Segregation

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Glossary

Area Effects The net contribution to the life chances of an individual based on living in a particular neighborhood or area
Gated Communities Residential developments that have gates and walls or fences and which may be patrolled by guards or have other surveillance mechanisms. Gated communities are also distinctive in combining these physical features with sociolegal and contractual obligations that govern the type of housing and conduct of residents and visitors
Integration The idea that minority ethnic groups become attached to and woven into the daily life of the larger or dominant social-national group.
Lifeworld Taken from sociology, the world around us that is shared and taken as a given for daily social experience.
Socially Tectonic Relationships Used to describe the close spatial proximity of social groups, in a neighborhood, but whose social interaction is very limited. Initially used by Tim Butler and Gary Robson in their study of gentrification in London to describe the general absence of social contact between gentrifiers and existing local, working-class populations.

Many commentators have acknowledged that social relationships tend to be conducted with people who are in some way like ourselves. This notion of homophily, the desire to be with people like oneself, suggests that those who hold similar values, similar status positions, or ethnic identities will tend to band together. When these tendencies in social behavior are expressed spatially in urban areas they create identifiable patterns of social similarity and clustering in neighborhoods. Where open choice characterizes residential decisions, we tend to find that social areas develop, which may show a prevalence of particular social characteristics. Tim Butler, in the context of middle-class migration and gentrification in London, talks about these tendencies in terms of a desire to be with "people like us," the sense that people do not necessarily express exclusive ideas about identity but value a local community that reflects their own identities and aspirations.

To understand the processes of segregation and social sorting, the geography of both market and public housing (nonmarket) and private housing is critical. It is important to remember that social influences, such as class and identity, are played out in the context of private housing markets so that choice is never fully unconstrained. Households are constrained by the resources that they have, and in capitalist economies, such resources vary dramatically according to patterns of personal and housing wealth and income. In housing markets, price operates as an indicator of the value of locational attributes, which thereby excludes those who cannot afford properties or rents in such areas. This means that a sorting process of social identity comes about through the interplay of these market forces combined with social forces and produce patterns of relative segregation on the basis of household income. The provision of affordable and public housing has often been planned in ways, particularly in regions such as Europe, to try to maintain social diversity at the neighborhood level and thus avoid areas of concentrated poverty and segregation.

Cities have, of course, experienced diverse histories of segregation of varying intensity and extent. In cities such as London, patterns of segregation and diversity occur unevenly, a patchwork of often very expensive private housing alongside remaining public housing estates, though much of public housing is now also privatized. Yet, the city retains a distinctive mix despite ongoing gentrification and investment by the super wealthy. In terms of the wider British experience the city's geography of housing tenure and extreme inequality makes it distinctive.

As some researchers have indicated, major European cities such as London, Amsterdam, and Berlin have generated distinctive subareas in which even apparent local social and tenurial diversity is not matched by social contact. In many such cities, the worlds of poorer renters and affluent owners are often not just different but separate from each other. Knowledge of each other is mutually exclusive, in what are characterized as "socially tectonic" relationships—wherein the affluent float above a poorer and minority ethnic grouping within the same neighborhood space. This raises a further issue, which relates to the importance of scale and how we interpret the prevalence and degree of segregation. At what point can we actually say that segregation exists to one degree or another? Few urban neighborhoods contain entirely one social group or another. While it is possible for there to be more or less parity between groups occupying the same neighborhood, it remains possible for their interactions, as we suggest above, to be largely separate. What we can more reasonably suggest is that the possibility of intergroup contact is reduced where populations are both materially disadvantaged and contained in particular areas. As Richard Sennett has argued, the fact that areas like downtown Manhattan are ethnically diverse does not mean that those groups interact with each other. However, he argues that local social difference influences our understanding of those who are different from ourselves. Research suggests that attention to context, history, and the specificities of neighborhood life in cities is very important.

Our initial discussion raises two key issues. First, the measurement of segregation is fraught with operational difficulties but remains important because such work informs public debates about how cities and housing should be managed to achieve more socially equitable outcomes. In the United States, for example, the Gautreaux court ruling was made in response to the discrimination and ghettoization of black families in US cities in the 1960s. If segregation is ultimately the spatial expression of prejudice and social division then understandings of its scale are clearly important. If we do not see this difference in daily life then empathy is made more difficult, with all of the implications this has for debates about citizenship and diversity in civic life. As shown later, the existence of *de jure*, or legally sanctioned, segregation in countries such as South Africa and the United States has shown that contemporary patterns of ethnic clustering are not only merely due to chance or the operation of the housing system but also reflect historical attempts to minimize contact with their Black populations. The social inequity and injustice that has stemmed from this have become a key feature of contemporary urban and ethnic relations in these countries.

A second key point to make is that where social groups tend to live apart, neighborhoods may operate as social containers for the residents of poorer areas that are separated from the wider social and economic life of the city. This issue has been given significant attention by researchers who have focused on what are known as area effects. This concept refers to the net contribution to a person or a household's life chances that stem from living in an area of ghettoized poverty. If one is on a low income and lives in an area with many other people on low incomes, it has been suggested that such neighborhoods tend to further the reproduction of poverty. These processes operate in various subtle ways. For example, low-income areas tend to be stigmatized and unpopular with some prospective employers who see residents as lazy. This can, in turn, lead to self-fulfilling prophecies that cast low-income groups as feckless or incapable. Other problems may stem from the additional burden on essential services, such as schooling, which may be pressured by high concentrations of poorer households. Equally, service providers in such neighborhoods may not see residents as worthy of help.

The work of William Julius Wilson in the United States has been important in highlighting how Black communities have often lost their middle, and indeed working, classes as work opportunities, rising crime linked to drugs, and violence encouraged these groups to leave the traditional heartlands of the urban Black population. These processes of loss and economic change linked to the rise of neoliberal, market-oriented policies in US cities had important effects on the socialization of young people, notably through the loss of important local role models in "respectable" positions. Analysts such as Wacquant have also argued that the punishment of the poor through increasingly aggressive welfare and policing regimes further corralled those with fewest opportunities, primarily minorities, into urban ghettos that offered little in the way of opportunity while leading to community resentment and further hostility toward policing regimes. This increased ratchet-effect, exerted by housing, welfare, and economic policies, generated worsening social conditions of racialized segregation in many US cities that persist today alongside growing debates about the treatment of Black and minority people by the police in general. What is characteristic of these conditions is the diminished levels of social capital, collective life, and reciprocity of such areas, in the face of often intense violence and mutual distrust.

There is clearly some degree of paternalism in debates about segregation in European countries. Arguments about the loss of role models are seen as risking the portrayal of poor and minority ethnic households as an underclass responsible for its own plight. In the US context, however, Jargowsky has shown that, as broader economic opportunities rose across the United States in the 1990s, work participation rates also rose in poorer, ghettoized Black communities, suggesting that segregated poverty is not disconnected from potential economic opportunities. Most recently the work of Wacquant has argued that the emergence of a "hyperghetto" of extreme concentrated and racialized poverty in the United States is matched by a more complex geography of welfare dependent, racially diverse, and migrant reception areas in European urban areas.

Peach has usefully argued that segregation is distinct from ghettoization. For example, the relative segregation of groups such as the Irish, Poles, and others have all tended to change over time as assimilation has occurred and economic well-being has improved, albeit with highly varied trajectories. Spatial clustering in cities promotes what Peach describes as supportive "ethnic villages" or sanctuaries, which serve protective and supportive roles for residents. In other words, patterns of segregation may change over time, as the relationships between ethnic groups also change. However, Peach also sees that segregation can have negative effects, where it may represent an attempt by dominant groups to keep underprivileged ethnic populations spatially and socially excluded.

Global Views on Variations and Explanations of Segregation

Much of the literature on segregation has focused on North American cities. Notable contributors such as Massey and Denton have described the growth of segregation and its underlying causes. The problem has tended to be seen as emerging most strongly following the late 1960s, though ghettoization and concentrated poverty were much in evidence, particularly from the 1930s. Even then we might look further back to earlier phases of urbanization where such sociospatial divisions were in evidence and a key feature of the work of the Chicago School of urban sociology. By 1970, the majority of the US population lived in the suburbs of its cities, a result, in part, of technological advances, cheap fuel, and "white flight" from the urban cores where unrest and rioting arising from concentrated poverty and an absence of civil rights became pronounced. As a result, patterns of ethnic differentiation became stark in many US cities such as Detroit, which moved from being a city with around 16% Black and foreign born in 1950 to 79.7% in 2010, with the overall population dropping from 1.8 million to around 670,000 in 2017. The cost of this segregation and poverty concentration was the perpetuation of social and racial disadvantage, often locked out of

suburbanizing work opportunities in what some saw as a spatial mismatch between transport, poor Black households, and the opportunities in new suburban areas.

Another key ingredient in the kind of segregation seen in the US was its mandating by law since the late 19th Century. To a significant extent the features of social life in American cities have continued this legacy and have generally been unable to overcome the abolition and integrationist concerns that led to desegregation in schooling and social life from the 1950s onward, which culminated in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. To some extent this enshrining of ethnic separation in law stemmed from that used in apartheid South Africa where similar concerns about racial mixing and the potential for racial dilution through marriage were prohibited by law. In Nazi Germany, prohibitions against marriage between Jews and German "Aryans" from the 1930s led to the ultimate spatial separation and collective isolation of the ghettos of Warsaw, among others in Poland. The term ghetto, while widely used today to refer to places of concentrated poverty, originally stemmed from the 14th-century concentration and, later, containment of Jews in the foundry area of Venice (ghetto being a word derived from the Italian *ghetta*, which was used to refer to the cooling waste material from iron production). While the word ghetto is often associated with areas of extensive Black poverty, the terms barrio and slums are used to refer to areas of Hispanic and White poverty today.

Religious segregation continues to be a feature of many cities today. In its most extreme form, in cities such as Belfast, its Catholic and Protestant communities continue to be highly segregated. Middle-class movement out of the city has historically served to further isolate and polarize those left behind in the inner city. Cities such as Glasgow, with its history of Irish migration, have retained a less sharply divided set of sectarian boundaries, yet continue to display ritualized religious and ethnic difference through social life and sport.

In the European context, urban life has been characterized by divergent levels of migration and minority ethnic concentration and generally less extensive sociospatial segregation than is found in US cities, yet concern with the specific problems of such concentration goes back at least to the 1950s, as new waves of migration from the Commonwealth to the United Kingdom followed the wake of the postwar boom. The focus then switched to the integration, opportunities, and relative concentration of new migrants in European cities who have often fled wars and human rights abuses in countries such as the former Yugoslavia, Iraq, and, more recently, Syria and who have also been attracted by the economic opportunities opened up by European integration for countries in the former Soviet and Eastern European states. In recent years, political discourse has deemed segregation/minority clustering as a negative outcome of integration policies implemented in different European countries. In particular, multiculturalist policies and politics of recognition have been criticized for encouraging cultural and spatial separateness.

All this raises further issues when segregation is considered in relation to recent housing and urban policies. For example, the desire to build new housing developments with some degree of social mix has become a prominent concern in the United Kingdom and European countries. The use of planning arrangements to encourage stronger neighborhood levels of social diversity also says something about deeper assumptions that relate to the desirability of social diversity as a means of combating segregation and reducing the costs of public service provision in deprived areas. Such assumptions continue to assert a value to social diversity though evidence that greater mix might facilitate stronger futures for poorer residents has remained contentious.

In recent years, the emerging picture of segregation has not been positive. Writers such as Wacquant and Kaufman have discussed a new urban poverty in terms of a growing spatial separation based on race in cities such as Chicago. This kind of hypersegregation has been produced as a result of broader shifts in the economies of cities, which have seen an erosion of middle-tier occupations with a shift to advanced service sector employment in the United States and professionalization in Europe, where neoliberal welfare reform has also become more advanced. These processes have also become further entrenched in countries such as Brazil, among other emerging economies in the Global South, where a combination of neoliberal market reforms imposed by institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and social disintegration from economic problems have conspired to produce not only social polarization between rich and poor but also the "fortification" of gated affluent areas marked off as clear territories from the poorer favelas. Beyond this, is the impact that broader global social processes, namely the massive increase in global wealth inequality and the rise of superrich, are having in major cities. In cities such as London, transnational real estate investments are transforming elite neighborhoods into enclaves of the superrich with profound impacts on local populations and housing markets.

Measuring Segregation—Debates and Issues

Significant progress has been made in recent years in the analysis of segregation, offering new perspectives beyond the traditional index measures. Traditional measures of segregation, as outlined in Massey and Denton's classic study in 1988, are linked conceptually to five different dimensions—unevenness, exposure, centralization, clustering, and concentration (defined in more detail below). In the past, the two most commonly used indices were the index of segregation or the index of dissimilarity (ID) and the index of exposure (P^*). The former measures the distribution of minority and majority groups across subareas of a city (e.g., if all of the subareas of a city were found to be 90% White and 10% Black, the Black population would be considered to be evenly distributed). It is interpreted as the percentage of a minority population that would have to move to create an even distribution. A figure of zero would denote no pattern of segregation since the distribution is equal between the two groups being compared. A figure of 1 would indicate total segregation, where the residential distribution between the two populations being compared

is totally uneven. In between these two values, an ID less than 0.4 is considered low, 0.4–0.59 as moderately high, and 0.6–0.69 as high and above 0.7 is considered very high:

$$\mathrm{ID} = \frac{1}{2}\sum_{i=0}^{n}\left|\frac{a_1}{A} - \frac{b_1}{B}\right|$$

where n = the total number of subareas in the city, a_i = the population of majority group A in the subarea, A = the total population of majority group A in the city, $b_{i=}$ the population of minority group B in the subarea, B = the total population of minority group B in the city.

Since these measures are only capable of including two groups at a time, they may be more useful for cities where there are only two dominant ethnic groups, though clearly most cities today are, in reality, complex and multiethnic spaces in which the majority/minority dichotomy is largely outdated. There is also the problem of scale since the index is aspatial and measures only the degree of segregation, but not its spatial patterns meaning we are unable to tell how segregated or evenly distributed the minority group is within an area. Moreover, often the output geographies used are defined by the census or other official data, making them unrepresentative of social areas within cities and difficult to compare over time and across different places.

On the other hand, indices of exposure attempt to measure the "experience of segregation" by the degree of potential contact between minority and majority group members within the area of the city where they live. The most commonly used measure is P^*, an interaction index. This measures the potential exposure of the minority group to the majority group. P^* is also used to ascertain the group "from whom and to whom" the exposure is directed; it takes into consideration the relative size of the groups being compared, as there will be greater probability that a member of a smaller group will come into contact with a member of the larger group:

$$P^* = \sum_{i=0}^{n}\left(\frac{x_1}{X}\right)\left(\frac{y_1}{t_1}\right)$$

where X = the total number of minority group X in the city, x_1 = the total number of minority group X in a given subarea, y_1 = the total number of majority group Y in a given subarea, and t_1 = the total population in a given subarea.

Measures of clustering capture the relative proximity of spatial units occupied by minority groups to one another. While the other measures consider the distribution of minority areas relative to a set point (such as the center of the city) or the distribution of minority and majority group members (the linked measures of exposure and evenness), this measure looks at the distribution of minority areas in relation to each other. If we compare two cities that have exactly the same scores when the other measures are computed, but in the first city, the minority areas are scattered throughout the urban area, and in the second, they are adjoining, it would be suggested that the latter is more segregated. Measures of concentration measure the actual amount of physical space occupied by a minority group, relative to the total land area of the city. This measure (normally termed the Delta index) is based on the assumption that through processes of residential discrimination, minority groups become marginalized and restricted into relatively few neighborhoods that overall occupy a small proportion of the city. There are clear weaknesses with the assumption that high density denotes either social marginalization or discrimination. For example, minority ethnic groups of Asian origin have displayed preferences to live in higher densities in extended family households. Furthermore, lower-income populations in several modern British cities have been "deconcentrated" from the inner city to peripheral housing estates with more space without greater social mix or amenity.

These "global" measures view minority residence as static and overlook intraurban differences, population change within localities and interaction between areas. To overcome these lacunae, new approaches, using spatial interaction data and attribute data, have attempted to weight data by the degree of residential mobility across areal units. However, residence is only one aspect of an individual's sociospatial experience. The well-ordered urban mosaic based on fixed spatial units does not represent the use of space, interactions in other domains, or mobility. New conceptual and analytical approaches have sought to capture segregation or social interaction experiences across different activity domains in the city by tracing individuals' spatial trajectories and activity patterns over time. Kwan contends that temporally integrated human geographies are essential for understanding the degree and impacts of ethnic segregation. In this approach, time and human mobility are key for measuring segregation experiences, given that such experiences are affected by the amount of time spent outside the residential neighborhood. In methodological terms, sociotemporal experiences and activity across domains can be measured using space-time data on activity patterns collected with GPS or mobile phone devices combined with social network, register, and survey data. The turn to "big data" and the potentials it offers for classifying individuals in geodemographic terms is also important for future analysis. Qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews, walk-along interviews, or time-space diaries, to name a few, are also essential for understanding use of space, social interaction, and dynamic forms of segregation.

Mobile and "Static" Forms of Segregation

Much of what we have discussed so far relates to what might be seen as static representations of social life, contained within residential neighborhoods, often as though such areas operated as the fundamental daily lifeworld. As we have seen from the area-effects debate, these spaces are often more important for low-income groups, yet movement beyond those boundaries may

be common. In this respect, theories of segregation have, while including exposure as a measure, often tended to downplay the spatial movement and social integration of social groups in daily life. With the rise of gated communities and other "master-planned" communities, where price and lifestyle operate in excluding ways, we see a growth in nodal geographies in which work, play, socialization, education, and consumption appear as more or less restricted and privatized functions at key points in the geography of urban spaces. This kind of segregation can be expressed as a time–space trajectory, wherein patterns of residential sociability, particularly those of the affluent, are extended across daily patterns of spatial movement. The perception of risky urban spaces and engagement with dangerous social "others" has led to segmented spatial trajectories in which groups associated primarily with people like themselves as a defense against such fears. As writers such as Graham and Marvin have noted, the splintering of urban areas into "premium network spaces" (such as "pay to use" highways) has forced a new subtle set of excluding moments in urban life. This kind of urbanism means that ability to pay, combined with the driver of social identity, has produced forms of segregation which operate across neighborhood boundaries and through fractured corridors of social contact and disconnection.

If segregation is a problem because it expresses deeper social fears and prejudices, while consigning lower-income and excluded social groups to poorer residential conditions, then its dynamic forms serve only to broaden our understanding of these social problems. Rising real incomes and mobile technologies mean that, for affluent groups, privacy and personal space is produced as an exclusive space from which other poorer or socially different groups may be excluded.

See Also: Ecological Fallacy; Gentrification; Segregation Indices; Suburbanization.

Further Reading

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http://www.censusscope.org/segregation.html Racial Segregation Statistics for US Cities and Metropolitan Areas.