and Hispanics moving in.[14] Major cities like Chicago are the new archetype of metropolitan spatial segregation, in which poverty is no longer concentrated in the central city but is suburbanizing, racing farther and farther out in the metropolitan fringe. The extension of gating and walling becomes a new way of maintaining race and class across our largest metropolitan areas. Segregation by income and race has led groups within the hypersegregated environment to wall and se-

Table 5.1. Top Ten Metropolitan Areas

Metropolitan Area	*% Walled*	*% Controlled Access*
Atlanta	7.4%	5.5%
Boston	3.5%	0.6%
Chicago	5.3%	1.3%
Dallas	17.8%	13.4%
Detroit	2.3%	1.2%
Houston	26.7%	21.9%
Los Angeles	18.2%	11.7%
New York	5.2%	1.7%
Philadelphia	2.0%	0.8%
Washington, D.C.	4.3%	2.6%

Source: American Housing Survey, 2001. Data compiled by Tom Sanchez, "Security vs. Status: The Two Worlds of Gated Communities," Metropolitan Institute, Virginia Tech, 2003.

cure their space against the poor—to protect wealth, as in Pacific Palisades on the California coast, or to protect property values in inner-city Los Angeles or the South Side of Chicago. Those who try to escape poverty by moving away use walls to prevent it from reaching their newfound oases. Walls and gates add to the hardening of racial and spatial distancing, as in the ten largest racially mixed metropolitan areas shown in table 5.1.

Structural segregation, when seen in the metropolitan context, leads to distinct gating phenomena. Those feeling threatened by *poverty race creep* have two options: to "fort up" in place, or to move to a perceived safe zone farther from perceived danger. The typical fort-in-place suburb is white; wealthy; and with homes in desirable locations close to water, woods, or hillside views. The working and middle classes without the resources to move fort up in their inner- and midring suburbs. Low-income groups are forced to live in public housing projects or opt to live in contained, walled security zones to ward off surrounding crime. Finally, there are the far exurbs where walls and gates are becoming increasingly common for standalone housing developments.

Fear is one of the prime motivators, along with newer homes and better prices, for most suburbanites. A survey exploring the motivations of people moving out of Chicago to the suburbs found that the push of crime was far more important than the commonly assumed pull of a better place to raise children. Interviews from the *Chicago Tribune* series on the survey are illustrative:

- "I wanted a large, fabulous house with a yard—and no poor people."
- "We became worn out by the traffic, parking hassles, noise, crime, lack of being able to *feel* safe, dirty streets, etc. We did not feel the city of Chicago was a good place to start a family."

- "The turning point was being caught in a crossfire between police and others while I was with my child . . . also, within the last year, I was mugged and my car was stolen."[15]

Although crime is actually declining, crime perception and fear remain high. Domestic terrorism threats and news accounts add to the perception when prognosticators theorize that core city areas are under the greatest threat. As a result, the combination of race, class, crime, and terrorism creates an irrational push to protect home and family. Gates are one response to these fears.

WHO'S OUT?

Gated communities in the United States go directly back to the era of robber barons, when the very richest built private streets to seal themselves off from the hoi polloi. During the twentieth century more gated, fenced compounds emerged to serve the needs of the East Coast, automobile, and Hollywood movie aristocracies. These early gated areas were different from the gated subdivisions of today; they were uncommon places for uncommon people. Now, the merely affluent and the middle class can erect barriers between themselves and undesirables.

As Gerald Frug of Harvard Law School points out, "[T]he spread of walled areas . . . raises a legal policy issue: what is the proper nature and extent of one's property rights? . . . I think these walled enclaves should be treated more like public space."[16] Moreover, there is an ominous tone of race and class associated with gating. When more young black men are in prison than in college, walls and gates mean something different to black Americans.[17] White, black, and Hispanic gate-controlled and walled communities differ by owner, renter, and income. But blacks are low in all categories.

From their earliest examples, the suburbs aimed to create a new version of the country estate of the landed gentry: a healthy, beautiful, protected preserve, far from the noise and bustle of the crowded city. But demographic, social, and cultural changes permeate society, changing and diversifying the suburbs. "Suburban" no longer connotes safe, beautiful, or ideal. As suburbs age and as they become more diverse, they are encountering problems once thought of as uniquely urban: crime, vandalism, disinvestment, and blight. Gated communities seek to counter these trends by maintaining the ambiance of exclusivity and safety the suburbs once promised. They exist not just to wall out crime or traffic or strangers, but to lock in economic position. Gated communities hope that greater control over the neighborhood will mean greater stability in property values. The majority

of gated, controlled-access (usually with guards) community home owners are white with a median income of more than $100,000. Blacks and Hispanics have different reactions to community elitism. Blacks with high incomes seldom elect to remove themselves from the surrounding community, even when they achieve the income and other status indicators of their white counterparts.

One gated, high-end community resident explained the symbolism of the gate: "The gate is something of a fallacy," he said. "Every time you go through with your clicker or your card, the computer has your code, and they know when you're coming and when you're going. Personally, I have nothing to hide, but I don't think it's anyone's goddamn business when I'm coming or when I'm going, and I wouldn't like my neighbors having that information, or the association. I personally would find that offensive."[18] A sentiment expressed by many African Americans too.

High-income black and Hispanic home owners find the gate offensive for other reasons as well. They view their roles as citizen models. If they remove themselves from their heritage communities and move in with "whitey" (gringos), they lose this vital connection with their birth community. Many blacks and Hispanics who "make it," we found in researching *Fortress America*, remain pillars of their communities because they are connected through their professions: doctors, lawyers, educators, ministers, local business owners, high-level public servants, and others who serve their ethnic communities. As one African American in South Florida described the separate enclaves, "They are not comfortable with us and I am not comfortable with them."[19]

Gating, and to some extent suburbanizing, represents a distancing from the community that is the foundation of the success of higher-income blacks and Hispanics. This is not to say that they feel compelled to live with the lowest-income groups. They can continue as role models living in racially diverse or even high-income racially separate suburbs. But closing themselves off could backfire and make them less popular in the very communities they represent to the broader population. Finally, the gates and guards are too symbolic of racial and economic divides that include slavery, racial stereotyping, and antidemocratic values. And for some Hispanic leaders, walls and gates recall the deeply polarized societies of Central and South America, which they left to seek a better, freer, less class-conscious way of life.

WHO HAS WHAT, WHERE?

Hispanics are more likely than blacks to live in gated compounds. We speculated that Hispanics, as recent arrivals, may be more likely to be confined to

the inner-city, low-income, multifamily rental market where perimeter fences and locked gates to ward off crime are common. Thus we should see some differences in the gated form of housing by city and suburb for Hispanics. That is, Hispanic renters might live in gated, central-city compounds and be a smaller proportion of the residents in gated or walled suburban areas.

To test this hypothesis, we looked at the suburban/city gated percentages for the ten cities shown in table 5.1. We were unable to look at the suburbs of each city since the number of cases in the survey for the non-central-city areas is small. Table 5.2 shows that location is important for whites and Hispanics but not for blacks. Our general hypothesis is correct. However, Hispanic renters tend to make up a larger portion than blacks in gated central-city areas in all income categories.

Black attitudes toward the appearance and symbolism of the prisonlike gates seem to trump all other features of living in this form of community.[20] As one commentator put it regarding this issue, "[W]hen we feel we need to put barriers between ourselves and our neighbors, something is wrong with the American Dream."[21] The basic reason for these differences in housing preferences is that only black athletes, entertainers, and high-visibility personalities feel they can justify to themselves and to their heritage members the need to retreat from the public.

Blacks who are less visible, we speculate, tend to see the gates as barriers to civic engagement and as symbols of the plantation, racial separation, and segregation. Further, the gate-guarded areas present a dilemma for blacks who view being stopped by guards as opportunities for "racial profiling." As Frug argues, "the walls that surround privatized areas do more than relocate those identified as potential criminals . . . they have an important psychological impact on insiders as well. . . . They enable the property owners to assert more extensive property rights against outsiders than those that the legal system actually authorizes."[22]

WALLS AGAINST CRIME

Realistically, crime is a far greater problem for lower-income people than for higher-income groups. Data from the 1999 Bureau of Justice Statistics National Crime Victimization Survey indicate that crime is also a greater problem in cities than in suburbs or rural areas.[23] The rates for both violent crime and household crime (e.g., burglary) are about 35 percent lower in suburbs than in cities. City residents are one and a half times more likely than suburbanites to be a victim of a violent crime or a household burglary. Yet gates are primarily a suburban phenomenon. The real danger of crime bears no relationship to the fear of crime, a fear that can spur the gating of neighborhoods that were once open to their surroundings.

Table 5.2. Suburban/City Gated/Walled Percentages for Top Ten Cities

Top 10 Metros: Black Households—Owners

	Central City		*Suburb*	
Weighted N = 1,484,228	*% Gated*	*% Walled*	*% Gated*	*% Walled*
Income Quartile				
First	1.0%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Second	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	5.0%
Third	3.6%	8.8%	0.0%	1.5%
Fourth	1.1%	5.2%	0.0%	4.1%
All	1.4%	4.5%	0.0%	3.0%

Top 10 Metros: Nonblack Households—Owners

	Central City		*Suburb*	
Weighted N = 7,592,840	*% Gated*	*% Walled*	*% Gated*	*% Walled*
Income Quartile				
First	3.9%	8.0%	1.5%	3.8%
Second	4.2%	9.6%	1.8%	3.0%
Third	3.8%	6.6%	1.0%	4.8%
Fourth	3.3%	5.2%	0.8%	2.4%
All	3.7%	6.9%	1.1%	3.3%

Top 10 Metros: Hispanic Households—Owners

	Central City		*Suburb*	
Weighted N = 949,579	*% Gated*	*% Walled*	*% Gated*	*% Walled*
Income Quartile				
First	0.0%	14.9%	1.5%	4.8%
Second	0.0%	14.2%	1.8%	5.7%
Third	3.1%	3.2%	1.0%	10.6%
Fourth	2.3%	4.1%	0.8%	4.9%
All	1.5%	8.6%	1.1%	7.2%

Source: American Housing Survey, 2001.
Note: The top ten metros are: Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.

The results of our survey in *Fortress America* of home owner association boards in gated communities show that security is a primary concern for those who buy property in gated communities. Nearly 70 percent of respondents indicated that security was a very important issue in the ultimate decision of residents to live in gated communities. Only 1 percent thought security was not an important motivation.

But security does mean something to all gated-community residents, and it is spelled out in their perceptions of criminality. Recent data support the contentions of gated home owners in some high-crime areas that gates do count. Data from the high-crime South Florida area indicate that gates do protect but not perfectly. All communities experienced some crime. For the victim, one crime is too many, so it is hard to say whether residents can gain much comfort from the data. Few crimes occur at home and people have to leave their compounds and go into the wider community where they are just as likely to be a victim as anyone else. So, the data are somewhat misleading because we would have to find comparable communities for a true test.

In *Fortress America*[24] we found that community location, not gates, made the difference in crime rates. Within a half-mile to one-mile radius of gated communities, crime rates are generally the same with or without a gate. Further, it is noteworthy that the largest gated communities in this small sample have relatively high crime rates. Thus, it can be reasonably argued that crime is a function of size. However, most Americans react to the *image* of crime and criminality. Image means color and class in this country.

We found an excellent example of the criminal imaging of walled-in residents in our research for *Fortress America* in an older, downtown section of Palm Springs, California. One resident in this mixed-race, gated neighborhood described the gate effect as "a boon if you're a widow or a widower. I am not as apprehensive here coming into my house, it's a lot more safe feeling." One of the men seconded her relief. "Before it was gated, I had to keep everything locked. There were transients coming through, walking up and down the street. You can't question them, 'what are you doing here?' because these are public streets, or they were . . . now it's a good secure feeling."

Everyone in the sample group had experienced break-ins or robberies in the past, and they spent several minutes telling stories of past crimes. They believe that there is a real increase in security with gates, not just a psychological effect. Most significantly, they said traffic dropped by 75 percent, and that alone meant fewer strangers. Nonetheless, fences can be jumped, as one woman pointed out. "*Two Mexicans* have been coming to the park around eleven o'clock at night to drink beer by the pool." The property manager hadn't heard of this, although it had been going on for nearly a week, and she promised to watch for them that night and call the police (the development had no roving patrol or guards). She noted that no development can promise "security," to which one man responded that there are "federal prisons they call 'maximum security' and they break out of there!"[25] These comments are dripping with racial overtones.

Basically, crime is moved but not controlled by gates and guards. To some extent this is precisely what activists opposed to gating in the black and Hispanic communities contend. Sanchez and Lang's review of the AHS data of thirty-four variables of home owner or renter characteristics reinforces the

above observations. They found that gated communities differed from ungated ones in people's acceptance of restrictions imposed through home owner rules in order to live in communities that had fewer signs of physical deterioration and in their perception that their communities possessed better neighborhood police protection.[26] But renters in gated and controlled-access communities perceived a high level of crime in the communities where they resided.[27] This is very likely a result of the locations of rental properties in high-crime areas, whereas gated home owner areas are in the suburbs away from crime.

WALLS AND GATES POLICY IN BLACK AND WHITE

Since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, more people feel vulnerable in the face of rapid change and the real or imagined threats of urban terrorism. Gated and barricaded communities are themselves a microcosm of a larger spatial pattern of segmentation and separation. The growing divisions between city and suburb, rich and poor are creating new patterns that reinforce the cost that isolation and exclusion impose on some while benefiting others. The actual crime statistics contradict the gated-community assertions of a need for further protection. Crime in every form is down across the nation. In fact, crime is very unlikely in the suburban areas where most gated communities are located. But crime in this case is definitely racially associated.

Residents of gated communities in our research pointed to the gates as protection against "those people," a not-so-subtle code for minorities who might come into their inner sanctum and commit acts of violence. As one young black expressed his visit to a gated compound in Seattle, "The guard was now visibly upset by my question, thinking perhaps that I was up to something, the vapor of some menacing crime loomed all around me. Why is a young black man [here]. Am I being fooled into letting down my guard and exposing my privileged patrons to the dangers of the streets?"[28]

These "turf wars," while most dramatically manifested by the gated community, are a troubling trend for the reemergence of racially inspired land use planning. As citizens separate themselves into homogeneous, independent cells, their ties to the greater polity and society become attenuated, increasing their resistance to efforts to resolve municipal, let alone regional, problems. Today, both new and old problems of race and class are joined with terrorism and immigration to make a more complex network of attitudes that drive the gating phenomenon.

In the suburbs, gates are the logical extension of the original suburban drive. In the city, gates and barricades are sometimes called "cul-de-sac-ization," a term that clearly reflects the design goal of creating a suburblike street pattern

out of the existing urban grid. Gates and walls are an attempt to suburbanize our cities. Neighborhoods have always been able to exclude potential residents through housing costs. Now, gates and walls exclude not only undesirable new residents, but even casual passers-by and people from the neighborhood next door.

The exclusivity of gated communities goes beyond the question of public access to streets. Gated communities are yet another manifestation of the trend toward privatization of public services—the private provision of recreational facilities, open space and common space, security, infrastructure, even social services and schools. Gated communities substitute for or augment public services with services provided by the home owner association. The same is true of all the private-street subdivisions that are now the dominant form of new residential development. But in gated communities, this privatization is enhanced by physical control of access to the development.

The trend toward privatized government and community is part of the more general trend of fragmentation; the resulting loss of connection and social contact is weakening the bonds of mutual responsibility and the social contract. The weakening social contract is illustrated by the self-interested nature of gated-community residents, who increasingly act as a group to vote against public expenditures for the total community.

The basic problem is that in gated communities and other privatized enclaves, the local community that many residents identify with is the one within the gates. Their home owner association dues are like taxes; their responsibility to their community, such as it is, ends at the gate. One city official in Plano, Texas, summed up the attitude of the gated-community residents in his town: "I took care of my responsibility, I'm safe in here, I've got my guard gate; I've paid my (home owner association) dues, and I'm responsible for my streets. Therefore, I have no responsibility for the commonweal, because you take care of your own."[29]

Residents of gated communities, like other people in cities and suburbs across the country, vary in the degree to which they feel the connections and duties of community within and outside of their developments. The primary difference is that in gated communities, with their privatized streets, recreation, local governance, and security, residents have less need of the public realm outside the gates than residents of traditional open neighborhoods. If they choose to withdraw, there are fewer ties to break, less daily dependence on the greater community.

As one resident of Blackhawk, a gated country club development in Northern California with a white, high-income majority told us, "People are tired of the way the government has managed issues . . . because you don't really have control over how the money is spent. . . . I feel disenfranchised . . . if the courts are going to release criminals, and we're going to continue not to prosecute people and continue to spend money the way we've been spend-

ing it, and I can't impact it, [at least here] in Blackhawk . . . I have a little control over how I live my life."[30]

This Blackhawk resident speaks for millions of white Americans who are using public policy to "fort up." This phenomenon has enormous policy consequences: In allowing some citizens to secede from public contact by internalizing and excluding others from sharing in their economic and social privilege, it aims directly at the conceptual base of community and citizenship in America. The old notions of community mobility and mutual responsibility are loosened by these new community patterns. What is the measure of nationhood when the divisions between neighborhoods require armed patrols and electric fencing to keep out other citizens? When public services and local government are privatized, when the community of responsibility stops at subdivision gates, what happens to the function and the idea of a social and political democracy? Can this nation so divided by gates and walls offer the dream of equality to all? If we lose this dream, what is the case and cause for this nation where all men are supposedly equal?

NOTES

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