

## Segregation

To say that social space is inscribed in spatial structures means to see physical space as one of the sites where power is asserted and exercised. But inequalities in positions, as we have seen in our discussion of intersectionality above, are being produced at the intersections of people's lives in terms of different positions they hold in relation to class, gender, sexuality and race and ethnicity. Segregation is the term that urban scholars use to refer to the positionality of groups in the city and the extent to which they occupy separate sites in the city. Social theorists like Bourdieu and Anthias have not been extensively used in the debate on segregation. As we will see, the focus of this strand of urban studies, which has produced a huge number of empirical studies, particularly in the United States, is primarily on the measurement of segregation and on theorising and measuring the effects of segregation, a 'cottage industry' (Slater, 2013) that we will discuss in more detail later in our section on neighbourhood effects.

Segregation can refer to ethnic or racial segregation and to social segregation, that is, the segregation by social class. Scholars may want to separate these because of the data they have, the cities they are interested in comparing, or the policy circles they want to address, but they are, of course, not separated in the lived city. As socio-economic status differences manifest themselves spatially, with the affluent living in neighbourhoods with high-status reputation and the poor living in undesirable areas, the city reflects the social stratification of the society at large, another way of saying that social space is inscribed in physical space. Such segregation is not voluntary: contrary to what new economics often assumes, people are not equal market competitors on a free housing market. Not only wealth limits people's housing choices; race, gender and sexuality also affect people's opportunities of where to live. Browne, Lim, and Brown (2009: 6–7), for example, discuss the concentration of gays in American cities as the appropriation of territory as a defensive act in a heterosexist society, out of a need for 'safe' spaces in a society that oppresses gays as men in relation to heterosexual men.

This, then, is linked to a discussion, important to housing studies, of how much choice and constraint there is in the housing choices people make (for an overview, see Clark & Dieleman, 2012). Do people act as free agents on the market, finding ways to consume the type of fixed housing preference that they have, given the economic resources at their disposal? Neo-economists would certainly assume that the market simply does its work. Forced or voluntary segregation has been theorised mostly by saying that segregation either is the result of structure (e.g. agents having different economic capital gives or limits their options to act as free agents on the market), or, given a specific volume of economic capital, is an expression of lifestyle preferences. This discussion has gained particular relevance in recent decades in attempts to explain ethnic concentration, or the phenomenon that people who share ethnicity tend to live in neighbourhoods with others from their own group. Noting that financially they may not need to do so, scholars have looked for other than structural explanations. It is clear from this discussion that the simple division between choice constraints and preference is not very useful, not least because the stories people tell of why they live where they live contain their own rationalisations. In a small study of motives for moving out of a gentrifying neighbourhood in Berlin, for example, Betancourt (2012) found that people referred to the advantages of the neighbourhoods they moved to as motives for their action rather than to the fact that they could no longer afford the rent of where they lived before, or could not meet their housing needs which had changed as a result of their life stage in the neighbourhood in which they grew up due to a lack of affordable housing. And what is a 'preference' in relation to a 'decision' is not the same thing either, so that where the literature treats a move to a new dwelling that matches a 'housing preference' as voluntary, this need not be the case (Floor & van Kempen, 1997; van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2007b).

Moreover, where people move to is not a free choice either: neighbourhoods have symbolic meaning or aggressively exclude, affecting where people live (Pattillo-McCoy, 1999), and a gap between one's habitus and habitat may affect this choice, as DuBois (2013: 176) signalled more than a hundred years ago:

The Negro who ventures away from the mass of his people and their organized life, finds himself alone, shunned and taunted, stared at and made uncomfortable; he can make few new friends, for his neighbours however well-disposed would shrink to add a Negro to their list of acquaintances. Thus he ... feels in all its bitterness what it means to be a social outcast.

In the United States, a large body of literature has also shown that blacks face racism on the housing market, some institutional, in the location of public housing in inner cities, some more individual, as in cases where real estate agents discourage blacks from moving into certain neighbourhoods or suburbs (Massey & Denton, 1993; Haynes, 2001).

## Social segregation

Ethnic or racial segregation is the form of segregation we may be most familiar with. The confusing thing here is that social segregation is also used in contrast to residential or spatial segregation: where the latter refers to the question whether groups different in ethnicity/race or class are living separately from each other in the city, here social segregation refers to the ways in which people who may reside in mixed neighbourhoods have separate social worlds of institutions, networks and the like. Atkinson (2006) has contributed to this line of thought when he discussed how middle-class and upper middle-class residents live in their own enclaves and travel the city through tunnels on their way to socially segregated places of work and leisure, like philharmonic orchestras or expensive restaurants. Butler and colleagues have shown how middle-class residents living in socially and ethnically mixed neighbourhoods in London make school choices that ensure that their children are surrounded by other children with the same habitus, out of fear of social contamination (Butler & Hamnett, 2007). Watt (2009) studied the ways in which middle-class residents in suburban London used their socially mixed neighbourhoods and discusses the social segregation in the facilities they use and avoid in terms of selective belonging.

Such social segregation is more difficult to measure systematically than residential social segregation, as it requires the study of what people do rather than where they live. Unsurprisingly, segregation studies have primarily focused on the measurement of various forms of residential segregation, assuming that the geographical neighbourhood of where we sleep matters most to whom we engage with, and that spatial distance not only expresses social distance but also acts as a basis for distinction in practices that reinforce the habitat, in the formation of social networks and in the generation of forms of capital. The study of segregation has been heavily dominated by American scholarship, where scholars have traditionally been interested in measuring racial segregation and particularly black/white segregation.

### **Segregation indices**

One of the first studies to measure segregation by race in the US was by Taeuber and Taeuber (1965) who developed the ‘index of segregation’ as the percentage of blacks who would have to move so that all areas in the city would have the same percentage of blacks as the percentage of the overall city. One thus takes the whole racial or ethnic composition of the city, and the degree to which neighbourhoods deviate from this standard of the overall city is the amount of segregation. The now most commonly used measure is the index of dissimilarity that is similar to Taeuber and Taeuber’s initial measurement. Their index has since been refined, including for example in the important study of Massey and Denton clustering (black neighbourhoods form an enclave in the city or more like a checkerboard), concentration (black neighbourhoods in one small area in the city or scattered all over the city), and centralisation (whether or not black neighbourhoods are located in the centre or the periphery) and unevenness (overrepresentation or underrepresentation of blacks in neighbourhoods) and isolation (lack of possibilities of interactions with whites based on nearness of a different group).

In the northern European context, it has become increasingly difficult to treat racial/ethnic and class segregation as independent because of the increasingly strong correlation between ethnicity and income. In the US, residential segregation remains extreme even when controlling for socio-economic differences between blacks, whites and Hispanics (Massey & Denton, 2013: 195). Compared to the growth of the black middle class, the indices of residential segregation have hardly changed in America:

despite the overturning of de jure segregation, de facto segregation continues in America, through practices such as bank and insurance redlining and prejudicial real estate steering ... White flight and continuing segregation have isolated racial minorities in central cities, undermining political coalitions and fragmenting the political landscape and the tax bases between ‘white suburbs’ and ‘chocolate cities’. (Lin & Mele, 2013: 192–3)

## Immigration and segregation

Segregation has become an increasing concern within the political context of European countries having to come to accept that they are immigrant countries (Esser, 1986; van Kempen & Süle Özükren, 1998) and studies of segregation have been growing, especially also in the context of the question to what extent the thesis of a polarisation in cities (the idea of a dual city emerging in the context of globalisation discussed earlier in this book) is directly linked to or a precondition for segregation and how much of segregation needs to be theorised as context-specific (Burgers, 1996; Wessel, 2000; Musterd, 2005a; Arbaci, 2007; Maloutas, 2007). Especially in countries like Germany and the Netherlands where immigration was less the result of their colonial pasts and more of the active recruitment of labour migrants in countries such as Turkey and Morocco, the initial general expectation in the 1960s was that these workers would return to their home countries when their labour was no longer needed. But they did not, and ‘integration’ became part of the national agenda of social problems from the 1970s onwards. With refugees and asylum seekers adding to the urban diversity in the 1980s, neighbourhoods with up to 65 ethnicities can be found in cities such as Rotterdam, where over 85% of the children are now born to parents of immigrant background. Whereas, depending on the geographical level one chooses to study, high concentrations of one dominant ethnic group can also be found, the European immigrant neighbourhoods are typically highly diverse neighbourhoods. Segregation measurements thus tend to compare immigrants to non-immigrants (see van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2010) and are usually interested in the possible effect of this residential isolation of ethnic minority groups on outcomes in, for example, interethnic friendships (van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2007a; Drever, 2004; Esser, 1986) and other network ties (van Eijk, 2010; Blokland & van Eijk, 2010) or labour market opportunities (Musterd, 2005b; Musterd & Ostendorf, 1998a; Bolt, Burgers, & van Kempen, 1998; van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2008). Two theoretical perspectives have been used to explain segregation (Charles, 2003). The spatial assimilation model works with the idea that objective differences in socio-economic status and acculturation explain segregation. Place stratification models maintain that prejudices and discrimination constrain the options for residential mobility of individuals. According to Charles, the two explanatory models are complimentary.

European cities thus also face racialisation of urban space, the process ‘by which urban and suburban space is associated with various ethnic and social groups’ (Charles, 2003: 382), with extreme segregation as a possible form. Such spaces do not always have to be negative hubs of social problems and exclusions but can also be actively created from within neighbourhoods or groups (Charles, 2003: 383). Indeed, neighbourhood social movements and forms of collective action may rise directly from a shared identity developing around a racialised space, as in the *casitas* that Puerto Rican immigrants erected in the Bronx (Sciolla, 1996: 70–5).

Here it is important to deal with theory carefully: assumptions made about shared identities may work for studying areas where specific castes may concentrate in Hyderabad, Bosniaks and Croats in Mostar (Figure 5.3; see Aceska, 2013), blacks in New York, Mexicans in Los Angeles or Cubans in Miami, or the Pakistanis and Indians in Brick Lane in London (Figure 5.4), but in European cities the segregation of immigrants and non-immigrants is an indicator of ethnic and racial heterogeneity versus homogeneity, so that the assumption of a collective identity can even less easily be made as in the case of ethnically or racially homogeneous areas, even though there too this assumption may reify ethnicity as automatically linked to a social identity, a danger that studies of ethnicity and identity have warned of extensively (Jenkins, 1996; Blokland, 2003b).



Figure 5.3 Mostar, with Muslim Bosniaks and Christian Croats each living on one side of the river

Mostar – Old Town Panorama, Szerkesztő Ramirez, 2007

Source: Wikimedia Commons:[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mostar\\_Old\\_Town\\_Panorama.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mostar_Old_Town_Panorama.jpg).



Figure 5.4 Brick Lane, London, where the ethnic character of the neighbourhood is the basis for the commercialisation of segregation

© Roger Taylor/Telegraph Media Group Limited 2003

## Segregation and integration

The social problem of integration, which can by way of shorthand be defined as the social and political problem that nation states with substantial numbers of immigrants, whom a deindustrialising economy can no longer absorb easily into its labour market, have to find ways to ensure that they can participate economically, socially, politically (and culturally, though this has been heavily debated) as full members in society to the same extent as non-immigrants. What defines full membership is again heavily contested, a debate primarily concerned with citizenship rights and entitlements (Lebuhn, 2013). For our purposes, what is most interesting is what theories of integration have been developed, and how they are relevant for the urban – how they are linked to the spatial expression of inequalities in the city.

Apart from theories on housing choice and constraints, including discrimination in the housing market, that try to explain the patterns of segregation, much work has been done on understanding the outcomes. Much of the discussion can be seen as asking to what extent ethnic concentration or segregation in urban neighbourhoods stimulates integration or, instead, blocks it (e.g. Dick, 2008). Integration is here generally understood as assimilation: integrated are those immigrants who have socially, economically, politically and culturally become full participants in mainstream society. The idea of assimilation includes the perspective that new immigrants face times of hardship and possibly discrimination upon arrival, but gradually, if not themselves then at least in the generation of their children, adapt to their new country. Assimilation theory holds that they will overcome obstacles and become socio-economically mobile, so that they, as it were, disappear as a visible social group. At most, ethnicity is celebrated, enjoyed through consumption and festivals and implies a choice of when and how to ‘play’ ethnic roles, so that ethnicity becomes symbolic. It becomes, in Gans’ (1996: 436) words, ‘a love for or pride in a tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated into everyday behavior’. For such ethnicity, no functioning groups or networks are a prerequisite, and ethnicity is expressive rather than instrumental (Gans, 1996: 435).

The assimilation thesis has been criticised heavily on various grounds (Rex, 1996). In the European discussion, the debate has primarily focused on the right of immigrants to maintain their cultural identities and the need for mainstream society and cities to define themselves as multicultural (Hannerz, 2004; Keith, 2005; Sandercock, 1998) and culture as fluid and changing rather than as a static ‘whole’ that one can ‘integrate into’, in an attempt also to fight forms of new or cultural racism (Hall, 1996; Cohen, 1999). Integration, it has been argued, suggests too much that immigrants are the ones who have to adapt to their new environment and that the social world in which they arrive has to do nothing but absorb them on the basis of sameness (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010; Zincone, Penninx, & Borkert, 2011).

In North America, too, alternative theories have been developed that in turn have steered the European discussion. These point, for example, to the subordinate economic position of immigrant groups and the value of ethnic solidarities and ties and of ethnic politics and mobilisation so that resilient ethnic communities may form as a result of disadvantaged economic positions that make smooth assimilation impossible (Portes & Manning, 2013: 204). Portes and Manning, after giving a useful review of the US debate on immigration and the city, argue that the latter brings useful revision to the assimilation thesis, but tends to be as homogenising to the other side of the spectrum: not all migrants are and remain marginalised at the bottom of the labour market. They show that various other models of incorporation are possible, of which the model of the ethnic enclave has gained most attention and has been taken up most strongly by scholars in Europe. Ethnic enclaves, whilst originally defined in economic terms only (Bailey & Waldinger, 1991; Waldinger, 1993) are areas where residence, work, leisure and personal networks within the ethnic group overlap. They may develop when three conditions are met.

First, a substantial number of immigrants must be present with entrepreneurial skills developed in their country of origin so that escape from wage labour is possible. Second, there must be access to capital, whether brought from the home country, pooled within the ethnic group or accumulated personally. Third, labour sources must be given, usually drawn from family members or newly arriving immigrants. Enclave businesses, according to Portes and Manning (2013: 210):

typically start small and cater exclusively to an ethnic clientele. Their expansion and entry into the broader market requires ... an effective mobilization of community resources. The social mechanism at work here seems to be a strong sense of reciprocity supported by collective solidarity that transcends the purely contractual character of business transactions.

That relations are not purely contractual applies to the sharing of financial resources and to the relationship between employers and employees. Furthermore, ethnic enclaves take spatial forms: there is a need for proximity of an ethnic market which they initially serve, there is a need for proximity to facilitate the exchange of information, and proximity serves the need for ethnic labour supply. This is where concerns about ethnic enclaves have been expressed in urban policy circles, where questions have been asked about the integration of immigrants into mainstream society:

once an enclave economy has fully developed, it is possible for a newcomer to live his life entirely within the confines of the community. Work, education, and access to health care, recreation and a variety of other services can be found without leaving the bounds of the ethnic economy. This institutional completeness is what enables new immigrants to move ahead economically, despite very limited knowledge of the host culture and language. (Portes & Manning, 2013: 211)

There is then no longer a necessity of acculturation for social mobility, and diverting from one’s ethnic identity is no longer rewarding. It is clear that the ethnic enclave has evoked discussion as to whether its effects are positive or negative: while on the one hand, the enclave may provide networks for new immigrants and economic opportunities, on the other hand the enclave may create negative effects of isolation and concentration. [Table 5.1](#) shows the main arguments that can be found in the broad discussion for or against ethnic concentration. Whereas each can be theorised, it is clear that such theories need empirical testing, and their validity will depend strongly on the particular urban and national context and the migration history of the ethnic group considered as well as the constituent elements of their cultural heritage.

European studies, however, have found that in so far as neighbourhoods produce context effects, for example in so far as there are differences in outcomes along these four dimensions between people living in different neighbourhoods which cannot be explained by their individual characteristics (class, educational level, gender, age, family composition, race/ethnicity), these are due to differences in socio-economic composition of the area. There is no evidence that ethnic or racial residential segregation alone produces any effect, different from the available evidence in the United States. While we may be most familiar with ethnic or racial segregation and read and hear most about how this may ‘threaten’ society, limit children’s life chances and the like, the much more important question is the question of poverty concentration and the possible neighbourhood effects that may follow from living and growing up in a poor neighbourhood, a discussion we will return to later. Let us first look at another process that heavily influences the spatial expression of inequalities in the city and can take a more regional form where cities become contrasted to the surrounding metropolitan area: suburbanisation.

**Table 5.1** Overview of arguments for and against ‘ethnic neighbourhoods’ in European cities

Dimension	For	Against
Social	Network formation, family support	Contacts remain limited to the ethnic group
Economical	Ethnic economy provides jobs	Limited chances for labour market mobility
Political	Communication and organisation of interests	No access to mainstream political domain
Cultural	Conservation of cultural identity	Limited identification, if not withdrawal from dominant culture

## **Suburbanisation**

Suburbanisation is generally understood residentially, as the process whereby an increasing number of people move out of the city to its outskirts, often to single family houses rather than apartments. Initially and especially in the US this has been written about as a middle-class and white practice with working class families moving much later. In Europe, suburbs include working-class families and do not mean single family housing at all. The Paris *banlieues* and Amsterdam South-east are well-known examples of suburban living that is far remote from the stately house with well-manicured lawns, the gas grill on the deck and the white picket fence that comes to the mind of many Americans when they think about the suburbs. Similarly, large council estates in British cities were often built on the edges. While these can be seen as sub-urban in the sense that they are subordinate to the central city in many ways, it may make more sense to refer to these areas as periphery in relation to the centre, a phrasing common in Latin American urban studies (see Ingram & Carroll, 1981; Gilbert, 1996; Marques et al., 2008) where *favelas* can be found on the edges of the central city. As in European cities, affluent enclaves of suburban character can be found beyond those areas again.

## Demand and supply

Gottdiener and Hutchison (2011: 124–8) have pointed to the demand and supply side of suburbanisation and have stressed that the two are intertwined (a discussion not unlike that in the theories of gentrification). Arguments on the demand side maintain that people act as individual market parties with preferences that they like to fulfil. There is a market for it, and that is why new dwellings appear, helped by the technological changes that make commuting to the city and low building costs possible. In a remarkable piece of work, Bruegmann (2011) rejects explanations that see anti-urban sentiment or racism as steering preferences for and thus the development of suburbia. Arguing that the question is not to explain sprawl, but to explain the concerted efforts of urban elites to keep cities from dispersing in earlier times, he identifies privacy, mobility and choice, three factors he sees as depending on affluence and democratic institutions, so that his theory goes beyond a simple assertion about individuals' preferences. When people become more affluent and acquire basic political and economic rights, they can pursue lives previously only available to a small elite. Privacy, then, refers to the ability to take control over one's own living surroundings. Mobility refers to personal and social mobility: being able to travel (by car) and to attain education and employment opportunities. Choice, in Bruegmann's view the most important factor, is the ability of ordinary citizens to choose their living, work and recreational settings (Bruegmann, 2011: 220). The problem with this approach is obvious: it denies the constraints for those who face racism, patriarchy and other forms of power inequalities and discrimination that severely limit all three of these factors. Still, his theory helps explain urban sprawl for those who suburbanised, although it does not explain the limited opportunities for those left behind. As we are interested in the spikiness of cities, suburbanisation should therefore be seen and studied in tandem with the two other processes – segregation and gentrification.

The supply side starts from the idea that capitalists have specific interests in creating a market for suburban living – not just because of the profit to be made on land and buildings, but also, for example, to stimulate the growth of the car industry. It would be wrong to suggest that suburbanisation is simply a question of market supply and demand. Dreier et al. (2013: 151) show that US federal policies have fostered suburbanisation by building highways and stimulating home ownership. This is not unique to the US. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, a home ownership stimulation programme for former residents of the German Democratic Republic, for whom it was close to impossible to acquire property before the end of communism, resulted in a flight from the city to nearby suburbs, creating a *Speckgürtel* around the city whilst leaving over 30,000 apartments, built in the two decades before, standing empty in the high-rise areas of East Berlin by the mid-1990s. Similarly, there are various reasons for the shrinking of cities in eastern Germany, but the government policy of stimulating home ownership and the suburbanisation that resulted is by no means a small factor in this process (Hannemann, 2004). This shows that it makes little sense for intra-urban inequalities to see the urban as a simple expression of neutral market forces just as it did for inter-urban inequalities: power as it is exercised in the political and social processes in the city is a crucial factor.

## **Commercial suburbanisation and sprawl**

Suburbanisation has not remained residential though. Retailing, in the form of shopping malls, manufacturing in the form of high-tech hubs of production arising in the outskirts, and the relocation of offices and administrative headquarters near convenient highway exits and airports rather than in central cities can all be seen as forms of suburbanisation. They create multi-centred metropolitan regions, of which sprawl can be seen as the most serious outcome (Gottdiener & Hutchison, 2011: 324–5): the unplanned, unregulated regional growth around major cities, claiming farmland for development. Sprawl refers both to such outward development in a metropolitan area and to the forms of such development: highways, strip malls, drive-in fast food stores, multi-storey cinema complexes (Jackson, 2011) and other ‘car-centered uses of space’ (Williamson, Imbrosio, & Aplerovitz, 2005: 303). For Fishman (2011), the decentralisation of housing, services and office jobs depends on technological innovation of communication, creating what he calls ‘technoburbs’ or even ‘technocities’, where the latter still bear the name of the core city but enclose a whole region that is multi-centred sprawl which Fishman (2011: 79) argues, may be unplanned but which is not unstructured, and based on its own logic and efficiency that contrasts with early suburbs:

The suburb separated [work and residence] into distinct environments, its logic was that of the massive commute, in which workers from the periphery traveled each morning to a single core and then dispersed each evening. The technoburb, however, contains both work and residence within a single decentralized environment.

Williamson et al. point out that while suburbanisation may be excluding and discriminatory and create a lack of tax base (especially in the US where much more of the revenues of the local state depend on local, especially property taxes!) in the central city, planned small town development in a metropolitan area in itself is not the problem. Indeed, the planning of ‘New Towns’ in British cities, followed also by enlightened urban planners in Dutch and German cities in the 1920s and 1930s, was a social-democratically motivated response of mixed-income communities providing better living conditions than the quickly growing, overcrowded tenement neighbourhoods. Ebenezer Howard, probably the best-known name associated with the garden city movement, was convinced that the ‘town magnet’ with its industrial jobs and its amenities needed to be balanced by the magnets of the country with its features of nature and quiet. He thought it ought to be ‘deeply deplored’ that human beings should live in the dark overcrowded alleys of the early twentieth-century city (Howard, 2011: 329).

Some of the consequences of sprawl are racial and ethnic segregation, a threat to nature and farm production and therefore a shortage of land for food production (particularly problematic in regions in the US) and high ecological costs, as the distances people have to travel by car in order to go about their daily routines increase. Metropolitan political fragmentation also hampers efficient administration. Intra- and inter-urban inequalities are thus linked. This has led authors such as Dreier et al. to argue that the metropolitan area, not the city as such, may be the adequate scale for studying intra-metro inequalities nowadays.

In short, then, suburbanisation and urban sprawl can be seen as social and political problems. While that may make them relevant, why, then, is suburbanisation of relevance to urban theory, other than as a description of particular empirical patterns?

### The relevance of suburbanisation for urban theory

While suburbanisation is to a large extent a class-based process, with the exception of council estates and public housing and of the shanty towns of cities such as São Paulo, it has historically been a process steered by housing choices of the middle classes. However, its theoretical significance for intra-urban inequalities lies in the intersectionality of race, gender and class that is obvious in processes of suburbanisation. First, suburbanisation has been connected to patriarchy and capitalism and discussed within feminist urban theory as an urban development that teaches us that cities ‘are not constructed in a gender-neutral way’ (Frank, 2008: 127). As we will see later, removing women from the city and the public and making them the queens of the domestic, private sphere in the suburbs, realms of reproduction, outside the city has been critically discussed as a product and expression of capitalism and patriarchy, even though scholars such as Frank have also pointed to the historically changing meaning of suburbia for women’s lives.

Second, suburbanisation is a process that helps us understand the formation of racialised spaces. Suburbs within metropolitan areas may try to attract affluent residents because they require less public spending. In the US zoning regulations and in both the US and Europe building codes, prices and straightforward prejudice and discrimination against minorities (see Haynes, 2001) can help some suburbs to remain exclusive. The rise of suburban gated communities may be seen as the extreme form of such suburbanisation. Intersectionality becomes clearest here as those gated communities or common interest developments – areas of housing that do not have to be suburban but also include condominiums in the inner city and are characterised by being run by homeowner associations that provide a range of services privately and set clear regulations on lifestyle – typically are exclusive: their services are exclusive to members, and their practices of selecting who moves in and who is kept out are exclusionary too. To Mike Davis (1990), an urban fear lies behind the development of such fortified enclaves. Caldeira, in her often quoted study of fortified enclaves in São Paulo, points to the class dependency of the middle classes on services delivered by lower-class residents, from providing security to taking care of their children, cleaning the house or, in the case of badly paid ‘office boys’, to pay their bills and ‘standing in all types of lines’ (Caldeira, 2013: 407–8). Setha Low (2003) has shown that the trend towards gated communities is taking place in many corners of the world, even though the cultural and social contexts in which it does so are very diverse. Low sees globalisation as leading to increasing heterogeneity and intra-urban inequalities, which in turn increase crime perceptions and a desire for more safety. Whereas Caldeira and Low hence focus on why people move into such places, Webster (2001) has argued that such communities are produced because services and amenities can be supplied most efficiently and effectively through such small administrations, and the process fits with the neo-liberal turn away from state provisions. It is thus another spatial expression of austerity and inequality with regard to resource access directly related to neo-liberalism and the ideology of the market.

Third, suburbanisation has been discussed within the cultural approaches to urban studies as a residential pattern that induces specific lifestyles and identities. Whereas suburbs are not homogeneous – Schmoe (1963) differentiated half a century ago between bedroom suburbs, service suburbs, mixed residential suburbs and workers’ suburbs – scholars have asked to what extent living in suburbs creates particular lifestyles, or ‘suburbanism as a way of life’ that is distinctive from an urban lifestyle (Gans, 1991). Others, such as Douglas Rae (2003), have theorised the consequences of suburbanisation for urban governance. Suburbanisation, Rae argued, geographically disconnects people’s social-cultural, economic and political citizenship, affecting the political texture of the city and creating problems of political participation and urban governance. As far as urban theorists are interested in urban culture and the city as producer of meanings, suburbs present important changes to traditional views (Wirth and Simmel) of what living in the city is about, and the cultural practices and meanings attached to inner-city and suburban life are also part of the production and consumption of ‘spectacles’ that link culture to political economic concerns (Lin & Mele, 2013: 347); and culture, Zukin (2013: 350) argues, has become a site for explicit conflicts over social differences and urban fear. Moreover, with deindustrialisation and suburbanisation, the central city has become increasingly important as a site of the consumption of culture, with waterfront development, shopping districts and heritage sites as a safe playground for tourists and cultural consumers who come, but neither work nor live in the city. The cultural production of symbols and aesthetics is also one of the central aspects of gentrification, to which we now turn.

Suburbanisation and gentrification have in common that, as processes, they name two different forms of creating sites in the city where social position and location match: in other words, they are names for the processes of creating habitats that match a habitus, whilst, at the same time, the sites themselves impact the habitus and help its reproduction. As we will see in our discussion of ghettoisation afterwards, these processes of resource generating and hoarding are directly related to the deprivation in locations in the city elsewhere.

## Gentrification

Gentrification may well be one of the most studied processes in current urban scholarship, and the case studies, debates and perspectives have become as much a cottage industry as the study of segregation; there is a remarkable absence of explicit links between the two themes, even though scholars do implicitly seem to agree that positions and locations are relational, so that one would expect that the study of middle-class agents, the economic and social processes that contextualise their agency, and the (re)production of inequalities that they bring about could, even should, have a stronger position in the research agenda of urban studies. But gentrification studies have focused more on the middle classes and how they affect the urban than on the interdependence between social groups in the city and the hierarchies that they construct, even though such hierarchies or interdependencies do not go away with gentrification.

With gentrification being such a popular term in urban studies today, the definition of gentrification has been stretched so that it now applies to virtually all forms of neighbourhood upgrading. In its original use by Ruth Glass (1964), however, displacement was a crucial part of the definition. Although scholars have amused themselves with discussions over the issue of definition (see Lees, Slater, & Wily, 2008), it is useful to reserve the term ‘gentrification’ for those processes of urban change that actually include displacement, as this brings some conceptual clarity to a highly politicised theme. Eric Clark is among those scholars who have argued that gentrification could benefit from a broader definition and stimulated discussion (1987; see also Butler & Smith, 2007), but the definition above has achieved textbook status. Like other themes discussed in this chapter, gentrification is a visible expression of economic and socio-political processes that shape contemporary cities. Like other phenomena sometimes also included as gentrification, such as touristification or the redevelopment of brownfield sites, economic processes or economic restructuring and the shift to the service economy and the political processes connected to neo-liberalism as discussed in [Chapter 3](#) can underlie such changes (Smith & Williams, 2010: 10). Defining gentrification in its simple form should not, however, suggest that explaining gentrification is straightforward, as there is no single theory of a homogeneous gentrification process. Put bluntly, gentrification is not ‘simply a facet of capital accumulation’ (Beauregard, 2010: 11). That may be so, but Clark makes quite a strong argument for saying that if gentrification is the change in the population of land users so that the new users have a higher socio-economic status in combination with a changing built environment through the investment of fixed capital (Clark, 2010: 25) then how exactly the process of gentrification changes the urban landscape, at what cost and for whom – and perhaps sometimes at no cost for anyone? – is case-based and we may find additional precision in theory; according to Clark, social polarisation and surrounding property rights may, for example, be the keys to the question why sometimes gentrification generates strong protest and in other cases does not, one of the remarkable features of gentrification. Clark’s important contribution to the discussion on defining gentrification comes, however, after years in which many scholars have tried, first, to describe gentrification as a process – not exactly theorising it in terms of seeking to explain it but rather trying to classify the stages, the characteristics, the shapes and forms, which shows the strong geographical approach to what is just as much a sociological phenomenon. Second, scholars have theorised explanations of gentrification in various ways. Third, scholars have studied, and to some extent theorised, the consequences of gentrification. There also is a broad spectrum of scholars studying gentrification in primarily descriptive ways; those studies that have explicitly looked at gender and gentrification will be briefly returned to in [Chapter 7](#). For understanding urban inequalities within cities, such descriptive studies have not made much of a theoretical contribution.

### **Gentrification as a process**

Gentrification as a process was modelled influentially and early in the debate by Clay (1979) who distinguished four steps. First the pioneers come – artists, bohemians, people willing to take risks and in search of cheap housing. They are then followed by developers and investors. When the media pick up that an area is becoming ‘hip’, more established middle classes take an interest in the place and prices rise. Finally, these middle-class professionals are outpriced by managers and business elites. While this notion of stages has gained textbook status, it is now widely felt that this model was too rigid, insufficiently context-dependent and sincerely limits gentrification as usable as a concept only if artists and bohemians move into an area first – as if no gentrification is possible without artists which is, as many smaller Dutch and German cities can testify, definitely not the case. Berry (1985) tried to develop a more inclusive model including the stages in which the role of the various actors involved, not just the gentrifiers themselves, was made clearer and demand and supply sides combined. Bourne’s (1993) approach was similar, but his modelling was more a matter of defining conditions for gentrification rather than the stages that the process would follow, and, especially, a plea to see gentrification as one of many of the processes that change cities. Two decades later, many may argue that Bourne was ‘wrong’ to expect gentrification to become less important when the pool of gentrifiers simply shrank, and more cities may have witnessed some variation of gentrification – whether or not this is the case of course depends on how one defines the process in the first place! – but that does not make the remark with which he concluded his contribution less important: ‘the challenge for the future will not be the emergence of the elite inner city, but the instability, vulnerability, and in some instances rapid decline of a host of other neighbourhoods’ (Bourne, 1993: 105). Within our metaphor of spikiness, the valleys are valleys because there are peaks, and gentrification can be seen as a spatial expression of more severe inequalities, making the urban landscape spikier. To understand processes of marginalisation, however, requires also the study of gentrification, as both relationally produce sites that structure resource opportunities for their users.

## **Production versus consumption**

Since the 1980s, two perspectives have dominated explanations of gentrification: perspectives that focus on production and those that focus on consumption. The most famous author to explain gentrification through the lens of the mode of production was Neil Smith, a geographer and student of David Harvey, who initially wrote against the 1960s and 1970s explanations that, similar to those we have seen for suburbanisation, assumed consumer sovereignty, and heavily influenced subsequent debate (Smith, 1983). Smith argued that understanding investments and land values was essential to understanding gentrification as a capitalist process. Land and buildings are commodities under capitalism, he argued, and gentrification occurs within the context of the value of land and buildings. The ground rent, that is, the return on the investment given the current land use, may not be optimal, the amount that could be generated by the best use (Smith, 2010: 90) so that a rent gap may exist: the disparity between the potential ground rent level and the actual ground rent capitalised under the present land use (Smith, 2010: 93). He summarises the gentrification process as follows:

Only when this gap emerges can redevelopment be expected since if the present use succeeded in capitalizing all or most of the ground rent, little economic benefit could be derived from redevelopment. As filtering and neighborhood decline proceed, the rent gap widens. Gentrification occurs when the gap is wide enough that developers can purchase shells cheaply, can pay the builders' costs and profit for rehabilitation, can pay interest on mortgage and construction loans, and can then sell the end product for a sale price that leaves a satisfactory return to the developer. The entire ground rent ... is now capitalized; the neighborhood has been 'recycled' and begins a new cycle of use. (Smith, 2010: 93)

Smith later weakened his own position somewhat, acknowledging that gentrification may be explained not only by the actions of advanced capitalists. His rent gap theory has also been heavily debated and criticised, for example by Hamnett (1991), Beauregard (1986), and Ley (1986), and turned out to be difficult to test empirically (Bourassa, 1993). A strong point of criticism by Bourassa (1993) was that the idea of land value or potential rent is explained by a Marxist approach just as little as it is by a neo-economical approach: 'it does not explain how it historically becomes profitable to rehabilitate or redevelop inner-city neighbourhoods'.

Here, then, it becomes clear that explanations of production cannot do without explanations of consumption. Gentrifiers may not do gentrification alone, but without relatively affluent, professional households the whole process cannot take place (Beauregard, 2010: 14). To say they have a preference for urban life means nothing – just as this was not an explanation for the suburban way of life: why do they have such a preference? Various important elements have been discussed here, including the relevance of the changing role of gender relations (women deciding if and when to have children, participating in the labour market and purchasing careers, are important actors in producing new gendered urban spaces and gentrification can be partly seen in this light: Bondi, 2010), or the role of aesthetics and distinction in class practices (Jager, 2010). Ley (1980, 1994) has linked gentrification to left liberal politics of the new middle class of professionals in social and cultural fields for whom living in the central city is a collective identity. For Caulfield (1989), gentrification is (partly) explained by the fact that culture of everyday life is not simply a consumer preference or a demand created by capital, but also active cultural practices that serve the establishment of identities and identifications. As Rose (2010: 209) has discussed, though, some of the spatial solutions people, such as employed women with children, seek to solve their social problems are indications of how people use the city as a site of resources and generate resources in the city. Lifestyle as such is not something they pick up the way you pick clothes or shoes when shopping.

Realising that gentrification hence is also about the gentrifying residents themselves and not just a matter of broad processes, whether accorded a neo-economic or Marxist explanation, does not mean one only needs to think of the demand side as individual people having lifestyle-based preferences, but needs to include the idea that cultural consumption can also be an investment (Zukin, 2010: 225), and can be studied in terms of strategies to ensure resources to reproduce social status and, indeed, create spatial profit in Bourdieu's terms, which is obviously a very different understanding of profit on a different scale than the Marxist perspectives of economic profit and land use.

## **Displacement**

Gentrification, then, comes with the displacement of lower-status users of the space. Displacement, 'the forced disenfranchisement of poor and working class people from the spaces and the places to which they have legitimate social and historical claims' (Lees, Slater, & Wyly, 2010: 317), directly affects the spatiality of inequalities. As displacement alters the access to resources directly, the analyses of displacement seem to be even more politically divided than the debate on the definition of gentrification as such. Here again a definitional issue is at stake. What do we mean by disenfranchisement? When is it forced and when do people voluntarily leave an area? If residents voluntarily leave because they are socially mobile and aspire to a suburban lifestyle, or to suburban schools for their children, is there still displacement? Peter Marcuse has tried to bring some structure to this discussion by distinguishing between direct and indirect displacement. Direct displacement comes in two forms: people can no longer afford the rent and therefore have to move; or repairs are no longer being done, the property is no longer managed and so on so that the quality of life deteriorates so much that people would rather move, the so-called last-resident displacement or chain displacement where prior households occupying the same unit also become displaced. Indirect displacement occurs symbolically as 'pressure of displacement' when changes in the commercial infrastructure, the culture of the neighbourhood and the ways of behaving that dominate public spaces are experienced as exclusionary. As Centner (2008) has pointed out more generally, spatial capital can be used as an exclusionary tool: exclusionary claims on public space that are socially legitimate may, through privileged consumption, create space perceived as exclusionary. Exclusionary displacement, then, is the form of indirect displacement where gentrification comes with new limitations on who is and who is not entitled to move into a dwelling, by a change in condition which affects that dwelling or its immediate surroundings (Marcuse, 1986: 185).

Displacement is an important theme in theories of intra-urban inequalities because it immediately touched on the capabilities to access and create resources to get by and get ahead. Indeed, as Newman and Wyly (2010: 566) have said, those who are forced to leave neighbourhoods may be torn from rich local social networks of information and co-operation. Whether such neighbourhood communities of support and solidarity indeed exist everywhere is doubtful (Blokland 2003a). The extent to which displacement hampers or creates opportunities for the poor is therefore primarily an empirical question and one that is dependent on the context. Clearly, where homelessness and overcrowding are the consequences of capital investment and market speculation, there are no 'advantages'. On the other hand, the strong politicisation of the gentrification debate blurs the view on the consequences. When Curley (2008) found that residents who were relocated through government programmes dispersing the poor (Hope IV) in the US were not suffering but instead were more likely to have a job and more likely to have their children doing better in school after being relocated, she argued that the end of 'draining' their social capital to other members of a poor neighbourhood made these households stronger. It may well be that in terms of feeling at home and belonging they may not have liked their new places that much. It would be odd, however, to be concerned with the life chances and severe structural inequalities of people but then to argue that their right to stay put for cultural and identity reasons is so important that their right to move up is ignored. We do not argue that displacement is not a problem, normatively and politically. Of course it is. However, the idea that, before the evil practices start, gentrifying neighbourhoods are nice, close-knit, positive places for poor residents is a nostalgic image that serves a political debate, but is in strong need of empirical back-up. It is not at all clear that the neighbourhoods undergoing gentrification always match this 'urban village' image that seems to inform the debate. Indeed, it is remarkable that the part of urban sociology that studies poor inner-city areas for their problems and apparent *lack* of cohesion and community is so remote from the part that engages with gentrification. Scholars have become very critical about the idea of a 'social mix' of people differing in race, class and ethnicity. According to Slater's provocative article, academic writers and policy makers debating social mix form 'an excellent example of how the rhetoric and reality of gentrification have been replaced by a different discursive, theoretical and policy language that consistently deflects criticism and resistance' (Slater 2006: 751).

The very idea of gentrification as a 'disruption of community' (Slater, 2006: 752) is based on the assumption that a locally bounded, well-functioning community is there in the first place. The debate on ghettoisation, however, shows that not only reinvestment in inner cities, investment in suburbs, but also economic, political and social deinvestment in poor areas (ghettoisation or spatial marginalisation) is part of the picture of the spiky urban landscape.

### Ghettoisation as a spatial process of marginalisation

While segregation and suburbanisation have been discussed as the terms urban theorists have used to make sense of the segregating forces of middle classes and whites and their behaviour on the housing market, including the political economy steering these actions, the twin to these processes is the marginalisation or ghettoisation of other neighbourhoods. One needs to be a little careful with suggesting that gentrification and suburbanisation are responsible for areas of concentrated disadvantage. Poor neighbourhoods, or even ‘ghettos’ where poverty and ethnic minority or racial status coincide, are the spatial expressions of processes in which local labour market situations, the state and other ‘institutional assemblages’ entrench poverty (Theodore, 2010: 170). They are spatial expressions of processes of marginalisation. Marginalisation is the opposite process of the advancement of the clustering of forms of capital elsewhere in the city, and the processes that make locations where strong positions can be maintained take place in a double bind with processes in the other direction. As we will see below, these include economic restructuring under conditions of technological development and globalisation, the articulation of racism and discrimination, spatial stereotyping, the ideological construction of ‘blaming the poor’, if not punishing them, based on behavioural understandings of poverty, and neo-liberal policy-making in times of austerity. In this section we trace the linkage between poverty and place back in the development of social sciences, discuss the notion of ghetto and then discuss these four processes of marginalisation.

Ever since the onset of industrialisation and the intense urbanisation that came with it, social critics have been concerned with the living conditions of the lower and working classes, who are the majority in the city: ‘temporarily durable existence for hard work’ is how Friedrich Engels described their lives after visiting London and Manchester at the end of the nineteenth century, and their segregated lives seemed to matter to no one: ‘society, composed wholly of atoms, does not trouble itself about them; leaves them to take care of themselves and their families, yet supplies them no means of doing this in an efficient and permanent manner’ (Engels, 2011: 54). It is not the slum or the poor neighbourhood as such that is new. What is different about poor neighbourhoods in the cities of the Global North now, and since roughly the 1950s, is, first, the way in which they are affected by economic restructuring and, second, the way in which they are affected by neo-liberal policy and austerity measures. Moreover, neighbourhoods may be homogeneous in class and race because society involuntarily segregates some of its members (Gans, 2008: 356) based on racism and discrimination.

## 'Ghetto' as a term in urban studies

The use of the term 'ghetto' in urban sociology goes back to Wirth's (1928) early work with the same title. Wirth aimed to show how the Jewish European ghetto was reproduced in Chicago at the time, tried to classify the Jews living there according to their lifestyle characteristics and noted that the ghetto was the product of the historical exclusion of Jews from mainstream society. It was strictly used to refer to Jewish neighbourhoods, and Wirth did not see them as much different from other ethnic neighbourhoods where first-generation migrants embarked on their way to assimilation (Haynes & Hutchison, 2008: 349–50). Robert Weaver's (1940) first study of racial segregation then linked the term to black residents, whilst Kenneth Clark discussed in *Dark Ghetto* (1965) the problems that came with racial segregation, referring to both its 'pervasive pathology' and its 'surprising human resilience' (quoted in Haynes & Hutchison, 2008: 351). Two points about this early work are of particular importance. First, notwithstanding his ecological approach, Wirth did note that the ghetto 'is not so much a physical fact as it is a state of mind' (Wirth, 1928: 287, quoted in Tonkiss, 2005: 54). Second, as Tonkiss (2005: 45–6) writes,

‘thinkers such as ... Wirth wanted to highlight the changing nature of social space in modern cities, and the mutually determining effects of culture and space, but their accounts could not always avoid lapsing into gestures of spatial and cultural fixity. The hangover from [this kind] of thinking is felt in the way that different parts of the city come to be identified with particular cultural, ethnic or racial ‘types’. Bounded spaces, that is, are defined, understood and often pathologized in terms of distinct groups.

Public opinion and discourse has come to refer to such areas as ghettos, increasingly also in European media. The tendency is a 'dilution of the notion of ghetto simply to designate an urban area of widespread and intense poverty, which obfuscates the racial basis and character of this poverty and divests the term of both historical meaning and sociological content' (Wacquant, 1997: 342)

While in the US such neighbourhoods have long been called 'ghettos' and European media have hyped this moral panic (Slater, 2010), European scholars have been hesitating to use the term, or have argued that it analytically makes no sense to do so, often claiming that Europe does not have 'American conditions' (Wacquant, 1997, 2008; Agnew, 2010; Nobles, 2010; Slater, 2010; Peach, 1996; Simpson, 2007). More than in the US, it seemed in welfare states such as France, the Netherlands, the Nordic countries, Germany and even Great Britain as if poverty, unemployment and their political and social consequences had disappeared in the booming years of welfare growth and welfare state development after the Second World War. From the 1970s, however, new forms of polarisation began to characterise European cities (Häussermann, Kronauer, & Siebel, 2004: 7) so that European scholars started to note the emergence of new poverty, often linked to migration ('ethnicising' poverty – see Häussermann et al., 2004: 9) and to find spatial expression in neighbourhoods where poor, migrants and the unemployed concentrated, although such concentration could by no means be compared to the concentration known from the US (Musterd & Ostendorf, 1998b). Madanipour (2011: 188–91) prefers to speak of social exclusion rather than poverty or marginalisation, as this allows him to stress the cultural, economic and political dimensions rather than just whether one is poor or not. In European countries such as Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and France, social exclusion has also been the core concept in policies aimed at combating disadvantage, whereby the 'spatiality of exclusion' has often, as in Britain, resulted in 'attempts to dismantle pockets of deprivation without necessarily dismantling the causes of deprivation or the forces bringing them together in particular enclaves' (2011: 191). Madanipour does see a relevance of spatial practices for exclusion. Exclusion, he writes (2011: 191), is a matter of resource access of various sorts; and such resources have 'clear spatial manifestations'.

Apart from poverty not being as extreme or as extremely concentrated, it has been pointed out that the scale, the exclusive black demography of the impoverished US tracts, and the ubiquity and lethality of crime in the American ghetto are all unlike the characteristics of very poor European areas (Western, 2010; see also Wacquant 1993: 366–7). Ghettos as neighbourhoods of the unemployed have been analysed by Americans, as O'Connor (2004: 69–70) has warned her European audience, within the tradition of 'analyzing the deviance of the poor in the ghetto without questioning the role of the free economic market as such'. While this may be a little too strong and not do full justice to Wilson and other American scholars, O'Connor of course correctly points out that taking American frames of references as 'theories' to understand empirical patterns of concentrated poverty and the processes of marginalisation that bring them about and make them durable must be done with caution (Wacquant, 1996). Various scholars have pointed to the metaphorical meaning of 'ghetto' in international scholarship nowadays (Monteiro, 2008: 378), with its strong behavioural connotations (Blokland, 2008b). We return to this below, as this ideology of blaming the poor for their own poverty is one of the important processes of marginalisation, a process of symbolic violence.

## Economic restructuring and marginalisation

Most urban scholars, whether they reject the ‘ghetto’ label or not, agree that the economic restructuring in the context of globalisation is one of the main processes of marginalisation. The displacement of manufacturing by service industries and the geographical relocation of industries as part of globalisation have been facilitated by the presence of docile, cheap workforces in the peripheries of the world. Outsourcing has made further fragmentation of the production process possible (Wacquant, 1995: 424). The new urban poverty that we now witness in the increasingly spiky city is not, however, just a matter of the disappearance of work. The workforce is split between highly skilled professional and technical jobs and, where jobs have not disappeared, the deskilling of the labour force. Low-skilled jobs have not gone altogether, but are more often part-time, require flexible working and carry less security and fewer benefits, with social goods such as health care coverage becoming privatised (Wacquant, 1999: 1641–2). One of the current debates focuses on the question whether this precariousness actually constitutes a new social class of ‘precariat’ (Fraser, 2013). It is clear at least that models of the spatial mismatch – the jobs are located where the poor people do not live and bad transportation makes them inaccessible – are too simple. Even when people living in poverty do find jobs, these tend to be poorly paid, part-time, temporary jobs with few if any benefits and no long-term prospects.

While poverty is not new and unemployment is not new either, the type of work available, if any, to the poor has transformed in character, reducing the chance that getting a job is the way out of poverty. Those who grow up in neighbourhoods of extreme poverty, then, are even more disadvantaged in the competition for such low-skilled jobs than poor living in less poor areas. The first reason for this is that, according to some scholars, the habitus needed for being successful in job applications is learnt through socialisation processes of others who work: the absence of such role models makes it difficult to learn the right dress code, manners and body language to get into jobs even as simple as flipping burgers in a fast-food restaurant.

Moreover, since Granovetter’s (1973) seminal study on how people find work it has been well known in the social sciences that the few jobs that are available can often be accessed through others in their social networks (see also van Eijk, 2010, for how this is related to neighbourhood). These two factors and spatial mismatch make the situation of poverty more severe and durable for those living in high-poverty areas. In addition, they may be subjected to residential discrimination as a result of spatial stigmatisation.

Stigmatisation was developed theoretically by Ervin Goffman (1990), who discussed how negative group characteristics were ascribed to individuals who then found strategies to cope with stigma, of which distancing was an important one (Blokland, 2008a). The negative stereotyping of high-poverty neighbourhoods as dangerous no-go areas influences the mental maps of many urbanites and becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy once people outside these areas start to avoid going there altogether and treat residents of such areas with fear and disrespect. While there is ample discussion of the supposed consequences of stigmatisation and, as Hastings (2004) shows in her overview of recent literature, various studies discuss the causes of stigmatisation, the actual process remains a black box, as does the question whether applying the under-theorised notion of stigma means the same and works the same ways in each of the very different city and national contexts. Although the evidence is not very systematic, it is often and quickly argued that the media stigmatise by reporting selectively and negatively about specific areas (Cole & Smith, 1996; Damer, 1974; Häussermann & Kapphan, 2002: 230). As in all labelling (Gans, 1995), those who decide what is news (Gans, 1979) have a powerful position to label disadvantaged neighbourhoods as dangerous and immoral urban areas that one should avoid. Such a ‘*blemish of place*’ may be superimposed on the already existing stigmata traditionally associated with poverty and ethnic origin or postcolonial immigrant status, to which it is closely linked but not reducible’ (Wacquant, 2007: 67).

Wacquant points to the impossibility of being home in a stigmatised neighbourhood: such spaces are no longer places with which one can identify, cannot function as a site for resource mobilisation and become a ‘battlefield’ (Wacquant, 2007: 70). Residential discrimination occurs when people are ascribed negative attributes based on where they live, affecting chances of finding jobs, interactions with the police and street-level bureaucrats (Wacquant, 1996). One may suspect that institutions deal differently with different people depending on where they live or where the particular institution is located: a boy acting up in school in a deprived area may be ascribed a mentality that is the product of his habitat, while the same behaviour in a boy in an advantaged neighbourhood may be seen as an individual psychological problem in need of remedial support. No one knows to what extent this really happens, as few have studied such internal logics of institutions empirically.

### **Stigma, discrimination and racism**

Residential discrimination and stigma become complex and especially harsh when combined with ethnic or racial discrimination. Discrimination and violence against immigrants occur in all major urban areas in Europe (Wrench & Solomos, 1993; Bjørge & Witte, 1993). But not all high-poverty areas need to be linked to racism and discrimination. In cities like Helsinki, Warsaw or Budapest this may, given the low ethnic and racial diversity, not make sense, whereas these cities too have their stigmatised areas. In many European cities and in all North American cities, however, a strong connection between extreme poverty and ethnic minority status exists, and high-poverty areas are also the areas where ethnic minorities concentrate, so that then racism and discrimination as marginalising practices do have to be taken into account. Wacquant (1995, 1997) identifies four elementary forms of racial domination, summarised as categorisation, discrimination, segregation and exclusionary violence, and shows how these apply to the Chicago ghetto.

Typically, spatial expressions of racism and ethnic discrimination categorise one group with ascribed characteristics as homogeneous. Scholars have long tried to challenge such actions. Du Bois in *The Philadelphia Negro* had made an effort to counter the tendency to consider African-Americans as a homogeneous mass, arguing that there was a ‘class of criminals and prostitutes’, a ‘class of honest poor with no touch of gross immorality or crime’, a respectable working class and a class of ‘families of undoubted respectability’. Du Bois stated that ‘coloured people are seldom judged by their best classes and often the very existence of classes among them is ignored’ (Du Bois, 2013: 179). His work resonates, however, with the connection between poverty and culture that was later found in the culture of poverty thesis and the underclass debate, and also shows similarity to the later distinction, as in the work of Elijah Anderson (1990, between ‘the decent’ and ‘the street’. In a way, the attempt to show that there are morally good people too – and that deviance is a sign of immoral character – does not escape the categorisation of inferiority as such. It is to the culture of poverty through the lens of the ideological construction of blaming the poor as a process of marginalisation that we now turn.

The conceptualisation of the ghetto in terms of space as container is crucial to the underclass concept (Gilbert, 1997, 2000, 2010). This pathologising of specific areas of the city as containing a culture of poverty resonated with the more general debate on urban poverty that has throughout its history carried implicit notions about spatial proximity. From the time social reformists and others starting portraying poverty in the days of Engels quoted above, the poor were seen as ‘suffering from individual pathology or from social disorganization’ (Gans, 1991: 300). With far less attention to neighbourhood poverty and pathology in the years to follow, the 1960s showed a return to the idea of poor people being deviant and pathological, and what is more, to the notion that they collectively constituted a group that deviated from mainstream society with different morals and norms.

## The culture of poverty

Oscar Lewis (1961, 1966a, 1966b) is credited with having coined the ‘culture of poverty thesis’. Describing the lives of families living in severe poverty in Mexico and Puerto Rico, Lewis argued that some of the poor developed a culture of poverty as both an adaptation and a reaction to their marginal position in a stratified, individualised society. Their ways of life presented coping strategies in the face of knowing they were unable to escape the despair of their lives in poverty. This, then, is what came to distinguish in the discussions that followed – and there were many – those just being poor from ‘the underclass’: although initially defined just economically, the concept of the underclass came to be adapted to make similar arguments about the importance of culture for understanding the coping of specific sections of the poor, partly psychological and partly behavioural, not so much to explain poverty as to explain how poverty became durable and inherited over generations. Katz (1990) and Gans (1991) are among those who have traced the development of the concept and shown how it developed in the American debate into a racialised term used for blacks (and Hispanics) and a term pointing to harmful behaviour, so that the concept ‘in essence proposes that some very poor people are somehow to be selected for separation from the rest of society’ (Gans, 1991: 333) and links the underclass to poor areas, which has one way or the other always been the case in the discussion about poverty.

Homogenising people living in high-poverty areas, the culture that they develop internally within their neighbourhood, even though initially their plight may have economic causes, perpetuates the poverty they are in, with its pathologies, because of what in the neighbourhood effects literature has been discussed as lack of cohesion or social control (known as the social disorganisation thesis), the absence of role models or presence of the inappropriate role models (the epidemic or contamination thesis), or deviance as a form of resistance against the mainstream (the subaltern thesis). Katz (1990) has summarised the major issues in the debate around the underclass, where whether individuals are responsible for their own poverty, whether culture plays a role in perpetuating poverty and dependence, whether family structures reproduce social pathologies, whether the ecological context influences behaviour, what the capacity of institutions is (and why they fail) and why poverty persists despite public policy are the questions steering these discussions.

Gans points out that those who have argued that the poor are not suffering from some deviant culture but instead economically deprived take what he has described as a situational view. People respond to situations available to them and change their behaviour accordingly; those taking the cultural view assume that people react to situations out of prior values and modes of behaviour:

When a behavior pattern is identified as part of a larger and interrelated cultural system, and when the causes of that pattern are ascribed to ‘the culture’, there is a tendency to see the behavior pattern and its supporting norms as resistant to change and as persisting simply because they are cultural, although there is no real evidence that culture is as unchanging as assumed.

Hence if one is to use a term like ‘underclass’ in urban theory, it must be a precise, analytical use:

if the concept of underclass is used, it must be a structural concept: it must denote a new socio-spatial patterning of class and racial domination, recognizable by the unprecedented concentration of the most socially excluded and economically marginal members of the dominated racial and economic group. It should not be used as a label to designate a new breed of individuals molded by a mythical and all-powerful culture of poverty. (Wacquant & Wilson, 2013: 191)

Whilst scholars became critical of the idea of a culture of poverty as an explanation of disadvantage and heavily debated the use or misuse of the term ‘underclass’, the social disorganisation thesis continued to be important in discussions on poverty concentration and the idea of the ghetto. ‘New urban poverty’ is the term that scholars like William Julius Wilson (1996: 123) have used for poor, segregated neighbourhoods where a substantial majority of the adult residents are unemployed. It is the absence of work, not poverty as such, that Wilson holds responsible for the severe lack of basic opportunities and resources and inadequate social controls in the ‘jobless ghettos’ which are different from impoverished neighbourhoods that were ‘institutional ghettos’ in that their structure and activities paralleled those of the wider society from which its residents were excluded.

Indeed, Loïc Wacquant speaks of the *hyperghetto* in comparison to what he sees as the more traditional ghetto. Ghettos were areas of severe segregation dominated by poverty, but not all were poor and the poor included working-class poor families. Only with deindustrialisation and the mobility of anyone who could move out of these areas (also due to desegregation laws in the US context) did the social infrastructure of these areas collapse, positive role models disappear, and networks to get ahead and get by deteriorate. ‘The relatively cohesive black community of the 1950s’, says Wacquant (1995: 418), ‘has given way to a deepening division between relatively secure middle and working classes and an increasingly vulnerable and isolated segment of minority poor.’ The hyperghetto, then, may not be a ‘container’ in which we can find one ‘culture of poverty’. Yet at the same time scholars such as Wacquant have pointed out that socio-economic marginality there does translate, in his view, into ‘the corrosion of the self’, into ‘collective demoralization’ (Wacquant, 2010b: 216), mutual distancing and retreat into the private sphere (Wacquant, 2010b: 217). The hyperghetto may have its own social logic; it is also socially disorganised. Social organisation can be defined as

the extent to which the residents of a neighbourhood are able to maintain effective social control and realize their common goals. There are three major dimensions of neighbourhood social organization: 1) the prevalence, strength and interdependence of social networks; 2) the extent of collective supervision that the residents exercise and the degree of personal responsibility they assume in addressing neighbourhood problems and 3) the rate of resident participation in voluntary and formal organizations. (Wilson, 1996: 124)

Wacquant has maintained that the ghetto is not disorganised but organised on different principles, that it is in fact ‘patterned’ and has a ‘distinctive, if unstable, social logic’ (Wacquant, 1997: 347).

Gans (1991: 88) has pointed critically to the sharp reading that this theorising about ghettoisation requires. The writings of Wilson, Wacquant and others on the advanced marginalisation of the hyperghetto are based on the disappearance of jobs (see also Wilson, 1996) in combination with the social despair that developed in (not just poor but) high-poverty areas where the working class and lower middle class were living. Gans warns that economic and racial inequalities explain the contrast between the poor inner-city neighbourhoods and richer suburbs. No housing policy could have realistically ended the class and racial inequality: ‘the suburban exodus may not have ameliorated these patterns, but it did not cause them’. Gilbert (2010: 149) too has argued that using labels like ‘ghetto’ or ‘hyperghetto’ may negate the ways in which the ghetto is created and maintained through wider social, economic and political processes, even though this is exactly what scholars like Wacquant aim to do.

## Ghetto and urban policy

Ghettoisation has, finally, been linked to the changing urban policies under conditions of austerity and the neo-liberal turn. Neo-liberalism rests on the assumption that the market is the preferred mechanism for the distribution of goods and resources, and that individuals themselves have the task of acting as actors on that market. This approach fits nicely with the culture of poverty thesis, albeit in a slightly different form: influenced by the work of Charles Murray (1984), poor people are no longer understood as either the passive victims of a deviant culture that reproduces their position or as the passive victims of structural forces that keep them poor as they are marginalised as an unnecessary underclass in the labour market, but instead as rational actors. Murray's favourite group, black young single mothers in the United States, is presented to his readers as active rational actors that weigh up the costs and benefits of finding a low-paid job against relying on welfare payments, welfare payments that become available to them when they have a child without a partner. What have derogatively been called 'welfare queens' are thus in his view no longer people with the wrong morals, but women making choices on the rationality of the welfare state: it is easy to see that in such a stick-and-carrot understanding of poverty, cutting welfare benefits and punishing the poor for not working becomes, and in the United States has become, the next logical step. The retrenchment of the welfare state means that rights to public aid have been replaced by the obligation to work (Wacquant, 1999: 1643). Policy has moved in a similar direction in Europe too, albeit less sharply. Other policy areas have been affected by neo-liberal changes as well. It is not difficult to see how a bigger role of the private market in housing and a retreat of the state from the housing sector add to marginalisation by further relegating poor people to those areas they can still afford when other neighbourhoods are gentrifying, resulting in an increased concentration of poverty in parts of the city, a city that becomes spikier in the process. Disinvestment in public services such as infrastructure and parks, education and social and health services affect those areas disproportionately, because poor people rely on such public services more than those who can afford the alternative of meeting their needs in the private market. Various authors have pointed to the state intervention in poverty areas that have remained (or become) strong, namely where the state acts to control. Body-Gendrot (2000) has argued that cities in the US have turned to repressive policing and crime fighting in ghettos where the French have developed integration policies of various kinds to exert social control over the poor and ethnic minorities, and explains these policies as the state reaction to an increasing insecurity among its constituents: economic crises, globalisation and the flexibilisation of the labour market have heightened an anxiety to which the state has no proper answer as the causes lie elsewhere. Controlling the poor comes with stigmatising them and the places where they live as a project to conceal the impotence of the state to take away such anxieties.

Wacquant goes even further and maintains that the ghetto and the prison belong to the same 'organizational genus': they are 'institutions of forced confinement' (Wacquant, 2010a: 81). The incarceration of black men in the US, for example, is in Wacquant's analysis not a matter of a crime-punishment connection, but a 'core state capacity devoted to managing dispossessed and dishonoured populations' (Wacquant, 2010a: 80).

Segregation, suburbanisation, gentrification and ghettoisation are thus the main processes that create spatial profits for some and spatial disadvantage for others, increasing intra-urban inequalities. The question that arises of course is why this matters. Theories of neighbourhood effects have tried to measure the consequences of the segregated city and to theorise how they come about. The next section discusses these theories.