



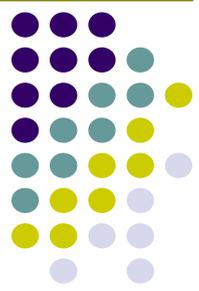
**Desegregating the City:  
Issues, Strategies and Blind Spots  
in Comparative Perspective**

**Xavier de Souza Briggs**

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# DESEGREGATING THE CITY: ISSUES, STRATEGIES AND BLIND SPOTS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

**Xavier de Souza Briggs**

## **Abstract**

In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the reality of urban segregation. As a result, the challenge for those concerned about the spatial dimensions of inequality is not so much to describe the conditions and patterns of urban segregation, but more to elucidate the consequences of urban segregation and to propose opportunities for strategic intervention. The paper starts by elaborating on three distinct, yet closely connected, levels of social and economic inequality: between and within nations, as a consequence of globalization; between cities, linked to rapid processes of urbanization; and, within localities. Although the main focus of the paper is on intra-local level inequalities, an understanding of all three levels is important as it provides an important context to urban segregation. The paper elaborates on the nature of *choice* and its limits, which is linked to spatial outcomes in the city. From there, it discusses the *consequences* of urban segregation, with specific emphasis on access/barriers in relation to work and other opportunities in the city. Finally, the paper elaborates on appropriate *strategies* to respond to urban segregation and its consequences. These strategies can be divided into ‘cure strategies’ and ‘mitigate strategies’. Ultimately, the paper is a call for a global conversation on urban segregation and its costs.

## **About the author**

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# DESEGREGATING THE CITY: ISSUES, STRATEGIES AND BLIND SPOTS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE<sup>1</sup>

**Xavier de Souza Briggs**

## **INEQUALITY AND CHANGE: SURVEYING THE GLOBE**

We live in a world more concerned about some inequalities than others. Naturally, these concerns are in part a function of differential awareness. But they also reflect competing priorities and deeply-rooted disagreements—first, about what public values *should* guide market-driven economies, particularly in democratic societies, and second, based on those values, about what commitments government, business and civil society should rightfully expect of each other.

This paper was written after an international dialogue about urban segregation and its consequences. Sociologists, economists, anthropologists, planners and others, some with hands-on experience in the world of policy and practice and some not, some from North America and others from Europe, Africa and Latin America, convened at the Lincoln Institute for Land Policy in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA., in July 2001. This paper critically discusses the themes of that gathering and outlines arguments about the key problems of segregation and strategies for addressing these problems.<sup>2</sup> Examples are offered from Africa, Europe, Latin America and North America.

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<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this working paper was presented at the International Seminar on Segregation and the City, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Cambridge, Massachusetts, July 2001. Francisco Sabatini, George Galster, and David Varady provided helpful feedback.

<sup>2</sup> The larger collection of research is forthcoming in a conference volume, *Desegregating the City: Ghettos, Enclaves and Inequality*, edited by David Varady (Albany, New York: SUNY Press). This working paper is

There are three distinct but closely connected levels of social and economic inequality on which we can and should focus attention around the globe. Understanding these will help us to keep urban segregation in perspective and also to synthesize the disparate lessons of the Cambridge gathering, which is my primary task here. Synthesizing is a problem-ridden enterprise, of course. One does not want to obscure real divergences in observation or interpretation, but it is important to organize our thinking so as to enable more productive learning. I will focus, in particular, on what can be learned across borders. A number of trends—globalization, rapid urbanization in the global South and more—suggest that our need for such learning will only increase in the years to come. Following the stage-setting section below, I preview the paper.

### **THREE LEVELS OF INEQUALITY: THE CONTEXT FOR URBAN SEGREGATION**

At the first and broadest level, inequality has increased in recent decades thanks to sweeping, large-scale changes in the nature and organization of work, exploitable technology and patterns of natural resource use, relations between business and government, and the terms of global trade. These changes have contributed to widening, and widely documented, economic inequality, both within and among nations (Rodrik 1999; Stiglitz 2002). Such macro-level transformations, a focus for high-profile activism at WTO, Genoa, and other so-called “anti-globalization” protests, have helped to renew and intensify important public debates. These debates center on how to reduce poverty and inequality overall, how to manage the usual tensions between growth and equity as economies change and, more specifically, how to reform wage standards, working conditions, terms of trade, business regulation and more—in technically promising and politically acceptable ways—on a global, trans-national scale.

At a second and much less visible level is the inequality directly tied to rapid urbanization—by the middle of this decade the world will be mostly urban for the first time in history (UN or (World Bank cite1999)—plus large labor, capital and material flows *among* key urban economies. There is the endless race among cities for their place on the competitive global stage (Borja and Castells 1997; Sassen 2000). This local

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adapted from the conclusion of that volume. For background on the conference, and for downloadable conference papers, go to <http://www.lincolnst.edu/education/education-coursedetail.asp?id=83>

dimension involves a hierarchy of its own, not between owners and workers, members of distinct ethnic groups, or technology have's and have-not's in general, but among localities as competing, live-work units. There are high-wage, high-tech “knowledge economy” cities, cheap labor manufacturing cities (not the most desired niche), trade cities with elements of both and other types.

In the global South, competitive strategic planning and regional economic development offer some logic of response. In the industrialized world, there is a new regionalism, with (broadly) similar tools, motives and complexities. Metropolitan regions, to act like competitive business units and to promote the well-being of their residents, must consciously define their niches in a changing world marketplace (Porter 2001). To secure and protect such niches, regions must marshal unprecedented cooperation among market, state and civil society actors to develop better skills, more attractive business climates and more. The second level of inequality, thus, defines a game in which, as part of global economic transformations and policy choices, the localities in which we work and live our lives face a wide variety of choices, and complicated fortunes, in the decades ahead. The choices and their impacts have important implications for local markets in labor and land, community identity (self-image), economic redistribution and other factors that shape spatial segregation (Fainstein 2001).

At a third level, the one on which we focused in the international meeting on segregation, there is sorting and inequality *within* localities, whether town, city or urbanized metropolitan areas. This sorting is not strictly spatial, of course. So-called knowledge-economy cities rely on numerous low-wage workers, in effect a distinct *occupational* hierarchy, to support the labor and lifestyles of the more highly skilled and highly paid (Sassen 2000; Fainstein 2001; Waldinger 1996). But linked to occupational and other forces, the central task of our meeting was to examine segregation as embodying key spatial dimensions of social and economic inequality at the local level—whether segregation by racial/ethnic identity, socio-economic status, religious beliefs or any other difference—and to offer views of a wide array of localities, nested in diverse economic regions and political contexts, around the globe, from Los Angeles to Belfast, from São Paulo to Toronto, Tegucigalpa and Johannesburg.

This survey of cities was not all-encompassing by theme, nor was it geographically comprehensive by any means. There is much more that we need to learn, in particular, about the nature and extent of changes underway in African, Asian and Latin American cities. Distinct traditions of data collection and analysis, a refusal to collect race or other identity-group data as a matter of policy in some countries and the scarcity of key statistical data in many developing nations most of all complicate any comparative project. But in covering a variety of cities and societal contexts, we distinguished *segregation* (a shorthand for spatial outcomes that indicate “separateness” per se) from questions of *choice and discrimination* (events and processes contributing to separateness) and *access* (what particular groups or individuals may be separated from in cities, thanks to spatial segregation). As we will see, the “ghetto” versus “enclave” distinction raises several of these cross-cutting issues. Finally, at our meeting, we worked to identify some of the local patterns that bear the imprint of more global forces, in effect noting links among the three levels of inequality.

Addressing the third, intra-local level, my intent here is not to revive simplistic notions of spatial determinism or to argue that all social problems with spatial dimensions require solutions that “lead” with space. What defines this work is the conclusion that space remains a critical dimension along which larger changes in the world continue to produce significant clustering or separateness, in some cases with unacceptable barriers to human well-being and opportunity. A more contestable issue, of course, is whether this spatial dimension is *changing* in any fundamental way, i.e. in the ways in which – or degrees to which – particular spatial barriers contribute to inequality. As I will review in a moment, our contributors in Cambridge developed no single view on this large question, though we hope to have created a basis for additional comparative dialogue to come. At issue, too, are cultural, political and other divides that complicate any public response for which we might hope. The meeting contributors varied widely in their specific problem diagnoses and thus in their prescribed solutions as well. Furthermore, in developing policy recommendations, some participants applied fairly strict standards of short to medium-term economic and political feasibility, while others ventured further a field with bolder proposals for change.

## PREVIEW

Notwithstanding the gaps in empirical evidence, for those around the globe concerned about the spatial dimensions of inequality, the central challenge now is less convincing others of the “what” of urban segregation (patterns or conditions), but of the “so what” (causes for alarm) and the “what now”—options for response that are substantively promising (if not always tested) as well as politically legitimate. With that in mind, I will attend to both how the meeting participants made varied and novel arguments about *different* phenomena and how we emphasized quite distinct aspects of the *same* phenomena in our partial survey of segregation and cities worldwide.

In a number of instances, our concise treatment of complex phenomena and myriad hopes for change has led to rather casual borrowing of policies across borders. Our South African colleagues Marie Huchzermeyer and Alan Mabin, for example, identified a number of policy alternatives on which US cities (and state and federal authorities as well) have labored long and with mixed results. It may be that South Africa actually represents more fertile ground for some of these policies, such as area-based fair share housing standards, reforms in tax treatment of homeownership and varied rental subsidy packages that expand residential options. More specifically, perhaps the US, as compared to other nations, is long on programmatic know-how and experience—with a rich history of relatively well-documented and highly varied interventions that respond to segregation and its consequences—but short on political will. Whatever the case, it behooves us to excavate the assumptions of these policy tools a bit, if only to leave our conversation across borders a bit more critical and our actions less open to costly surprises.

I begin by addressing the issue of *choice* that is so central to the causes and consequences of spatial segregation—not to mention assumptions about viable, legitimate responses. I then define the distinct *consequences* (costs and benefits) of spatial concentration on which participants at the international meeting focused, respecting the variation in context but asserting some deep parallels (across borders) in our concerns. Finally, I use these cross-cutting concerns to rethink *strategies*, outlining a few simple ways we might think about the hardest problems and the leverage we have (or need) for solving them. The point of this last step is less to blueprint a research agenda, although there is much we would still like to learn, than to suggest what the evidence teaches us so far about

*affecting* forms of segregation that we indeed determine to be problematic and worthy of response.

The main argument of this paper is that the most fundamental choice facing us around the globe is that between *lowering* rates of spatial segregation (however it may be defined in a given context)—what I will call “cure” strategies, on the one hand—and, on the other hand, reducing the problematic *links* between space and the social, economic or other outcomes we care about (“mitigate” strategies) without trying to change spatial patterns themselves to any significant degree. That is, cure strategies reduce segregation rates themselves whilst mitigate strategies reduce social costs of segregation that societies may find unacceptable. For many communities, practicality and public values may favor pursuing a bit of both, i.e. where significant action can be mounted at all. From immigrant gateways in the US to post-apartheid South African cities and beyond, the meeting participants provided clues, though no easy answers, on how to think about and make these choices.

#### **PERSPECTIVES ON CHOICE**

The ascendancy of markets, and more specifically of the Western neo-liberal model, around the world makes *choice* an appropriate starting point for any discussion of spatial outcomes in cities—and, indeed, makes choice a defining ideal of the world’s most influential societies. The problem arises in developing any shared conception of what this much-discussed ideal means or requires. In the meeting, Gregory Squires presented housing search data from surveys conducted in metropolitan Washington, D.C., and Alan Mabin discussed changes in Johannesburg. From one context to another, and regardless of professional background, meeting participants largely agreed that choice and its consequences are not a simple function of buying power, though markets necessarily discriminate on that basis first.

The housing consumers in our subject communities search, but not under conditions of perfect information and not independent of social networks that include co-ethnics, those who share an income level or (class) lifestyle (regardless of ethnic identification), and others who inevitably help shape our identities, as well as our conceptions of what we want residentially and where best to find it. But in the contemporary lingo of social science, residential search is “embedded” socially: individuals do not walk around

searching and comparing like solo buyers in a bazaar. Consumer preferences, for their part, emerge not only as likewise embedded and complex, particularly when assessed across huge differences in cultural and historical context, but such preferences can shift over time, as choices and public values shift.

Alan Mabin's assessment of post-apartheid South African cities illustrates this well: white social and spatial distancing from all blacks has been transformed into black and white middle-class distancing from *poor* blacks, in part because of the new economic and residential mobility of black professionals and in part because metropolitan development patterns are shifting the choices available to *all* groups. In the most general way, each of these groups makes the most of limited choices and a limited purse, but the practical implications of preference and choice have been transformed in South African cities in less than a decade. Since city-regions, not rural areas, will largely drive the economy and politics of the new South Africa, the new urban segregation shows every sign of being a defining feature of life in a rapidly transforming society.

Mohammed Qadeer's Toronto appeals as a checkerboard of small-scale ethnic neighborhoods, segregated at the micro-level but integrated at the level where schools and tax districts are shared. Toronto benefits from its self-image as a place that makes diversity work. But missing is a close analysis of residential preferences by ethnic and income group and of housing prices and other market trends in that famously diverse immigrant gateway. Do current residential choices merely inhibit preferences that would splinter the city into larger segregated districts, or do the relatively generous Canadian welfare state, the historic embrace by government of pluralism rather than the assimilation ideal, and the absence of a large, historically disadvantaged, and stigmatized subgroup analogous to US blacks combine to produce generally more integrative preferences in Canada than in its southern neighbor? Have public policies related to housing, economic development, public education or other domains been significant contributors, whether for good or bad or both?

Most discussions of choice in housing lead quickly to the phenomena of enclaves, which together create the checkerboard or "mosaic" that the famed Chicago School of sociology recognized as a defining feature of the modern city. Beyond the much-studied inner-city (lower-income enclaves of foreign-born immigrants or domestic in-migrants), Frederick

Boal and Ceri Peach have outlined a variety of ethnic enclaves (see papers online – footnote 2). These range from ethno-religious enclaves defined by Boal as “ratcheted up” in levels of segregation (thanks to persistent conflict in the case of Belfast) to “suburban parachuted” Hong Kong Chinese enclaves in Peach’s depiction of Vancouver, British Columbia. As David Varady outlines, self-protection, conscious objectives of cultural preservation, less conscious “comfort level” preferences for living among those with shared backgrounds and considerable buying power—in the case of South Asian immigrants in the US—all contribute to these spatial concentrations. But *freedom* of choice would seem to be a relative concept where overt conflict or a history of harassment is perceived to threaten one’s life and property, where ethnocentrism in the larger society (and not merely the positive attractions of co-ethnics) motivates self-protective enclaving and where some members of the enclave may benefit from that residential pattern much more than other members do. The consumers in these cases vary widely in the choice constraints they face and few of these constraints are a simple matter of inequalities in buying power.

In light of these realities, how should we assess Peter Marcuse’s notion presented in his conference paper that “enclaves” are chosen by their residents and “ghettos” not, that enclaves are mostly good and ghettos usually bad? The first contrary centers on choice, the second on normative judgments we make based, in part, on how we *conceive* of choice. On the one hand, fears of racial harassment and the choice to self-segregate contribute to ghettos, if by that we mean segregated low-status subareas of cities. But as outlined above, this is under an awfully generous rendering of the choices actually available to ghetto residents and of their obligation, relative to that of the rest of society, to overcome fears and make new choices in spite of a painful and costly past.

On the other hand, as I outlined in my conference paper on social capital and segregation in the US, enclaves are not good at every point in time, not good for every type of enclave resident and not equally good for those inside and outside the enclave. In London, Amsterdam and elsewhere, ethnic enclaves that harbor, and in fact facilitate, terrorist organizing are a case in point of the latter. So are enclave institutions, religious or other, that may discredit important values of the wider society, such as gender equality in work and civic participation or the separation of church and state, or that do little to encourage literacy in the language and customs of the larger society. As for costs and benefits as a

function of point in time (or stage), low-wage laborers, say in New York’s Chinatown, benefit from the job networks, credit pools and other distinctive structures of that enclave—until the same structures inhibit mainstreaming in the wider economy, limiting social, economic and residential mobility and contributing to exploitative working and living conditions.

In all of these places and situations, human beings *are* making choices. They develop preferences and they act, based on what they observe, what others observe and communicate and what the choosers decide they are willing to pay. But in practice, choice is a many splendored and much bedeviled thing. Simple analytic distinctions based on “choice” (in the broadest sense of that label), along with normative judgments about what spatial patterns constitute a problem worthy of public intervention and what merely empowers a community to remain distinctive, all too quickly become academic. To be sure, ghettos and enclaves are more than ideal types, especially where there are significant differences between the two in the median buying power of households in each and demonstrable differences in discrimination suffered by those living in a labeled ghetto as compared to a labeled enclave. But the ghetto versus enclave distinction turns out to be an invitation to deeper and much more context-specific questions about the nature of individual and group preferences, actual residential choices available or possible, histories of prejudice and coercion, and societal expectations about what all groups should acquire or share, regardless of background, as part of belonging to a political community—ideally, one that imposes and enforces obligations of all groups even as it extends them rights and due rewards.

Future comparative projects might usefully apply distinct analytic emphases, and distinct conceptions of choice, to the same cases rather than different ones. We are all prisoners of our training and habits of mind, and we all tend to emphasize the features of our local puzzles (the empirical cases) that support our arguments. Moreover, our analytic choices and framing of results are value driven. We agree strongly on some points, for example that some outcomes in cities are largely unintentional (just add up) and not cleverly, let alone diabolically, planned. But the meeting participants, sociologists and economists in particular, like their researcher and policy advocate colleagues around the globe, remain caught in a stand-off that precludes what could be a very useful, and policy-relevant

empirical consensus on the nature of choice, its limits and public obligations given the same.<sup>3</sup>

### **CONSEQUENCES OF SPATIAL CLUSTERING: A FOCUS ON ACCESS**

One way to debate urban segregation today is to reconsider the relevance of the Chicago School model linking social assimilation to spatial incorporation in cities—the idea that space is an index of social acceptance and attainment of status over time (Park 1926; Massey 1984). In their papers, Frederick Boal and Ceri Peach provide the most direct critiques of rendering segregation as a merely transitional state leading to assimilation, which in turn would be relatively linear and comparable across identity groups (as the Chicago School expected). Using Belfast, Boal shows that segregation can ratchet in the “wrong” direction. Peach reminds us that some groups show persistent ghettoized segregation (blacks in Chicago) or long-run, apparently voluntary enclaving (Jews in Toronto), both at odds with the Chicago School’s core assumptions.

Beyond these elements, though, the contemporary era has brought into question the nature and desirability of the assimilation ideal itself and several of our contributors addressed the pluralist ideal as an alternative to assimilation. In a very real sense, we have

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<sup>3</sup> Most economists analyzing residential choice and its impact on segregation patterns make the standard assumptions that preferences are stable and that individuals can be treated as utility maximizers. Sociologists are interested in how preferences are shaped by social context and how choices are “embedded” in networks, norms and other socially structured phenomena. Sociologists also tend to see racial/ethnic identity and attitudes as exerting fairly direct influences on how and where we choose to live, while economists are inclined to see race-based preferences as another element of the individual actor’s utility function; racial avoidance can be inferred only after the “pure” effects of buying power are accounted for. While buying power gaps among the races do explain some segregation, much remains unexplained, and the survey evidence on racial attitudes about preferred neighbors (e.g., Bobo 2001) is compelling—all the more so when combined with the results of carefully conducted audit tests of housing discrimination (Yinger 1995; Turner et al. 2002). Together, those data indicate that all groups have a hierarchy of preferred neighbors (by race group) and that blacks and Hispanics in the US are likely to encounter some form of discrimination from real estate professionals in about one-quarter of all searches (for rental or ownership units). Finally, arguments that whites avoid certain neighborhoods based on perceptions of “structural strength” (Ellen 2000) rather than racial make-up cannot rule out the existence of a double standard: namely, that judgments about current strength and future viability are filtered through racial attitudes. For example, whites may well make allowances (qualified judgments) for vulnerable neighborhoods that are mostly white but not do the same for similarly vulnerable neighborhoods that are mostly black. Multi-disciplinary work would enable researchers from distinct traditions to build on each other’s findings. The assumption of stable preferences, for example, is perfectly reasonable for some analyses but should be “relaxed” for others. Signaling related to structural strength is worth understanding, but so too are the ways in which race may filter signals and interpretations of same.

shifted our central concern from assimilation (and, more recently, “convergence”; see Briggs forthcoming) that erodes group differences, which may or may not take a widely coveted form, to *access*, for which aspirations are more or less universal. That is, beyond describing urban choices and their spatial consequences, our normative focus on inequality and the case for intervention center on what segregated patterns mean for access to a host of public and private goods in the city and, through them, to “opportunity” variously defined.

Whatever its form and whatever the causes, what does urban spatial segregation bar access to? Our global round-up confirmed a keen interest, across borders, in access to *markets* first and foremost. The spatial structure of our cities and of our local labor markets vary widely. For example, Glen Pearce-Oroz’s new towns, built as part of recovery from a massive hurricane, isolate their residents from jobs in Tegucigalpa’s urban core, while conversely the most segregated neighborhoods in urban America create transport, information and other barriers to jobs that have largely decentralized (headed to the suburbs) in recent decades. Alan Mabin and Marie Huchzermeyer’s assessments of South Africa emphasize the isolation of black townships from a shifting geography of employment (increasingly following the pro-suburban American pattern).

Regardless of the form and direction of spatial change, in all these instances, segregation contributes barriers to work. Notably, debates in the US about a “spatial mismatch” between disadvantaged workers and areas of job growth are largely about the degree of mismatch (how patterns vary by metro context and type of worker) and the how (specific mechanisms) rather than the whether (Kain 1968; reviews in Kain 1992, Ihlanfeldt 1998). Moreover, recent research indicates that for blacks, the most job-isolated group in terms of residential locations, a decrease in spatial mismatch between 1990 and 2000 owed mainly to encouraging residential mobility of black households in that period (Raphael and Stoll 2002). While discussions of the “geography of opportunity” in metropolitan America generally lead with these barriers to employment (Galster and Killen 1995; Pastor 2001), European researchers are also tracking spatial and social barriers to consumption markets as evidence of the “social exclusion” of key groups (Briggs 2003; Lupton and Power 2002). US policy concerns about “under-retailed” urban neighborhoods—a key emphasis of urban economic development proposals late in the

Clinton Administration and of Michael Porter's inner-city competitiveness thesis—reflect this concern, albeit rarely with explicit mention of segregation.

If barriers to market participation are priority one, isolation from *quality public services* represents a close second in many city and country contexts. More than markets, this isolation reflects deliberate policy decisions about the finance, governance and implementation of public education, safety, welfare and other public services. In his conference paper, Pearce-Oroz has shown that residents of Tegucigalpa's new towns in effect traded away housing in the core that provided better access to urban jobs and consumption for housing on a newly built periphery that offered better access to public services and higher quality housing stock. The long-standing observation in US metropolitan areas that segregation consigns the most disadvantaged young people to the worst public schools continues to hold, but with new wrinkles: unlike Europe, America's heavy reliance on local property taxes and segregated neighborhood school attendance zones continue to structure school life around residential segregation. But many inner-ring suburbs, especially those with a large minority presence, also show signs of school failure and charter schools and "choice" proposals formally de-link school attendance from neighborhood of residence. These mechanisms function on a limited scale in many metro areas and early evidence on their impacts is mixed. Unregulated by enrollment balancing mechanisms, charters and choice schemes also reproduce class segregation and, in some cases, segregation by race as well. At our meeting, economist Robert Wassmer defended choice among public service districts in metro America—as "Tieboutian clubs," in honor of the public choice theorist—for its efficiency, acknowledging the need for some intervention to curb high social costs arising from inequities.

Where markets and public policy are closely inter-twined, as in the siting of land uses with important and controversial spillover effects, spatial access becomes a public health issue as well. In their paper on sprawl and segregation in Los Angeles, Banerjee and Verma show that black and Hispanic households are more likely to live in urban core neighborhoods near environmental hazards. Pastor (2001) argues that the uneven geography of environmental health remains too invisible within the politics of race and spatial segregation in America—not only in L.A. of course, but also in every city where distance from unwanted land uses tracks political and economic power.

As complex and varied as these access issues are, within nations and in comparisons across them, a third type of access—to a *shared political life*—is more complex and contested still. In the broadest terms, urban spatial segregation not only tends to segregate political jurisdictions (spatially bounded interest communities), for example by race and income in the US (Massey and Denton 1993). Such segregation also reduces access by the minority poor to extensive, diverse political influence networks and groups, as I outlined in a paper on social capital and segregation. Barriers of racial/ethnic identity, socio-economic status *and* space compound all too easily to truncate bridging ties, inclusive political groups and other foundations of democratic life in diverse societies (Briggs 2003; Putnam 2000).

That tendency noted, spatial segregation has historically had a converse effect too, of course, concentrating interest communities in ways that support mobilization. That is, segregation has produced important political enclaves that challenge status quo arrangements. In the global North and South alike, urban social movements are one important outgrowth of this (Fainstein and Hirst 1995), but so are politically influential, area-based “community development” projects and institutions. The issue becomes how to ensure that political life is not permanently defined by spatial boundaries that correlate strongly with political ones, making political identities partisan and insular and limiting compromise and learning across groups. Boal’s ethnic scenarios spectrum, which culminates in the dire euphemism of “cleansing,” illustrates the extent of this risk.

Finally, social capital and social stigma represent newer areas for empirical inquiry into segregation. In my conference paper, I argued that social capital concepts help explain many of the economic and political consequences of segregation, not as a stand-alone force but as an organizer of public and private choices and their consequences (and see Warren, Saegert, and Thompson 2001). Formal evidence on “space as a signal”—i.e. social stigmas (or conversely, status enhancement) as a function of place of residence—has been generated primarily in the US, through employer interviews that focus on hiring decisions (Tilly et al. 2001). Ihlanfeldt and Sjoquist (1998), in a comprehensive review of the most sophisticated studies of spatial mismatch and employment, note that such signaling, and related discrimination, are plausible contributors to mismatch impacts. And in his conference paper, Espino emphasizes segregation as a mechanism for status differentiation with social and psychological, not just economic, motives.

It is unclear how much the space-as-a-signal concept applies outside the US, where large, racially identifiable ghettos are favorite media subjects and their residents notoriously stereotyped. Alan Mabin's description of a widening class gulf among South African blacks is at least suggestive of stigmas that may come to separate township blacks from upwardly mobile black professionals who increasingly live outside the townships. But the American evidence specifically asserts that "ghetto" functions for employers and other brokers of opportunity as a *social type* and a *proxy* for a person's reliability, not just as an undesirable *location*. It would be very helpful, particularly as part of our debate over acceptable and unacceptable forms of spatial concentration—ghetto versus enclave, in the shorthand—to know how much this signaling effect obtains in other nations and whether the effect touches a variety of status groups. Gilroy and Speak's (1998) work on social exclusion in Great Britain illustrates the type of research that is needed.

Finally, while barriers to opportunity facilitate a comparison of segregation's consequences across contexts, there is clearly more at stake in segregation. The opportunity framework de-emphasizes cultural life and sense of place in the city and the case for policy intervention is rarer in connection to those issues. In the sense that culture may seem less urgent than social and economic opportunity, as well as fuzzier or less defined, the oversight is understandable. But it is also curiously at odds with powerful political symbols, specific claims about the costs of certain integrative policies and even our causal models of how segregation arises in the first place. That is, cultural identity—and the drawing of social boundaries that define an "us" and "them"—remains potent in the symbols, frames and codes of politics in many places. One lesson of cultural studies is that these boundaries do not in every instance track historical *ethnic* identity differences. Rather, they embrace a class culture emerging in Mabin's upwardly mobile black South Africa and similar status groupings elsewhere. Furthermore, anti-integration activism, for example in ethnic pride and ethnic nationalism, frequently employs threats to culture, and specifically to cultural preservation, as a rallying cry. And several of us at the meeting emphasized that self-segregation, while not enough to explain segregation outcomes, certainly contributes.

Here again, the US context is instructive and particularly well-documented. In the classic juxtaposition, black Americans routinely express to interviewers a desire to live in mixed-

race neighborhoods, but define that mix as including a proportion of fellow blacks that exceeds the apparent “comfort zones” of similarly surveyed white Americans (Bobo 2001). These findings, on which whites and blacks show some convergence in recent decades, probably capture a variety of associations we have with race in America, some of which compete in our decisions: for one, a powerful attraction to co-ethnics that reflects a variety of shared traits, such as language (or code or dialect), regional or national origin, tastes and normative disposition, physical appearance (physiognomy and/or dress) and more (McPherson, Miller, and Smith-Lovin 2001); but second, the pragmatic observation that mostly white neighborhoods tend to have safer streets, better schools and better amenities than mostly minority neighborhoods—greater “structural strength,” as Ellen (2000) summarizes the attraction. Minority suburbanization, a step toward lower segregation in US metro areas, comes fraught with perceived trade-offs among these factors. Squires, Friedman and Saidat’s evidence, in their conference paper, on the comparatively segregated neighborhoods “chosen” (under constraint) by middle-class blacks in the Washington, D.C. metro area certainly suggests a strong “net” attraction of living among one’s own. This reminds us that even when the multiple dimensions of minority household preferences are kept in view, discrimination too often de-limits the options available (and see multi-city housing discrimination evidence in Yinger 1995; Turner et al. 2002).

#### **RE-THINKING RESPONSES: POLICY, STRATEGY AND LEARNING ACROSS BORDERS**

The preceding discussion suggests that in spite of cultural and other rationales for protecting separateness, we should take *access*—at once social, economic and political—as defining the case against forms of spatial segregation that are demonstrably linked to inequality. The discussion further suggests that choice is a powerful ideal, and certainly a powerful force in any market-led society, but not a simple ideal by any means. Choices are embedded and constrained in ways that make it difficult to discern empirical causes and effects as well as the political and moral high ground.

If we turn to implications for policy, the plot thickens from there. The world’s city-regions face a variety of tough policy choices now and in the years ahead, from meeting basic needs to securing much-coveted competitiveness in a global economy and handling new “sustainability” challenges in health and the environment (World Bank 1999). Choices about policy and public action to curb urban spatial segregation, or more precisely to affect segregation of particular kinds, should be thought about in the context

of that larger list of priorities. It is not at all clear that affecting segregation in significant ways will rise high on the public agenda on its own; it may well gain momentum if linked to higher priority, “top-of-mind” issues.

South Africa may be the ultimate example of this. As Mabin and Huchzermeyer stress, it is the case of a nation very recently transformed by a highly racialized government and social movement, which explicitly identified desegregation as a national priority, yet now shows limited commitment to this policy goal in the face of competing priorities, such as creating jobs, meeting basic shelter needs (regardless of housing location) and combating HIV/AIDS. Likewise, the conference papers that address largely unplanned metropolitan growth or “sprawl” (especially Pendall’s paper) tackle what has been a very hot public issue in state and local politics in the US in recent years, hinting at the complex ways in which segregation by race and income may link to these public concerns with much more momentum behind them. It is noteworthy that *racial* desegregation enjoys virtually no public attention or support in the US, while *deconcentration* of poverty (a specific form of income desegregation) enjoys a bit of both—“has legs,” as we say in American politics. So lesson one is a reminder not to think about urban spatial segregation in isolation from the larger public agenda, defined by the issues to which the public and policymakers seem willing to attend.

Lesson two is about distinguishing *policies* from the underlying *strategies* of assumed cause and effect that justify policy choices in particular contexts. At their best, strategies embody clear logics of expected cause and effect—why the state of the world will change in a particular direction if some intervention is made. Ideally, these causes and effects can be described in a logical sequence or chain. In the parlance of evaluation, these logics constitute formal or informal “theories of change” (Chen 1990; Weiss 1995), also known in strategic management circles as “logic models.” Logic models expose assumptions and contingencies that are critical for policymakers, constituents, implementers and evaluators to understand, at least on a basic level.

The enforcement of laws against housing discrimination is a classic example—and one for which more promising logic models are sorely needed. Because a number of our authors have recommended such “fair” housing protections where they are *not* the law of the land, or stronger enforcement where they are (as in the US), I will outline the logic on which these recommendations depend *as means of reducing segregation*. Clearly, there are other reasons to enact fair housing laws, and I will return to those other reasons in a moment. But in the form of a basic theory of change, in order to affect spatial segregation patterns fair housing laws require the following:

1. That the “victims” (housing consumers, in this case) be *aware* of their rights under law;

2. That the victims be *aware* that they have been victimized (e.g. by real estate professionals, financial institutions or others);
3. That the victims be willing and able to *report* their perceived victimization to authorities;
4. That adequate *resources* be in place for processing, investigating and adjudicating claims (the complex operational element of enforcement);
5. That *penalties* be adequate for those claims that produce a finding of guilt on the part of alleged perpetrators;
6. That, ultimately, substantial reductions in housing discrimination (the target process) *will* have a significant impact on residential segregation (the target outcome).

Each step in this logic chain is a potential source of leverage on the ultimate policy targets (designated “problems”) and, conversely, a potential breakdown point. First, if the US case is any prologue, victims of housing discrimination are frequently unaware of their rights (so we invest, albeit modestly, in “fair housing education” programs). Next, it is increasingly unlikely that victims will detect wrongdoing when it happens, because discrimination has taken on more subtle forms in recent years. It is harder and harder to police (so we invest, albeit modestly, in random “audit” testing and subpoena records in search of a paper trail of discrimination). Third, some victims, foreign-born immigrants in particular, will be reluctant to report wrongdoing; they may fear reprisal or simply want to avoid inconvenience. Finally, the administrative agencies entrusted to collect, process, investigate and in some cases adjudicate claims are notoriously under-funded, backlogged and conflicted about how best to pursue their policy mandates. Some of this is about the contradictions and tensions inherent in regulatory enforcement work, one of the “bad cop” functions of government (Sparrow 2000). But it also reflects a particular ambivalence, at least in US society, about how to handle race and define equal opportunity.

If we assume that penalties, where applied, do in fact change behavior—a bit of a heroic assumption, granted, because discrimination may simply become more clever, but fair housing settlements have run to the hundreds of millions of dollars—then just two hurdles remain. First, reducing discrimination must actually expand the residential choices of potential victims (typically, racial minorities). For reasons outlined above, such reductions may not, at least not in the short run, change self-segregating choices where minorities want to avoid harassment by neighbors or simply enjoy the company of others who are like them. Second, and more problematic still, reducing discrimination faced by minorities (the primary concern of fair housing laws) does nothing to affect white consumers’ avoidance of mostly minority neighborhoods. Such avoidance, while perhaps objectionable and certainly costly (in the aggregate) to the society, is perfectly

legal. Realtors cannot legally steer clients away from (or toward) mostly minority areas, but clients are perfectly free to steer themselves, i.e. to self-segregate.

None of this is to argue against the enactment and vigorous enforcement of fair housing laws, which embody an important commitment to equal opportunity as part of the good society. But this simple logic chain reveals just how precarious and limited fair housing laws can be *as a means of reducing segregation*. Seen in this context, public policy is often thought about quite narrowly as “government mandate,” which unduly emphasizes officialdom and often exaggerates the power of government will alone to affect social conditions. From the standpoint of strategic problem-solving and of prescribing appropriate solutions across disparate contexts, the essence of policy is in: naming conditions in the world that demand attention, money or other public resources; specifying desired changes or states with respect to those conditions; outlining best-available knowledge about desired causes and effects that might lead to those states; and, specifying the mechanisms that will be employed based on the knowledge available.

As a practical matter, policymaking is rarely if ever a linear, technical process of choosing among strong alternatives with extensive information on problems in hand. But the preceding distinctions between strategy and policy do enable us to interrogate our meeting participants’ policy recommendations and, more specifically, the degree to which supposed solutions might or might not travel well across borders. These distinctions have two broader values as well. First, they help us avoid confounding discussions about policy mechanisms *per se* with those about assumptions (why’s) that underlie those instruments. Second, the distinction highlights the need to generate a wider array of options for implementing particular strategies and, scaling this up, a wider array of strategies for accomplishing complex goals that society deems worthwhile.

In my conference paper on social capital and segregation, I outlined broad strategies employed in the US over the past half century to either *lower the rates of spatial segregation* (“cure” strategies) or to *mitigate the social costs of that segregation* without necessarily affecting spatial patterns themselves (“mitigate” strategies). In keeping with the distinction outlined above, each of these *strategies* can be pursued with multiple official *policies* and a host of specific *mechanisms* (consumer incentives, social programs, social marketing, etc.). In Table 1, I expand on this typology to encompass as much as possible the policy ideas of the other meeting participants. Note that the role of the fair housing mechanism is now clearer: it targets a specific problem (market discrimination in the search for housing) which *contributes* to segregation, but other strategies are needed to address proximate problems, such as legal avoidance of particular areas by consumers (“segregative choices” in the left column of the Table).

**Table 1. Affecting Segregation: cure and mitigate strategies**

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Target problem/sub-problems	Responses
<p><b>High rates of residential segregation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unequal buying power across groups</li> <li>• Exclusionary land use policies</li> <li>• Market discrimination by sellers, lenders, brokers</li> <li>• Segregative residential choices by market-rate consumers (including neighborhood avoidance)</li> <li>• Discrimination in public and other subsidized housing</li> <li>• Segregative choices by subsidized consumers</li> </ul>	<p><b>“Cure” strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted economic development, income supports, tax incentives for housing</li> <li>• Fair share housing policies, state/provincial/central overrides of local land use decisions</li> <li>• Regulatory (fair housing enforcement) and educational (sellers, consumers, real estate brokers, lenders)</li> <li>• Affirmative marketing (to minority and/or majority groups)</li> <li>• Housing subsidies, counseling and choice incentives for low-income households</li> <li>• Community development (upgrading), including mixed-income housing development to attract diverse in-movers</li> <li>• Affirmative occupancy policy, scattered-site social (“public”) housing</li> <li>• Community development upgrading of subsidized housing and environs, relocation counseling and assistance, scattered-site housing., equity insurance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>High costs of residential segregation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational inequality across schools or school districts</li> <li>• Spatial and space-related barriers to job access</li> <li>• Spatially concentrated crime, lower quality housing, lack of public and private amenities, inadequate public services</li> <li>• Neighborhood stigmas (space as a signal)</li> </ul>	<p><b>“Mitigate” strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School desegregation by mandatory busing or voluntary choice programs and magnet schools, changes to school governance and attendance boundaries</li> <li>• Fiscal reform to equalize across geographies</li> <li>• Reverse commuting (transportation) to jobs</li> <li>• Regional workforce development alliances or networks (matching), area-based economic development (grow jobs close to seekers)</li> <li>• Community development (upgrading)</li> <li>• Public service reform and expansion (human services, health, policing, etc.)</li> <li>• Equal employment enforcement and education</li> <li>• Workforce development programs (self-presentation, behavioral norms)</li> <li>• Public education, social marketing (“one city”)</li> </ul>

Several tasks are beyond my scope here, such as outlining logic models for each strategy identified in Table 1, assessing the normative and moral dimensions of each, or even reviewing the bottom-line evidence available on the effectiveness of these strategies. What I can do is focus on a few of the most popular recommendations and the ways in which we have justified them. As previewed above, in developing their policy ideas the meeting participants begin with varied conceptions of what constitutes “the problem” of spatial segregation (or set of problems) compelling public action. Much of this variation

has to do with juxtaposing acceptable social pluralism, which may include some spatial *separateness*, from undesirable *exclusion*. No one provided easy answers on how much pluralism is acceptable or how to know where exclusion begins. But we do recognize, in particular places, states that seem acceptable or even desirable (Toronto's mixed-income ethnic neighborhoods under multi-ethnic public service districts) as opposed to undesirable ones (Chicago's large, high-poverty ghettos or Johannesburg's isolated and poor black townships).

### **POPULAR PRESCRIPTIONS**

In navigating the boundaries of pluralism and exclusion, recommendations for area-based "fair share" housing requirements (in which jurisdictions are obliged to accept their fair share of low and moderate-income housing), place-based mixed-income housing development, school integration and expanded people-based (demand-side) housing subsidy options such as rental subsidies were particularly popular at our meeting. The evidence on these is mixed, of course. Fair share requirements are challenging to sustain politically and because they tend to rely on new housing development (the requirements are for including affordable units in every locality), fair share policies go nowhere when markets are depressed. (Any basic logic modeling of this strategy highlights the crucial importance of expansion or growth to make the strategy work.) Such policies are, thus, particularly unsuited to segregated communities in which population is declining or where growth is minimal. On the other hand, expanding city-regions and parts of same are ideally positioned to include strong fair share principles in larger housing and economic development strategies.

For its part, income mixing can happen at the project, neighborhood or some larger level. Rolf Pendall emphasized income mixing as a tool for reducing income segregation or, more modestly, for limiting increase in the same where "smart growth" measures threaten to make price bidding more intense in urban areas. Unless it includes racial/ethnic targeting, though, developments may be income mixed but race segregated. This is the thirty year-old US experience, at any rate, and race-based occupancy and similar targeting mechanisms tend to be controversial to say the least. Since proximity does not guarantee social contact, let alone tolerance or collective action around shared concerns, making formerly segregated households spatially proximate to one another may fail to meet larger social objectives. But certainly, neighbors often share interests around which mutuality and civic organizing can develop and spatial mixing addresses the barriers to access

(employment, quality public services and shopping) that have a distinctly spatial component independent of any social force.

School integration, where it happens independent of residential desegregation, involves shifts in school enrollment, a structuring of parents' choice options and often home-to-school transport (i.e., citywide or metropolitan-wide busing) that struggle with logistical problems and political resistance. But as I reviewed in the chapter on social capital, the case for somehow desegregating schools, particularly in the pre-college years, is extremely strong. Disadvantaged minority-group students tend to gain more diverse social networks, better human capital and the richer psychological resources and cross-cultural skills needed to "make it" in the wide society (Crain and Wells 1994). At the very least, majority-group members gain more diverse networks of the kind needed to curb prejudice and strengthen civic life. Our volume did not present evidence on school-level integration across the globe, but where trends parallel those of the US (where re-segregation of the native-born and high segregation of key immigrant groups are the norms), there is certainly cause for alarm. Fred Boal, citing the so-called "Cantle Report" (Home Office 2001), indicated that growing segregation (including segregation in the schools) has contributed to rioting in a number of English cities in recent years.

Demand-side housing subsidies, which sometimes come with locational incentives or constraints in tow, have become increasingly popular in recent years in contexts as disparate as the US and Chile. Rental housing vouchers and other demand-side tools are thought to embody the efficiencies of the market and counseling and other services can be attached to the subsidies themselves to encourage particular residential choices. As David Varady and a colleague have shown (in their conference paper), even comparatively low cost tenant counseling and placement programs can significantly improve household satisfaction with housing and neighborhood. Larger social impacts, e.g. on school or labor performance, are less clear. But long-run evidence from Chicago's Gautreaux program (Rubinowitz and Rosenbaum 2000), along with the early evidence from the five-city Moving to Opportunity (MTO) program of the US government (Del Conte and Kling 2001; Goering and Feins 2003), is certainly encouraging on those dimensions. MTO's recent 5-year interim evaluation (Orr et al., 2003), which David Varady discusses in his introductory chapter, encourages a more cautious optimism, however, and shows why many housing mobility interventions will probably not constitute as dramatic and

beneficial a “treatment” (in experimental terms) as Gautreaux did. Most “moves to opportunity” will not be from extremely high poverty, racially segregated ghetto neighborhoods (such as those in inner-city Chicago anchored by large, distressed public housing projects) to job-rich, solidly middle-income neighborhoods in which the in-movers are essentially racial pioneers. Most moves will involve more modest transitions, with both the easier adaptation and reduced long-run benefit that implies. Some kids in the mover families will benefit, while others will not. Key effects may lag considerably, taking years, or perhaps a decade or longer, to fully register. Finally, some families will stay in lower-risk, higher-opportunity areas, while others will choose to head back to higher-poverty areas. Still others, when offered the “opportunity” to endure immediate and difficult transitions with uncertain benefits that accrue over time, will refuse. Moving involves trade-offs for most families (of any income level or racial/ethnic background). As David Varady emphasizes, some of those policymakers would like to target will not readily move away from friends and kin, supportive faith institutions, public transportation and more. Unless policy changes the calculus—the actual trade-offs or the ways in which they are perceived—take-up will be limited in some places.

In general, we have much too little evidence on how to help households adapt to the social and economic transitions they face in moving from what are, typically, high poverty and mostly minority neighborhoods to low poverty, mostly white (or racially mixed) ones—or on comparable moves in other countries, where religious or other identity-group differences may be more salient. In addition, demand-side housing mechanisms are limited where supply becomes constrained, e.g. in gentrifying areas where prices spike and supply expansion lags or in submarkets where discrimination effectively limits the actual stock available to particular groups of consumers. Finally, in lieu of counseling, transportation and other supports, there is evidence, at least in the US case, that tenants make quite segregative moves if simply “handed” a voucher. Fear of harassment, a lack of information on wider options available and ignorance of the full cost of segregated living may all contribute to this.

In some instances, otherwise smart policy may generate unintended consequences or pose difficult trade-offs for households and society. Retrofitting, or rounding out, a policy after the fact may help. For example, Pearce-Oroz recommends stronger transportation links to downtown jobs as a way of compensating for the uneven trade off that residents of

Tegucigalpa’s new towns have made (as they started new lives on the urban periphery after the hurricane). My own work on housing mobility and desegregation in the US suggests that transportation likewise helps “brown kids in white suburbs” hang on to social support from the old neighborhood while enjoying advantages of the new (Briggs 1998). And “car vouchers” (a shorthand for car ownership promotion mechanisms such as subsidized loans for purchasing used cars) are probably essential as part of a metropolitan opportunity strategy in the US and other nations where employment decentralization—“job sprawl,” as economists put it—is increasingly the norm. Where access to jobs is concerned, the most immediate resource that many low-income households lack is reliable transportation and transit has thus far proven inadequate for reaching scattered suburban jobs. Public and charitable resources can help households that lack the ability to make such links themselves, and so could employer-sponsored incentives.

A handful of our contributors, such as Espino, Marcuse and Wassmer, are quite pessimistic about the prospects for significantly reducing economic segregation, a perspective that leads to policy ideas that target buying power and the treatment of housing as a good (i.e. in tax policy or restrictions on sale) rather than locational preferences, locational choices or discriminatory behavior in the marketplace. These are some of the boldest proposals, as well as the least tested and perhaps least likely to win broad-based public support. But strategies that define these kinds of interventions certainly expand on the alternatives commonly discussed and might find an ear in transforming societies that such strategies lack in older, more politically inflexible ones.

Finally, whatever the specific problems we wish to tackle and the strategies we develop for tackling these problems, there remains the thorny policy problem of competing objectives. The South African context presents a number of dilemmas that reflect this—dilemmas faced in a fairly fluid, reformist political environment. The quickest route to expanding shelter may also be the most segregative by race and income, as Huchzermeyer has shown in reviewing post-apartheid housing policy. Promoting homeownership by the poor may be at odds with promoting social and economic mobility, especially if spatial mobility or wider spatial choice are important contributors.

Likewise, US housing policies have frequently faced trade-offs between housing affordability and mixing objectives, whether mixing by race or income or both was at issue. Civil rights leaders have rarely been happy when mixed-income housing developments that maintained racial balancing targets kept lines of minority consumers waiting so as to attract the appropriate number of whites into housing units. Here, too, the challenges are both logistical and political. On the logistical front, units go vacant, revenues are lost and marketing can be costly. As for politics, strategies that aim for higher social objectives frequently struggle to defend themselves when the public pressures for greater attention to immediate needs. When implementation involves paradoxical double standards, such as “discriminating” in favor of white applicants in the example above, political support and legitimacy are even harder to come by—and harder to hold.

#### **SUMMING UP**

Through our conference and the follow-on volume to come, we can scarcely claim to have finished the work of developing promising policy in light of such challenges. But we have shown that beyond mere diagnosis of shared or divergent conditions in various places, a more global conversation about segregation and its costs can contribute vital knowledge about how to pin down what we want to change, how to build a more persuasive case for change and how to make change more likely through substantively savvy strategies. As I write this in the wealthy North of the globe, and in a nation particularly eager to export its policy preferences abroad, the need to engage in this conversation more often, and with greater humility and mutual respect, is all too clear.

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