New Build 'Gentrification' and London's Riverside Renaissance

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New-build 'gentrification' and London's riverside renaissance

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Received 3 February 2004; in revised form 5 August 2004

Abstract. In a recent conference paper Lambert and Boddy (2002) questioned whether new-build residential developments in UK city centres were examples of gentrification. They concluded that this stretched the term too far and coined 'residentialisation' as an alternative term. In contrast, we argue in this paper that new-build residential developments in city centres are examples of gentrification. We argue that new-build gentrification is part and parcel of the maturation and mutation of the gentrification process during the post-recession era. We outline the conceptual cases for and against new-build 'gentrification', then, using the case of London's riverside renaissance, we find in favour of the case for.

> "In the last decade the designer apartment blocks built by corporate developers for elite consumption have become as characteristic of gentrified landscapes as streetscapes of lovingly restored Victorian terraces. As gentrification continues to progress and exhibit new forms and patterns, it seems unnecessary to confine the concept to residential rehabilitation."
>
> Shaw (2002, page 44)

1 Introduction

Recent gentrification research has begun to highlight the challenges that current waves of gentrification pose towards its conceptualisation (Lees, 2003a; Slater, 2004). In the last decade gentrification has matured and its processes are operating in a new economic, cultural, social, and political environment. Although the gentrification literature has long been involved in intense debate over the explanatory power of various perspectives, the processes that came together to cause traditional gentrification seem to have changed. It is perhaps time now to move away somewhat from explanatory debates and to consider how the process of gentrification has changed over time and how we might want to define gentrification in the 21st century.

Although the conceptualisation of gentrification has never been completely consensual (Smith, 1996), a distinctive landscape of urban renovation and renaissance has long been associated with it. That landscape and its associated social processes are evident in British sociologist Glass's (1964, page xviii) coinage of the term 'gentrification' and it has long offered some form of unity in the field:

> "One by one, many of the working class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle classes—upper and lower. Shabby, modest mews and cottages—two rooms up and two down—have been taken over, when their leases have expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences. Larger Victorian houses, downgraded in an earlier or recent period—which were used as lodging houses or were otherwise in multiple occupation—have been upgraded once again ... . Once this process of 'gentrification' starts in a district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working class occupiers are displaced and the social character of the district is changed."

Early definitions of gentrification by authors such as Smith (1982, page 139) were closely aligned to Glass's (1964) description:

"By gentrification I mean the process by which working class residential neighbourhoods are rehabilitated by middle class homebuyers, landlords and professional developers. I make the theoretical distinction between gentrification and redevelopment. Redevelopment involves not rehabilitation of old structures but the construction of new buildings on previously developed land."

Today, however, gentrifiers' residences are "as likely to be smart new townhouses as renovated workers cottages" (Shaw, 2002, page 42). As such, Smith (1996, page 39) now argues that a distinction can no longer be made; indeed he argues to the contrary that gentrification has departed from Glass's description and that it now refers to a much broader phenomenon:

"How, in the large context of changing social geographies, are we to distinguish adequately between the rehabilitation of nineteenth-century housing, the construction of new condominium towers, the opening of festival markets to attract local and not so local tourists, the proliferation of wine bars—and boutiques for everything—and the construction of modern and postmodern office buildings employing thousands of professionals, all looking for a place to live? ... Gentrification is no longer about a narrow and quixotic oddity in the housing market but has become the leading residential edge of a much larger endeavour: the class remake of the central urban landscape."

New-build residential developments, nevertheless, stand in stark contrast to the renovated Victorian and Georgian landscapes of classic gentrification texts [such as those of Glass (1964), and Smith (1982)]. This has led scholars such as Lambert and Boddy to question whether new-build city-centre residential landscapes can in fact be characterised as gentrification at all:

"we would question whether the sort of new housing development and conversion described in Bristol and other second tier cities, or indeed the development of London's Docklands can, in fact, still be characterised as 'gentrification'—postrecession or otherwise. There are parallels: new geographies of neighbourhood change, new middle class fractions colonising new areas of central urban space, and attachment to a distinctive lifestyle and urban aesthetic. But 'gentrification', as originally coined, referred primarily to a rather different type of 'new middle class', buying up older, often 'historic' individual housing units and renovating and restoring them for their own use—and in the process driving up property values and driving out former, typically lower income working class residents. Discourses of gentrification and the gentrification literature itself do represent a useful starting point for the analysis of the sort of phenomenon discussed above. We would conclude, however, that to describe these processes as gentrification is stretching the term and what it set out to describe too far" (Lambert and Boddy, 2002, page 20).

In this paper we also ask whether new-build residential developments in the city centre (we focus on metropolitan London) can be conceptualised as gentrification. In so doing we draw on Lambert and Boddy's (2002) stimulating set of arguments, but whereas they argue that such developments (they focus on nonmetropolitan Bristol) are better termed as 'residentialisation' (they also use the term 'reurbanisation'), we argue that they are examples of third-wave 'gentrification'. We begin by outlining new-build 'gentrification' as one of the mutations of the gentrification process during the post-recession or third-wave era. Then we outline the case for and the case against new-build 'gentrification'. We then use the case of London's recent riverside renaissance to argue that despite the different character of new-build developments there are striking parallels between those developments and previous waves

of gentrification, such that new-build developments can, and should, be identified as landscapes or as forms of gentrification. We conclude with the argument that defining new-build developments, such as those being constructed along London's riverfront, as gentrification is politically important if we seek to question the increasing middle-class recolonisation of the central city.

2 Contemporary gentrification

Hackworth and Smith (2001) date the emergence of third-wave or postrecession gentrification from approximately 1993 – 94. This postrecession resurgence of gentrification "poses important questions about the historical continuity of current gentrification processes with previous generations of neighbourhood change" (Lees, 2003a, page 2490; see also Hackworth, 2001; Hackworth and Smith, 2001; Wyly and Hammel, 1999). Contemporary gentrification is varied and defies more singular definitions because gentrification now occurs in a variety of sites and takes a myriad of forms.

In terms of location, gentrification has gone global (see Atkinson and Bridge, 2005). It can be found in different sites all over the world. It is evident not just in English-speaking countries but, as Smith (2002, page 439) lists, in Eastern Europe, South America, the Caribbean, South Africa, Asia, and even holiday islands such as Tenerife. Researchers are beginning to study these global gentrifications—see, for example, Uzun (2003) on Turkey and Visser (2002) on South African cities. Gentrification also appears to have moved outside of the central city, for the term 'gentrification' is now being used to describe changes in the suburbs of some cities (see Badcock, 2001; Hackworth and Smith, 2001; Robson and Butler, 2001; Smith and DeFilippis, 1999) and even rural areas [see Phillips (1993; 2002) and Smith and Phillips (2001) on 'greentrified rurality'].[1] Phillips (2004) has been most strident in his criticism of gentrification researchers for their narrow focus on the *urban* geographies of gentrification and their ignorance of other traces of the geography of gentrification.

Smith (2002) is surely right when he argues that postrecession gentrification is now a global urban strategy tied to a new revanchist urbanism. We could go a step further and argue that a 'gentrification blueprint' is being mass-produced, mass-marketed, and mass-consumed around the world. As the urban – rural dichotomy has broken down (see Amin and Thrift, 2002),[2] as a significant part of the world has become increasingly urbanised and desirous of an urban(e) lifestyle, the result seems to be that even some Third World cities and First World suburban and rural areas are experiencing gentrification. Smith (2002, pages 390 – 392) is right to argue that studies of gentrification have failed to "problematize the locations of gentrification adequately" and that in so doing we need to widen the "spatial lens" of gentrification studies (see also Phillips, 2004).

In direct relation to this, the form or type that gentrification has traditionally taken has also mutated and this relates to the actors involved. As Lees (2003a, page 2490) argues, although third-wave gentrification can still be of the *traditional* or *classic* form—that is, an individual gentrifier renovating disinvested or derelict old housing through sweat equity or by hiring builders and interior designers, leading to the embourgeoisement (Ley, 1996) of a neighbourhood and the displacement of less wealthy residents [for example, Glass's (1964) definition]—increasingly it is taking other forms too. For example, it can be *state led*, where national and local governmental

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[1] Antiurbanism was a recurrent theme in the writing of Glass; there are parallels with notions of rustification: as we see in section 4.2.3, advertisements for new-build developments along the Thames play off nature and rustification.
[2] Interestingly it was Thrift (1987) who was perhaps the first to discuss rural gentrification.

policy actively seeks to promote and support gentrification (see Atkinson, 2002; Hackworth and Smith, 2001; Lees, 2000; 2003a; Slater, 2004; Smith, 2002; Wyly and Hammel, 1999) often in tandem with *developers* (see Hackworth, 2002; Lambert and Boddy, 2002). In Europe gentrification has been linked to public policy interventions in cities in the United Kingdom (Atkinson, 2004), the Netherlands (Kleinhans, 2003), Belgium (Van Criekengen and Decroly, 2003), and Spain (Vicario and Monje, 2003). Third-wave gentrification is no longer always residential: it can also be *commercial* (see Carroll and Connell, 2000; Curran, 2004; Kloosterman and Van Der Leun, 1999) or both—for example, *live-work* units (Lees, 2003b).[3] Gentrification is no longer always restricted to disinvested neighbourhoods, as some neighbourhoods that have already experienced earlier rounds of gentrification and reinvestment have been subject to *regentrification* in the form of *supergentrification* (see Lees, 2000; 2003a). And, as is the subject of this paper, there can also be *new-build* gentrification (see Badcock, 2001; Cameron, 2003; Hackworth, 2001; 2002; Lambert and Boddy, 2002; Morrison and McMurray, 1999; Shaw, 2002). Hackworth (2001; 2002), for example, identifies the presence of new-build, corporate developments in increasingly marginal gentrification locations as one of the major features of postrecession gentrification. Rose (see Germain and Rose, 2000; Rose, 2002) discusses the construction of new-build 'infill' housing in already-gentrified areas of Montreal. And most disturbing: Cameron (2003) discusses new-build developments in inner-city Newcastle (United Kingdom) which have been deliberately built over razed public housing and which therefore demonstrate an aggressive and strategic attempt by Newcastle City Council to attract the middle classes back into specific locations in the city centre.

The underlying processes of gentrification and the material changes they produce seem to have been stretched over time and space. Contemporary gentrification has become increasingly complex because different actors and locations have become involved and the landscapes produced have changed. By encompassing all these mutations under the term 'gentrification' we realise that we run the considerable risk of undermining "the usefulness, and distinction, of the concept for understanding urban change" (Smith, 2002, pages 390–392). It is, however, a risk that we must take.

3 The case for and against new-build development as 'gentrification'

If we look closely at the gentrification literature of the early 1990s onwards we can see that authors have in fact been thinking about this issue for some time now. Warde (1991, page 224), for example, argued that there is a world of difference between those who buy an old house and renovate it and developer-produced condominium developments: "The key difference between large-scale, directed, gentrification of Fairview Slopes, Vancouver, and the restoration of Victorian houses in Stoke Newington, in East London, is not the aesthetic features of the end product, but the social processes that generate the built environment." In contrast Deutsche (1996, page xiv) defined gentrification as the "residential component of urban redevelopment" and Ley (1996, page 34) argued for a broader definition of gentrification that included "renovation and redevelopment on both residential and non-residential sites." Lambert and Boddy (2002) acknowledge some important similarities between new-build residential development along Bristol's waterfront and gentrification, but, for them, the differences are too great. Here we outline the cases for and against considering new-build residential

[3] Many of these so-called 'new' forms of gentrification are not in fact new at all: for example, Zukin (1982) discussed live-work units some time ago (see Podmore, 1998). What is new, however, is the fact that these forms have become mainstream within national urban policies and in particular in prescriptions for urban renaissance (see, for example, DETR, 1999; 2000).

developments in city centres as forms of gentrification. The cases we build here are conceptually based rather than empirically based; later in the paper we draw on some initial empirical work on London's riverside renaissance to back our case 'for'.

3.1 The case 'against'

New-build gentrification contrasts with previous rounds of gentrification because different groups of people are involved, different types of landscapes are being produced, and different sociospatial dynamics are operating. New-build developments do not involve the restoration of old housing stock by a new middle-class resident rich in social and cultural but lacking in economic capital (see Bridge, 2001; Caulfield, 1994; Ley, 1996). Rather, new-build gentrification is made up of large, newly constructed apartment complexes and luxury residential estates where the gentrification has been conducted by a developer. The contrast between traditional and new-build landscapes demonstrates how the capital deployment processes of gentrification have changed, because the new-build landscape has significantly different associations with cultural and economic capital. New-build gentrification involves the large-scale deployment of economic capital by developers who have the capacity and capability to do so, and then the deployment of economic capital by consumers buying into this highly commodified form of urban lifestyle (Bridge, 2002) in which heritage and historic referents are a significant part of the appeal. The consumers are buying into a different version of urban living (Lambert and Boddy, 2002, page 21).

New-build developments are often built on brownfield sites or on vacant and/or abandoned land; as such they do not displace a preexisting residential population in the same way as classical gentrification has done [see Glass (1964)]. As Lambert and Boddy (2002, page 18) state: "there is no direct displacement of other social groups and lower income households as occurred with pre-recession gentrification." The processes of social change are different and a process of replacement occurs instead (compare Hamnett, 2003a). With respect to new-build developments, "Gentrification in the sense of a process of social change based on 'invasion and succession' is, therefore, a misnomer" (Lambert and Boddy, 2002, page 18).

3.2 The case 'for'

There is more evidence from the gentrification literature in support of 'the case for'. New-build 'gentrification' is just that because it involves middle-class resettlement of the central city, the production of a gentrified landscape, and lower income displacement in the adjacent residential communities. The expensive apartments and houses in new-build developments in central cities are marketed to the high-earning middle classes who have the economic capital to purchase or rent these residences and the cultural and social capital that leads them to desire the residences in the first place. Capital is reinvested in and through these new-build developments, first, by the developer, and, second, by the consumer. In order to market these developments successfully to the urbane new middle classes [to the 'urban seeking' as opposed to 'urban fleeing' group (Butler, 1997)], developers have reproduced the gentrification aesthetic or as Zukin (1991, page 193) argues: they have exploited "the taste for old buildings and downtown diversity that gentrifiers 'pioneered'" (see also Podmore, 1998). This reproduction of, and play on or off, the renovated Victorian aesthetic has been facilitated by the vagaries (the play and pastiche) of postmodern architecture. Some time ago now Mills (1988) analysed the newly built postmodern landscape of Fairview Slopes in Vancouver. In that case developers, architects, and marketing agents created a new landscape of gentrification—one that demonstrated processes of capital reinvestment, social upgrading, and middle-class colonisation.

We argue that new-build gentrification is bound to cause displacement, but that this displacement will not be direct because most new-build developments are built on brownfield sites—although, as Cameron (2003) demonstrates with respect to Newcastle, some city councils have razed low-income neighbourhoods in order to construct new-build middle-class neighbourhoods. Rather, the displacement is likely to be 'indirect', a form of 'exclusionary displacement' [see Marcuse's (1986) fourfold typology of displacement] where lower income groups are unable to access property because of the gentrification of the neighbourhood. As Lambert and Boddy (2002, page 18) themselves state, price shadowing could occur:

> "There may however be second order effects. Neighbouring areas of existing housing may become more attractive as the image, cultural value and desirability of the general location rises. Rising rents and prices may therefore trigger secondary processes of displacement."

In tandem 'sociocultural displacement' may also occur as gentrifiers take control of community apparatus (see Robson and Butler, 2001). Unlike the direct displacement tied to traditional processes of gentrification (see Smith, 1996), indirect displacement can avoid legislation (planning or other legislation, such as antiwinkling laws) that seeks to protect poor inner-city residents from displacement.

We want to conclude this section by arguing that the defining characteristics of contemporary gentrification should include in the widest sense: (1) reinvestment of capital; (2) social upgrading of locale by incoming high-income groups; (3) landscape change; and (4) direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups. In the following section we demonstrate that new-build developments along the Thames feature these defining characteristics of gentrification. But before coming to that issue we let Shaw (2002, page 45) sum up our case:

> "Why is it important that the social restructuring of the inner city is considered as a coherent, all-encompassing process? Because whether it is a middle class household or a development corporation, and whether a sensitive restoration job or a designer high-rise, it has the same effect on those displaced. And the same impact on social and cultural diversity in the inner city."

4 New-build 'gentrification' on London's riverside [4]

London's riverside is witnessing a dramatic transformation. Swathes of disused brownfield sites along the river have been, or are in the process of being, redeveloped under an influential urban-policy umbrella created by the Greater London Authority (GLA, 2002; 2004) in conjunction with national government urban policy guidelines (DETR, 1999; 2000). Stretching west from the eastern 'Thames Gateway' to Brentford, London's riverside (see figure 1) is set to become the focus of urban living in the capital as vacated industrial and commercial sites and derelict docks are redeveloped. Although riverside living is not a new phenomenon for some Londoners, and, indeed, it has become the 'norm' for those who live and work in Docklands, riverside living will be a new mode of living in many areas of London along the Thames in the 21st century. As a result, previously unreachable and unliveable areas of the city are being transformed into new urban living spaces for both leisure and residence. Lambert and Boddy (2002, page 17) argue that such new-build middle-class owner-occupied residences in the inner city are in some sense a 'new product'; we concur with this assessment.

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[4] The empirical work on which this paper is based is still underway, the quantitative statistical analysis and questionnaire phases have been completed, the in-depth interviews have yet to be completed.

Figure 1. Map of London's riverside (drawn by Roma Beaumont).

The redevelopment both of Docklands in the 1980s and of its new-build residential landscape shares some similarities with the new-build riverside renaissance happening in other locations along the Thames today but there are significant differences too. The Docklands redevelopment concerned a relocation of business (the City) through (what eventually became) [5] a publicly subsidised programme of large-scale redevelopment and in tandem it underwent tremendous residential change in the classic Thatcher model of erasing the working-class history and geography of the city in order to make everyone middle class (see Bentley, 1997; Brownill, 1990; Smith, 1989). In contrast, contemporary new-build developments along the Thames are not connected to the relocation of the City; they are smaller in scale, privately funded, tend to be located in the traditional retail and commercial core of the city, and are fundamentally tied to New Labour attempts both to attract the middle classes back to the central city and, in so doing, to instigate social mixing in an attempt to defeat social exclusion and urban malaise (see Imrie and Raco, 2003). We look now at the rhetoric and reality of those attempts because in addition to making the case for new-build 'gentrification' we also want to demonstrate that, despite government (at all levels) rhetoric that tries to sell prescriptions for urban renaissance as conducive to social mixing, the result is gentrification and social polarisation.

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[5] See Brownill (1998) who divides the time of the London Docklands Development Corporation into three different periods in terms of the ways in which they interacted with local people and their communities. Such detailed readings are necessary for any research into the impact of urban regeneration on local communities because local politics and policies on the ground shift within relatively short time periods.

4.1 Rhetoric

Discourse analysis of national (DETR, 1999; 2000) and metropolitan (GLA, 2002; 2004) urban-policy documents reveals clear similarities in the way that policymakers at different levels are identifying urban problems and promoting urban cures. At the national level, the Urban Task Force (UTF) report (DETR, 1999) and the government response to it, the Urban White Paper (UWP) (DETR, 2000), have created a programme of urban regeneration that could slot neatly into any gentrification textbook (Lees, 2003b). The British government is promoting and selling its vision of urban renaissance through the strategic use of certain keywords—keywords that serve to neutralise what is essentially a programme of state-led gentrification:

> "both the UTF and UWP argue that urban policy in England must embrace 'sustainability', 'diversity' and 'community' in the face of forces that are destroying the physical environment, causing social exclusion, fracturing communities and disrupting our sense of place. These key words are pivotal in both documents" (Lees, 2003b, page 75).

These same keywords are also evident in the GLA's prospective urban-policy documents—the Draft London Plan (GLA, 2002) and the London Plan (GLA, 2004). Like the UTF report, the Draft London Plan was heavily influenced by Richard Rogers;[6] as such it is much easier to uncover the hidden face of gentrification in the Draft London Plan than in the London Plan. As in the corresponding case of the UTF Report and the UWP (see Lees, 2003b), the Draft London Plan and the London Plan are stylistically very different. The Draft London Plan is more descriptive than the necessarily staccato policy statements of the London Plan. Moreover, the import of Mayor Ken Livingstone is quite noticeable in the London Plan, in which he appears to have mediated many of the 'middle class" excesses of the Draft London Plan by seeking to make the policy prescriptions more inclusive of all sectors of society.

The rhetoric and visions found in the Draft London Plan (GLA, 2002) are strikingly similar to those found in the UTF Report and the UWP (DETR, 1999; 2000). In the influential foreword section to the Draft London Plan, Richard Rogers and Nicky Gavron [7] write:

> "Urban renaissance is about making the city a place where people want to live, rather than a place from which they want to escape. A successful and *sustainable* city needs to be both beautiful and environmentally responsible, both compact and polycentric, with distinctive *communities* and neighbourhoods. But above all, it must be a fair city, respecting and celebrating the *diversity* of its people. ... London cannot any longer grow as it has done in the past, ignoring growth's negative impact on social cohesion, equality and the environment. ... The draft London Plan sets out a vision of a renewed London: open, tolerant, affluent, socially and environmentally responsible, a beautiful city of which Londoners and Britain can be proud" (GLA, 2002, page xi).

The Draft London Plan (GLA, 2002) aims to create a 'Blue Ribbon Network' in which the regenerated riverside will provide a focal space for London's diverse and disparate social groups to mix. By increasing social mixing between London's various communities, the GLA hopes to increase levels of social cohesion. In sum, the role of London's riverside is as a place of confluence, a place where different social groups can interact harmoniously. The riverside has been given a new role—to facilitate the urban

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[6] Sir Richard Rogers is chief advisor to the Mayor of London on architecture and urbanism. He is also 'Lord Rogers of Riverside', chair of the Urban Task Force.
[7] Nicky Gavron is Deputy Mayor of London, she was the Mayor's Cabinet Advisor on Strategic Planning.

policy goals of both urban regeneration and social cohesion:

"The real heart of London is the river. Look at any satellite image and it is the Thames that dominates ... . It is this huge and beautiful waterway which holds the key to revitalizing the metropolis. It must once again become a cohesive element linking communities"—Richard Rogers (GLA, 2002, page iii).

These same goals are evident in the London Plan (GLA, 2004), although this subsequent document steers clear of highlighting an explicit urban-renaissance agenda. The London Plan is the first statutory, strategic plan prepared for London for two decades. In his foreword, Mayor Ken Livingstone clearly promotes urban sustainability as the solution to London's continued growth. His foreword also demonstrates how closely the London Plan dovetails with national urban-policy prescriptions—from quality of life to high-quality design:

"London [thus] faces a radical challenge, which requires a radical policy response. This should ensure that its rapid expansion of population and jobs within a constrained area maintains and enhances its economic and business efficiency, is accompanied by strong improvements in the quality of life and environment and greater social and economic inclusion. All policies must be inter-related, incorporating sustainable economic and social development, environmental protection and enhancement, high quality design and the development of London's culture.
My vision, which guides all my strategies, is to develop London as an exemplary, sustainable world city, based on three interwoven themes:
• strong, diverse long term economic growth
• social inclusivity to give all Londoners the opportunity to share in London's future success
• fundamental improvements in London's environment and use of resources" (GLA, 2004, page xii).

There are sections of the document that demonstrate a more implicit urban renaissance agenda, one which is tied to the government's promotion of social mixing and more-balanced communities:

"New housing development, including additional provision arising from conversions, should ... help to promote mixed and balanced communities by taking account of changes in household characteristics and lifestyles ... . Boroughs should also promote new concepts of urban living ... " (GLA, 2004, page 59).

With the London Plan, the GLA has continued to develop specific policies for London's riverside and urban waterways. Indeed an entire section (section 4C) of the document is given over to the 'Blue Ribbon Network'. There are two main aims with respect to enhancing this network:

"To promote social inclusion and tackle deprivation and discrimination, policies should ensure that the Blue Ribbon Network is accessible for everyone as part of London's public realm and that its cultural and environmental assets are used to stimulate appropriate development in areas of regeneration and need" (GLA, 2004, page 194);

and

"The Blue Ribbon Network should not continue to be developed as a private resource or backdrop, which only privileged people can afford to be near or enjoy" (GLA, 2004, page 207).

In the sections below we will demonstrate that the gentrification of London's riverside has, in direct contrast to the above statements, already increased social exclusion and the numbers of privileged people living along the river.

4.2 Reality

This urban-policy vision is already beginning to translate into urban reality for London's residents as the GLA and borough councils direct urban development along the Thames. Developers have moved in and areas of the riverside have been opened up to the public, in many instances for the first time in years:

"thanks to the prolonged property boom of the past five years, miles of paths have opened up on both sides of the river, mostly courtesy of developers forced by local councils and the GLA to provide or help fund public riverfront access, in return for building luxury apartments" (McConnell, 2003).

London's residents are once again living on the banks of the river. Yet there are already signs that the redevelopment of the riverside is not leading to the social mixing and social cohesion envisaged. Contradictions between the policy rhetoric and the reality of the regeneration seem to be opening up because both national government (DETR, 1999; 2000) and the GLA (2002; 2004) have opted to follow an 'economically viable' regeneration framework that is 'market led'. As such, the riverside is being 'opened up' by private developers who are mainly building luxury apartments. Such luxury housing seems anathema to the policymakers' visions of social cohesion through social mixing. The new-build residential developments which have been completed thus far along the Thames, and which are indeed due to be completed soon, constitute, we would argue, nothing more than state-led, private-developer-built, gentrification. The physical fabric may be new and on brownfield sites but the outcome is very familiar.

4.2.1 *Reinvestment of capital*

The signs of reinvestment along London's riverside are visually apparent from any number of locations throughout the metropolis in the new-build developments that front the river. In the past four years forty-eight riverside developments (of over twenty-five units each) have been built or are near completion along the Thames (this number excludes the Docklands boroughs of City of London, Tower Hamlets, and Newham). Many more are planned. The Thames Gateway area, for example, has extensive plans which may see large areas of brownfield riverside subject to residential development in the near future. Developers tend not to want to release information on the cost of these new-build developments. One example, however, is the Riverside West development in Wandsworth, southwest London (see figures 1 and 2). Built by St George plc on the former Wandsworth Gas Works site, this mixed-use development covers 29 000 ft^2 and is made up of four large riverside luxury apartment blocks with 467 luxury apartments. It includes a leisure centre, a hotel, a health and fitness club, offices, shops, restaurants, and a children's day nursery. To date, the construction costs have amounted to over £250 million, and as the site is still being redeveloped that value is likely to climb. The smallest apartments (two-bed, no river views) have been marketed at £259 950 and the largest (four-bed penthouse) at £824 950. Even the smaller developments such as Brentford Lock (see figure 1), set back from the river on Brentford High Street near the confluence of the Grand Union Canal and the Thames on the site of the former British Waterways London depot, bear significant costs in terms of reinvestment—in this case £95 million; developed by St George plc and Charles Church, 343 residential dwellings are to be completed by 2006. Other features include a 140-bed hotel with restaurant and conference-meeting facilities; a public house; retail and restaurant units with high street and water frontages; a high-quality boat mooring scheme with full facilities and improved visitor moorings; a restored water space with potential for restaurants, trip boats, and floating attractions; and an attractive information point in the historic, grade two-listed Toll House building.

Figure 2. Riverside West, Wandsworth (source: Mark Davidson). Riverside West stands on an old gas works next to a cement plant and the riverside refuse dock. It constitutes one development in a string of nine along this part of the river.

The cost of the apartments ranges from £244 950 for a two-bed apartment to £570 000 for a three-bed apartment.

This development obviously represents a major investment of capital, both by the developers themselves and by the buyers of the properties. Such a process of economic capital reinvestment in a pocket of devalorised land, which transforms the area into a prime piece of real estate, mirrors patterns of economic reinvestment in classical gentrification [see, for example, Smith's (1982) rent-gap thesis]. However, some important differences emerge when comparing Riverside West with the traditional form of gentrification. First, at Riverside West the reinvestment is singular, the large-scale investment of economic capital operated through the unitary channel of a corporate developer. This stands in contrast to the piecemeal, individual-based economic reinvestment that operates in traditional gentrification. Despite this contextual difference the fact remains that a reinvestment of economic capital into a devalorised area is occurring. What seems to have happened is that in the postrecession era the reinvestment became larger and more commercial. Second, the state is explicitly involved as a major driving force behind gentrification along London's riverside. This is resulting in a negotiated process of gentrification in which the state engages with developers to produce regeneration cooperatively. This negotiated process presents problems for the application of Smith's rent-gap model to London's riverside, because the state (rather than land value) is changing, negotiating, and directing the operation of capital in the urban land market to achieve its own goals.

4.2.2 *Social upgrading by an incoming new middle class*

Although data from the 2001 Census captures statistically only the early days of this riverside regeneration it is clear that social upgrading along the Thames is already occurring. Table 1 demonstrates that the number of residents in professional occupations has increased significantly in Thameside London boroughs between 1991 and 2001. For example, between 1991 and 2001 the number of managers and senior officials increased by 20.9%, the number of professionals increased by 42.9%, and the number of associate professional and technical residents increased by 44.5%.

Table 1. 1991–2001 population growth according to occupational group in Thameside London boroughs, excluding boroughs incorporated in Docklands and the City of London (source: UK Census 1991–2001).

	1991 population	2001 population	Population change	Population growth (%)
Total	1 148 880	1 375 984	227 104	16.5
Occupational group				
Managers and senior officials	202 940	256 667	53 727	20.9
Professional	116 250	203 690	87 440	42.9
Associate professional and technical	142 540	256 985	114 445	44.5
Administrative and secretarial	229 240	205 735	−23 505	−11.4
Skilled trades	114 170	101 214	−12 956	−12.8
Personal services	104 780	80 910	−23 870	−29.5
Sales and customer service	66 620	85 414	18 794	22.0
Process, plant and machine operatives	66 490	62 201	−4 289	−6.9
Elementary	89 010	123 168	34 158	27.7

Table 2 provides more detail; it shows population change according to occupational classification for high-income and low-income groups (class 1 and class 2) in all Thameside London boroughs and then further breaks this down into data for riverside and nonriverside wards in those boroughs. Table 2 demonstrates that those Thameside boroughs and wards that have seen new-build development in recent years have seen the largest increases in class 1 population—that is, they have seen the largest increases in population of residents with professional occupations. Greenwich, Hammersmith, Havering, Hounslow, Kingston, Lambeth, Southwark, Wandsworth, and Westminster have all seen significant increases; it is no coincidence that these boroughs have all seen new-build developments. The Greenwich data, for example, reflects the active riverside regeneration that accompanied the development of the Millennium Dome, and Hammersmith had two large new-build developments by 2001, for example, the Regent on the River development. But these data indicate only the tip of the iceberg because many of these boroughs have seen or are about to see new-build development after the 2001 Census. Wandsworth, for example, had two large developments which would have been included in the 2001 Census, but now there are currently eleven other large-scale developments in progress. Boroughs such as Greenwich, Hammersmith, Hounslow, Lambeth, and Wandsworth have significant brownfield areas surrounded by low-income neighbourhoods, and thus they are susceptible to upgrading. Havering, for example, as part of the Thames Gateway is poised for hugh brownfield conversion.

Table 3 (over) shows that the riverside wards of Thamesfield (Wandsworth) and Shadwell (Tower Hamlets), which contain new riverside developments, have experienced disproportionately large growth rates in the number of professional residents when

compared with the rest of their respective boroughs and with Inner London as a whole, and also that the increases in the population of class 1 workers are being experienced by Docklands (Tower Hamlets and Shadwell) and non-Docklands (Wandsworth and

Table 2. Population change in riverside and nonriverside areas of London boroughs (including boroughs incorporated in Docklands and the City of London) according to occupational classification (source: UK Census 1991–2001).

Borough	Area	Class 1 [a]			Class 2 [b]		
		population		population change (%) class 1	population		population change (%) class 2
		1991	2001		1991	2001	
Barking and Dagenham	nonriver	8 890	15 032	69.1	52 160	44 281	−15.1
	river	1 770	2 837	60.3	12 462	9 545	−23.4
Bexley	nonriver	4 880	6 035	23.7	41 782	32 394	−22.5
	river	25 680	31 393	22.2	47 649	43 446	−8.8
Greenwich	nonriver	20 740	28 000	35.0	62 390	44 674	−28.5
	river	5 880	11 458	94.9	15 714	15 354	−2.3
Hammersmith and Fulham	nonriver	24 490	36 985	51.0	36 661	26 002	−29.1
	river	7 240	16 211	123.9	10 825	10 797	−0.3
Havering	nonriver	28 850	34 142	18.3	88 892	70 968	−20.2
	river	2 370	3 161	33.4	10 064	9 647	−4.1
Hounslow	nonriver	22 860	31 141	36.2	61 654	45 874	−25.6
	river	10 440	15 283	46.4	15 187	12 903	−15.0
Kensington and Chelsea	nonriver	28 440	47 961	68.6	30 448	26 892	−11.7
	river	3 860	5 186	34.4	4 722	3 551	−24.8
Kingston upon Thames	nonriver	21 210	28 656	35.1	37 353	29 256	−21.7
	river	9 130	12 711	39.2	10 731	7 132	−33.5
Lambeth	nonriver	35 630	65 540	83.9	65 701	53 125	−19.1
	river	4 460	8 681	94.6	9 434	7 705	−18.3
Lewisham	nonriver	33 280	51 624	55.1	82 366	63 150	−23.3
	river	620	1 984	220.0	3 043	3 298	8.4
Richmond Upon Thames	nonriver	15 000	23 353	55.7	22 564	18 632	−17.4
	river	28 640	35 713	24.7	29 706	19 271	−35.1
Southwark	nonriver	23 080	40 591	75.9	62 653	48 332	−22.9
	river	4 300	13 278	208.8	10 976	10 674	−2.8
Wandsworth	nonriver	46 010	71 634	55.7	72 512	47 447	−34.6
	river	9 840	19 172	94.8	12 271	10 485	−14.6
Westminster	nonriver	27 420	45 867	67.3	42 279	27 897	−34.0
	river	6 720	13 713	104.1	11 996	10 215	−14.8

[a] Class 1 (gentrifier proxy): SEG 01 (managers and senior officials), SEG 02 (professional occupations), SEG 03 (associate professional) [gentrifier proxy taken from Atkinson (2000)].
[b] Class 2 (displacee proxy): SEG 04 (clerical and secretarial occupations), SEG 06 (personal and protective services occupations), SEG 09 (process operatives), SEG 05 (skilled trades) plus permanently sick and retired [displacee proxy taken from Atkinson (2000)].
Notes: The UK census data sets used are *Economic Activity* (permanently sick and retired) and *Occupation* [socioeconomic groups (SEGs)]. The 'river' area is an aggregate composition of all wards within the borough that have a riverside area. The 'nonriver' area is an aggregate composition of all those wards within the borough that have no riverside area. 1991 UK census occupation data were presented in the form of a 10% sample; these data have therefore been multiplied by a factor of 10 at borough level to make them compatible with 2001 datasets.

Table 3. The change in population of potential gentrifiers and displacees in Shadwell and Thamesfield (source: UK Census 1991 – 2001).

Area	Class 1 [a]			Class 2 [a]		
	population change	percentage population change	change as a percentage of total population	population change	percentage population change	change as a percentage of total population
Shadwell	1 529	252.2	18.7	−435	−8.2	−4.1
Thamesfield	3 558	165.4	14.9	−1 273	−45.5	−6.4
Tower Hamlets	20 605	132.3	38.3	−14 506	−23.8	−10.8
Wandsworth	26 651	48.7	13.0	−32 049	−42.1	−11.5
Inner London	305 250	78.0	15.0	−268 182	−31.6	−8.9

[a] See table 2 for a definition of class 1 and class 2.

Thamesfield) boroughs and wards alike. It is also worth noting that these riverside areas have even higher growth rates for senior managers (SEG 01) than the corresponding aggregate professional figures (SEGs 01 – 03).

Analysis of enumeration district (ED) data and output area (OA) data from the 2001 Census reveals a distinct geographical pattern to the borough-level and ward-level data of tables 2 and 3. ED-level data is the smallest scale available from the 1991 Census and OA-level data is the smallest scale available from the 2001 Census. Although 1991 EDs and 2001 OAs are not geographically comparable (see Martin, 2004, for a detailed discussion of census boundaries), the use of geographic information systems (GIS) can help to demonstrate visually how socioeconomic patterns have changed in London, specifically along riverside areas. From the examples of Wandsworth riverside (non-Docklands) and Shadwell riverside (Docklands), places in which riverside developments were occupied in 2001, fine-grain geographical analysis reveals that the socioeconomic changes evident in the borough-level and ward-level data have a distinct relationship to riverside development. Figure 3 clearly demonstrates how new-build riverside development has led to riverside areas becoming dominated by class 1 (that is, gentrifier) populations. Although these strong concentrations of gentrifiers and proportional decreases in displacee populations cannot unconditionally demonstrate direct displacement, they do strongly indicate that riverside areas have already experienced significant population change. With riverside populations being so heavily weighted towards the gentrifying social classes, these areas, and all the services that they require, are clearly not going to become socially inclusive in the way that the government and the GLA hope.

Apart from census data, social upgrading along the Thames can also be demonstrated by the socioeconomic demographic that new-build riverside apartments are developed and marketed towards. Most of the developments are presenting 'luxury' apartments with a starting price for one-bedroom properties at around £250 000. In many riverside districts such property contrasts sharply with existing housing in the same area. An example of this can be found in Battersea, Wandsworth. In Battersea a one-bedroom flat in the riverside development, Chelsea Bridge, will cost around £340 000. In comparison, a one-bedroom flat in a former local council development further along the riverside, will cost around £120 000. Both of these properties are close to the river and close to Battersea Park and both have similar floor space. Despite these locational similarities, the people moving into the newly constructed Chelsea Bridge development have a significantly different socioeconomic profile from those moving into the former council block.
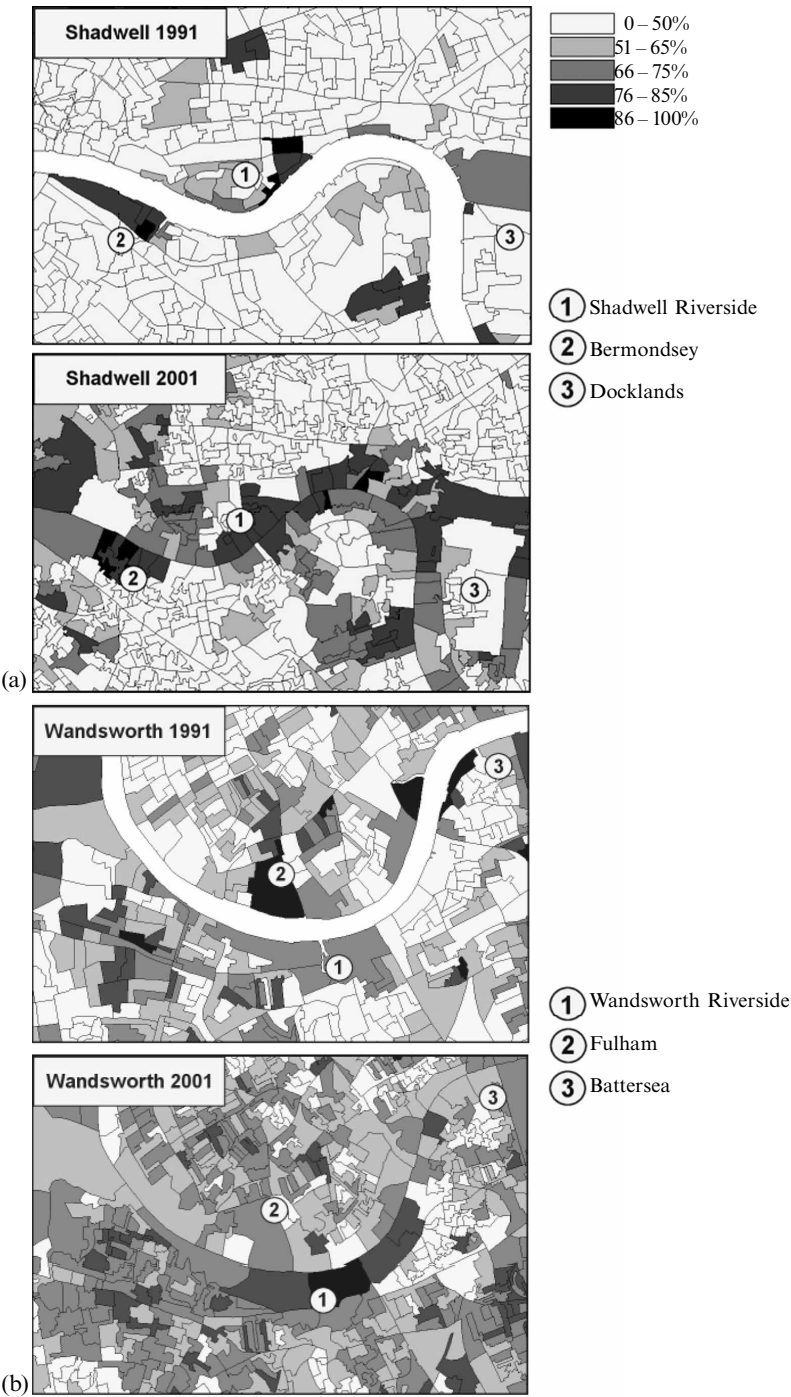
Figure 3. The increase in class 1 or gentrifier population in the riverside areas of (a) Shadwell and (b) Wandsworth, 1991 – 2001 (source: UK Census 1991 – 2001). Note: percentage levels refer to the proportion of the gentrifier and displacee population (see table 2 on how gentrifiers and displacees are defined) that is comprised of gentrifiers; darker areas therefore represent areas that have higher concentrations of gentrifiers and lower concentrations of displacees. The path of the River Thames is obscured in the 2001 maps because the Output Area boundaries encompass the river area itself.

Evidence from a questionnaire survey conducted in Brentford in 2004 demonstrates how the socioeconomic profile of a riverside development contrasts to that of the local residential population (see table 4). Brentford was chosen as one of three case-study sites.[8] Each site has had, and continues to witness the construction of, new-build riverside developments. In each case-study site 150 residents from a new-build riverside development and 300 residents from the local neighbourhood were surveyed. The survey response rate in Brentford was 25% for both populations.

Analysis of the survey results demonstrates that upgrading is taking place despite Brentford being a reasonably socially balanced community (the type that the government and the GLA seek in policy terms) and despite a 25% allocation of affordable housing in the new-build development. The riverside development has clearly increased the population of managers and professional (SEGs 1 and 2) in the neighbourhood. The data presented in table 4 do not include the population of self-employed business owners in the development. Business owners accounted for 10% of the population and they were all property owners, one third of whom owned their property outright. This self-employed group may therefore represent further upgrading, beyond that of the employed groups. The new-build development has introduced a younger and more highly educated group of residents into the neighbourhood, and the tenure data also reveals a high proportion of private renters within the riverside development. This represents the strong trend of investment buying within riverside developments and the presence of more short-term residents. The trend towards investment buying was highlighted by property-sales staff in interviews at the three case-study riverside developments.

Table 4. A comparison of the occupational, educational, and tenure profiles of local neighbourhood and new-build development residents in Brentford.

	Brentford local neighbourhood	Brentford new-build development
Average age	44.2	34.8
Employed residents: occupation (%)		
Managers	4.2	18.9
Professional	16.7	18.9
Associate professional and technical	27.1	21.6
All other occupational groups	52.1	40.5
Educational levels of residents (%)		
None	1.5	0
State secondary	19.1	8.1
Public school	1.5	2.7
Further education college	19.1	13.5
University	57.4	75.7
Tenure (%)		
Owner-occupier	19.1	8.1
Owner mortgage	58.8	40.5
Private rent	5.9	32.4
Housing association rent	2.9	10.8
Local authority rent	8.8	0
Shared ownership	1.5	8.1
Lodging	1.5	0
Other	1.5	0

[8] We report here only on the Brentford case-study site.

4.2.3 *Landscape change and the new-build gentrifier*

Accompanying the reinvestment of economic capital along the riverside is a reinvestment of cultural capital which is evident in the built form and in the marketing material of new-build developments. The landscape change is from brownfield, vacant and/or abandoned land to a particular aesthetic of residential housing. The new landscape is a mixture of new-build style gentrification and copies of classic or pioneer-style gentrification aesthetics, thus developments often include large medium-rise modern apartment buildings alongside mock-Georgian townhouses and New-York-style apartments (see figure 4). The echoes of the cultural tastes of classic gentrifiers to be found in the built form of these new developments are also evident in the promotional promises of a particular urbane lifestyle. Just as pioneer gentrifiers sought an urban lifestyle imbued with urban history and culture (Caulfield, 1994), new-build developments along the river sell that same set of desires:

> "The Royal Arsenal London, dates back 300 years as a site for the manufacturing of ordnance and has played a vital role in the development of the British Empire and the defence of the Realm ... . The original architects of the Royal Arsenal include Sir John Vanbrugh and Nicholas Hawksmoor, whose legacy of baroque beauty can be seen all over England but nowhere more magnificently than on this historic and famous landmark site. The unique location of the Royal Arsenal London offers residents an unrivalled opportunity. Homes will combine the comforts of life in the new millennium with the elegance and heritage of centuries past, and all within commuting distance of Canary Wharf (just 4 miles away) and the City of London

Figure 4. Putney Wharf, Wandsworth (source: Mark Davidson). Both this new-build tower and the renovated terraced housing below are part of the One Putney Wharf scheme.

(just 8 miles away). Central London, the rest of the UK and Europe are also easily accessible" [9] (Royal Arsenal, Woolwich—Berkley Homes).

"Life in Wandsworth has always led to a trail of creative innovation and fashionable excess. From its first mention in the Domesday Book, the area earned an enviable reputation at haute couture's cutting edge ... . '*The people here are now the most alive of any about London*' ... . Along the Thames, vibrant communities, contemporary style and historic institutions have always stood side by side. Riverside Quarter offers the tranquility of life at the water's edge" (Wandsworth Riverside Quarter Limited).

But having the Thames to draw inspiration from, the marketing material also plays off a particular lifestyle—one where the city (London) and nature (the riverfront) complement each other:

"'London's new left bank'. Adjoining a new health and fitness centre, hotel, shops, restaurants and cafes, Riverside West is set to become a bustling new riverside quarter. A sweeping tree-lined boulevard and riverside piazza gives the development an exciting metropolitan focus. The ambience is enhanced by two communal garden areas, and a wealth of stylish landscaping ... . Riverside West has already attracted some of London's brightest, trend-setting people—it is easy to see why. Experience its energy now, and discover how riverside living has come of age" (Riverside West).

"Breakfast on the balcony facing the Thames. A brisk cycle ride along the leafy riverside towpath watching herons dip and rowing boats glide gently by. Or a leisurely stroll into the village to shop or simply browse, to enjoy the charming atmosphere of Kew. The feel of grass underfoot, the sound of leather on willow as you picnic on the green. Lazy summer days by the river, kicking leaves in the crisp autumn air. Everything feels so natural. A sense of village life just minutes from central London" (Kew Riverside Park).

New-build gentrification along the Thames contrasts sharply with David Ley's (1996) thesis on the deployment of cultural capital by a cultural new class as a central feature of the gentrification process. This is because in the developments along the Thames cultural capital is a commodified, mass-produced, and niche-marketed product. The traditional gentrifier's lifestyle has been appropriated and sold commercially to more gentrifiers who are more wealthy and short of time. They buy or rent, as opposed to create, a lifestyle. There are limits to what the resident can do to his or her property. Certainly the exterior renovations and personalisations witnessed at scenes of classical gentrification are not possible in new-build developments. And for interior decoration these new developments have interior-design services, through which the resident simply orders the interior of the apartment when he or she buys the property (from interviews with development sales representatives, 2004). There is no sweat equity involved. Gentrification researchers are only now beginning to consider how the relationship between economic and cultural capital in the gentrification process has changed over time (for a critique of this earlier thesis see Lees, 2003a; Ley, 2003). Culture remains important to the process but its role seems to have mutated and this changed role requires further retheorising in the explanation of contemporary gentrification (see Bridge, 2002).

Butler and Robson (2001; 2003) identified differences between the consumption strategies of gentrifiers in different neighbourhoods; their biggest distinction was between those gentrifiers who worked in the private sector and consumed their housing

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[9] This extract and those extracts below are taken from promotional material contained within leaflets and on developers' websites.

as a ready-made aesthetic and those who worked in the public sector and invested social capital in their neighbourhoods. New-build gentrifiers are more closely aligned with the first group—they have high levels of economic capital, privatised circuits of consumption, and have bought into a commodified version of gentrification. In particular, the Brentford survey demonstrates how new-build gentrifiers do not invest social capital in the local neighbourhood. Their lifestyles are quite private and they undertake very little social interaction in the local neighbourhood on the doorstep of their development. Their private lifestyles are demonstrated in the section of the survey that asked residents to note their usage of neighbourhood facilities. Beyond local restaurants (83.3% usage) the most popular neighbourhood facility used by the development's residents was their own private gym (56.8% usage). All other neighbourhood facilities, namely the community centre, public library, public gym, and leisure centre had an average usage level of only 4.6% by new-build gentrifiers. There is little interest in or attachment to the local neighbourhood. Only 18% of the new-build residents mentioned the local neighbourhood as a reason for moving into the development. In all but one of these responses, the local areas mentioned as motivating them to move into the development were the neighbouring, predominantly middle-class, areas of Kew and Chiswick. Most of these new-build gentrifiers are what Bridge (2003) terms 'corporate gentrifiers', and as such they desire little connection with the local neighbourhood.

According to Bridge's (2003) work on time – space trajectories, new-build gentrifiers tend to deploy their cultural capital on a temporal basis; this involves "capital accumulation that is not so rapidly materialised (or convertible into economic capital). It is less visible and aligns much more with traditional middle-class strategies of distinction through education" (page 2547). The temporality of the new-build lifestyle is evident in the words of two surveyed residents:

"I do not think a sense of 'community' is fostered in new riverside developments. The people who live here tend to be very 'private people' or this is their second home so we are only here in the evenings or weekends at most" (survey respondent number 105 from the Brentford Development).

"New developments attract transient residents! The young who will probably move on in less than 5 years ... . There are also many Weekenders. This development certainly has a lot of 'non-permanent' residents. 'Foreign executives': there seem to be a few people here on 1 – 2 year high paid contracts who will move on when the contract is complete. Lack of families leads to lack of communal mixing throughout the age ranges—no sense of history/pride. We probably price local families out of the area which is a shame ... " (survey respondent number 75 from the Brentford Development).

Such observations are anathema to the prescriptions for social mixing found in the DETR (Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions) (1999; 2000) and GLA (2002; 2004) policy documents. Rather than enhancing social capital and social cohesion in the local neighbourhood, new-build gentrifiers tend to stick to their self-contained development. They tend not to put down roots. They are transient residents who have bought into, or, as is more often the case, have rented, a particular lifestyle.

4.2.4 Displacement

Finding evidence of displacement is a difficult task. The research on gentrification-induced displacement in London to date is contradictory: although Lyons (1996) and Atkinson (2000) used the longitudinal survey and found evidence of displacement, Hamnett (2003a, page 2421) rejects their interpretation and, using census data, argues that increasing concentrations of professionals in gentrifying areas are best explained

by an expanding middle class. This debate, however, has been unfruitful because the underlying sociospatial processes of displacement and segregation cannot be deduced from such extensive methods alone; intensive "research at a finer spatial scale, using a more qualitative approach" is also required (Atkinson, 2000, page 163). Though the exhaustive ward-level comparison of 1981 and 1991 Census data by Buck et al (2002, page 160) found reduced levels of segregation according to socioeconomic group across Inner London, they too concede "the need [for] more detailed analysis to establish whether segregation rises as the gentrification process matures." By considering not just the statistical evidence from the more recent 1991 and 2001 Censuses for displacement and segregation but also qualitative data from the Brentford questionnaire survey, we offer here a more detailed picture of gentrification-induced displacement.

Atkinson (2000; 2002) notes that, even though gentrification and displacement have traditionally been regarded as omnipresent at the scene of gentrification, the empirically observable connection between them is not quite as strong as the literature might suggest. Social movements in, out of, and around cities involve a vast number of processes that make the identification of a direct relationship between gentrification and displacement a difficult task:

"Separating gentrification and displacement out from wider processes of social change, incumbent upgrading, voluntary migration and welfare and labour market changes provides complex problems for measuring such processes. Further, it is exceedingly hard to distinguish between gentrification as a form of neighbourhood replacement or displacement" (Atkinson, 2000, page 151).

This is especially difficult in a global city such as London. The relationship between gentrification and displacement is also blurred because of the impact of locality on urban social movements. As Atkinson (2002, page 9) states, the "role of individual neighbourhood contexts is important in determining the prevalence of displacement ... ". For example, the presence of social housing can act to limit gentrification-induced displacement, although new housing and urban policies that promote social mixing and the turnover of some council housing to housing associations in the United Kingdom mediates this somewhat.

Direct displacement is not a significant feature of the gentrification of London's riverside because most of the new-build developments are situated on brownfield sites. We have hypothesised that displacement for the most part will be 'indirect'. New-build developments will generate displacement by introducing a large population of gentrifiers into the community very quickly and will thereby act as beachheads from which the tentacles of gentrification can reach outward into the adjacent communities.

Despite the fact that both this research and the new-build developments along the Thames are in their infancy, we do have empirical evidence to suggest that indirect displacement is already taking place along the Thames. Table 1 shows that populations of the lower-middle-income and low-income occupational groups in Thameside boroughs decreased significantly between 1991 and 2001—the population of those working in administrative and secretarial occupations decreased by 11.4%; those in skilled trades decreased by 12.8%; personal service by 29.5%; and process, plant, and machine operatives by 6.9%. The 27.7% increase in elementary workers (cleaners, kitchen staff, security guards, porters, etc) is perhaps not surprising in that it is these groups that are most likely to 'serve' the incoming middle classes, often in their new houses and apartment complexes. Such increases answer Hamnett's (2003b, page 8) question of whether growth at the top of the occupational and skill spectrum is paralleled by growth at the bottom and offer some support to proponents of the social-polarisation thesis (for example, Friedmann and Wolff, 1982; Sassen, 1991)—in Thameside boroughs there is both a growing professional and managerial population and a growing group

of less-skilled service workers. "[T]here is clearly a fine line to be trodden between local stories of displacement and loss and the macro picture of London's success" (Atkinson, 2003, page 2347).

Table 2 offers a more detailed picture: nearly every single Thameside ward and borough has experienced a decrease in class 2 population [following Atkinson (2000), class 2 is the displacee proxy]. As most of the low-income housing is not in wards that front the river, a comparison of nonriver-area and river-area statistics is not useful here, but, taking this into consideration, we could hypothesise that the larger decreases in the nonriver-area class 2 population are indicative of indirect displacement. Indeed, boroughs which contained large-scale new-build developments at the time of the 2001 Census have seen significant decreases in their class 2 populations in nonriverside wards—the Greenwich class 2 population decreased by 28.5%, Southwark by 22.9% and Wandsworth by 34.6%. Table 3 shows that gentrification-induced social change is similar in the Docklands ward of Shadwell and in the riverside, but non-Docklands, ward of Thamesfield. Figure 3 uses ED-level and OA-level data to demonstrate pictorially the fine grain of gentrification-induced social change along the river. In areas in which the percentage of professional residents has increased (see section 4.2.2) the percentage of lower income groups has decreased. The result is an unequal city (for a London-wide analysis see Hamnett, 2003b).

The fact that there is already some statistical evidence of gentrification-induced displacement as a result of new-build developments along the Thames reveals the reality of state-led gentrification on London's riverside. As critical urban theorists, we would charge that urban change is never natural in the ecological sense but rather that it reflects the competition between different social forces. Those responsible for new-build, market-led developments along the Thames are unconcerned with stimulating social mixing along the river; rather they seek to stimulate a larger middle-class market for riverside residence. The data in tables 1–3 and in figure 3 suggest that lower-middle-income and low-income groups are experiencing indirect displacement due to high-income middle-class influx, alongside related increases in house prices, with few mechanisms to protect existing populations.

However, the qualitative data drawn from the Brentford survey reveal a mixed response from the local population (those who live outside of the new-build development) towards gentrification in their neighbourhood. The long-term residents (resident for over 10 years, predominantly working class) are more negative about the impact of gentrification and the newer residents (resident for less than 3 years, predominantly middle class) are more positive about its potential impacts. Brentford is more socially mixed than the Sands End neighbourhood that Bridge (1994) studied and maybe this explains why our survey contradicts his survey findings. Bridge (1994) found that, for the most part, the working-class population of Sands End did not have a problem with the gentrification of their neighbourhood. In contrast, the long-term working-class residents in Brentford commented on the destructive and unsettling changes within their neighbourhood:

"Brentford is being overdeveloped with no housing being provided for the working class. I am very much against the leveling of St George's Church—which has stood for hundreds of years—Why not let it be. The character of the river is being destroyed by ruthless planners and builders" (survey respondent number 61).

The changes are resented and long-term residents reveal a growing sense of disconnection and displacement from their neighbourhood:

"There is a reduced facility for older and retired people in this neighbourhood and maybe the new riverside development will cater for the younger/commuting people thereby making this facility even less needed" (survey respondent number 18).

The newer neighbourhood residents, however, seem thirsty for the continued and even accelerated gentrification of their neighbourhood. Many of these newer residents moved into the area because Brentford was perceived by them to be up-and-coming. They saw the riverside developments as symbols of regeneration and neighbourhood change and as contributing to the process of gentrification that they desire for their new neighbourhood:

"Brentford desperately needs better shops. Somerfields is not a quality store. Most of my neighbours shop elsewhere (Kew, Osterley, Chiswick). A farmers market in Brentford would be a start" (survey respondent number 59).

"There are no small cafes that are attractive enough to meet up with a friend for instance. Brentford has been a back-water for a long time ... . It will take some years yet, it will come, to make this a truly attractive place to live in. The potential is there!" (survey respondent number 36).

Moreover, contra DETR (1999; 2000) and the GLA's (2002; 2004) prescription of urban renaissance as an instigator of social mixing, social cohesion, and social inclusion, these new gentrifiers do not want to mix with low-income groups; if anything, they are frightened of them:

"There are two very different sides of Brentford. West of Ealing Road it's safe and quite family orientated, but to the East it's far rougher. Most of the houses/flats are council places and there's a watch your back feel to the place" (survey respondent number 38).

Using census data we have identified gentrification-induced social change along the river, in particular the displacement of low-income groups by high-income groups. Moreover, research at a finer spatial scale with a more qualitative approach has shown that the new-build developments have caused indirect displacement by attracting new, middle-income, residents to what they perceive to be an up-and-coming, that is, gentrifying, neighbourhood. As we hypothesised, the new-build developments have acted like beachheads from which the tentacles of gentrification have slowly stretched into the adjacent neighbourhoods. Further gentrification-induced displacement seems inevitable.

5 Conclusion

We have found in favour of the case *for* considering new-build developments in metropolitan London as examples of contemporary, state-led 'gentrification'. In the United Kingdom, policymakers and urban regeneration practitioners view gentrification as a model for urban renaissance that can resolve social, environmental, economic, and even educational and health problems in cities (Atkinson, 2004; Lees, 2003b). Ironically, given the evidence for its negative impacts, gentrification is seen as a panacea for both regional and social inequalities. In London, as we have seen, the GLA has been active in promoting an urban renaissance in the vein of the DETR—especially along the Thames, where it has created a 'Blue Ribbon Network'. Although it would be wrong to argue that the aim of the DETR and the GLA is to provoke displacement, it is obvious from this study that displacement is already the result along the Thames. As these policies are thrust into full gear (the London Plan has only just come on board) the end result can only be further and very significant displacement. Atkinson (2004, pages 114–115) notes that, because displacement has been located most strongly in metropolitan areas which have strong economies, such as London, there has been muted government response to it. It appears to be seen as one of the social costs of economic success that is worth tolerating. Butler and Robson (2003) have gone so far as to argue that the recent expansion of, and plans for, new towns around London have arisen as solutions to the lack of affordable housing in the capital. As in the 1950s

and 1960s, when the original new towns were built, it seems that the class 2 population of London will be decamped yet again to the outskirts of the capital. The outcome could be a return to an urban model in which the middle classes reside predominantly in the urban core and lower income groups reside predominantly on its suburban and former urban margins.

Given the increasing middle-class recolonisation of central London, specifically along the River Thames, and the corresponding displacement of lower social classes, it would be folly to disavow new-build developments of the label 'gentrification'. Consequently we want to conclude this paper by arguing that gentrification scholars need to allow the term gentrification enough elasticity to 'open up new insights' and indeed to reflect the mutations in the 21st century of this increasingly active and somewhat different process. Bondi (1999) is right to warn of the dangers of trying to overload the concept with reconceptualisations:

"... I would argue that creative approaches to the production of academic knowledge entail cyclical processes of conceptualisation and reconceptualisation. In this context, Ruth Glass's (1964) coining of the term 'gentrification' opened up new questions about urban change. But the more researchers have attempted to pin it down the more burdens the concept has had to carry. Maybe the loss of momentum around gentrification reflects its inability to open up new insights, and maybe it is time to allow it to disintegrate under the weight of these burdens" (page 255).

However, we should not allow the term gentrification to collapse under the weight of the mutation of the process itself. Gentrification is an active urban process that has changed over time. We cannot and should not stick to outdated definitions of it. Glass's (1964) definition of the process is a relic of its time; it is useful but must be used as a springboard from which to open out the definition as opposed to something that restricts it. By concentrating on the core elements of gentrification: (1) the reinvestment of capital; (2) the social upgrading of locale by incoming high-income groups; (3) landscape change; and (4) direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups, and by not attaching it to a particular landscape or context, we should be able to keep hold of 'gentrification' as an important term and concept for analysing urban change in the 21st-century city.

'Gentrification' is perhaps the most politically loaded word in urban geography or urban studies and indeed in the politics of cities. Think back to 1985 when the New York Times ran an advertisement in praise of gentrification—titled *Is gentrification a dirty word?*—which was paid for by the Real Estate Board of New York (see Smith, 1996, chapter 2), and observe that the DETR's UTF Report and UWP and the GLA's Draft London Plan and London Plan never use the word 'gentrification'—preferring 'urban renaissance' instead. These politics are important to those of us who feel it is important to be critical of gentrification processes and as such we want to open up the term to new forms of gentrification, such as new-build 'gentrification'.

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