

## Poverty, crime and education

贫困、犯罪与教育

### The paradox of the ghetto

贫民窟的悖论

Unnervingly, poor children seem to fare better in poor neighbourhoods

令人奇怪的是，穷人家的孩子若是生活在贫困区域，表现反而更好。

THE poorest people in Leicester by a wide margin are the Somalis who live in the St Matthews housing estate. Refugees from civil war, who often passed through Sweden or the Netherlands before fetching up in the English Midlands, they endure peeling surroundings and appalling joblessness. At the last census the local unemployment rate was three times the national average. But Abdikayf Farah, who runs a local charity, is oddly upbeat. Just look at the children, he says.

生活在 Leicester 郊区最穷的人是索马里人，他们生活在 St Matthews 住宅区。在他们来到英国中部之前，作为内战的难民，索马里人经常穿越瑞典或者荷兰。他们忍受环境的盘剥，因没有工作而担惊受怕。在最近的人口普查中，当地的失业率是不列颠全国平均水平的三倍。但在当地从事慈善事业的 Abdikayf Farah 却莫名的乐观。他说，看看那些孩子就明白我为什么乐观了。

Close to Mr Farah's office is Taylor Road Primary School—which, it turns out, trumps almost every school in Leicester in standardised tests. Its headmaster, Chris Hassall, credits the Somali immigrants, who insist that their children turn up for extra lessons at weekends and harry him when they seem to fall behind. Education is their ticket out of poverty. Poor district, wonderful school, well-ordered children: in Britain, the combination is not as unusual as one might suppose.

紧挨着 Farah 办公室的是泰勒路小学——这个小学在 Leicester 地区的标准化测验中的成绩优于本地区绝大多数学校。该校校长 Chris Hassall 赞叹道，Somali 的移民，坚持让他们的孩子在周末补课，而当孩子们的成绩落后的时候，就敦促校长严格要求。教育是他们摆脱贫困的通行证。贫困的街区、完美的学校、秩序井然的孩子们：在不列颠，如此的组合并不是人们通常想的那么稀奇。

Britain has prized the ideal of economically mixed neighbourhoods since the 19th century. Poverty and disadvantage are intensified when poor people cluster, runs the argument; conversely, the rich are unfairly helped when they are surrounded by other rich people. Social mixing ought to help the poor. It sounds self-evident—and colours planning regulations that ensure much social and affordable housing is dotted among more expensive private homes. Yet “there is absolutely no serious evidence to support this,” says Paul Cheshire, a professor of economic geography at the London School of Economics (LSE).

自 19 世纪以来，不列颠的人们就赞同这样一种理念：不同经济水平的人比邻而居。当穷人聚居起来时，贫穷和种种不便的问题也随之集聚，这引发争论；相应的，富人的邻居都是富人的时候，富人也会得到偏袒。不同阶层混居当能帮助穷人。这个想法听上去是自洽的——并且也影响了管理规则的制定。这些规定使得社交更为便利、价格更为合适的公寓布局在更为昂贵的私人住宅中。然而“绝对没有过硬的证据表明这个看法是对的”，伦敦经济学院的经济地理学教授 Paul Cheshire 如是说。

And there is new evidence to suggest it is wrong. Researchers at Duke University in America followed over 1,600 children from age five to age 12 in England and Wales. They

found that poor boys living in largely well-to-do neighbourhoods were the most likely to engage in anti-social behaviour, from lying and swearing to such petty misdemeanours as fighting, shoplifting and vandalism, according to a commonly used measure of problem behaviour. Misbehaviour starts very young (see chart 1) and intensifies as they grow older. Poor boys in the poorest neighbourhoods were the least likely to run into trouble. For rich kids, the opposite is true: those living in poor areas are more likely to misbehave.

并且有新的证据表明这个观点是错误的。美国杜克大学的研究者追踪了研究英格兰和威尔士超过 1600 名儿童，从 5 岁一直观察到 12 岁。他们发现穷人家的男孩如果生活在生活裕如的邻居边上，很容易进行反社会行为，从说谎、辱骂这样的小过失到诸如打架、偷窃商品和恣意毁坏公共物品的行为。其行为评定的依据是根据常用的问题行为判断标准。这些孩子的行为不端问题起源很早，而在他们长大之后这些问题出现频繁。生活在周遭最贫困环境的男孩最不可能陷入麻烦。对于富家子弟，结论是反过来的：生活在贫穷区域的那些更容易行为不端。

The researchers suggest several reasons for this. Poorer areas are often heavily policed, deterring would-be miscreants; it may be that people in wealthy places are less likely to spot misbehaviour, too. Living alongside the rich may also make the poor more keenly aware of their own deprivation, suggests Tim Newburn, a criminologist who is also at the LSE. That, in turn, increases the feelings of alienation that are associated with anti-social conduct and criminal behaviour.

研究者们提出了如下的原因解释这一现象。较为贫穷的区域是警方重点布控的地方，这阻止了孩子们成为恶棍；也可能生活在高档区域的人们较少检举不端行为。伦敦经济学院的犯罪学家 Tim Newburn 认为，生活在富人旁边也可能让穷人感觉到自己是被剥夺了。于是，穷人们那种被遗弃的感觉越发强烈，最终导致反社会行为和犯罪行为。

Research on England's schools turns up a slightly different pattern. Children entitled to free school meals—a proxy for poverty—do best in schools containing very few other poor children, perhaps because teachers can give them plenty of attention. But, revealingly, poor children also fare unusually well in schools where there are a huge number of other poor children. That may be because schools have no choice but to focus on them. Thus in Tower Hamlets, a deprived east London borough, 60% of poor pupils got five good GCSEs (the exams taken at 16) in 2013; the national average was 38%. Worst served are pupils who fall in between, attending schools where they are insufficiently numerous to merit attention but too many to succeed alone (see chart 2).

对于英格兰学校的研究却有一些不同的情形。有资格接受学校免费午餐—贫困的标志之一的学生在学校里（没有其他贫困学生）表现最好。这是因为老师可以给予他们足够的关注。不过，也有发现表明，在全是贫困学生的学校里，穷人家孩子的表现也是出奇得好。这也许是因为学校别无他法，只能把关注点都集中在他们身上。在东伦敦一个贫瘠的自治区，Tower Hamlets，60%的穷学生在 2013 年的 GCSE 测验（16 岁开始测验）中得到 5 的好等级，全国平均水平是 38%。表现最差的是不算很贫穷但又不是很富裕人家的孩子，在所就读的学校，他们的人数没有多到可以得到关注，但想要出人头地他们的人数又太多了。

Mr Cheshire reckons that America, too, provides evidence of the limited benefits of social mixing. Look, he says, at the Moving to Opportunity programme, started in the 1990s, through which some poor people received both counselling and vouchers to move to richer neighbourhoods. Others got financial help to move as they wished, but no counselling. A third group received nothing. Studies after 10-15 years suggested that the incomes and

employment prospects of those who moved to richer areas had not improved. Boys who moved showed worse behaviour and were more likely to be arrested for property crime.

Cheshire 认为, 美国也有证据表明混合社会的局限性。他认为, 在始于 20 世纪 90 年代的“奔向机遇”的项目中, 通过这个项目, 一些穷人在搬去与富人为邻之前接受了咨询和金融券。一些人正如期待的那样得到了金融帮助, 但是没有接受咨询。第三组什么也没获得。经过 10 年到 15 年之后, 研究表明, 收益和就业都得以保障的那些人并没有任何提升。搬过去的男孩子表现出更严重的行为问题, 并且更可能因为金钱犯罪而被逮捕。

In Britain, this pattern might be partly explained by the existence of poor immigrant neighbourhoods such as St Matthews in Leicester. The people who live in such ghettos are poor in means, because they cannot speak English and lack the kind of social networks that lead to jobs, but not poor in aspiration. They channel their ambitions through their children.

在不列颠, 这种现象可以得到部分证实。诸如住在 Leicester St Matthews 区的贫困移民的存在就可以证实这点。生活在这些地区的人们平均生活水平属于贫困状态, 因为他们不会说英语, 也缺乏那些可以提供工作的社会关系网络, 不过他们不乏进取的勇气。他们把自己的进取之心传递给了自己的孩子。

Another probable explanation lies in the way that the British government hands out money. Education funding is doled out centrally, and children in the most indigent parts tend to get the most cash. Schools in Tower Hamlets receive 7,014 (\$10,610) a year for each child, for example, compared with the English average of 4,675. Secondary schools also get 935 for each poor child thanks to the “pupil premium” introduced by the coalition government. Meanwhile Teach First sends top graduates into poor schools. In America, by contrast, much school funding comes from local property taxes, so those in impoverished areas lose out.

另外一个可能的解释跟不列颠政府的资金流向有关。教育基金的支出是集约式的, 最需要援助的孩子会得到最多的资金。Tower Hamlets 的学校每个孩子每年可以获得 7014 英镑。而英格兰平均水平是 4675 英镑。由于联合政府的“小学生奖金”, 中学的贫困学生每位也会得到 935 英镑。与此同时, “优先教学”项目将优秀毕业生送入贫困地区的中学。与此相比较的是, 在美国, 多数学校基金来自当地财政, 这样的话那些欠发达地区的学校就被忽视了。

As the Duke University researchers are keen to point out, all this does not in itself prove that economically mixed neighbourhoods are a bad thing. They may be good in other ways—making politicians more moderate, for example. But the research does suggest that the benefits of such districts are far from straightforward. Patterns of social segregation reflect broader social inequality, argues Mr Cheshire, who has written a book about urban economics and policy. Where mixed neighbourhoods flourish, house prices rise, overwhelmingly benefiting the rich. Spending more money on schools in deprived areas and dispatching the best teachers there would do more to help poor children. Assuming that a life among wealthy neighbours will improve their lot is too complacent.

杜克大学研究者尖锐地指出, 所有这些并不能证明, 经济混合社区就是个坏东西。他们也许会在其他方面有益—比如让政客们更为中和。不过这些发现这些区域的益处表现得并不明朗。社会分离的模式反映了更严重的社会不平等, Cheshire 争论道(他写过一本关于城市的经济与政策的书)。当混合社区繁荣起来后, 房价上涨, 获益的毫无疑问是富人。在贫瘠地区投入更多资金, 并将最好的教师分配过去会更好的帮助孩子们。生活在富人中能极大改善穷人家孩子们状况的想法, 显然是过于想当然了。