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"Golden ghettoes. Moving decisions of the affluent from a comparative lens "

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Las naciones presentan diferentes niveles de desarrollo social, diferentes estructuras de oportunidades así como diversos grados y tipos de pobreza y exclusión. A su vez enfrentan estos desafíos de manera diversa. Esta serie pretende ofrecer panoramas comparados de desarrollo social y extraer lecciones de dichas comparaciones que permitan a la comunidad académica y a los tomadores de decisión conocer mejor las realidades nacionales, sus niveles relativos de desarrollo y las causas detrás de logros y problemas del desarrollo humano.

Golden Ghettoes:
Gated Communities and Class Residential Segregation in Montevideo, Uruguay[*]

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Golden Ghettoes: [1]
Gated Communities and Class Residential Segregation in Montevideo, Uruguay

Abstract

This paper examines the local expression of a global phenomenon: gated communities in Montevideo, Uruguay. Focusing on the residents' perspective, it investigates micro level processes of class segregation. It analyzes residential and class trajectories, motivations for moving and consequences of the move. It relies on interviews with residents, developers, architects, and real estate agents; advertisements; and ethnographic field notes. A major finding is that gated communities do not always increase social and residential segregation. In Montevideo, families in these neighborhoods were already segregated from lower classes. Residents experienced changes in family and community life, but those changes rarely corresponded to changes in their class segregation They moved to new neighborhoods to secure class reproduction and gain control over their immediate environment, something that they saw the open city was threatening.

"The city grows by expansion, but it gets its character by the selection and segregation of its population, so that every individual finds, eventually, either the place where he can, or the place where he must, live."
(Robert Park, "The city as a social Laboratory" 1929)

The literature on residential segregation heavily leans towards the analysis of those who have little choice in deciding where to live– one of the noticeable exceptions being the increasing literature on gentrification.[2] Intrigued by the different forces behind urban residential segregation, I studied a particular group of the affluent who have recently moved to gated communities in Montevideo, Uruguay, and its metropolitan area.

While studies about segregation are mostly macro, taking the city or the community as the unit of analysis, here I focus on the micro-foundations of residential patterns. I explore the interplay of agency and structure at the micro-level to understand the social processes behind residential segregation. This includes the subjective dimension of segregation (the meanings attributed by actors) as well as the patterns of interaction within the neighborhood and outside its boundaries.

Through an analysis of the motivations and effects of housing decisions, I address two main points. First, I evaluate the effects of gated communities on the residential and social segregation of residents.[3] Second, I explore the meanings associated with their housing decisions. The specific guiding questions are: What are the motivations and effects of moving to a private neighborhood, especially regarding social interaction? How do residents perceive their [past and present] situation? What assumptions do they bring to their decision making? What behavioral patterns result from those decisions? What are the social consequences of these individual decisions and behaviors?[4]

THE DEBATE

"A gated community is a residential development surrounded by walls, fences, or earth banks covered by bushes and shrubs, with a secured entrance. (…) These barriers physically enclose the houses, streets, sidewalks, and other amenities, and entrance gates are operated by a guard or opened with a key or electronic identity card. Inside the development there is often a neighborhood watch organization or professional security personnel who patrol on foot or by automobile" (Low 2003). Thus, access to residents' houses and public space inside the gate is restricted. Other terms with the same meaning are security villages, fortress neighborhoods, exclusive leisure developments, private neighborhoods, fortified enclaves and so on. Although the idea of a continuum of more or less restricted areas in the city is more useful than a sharp distinction, gated communities are different from other exclusive areas. They are (at least spatially) different from cooperatives, condominiums and doorman apartment buildings because gated communities combine common amenities, owners' associations, fences, and gates.

Gated communities are a sort of return to Modernist planning, to those utopias of the beginning of the twentieth century when some architects thought their projects could establish order in the chaos of industrialization and urbanization (Fishman, 1982). Against the diversity of postmodern cities, private neighborhoods offer uniformity of design, which developers and residents maintain by enforcing renovation rules and restrictions. Initially mainly limited to the US, [5] they have now spread all over the world in cities as different as Beijing, Johannesburg, and Mexico City. Together with shopping malls and theme parks, gated communities characterize the recent global trend of privatized urbanization.

Gated communities are fascinating objects of study but, as I will develop, we should not exoticize them. They are laboratories where we can observe the interplay between space and class (Blokland and Savage, 2001). They have clear, at least geographical, limits that make them manageable objects of study. In addition, these enclaves touch on the basic questions of urban sociology, such as the integrative or disintegrative nature of the city. Since the beginning of massive urbanization, different demographic and technological changes have enhanced the fear that community or *gemeinschaft* (Tönnies, 1887) would dissappear. Gated communities have reopened the community question in different ways. What will be the effects of gated communities for residents and for the broader society? Can they recuperate the face to face neighborhood interactions that the city does not provide any more? Will they change inter-class encounters, feelings of belonging to a broader community and citizenship?[6]

The debate has been dominated by strong positions criticizing or defending the existence of gated communities. While critics see them as a threat to public space (Davis, 1992; McKenzie, 1994; Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Atkinson and Flint, 2004), defenders emphasize that they efficiently provide services the state and the market cannot (Webster, 2001). The effect of gated neighborhoods on community ties remains unclear. The prevalent perspective is that gated communities generate more intra-gate interaction, less inter-neighborhood interaction, less participation of residents in the public space and, as a consequence, less participation in the civic realm in general. In other words, the natural consequences of gated communities are both increasing residential and social segregation.

Some recent empirical studies support the idea that gated communities increase segregation. Both, research focused on the city as the unit of analysis (Caldeira, 2000) and research focused on residents (Low, 2001, 2003; Svampa, 2001, 2002; Roitman 2004) report increasing segregation in cities because of gated

communities. Some authors, however, have questioned the prevalent assumption that gated communities always have negative consequences for segregation. Sabatini et al. (2001) and Salcedo and Torres's (2004) research on Chile find gated communities do not necessarily increase residential segregation. On the contrary, Santiago's gated communities brought poor and rich closer, thus reducing the scale of segregation (Sabatini et. al. 2001). While in the past the affluent were exclusively located in one specific area of the city, gated divelopments have dispersed them. According to Sabatini et. al. (2001), this new smaller scale segregation is more benign for the poor because they benefit from some of its externalities. They argue that new neighbors bring better services such as roads, stores, jobs, and an improved reputation to districts that were stigmatized in the past.

Adding more micro-level and subjective evidence to the previous claim, Salcedo and Torres (2004) study a poor neighborhood located in Huechuraba, a historically poor district in the outskirts of Santiago that has recently been surrounded by gated developments. They interview both residents of the poor neighborhoods and residents of the gated neighborhoods, focusing on their ties and mutual perceptions. They find that functional ties have emerged since the gated neighborhoods arrived, basically market exchanges (e.g. gated residents are clients or employers). Poor dwellers express a general positive view of the impact of the recent arrival of their upper class neighbors and no expression of hostility or fear among insiders and outsiders. Gated residents, in turn, do not feel their poor neighbors are a threat. They see them as honest and hardworking, in contrast to those they refer to as the *other* poor. Based on this evidence, the authors conclude that the smaller scale of segregation in Santiago allows not only functional relations that did not exist before but also diminishes subjective segregation. In a similar vein Manzi's and Smith-Bowers and (2005) study of England finds that gating can encourage wealthier people to stay where they live instead of moving to more affluent neighborhoods. [7]

In the present paper, I build on this research and focus on Montevideo. I examine variations in residential and social segregation, both in their objective and subjective dimensions. I offer a longitudinal perspective based on residents' accounts of their residential and class trajectories before moving. I argue that gated communities have not increased residential segregation in this city. Unlike similar studies in other cities, I do not base my argument on a reduction of the segregation scale or on the existence of functional relationships between residents and surrounding poor dwellers, but on residents' stable residential and class trajectories.

DATA AND METHODS

The main data source for this paper are interviews with residents, but I would define the broader study as a methodological "bricolage" or "quilt building" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003) since it required piecing together different types of data. I used interviews with informants, advertisements from newspapers archives, informal conversations with people from the neighborhoods and surrounding areas, documents (state regulations and neighborhood regulations), observations, field notes, pictures and secondary data such as crime and fear of crime statistics.

I developed a sampling frame for interviews in various stages, stratifying by type of neighborhood, and purposefully searching to maximize variation on dimensions of interest. Since there are no previous studies of private neighborhoods in Montevideo, the first step was mapping them and estimating their population. For that purpose, I conducted 6 interviews with key informants from the state and the

real estate sides (architect from the government, professor, developers and real estate agents). Whenever I found a new neighborhood, I went to the site, took pictures, walked or drove around, tried to talk to someone (e.g. guards, people I encountered in the surroundings) and took field notes.

After having a better sense of the universe, I identified three different types of gated neighborhoods and selected at least one of each type for my study. [8] The third step consisted of sampling individuals within the chosen neighborhoods. Since field researchers have difficulties getting access to these populations, and since there is no available list of residents of gated communities, I used snowball sampling. To minimize biases of this kind of sampling, I started more than one snowball at the same time. Interviewees are not representative of the whole population of gated communities but they are broadly representative of the range of residents of gated communities in Montevideo and its metropolitan area. Besides, they represent the only relatively systematic sample of residents of gated communities in Uruguay today.

I conducted 15 semi-structured interviews with residents, generally in their houses or work places. Inspired by the designs of Low (2001) and Blee (2002), the questionnaire included retrospective questions as a way to reach a longitudinal perspective. After each interview, I wrote field notes including house architecture and decoration, who was at home at that time of the day doing what, general appearance of the neighborhood, and so on. I also used a small self-administered questionnaire at the end of the oral interview, requesting socioeconomic and demographic information about the respondent and her/his family.

The self-administered questionnaire provided straightforward, comparable, information about patterns of social class and mobility. The less structured interviewed schedule required a more sophisticated analysis. I coded interviews using both deductive codes suggested by the literature (e.g. "security") and inductive coding. Besides coding by themes, I also paid attention to narratives (e.g. "narrative of continuity" and "narrative of rupture"). This type of coding focuses on how subjects represent reality in ways other than a "true" account of reality (Blee, 2002; Silverman, 2003).

THE CASE

Montevideo, the capital city of Uruguay, is the smallest of the country's 19 political and administrative units. Almost half of the nation's residents live there (1,344,839 inhabitants), and it contains the main industries and services. Although it used to be a homogeneous city in terms of socioeconomic groups, in a country considered egalitarian in comparison to the rest of Latin America, recent studies have shown signs of increasing inequality and erosion of the social fabric (e.g. Portes, 1989[9]; Filgueira, 1998; Kaztman and Filgueira, 2001; Kaztman, 2001; UNDP, 1999). Socio-economic residential segregation has increased (Kaztman et al., 2003) and squatter settlements have mushroomed in the last decades (Alvarez, 2002).

The first gated communities appeared in Uruguay in the second half of the 1990s, following a much stronger explosion in Argentina. Uruguay developed gated communities later, in smaller numbers and of smaller sizes than nearby cities like Buenos Aires or São Paulo. One important question this study raises is why there are so few gated communities in Uruguay –only 10 in Montevideo and its metropolitan area, with some others in development.[10] It is difficult to estimate how many people live in gated communities today. Since the last national census in 1996 occurred before the first settlements, there is no way to estimate this population

except direct fieldwork. My estimation, based on interviews with developers, newspaper advertisements, and counting of houses *in situ*, is that 315 families were living in gated communities in June 2003. Since the estimated average household size is 4.2, around 1323 people were living in one of the 10 gated communities in Montevideo and its metropolitan area.

I should contextualize the appearance of gated communities in relation to other phenomena. The first one is the concentration of affluence in the city. Using geographic information software (GIS), I found that both poverty and affluence are segregated but that the latter is more concentrated.[11] Second, in recent decades, the market has started to offer a whole range of private services targeted to the upper classes such as health and educational services, private security, and private cemeteries. Third, Montevido has been expanding geographically, without demographic growth. Since the 1960s, the city core has lost both residents and functions while the metropolitan area has gained both (Artigas et. al., 2002). While poorer families migrated to the north and north-west periphery of the city, wealthier ones moved to the east coast strip, populating the Ciudad de la Costa and its surroundings. The gated communities analyzed here are located in this east zone of the metropolitan area. They have access to the two main routes from the city to the East, a long strip of seaside resorts, but they are removed from dangerous and noisy traffic. Finally, the last trend is older and specific to the most affluent families of Montevideo, which traditionally have moved away from the city center. The first affluent enclave was El Prado, originally a very upper-class neighborhood where we can still find enormous residences built in a European-like architecture (the president's residence is one of them), with green, sinuous, open avenues, and one of the most beautiful parks of the city. Carrasco is another traditional affluent neighborhood, originally built for weekend and vacation time in the beach, but slowly turned into permanent residence. Carrasco is today the neighborhood with the highest per capita income in the city. Gated communities are a new expression of the long-lasting search by affluent residents for select and spacious places.

Gated communities are symbolic continuations of the affluent suburban neighborhoods, especially of Carrasco. Some of their names illustrate this: Gardens of Carrasco, Hills of Carrasco, Carrasco Villa. They vary in price and appearance, with the one located in the city being the most expensive. All the others cluster in a semi-rural area approximately 23 kilometers from the city center. All of them have only one entrance, in general with a guard. Inside, they all have big, generally brick-made, detached houses with yards that reach the streets, with no sidewalks. The three located the farthest from the city are the largest. Situated in a geographically beautiful non-urbanized area with smooth rolling hills, you have to take a detour from the highway to find them. By the time you get there, no sign of the city is left. Bird song replace traffic noise, and the grey of the city gives way to diverse tones of green spoilt only by scattered luxurious houses of various shapes and colors. An artificial lake and a huge golf course stand out in the huge area surrounded by wire fences and connected by wavy streets. One of them has a kindergarten and another one has a restaurant where residents can also get some groceries. These neighborhoods offer residents a system of vans since no public transportation reaches the area. The only other nearby settlement is a poor village some of whose inhabitants work as gardeners, maids, and construction workers for the gated communities. During my visits on weekdays at different times of the day, I rarely saw people outside in any of the neighborhoods except for a few children riding their bikes and many construction workers. I always had to negotiate my entrance with the

guards, who would only let me in once they were sure I had an appointment with one of the residents. The easiest to get entrance to, was the one located in the city, which is formally not a private neighborhood since the municipality does not allow the closing of streets. There, despite not being intercepted by the guard at the entrance, I was discretely followed by a small private security car while trying to take pictures like the one you see in figure 1.

[figure 1 about here]

RESIDENTS

Residents of gated communities are a very homogeneous group in age, family stage, and class. The typical family among respondents was nuclear with young children and moved to a gated community after living in one of the affluent neighborhoods of the city located along its southeastern coast. Respondents and their partners were for the most part in their 30s or 40s. Most of them had had a college education[12] and worked in the private sector, usually in the service sector, in professional and managerial positions. Their median household income was in the upper quintile of the income distribution in the city. None of their children were going to state school. Almost all attended one of the private bilingual schools in North Carrasco, the most exclusive of the city. In some cases, they were the same schools their parents had attended.[13] In sum, respondents were among the upper service classes of Uruguay (Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992), but there is still a group of big capitalists above them such as landowners, and owners of big businesses and industries. [14] They accumulated considerable volumes of economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1984).[15]

Contrary to what I expected, most residents were not primarily upwardly mobile people. They mostly came from upper and upper-middle class families and had remained in the upper or upper middle class throughout their lifecourse. To measure intergenerational mobility, I considered education, occupation and neighborhood of respondents' parents and compared that with residents' characteristics. In general, respondents' fathers were highly educated, belonged to high status occupations and lived in the most affluent neighborhoods of the city. To measure life course mobility, I considered residents' past neighborhood as well as qualitative accounts of their earlier as presented in interviews. Most came from three of the top four neighborhoods in a ranking of the 62 neighborhoods of Montevideo.[16] Only three out of fifteen respondents told me stories of upward mobility, such as "we made a great effort to buy this house." The norm was "I want to live in a neighborhood similar to the one in which I grew up."

"Here neighbors are important" …But class has always been! CLASS AND CLASS INTERACTION CONSEQUENCES OF THE MOVE

How do daily interaction patterns of people change once they moved to gated neighborhoods? What are the patterns within the neighborhood and outside its boundaries? What are residents' relationships with people from lower social classes? Although most residents experience or perceive an increase in interactions among neighbors since they moved, the class composition of neighbors remains the same on average.

Once inside the gate it is family more than community that is the center of life. Most respondents mentioned their children as a justification or motivation for their move. In the spacious houses, large meeting spaces are prioritized, such as big kitchens, big living rooms with fireplace, and barbecues. Most people keep seeing their friends and relatives as usual although, for some, the frequency of the visits diminishes, either because –as one resident said- "once at home, I feel so good that I don't feel like going out" or because people cannot visit so often given the distance. The search for community, which studies in the US highlight as one of the motivations for people to move to gated neighborhoods, does not appear to be a motivation in Uruguay. Most people evaluate the intra-neighborhood dynamics positively, but that evaluation is *post facto* rather than a motivation for the move. In interviews residents related that some sort of community actually preceded the move. Many residents mentioned knowing other residents from before (old neighborhood or school ties), but there were more direct microstructures of recruitment. Many people moved after friends or relatives transmitted to them the idyllic experience of living in the garden city.

Residents emphasized the emergence of daily interactions and solidarities. Children are one of the main generators of these networks. Even respondents who were defensive and said their friends were outside and had not changed, declared that their children had friends in the new neighborhood. The gated neighborhood becomes an agency of socialization for children, in addition to school and family. Families leave some responsibility to the neighborhood for raising children which was something they were afraid of before, because of intense urban traffic, crime, and so on. The neighborhood becomes an agency of sociability and enjoyment also for some adults, characterized by trust (doors open, possessions outside), mechanical solidarity (daily exchange of favors in coping with shared problems of distance from the urban center) and, in some cases, friendship. Adriana, a part-time dentist and mother of three, emphasized these everyday interactions in her interview. Comparing her present neighborhood with her previous one, she said:

> It's more familiar here because **we are all in the same situation**. For instance, the one that called right now [her cell phone rang during the interview] was a mom whose son is in Carrasco right now [the neighborhood where the interviewee works and where the interview took place] and since she saw me going out, she calls me to ask if I can pick up her son and take him with me. Since we are all in the same situation, we're all far away, we help each other. In Pocitos [previous neighborhood] you don't have any idea about the others and there's no much contact. **Here neighbors are important** [emphases are mine].

There are several facilitators of intra-neighborhood sociability such as generational, socioeconomic and cultural homogeneity, relative distance to the city, low-density surroundings or relative isolation and large and attractive leisure areas inside the neighborhood.

Like Adriana, most respondents reported the emergence of new patterns of community behavior, based either on their experience or on what they observed from

others. Other studies have interpreted this finding as evidence of increasing segregation and intra-class homogeneity. A closer look gives us a slightly different perspective. In general, these ties do not substitute, but rather add to previous ones, as reflected in the stories residents tell about their trajectories. Moreover, previous ties were, in general, equally class homogenous. Juan, a manager in a private company reported feeling his new neighborhood is like Montevidean neighborhoods used to be, where everybody knew everybody else. Where he lived before, in Punta Carretas he barely knew the people in his own building, but "here," he said, "we already have friends." However, when asked to compare his past and new neighbors socioeconomically he said there are no real differences; they are all middle or upper middle class.

> [my old neighbors were]Pretty much the same as these ones. I lived in a building that was pretty much middle class, and here they are middle class. Well, maybe for the living standards today, in a Uruguay that has almost a million poor people, it's not middle class. But for the Uruguay of the past, this is middle class.

In sum, residents experience changes in family and community life, but those changes rarely correspond to changes in their class segregation. Not surprisingly, residential and social segregation do overlap in the gated communities of Uruguay. However, from this crossectional relation causality cannot be inferred. [17] Using retrospective questions, I found already existing social and residential segregation facilitates the move to gated communities. Gated communities in Montevideo are more similar to other processes of affluence segregation than many would assume. For residents, moving to a gated community implied more a rise in their already high degree of segregation than a qualitative rupture with the city.

This finding contributes to a nuanced notion of segregation-integration and public space. Some of the most apocalyptic literature on gated communities has over-emphasized their effect on segmentation (e.g. Davis 1992). Even though gated communities, like other types of homogenous neighborhoods, have the potential to increase segregation, we need data about the past to evaluate these effects. According to my data, those who live in gated communities in Uruguay, have never interacted with other social classes as equals even if they shared public places with people from lower classes. They might have had (unequal) labor relationships with them, as they have now (residents employ construction workers, house cleaners, and so on), but they never went to the same schools. This has at least two consequences. First, we should focus not on the presence and absence of interaction but on the quality of the nature of the interaction, as race scholars have noted (Drake and Cayton, 1970; Bonilla Silva, 1997). Second, we should abandon an idealized nominal idea of "the public space" and question it with empirical work (Lofland, 1993). Instead of diagnosing a reality of fragmentation and inferring it is worst than an idealized past, we should find out how integrated was that past.

MEANINGS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF HOUSING DECISIONS

In the previous section, I emphasized stability in class interaction among residents of gated communities in relation to their past. Then why did they move? What changes were they foreseeing if any? In this section, I argue they moved to secure class reproduction and to gain control over an increasingly unpredictable city. I first analyze overt motivations and then explore their underlying meanings.

Respondents' housing decisions were part of broader evaluations about with whom they wanted to live, where they wanted to be, the kind of life they wanted to have and the type of family arrangement they wanted to commit to.[18] In some cases, respondents rationalized their decision in terms of a marriage or the birth of a new

child. Most moved when they had accumulated capital after some years of marriage. In all cases, they carefully evaluated their options. Respondents had not made many housing moves and generally planned to stay in their new neighborhood. Understanding their motivations and the meanings associated to this turning point is crucial. Such motivations are sociologically interesting if linked to class representations, formation, and reproduction.

Fernando, today a resident of a gated neighborhood, has lived in Carrasco his whole life. When he married, he bought a house in the North part of that neighborhood. Around six years ago, he decided to move, but he did not want to leave the area. North Carrasco has changed in the last years. Squatter settlements have mushroomed invading all the remaining empty land. Its contrasts are among the sharpest in the whole city. A good illustration is a wall that has a riding club on one of its sides, and serves as one of the four walls of several shanties on its other side. Fernando described these poor enclaves as "fairly quiet" and recognized there are some very hard working people among them, "people that have lived there their whole life." But , he said, "there are others who rob here or in other zones." He told me the area has become much more insecure, and this is why he and his family decided to move. He just moved six blocks away, but now he lives in a private neighborhood. Since he moved, his life "has changed completely." Now he can go on vacation without worrying about robberies. Now his children can play outside without fearing traffic. They can leave their bikes outside without worrying about robberies. "This neighborhood is like Carrasco used to be in the past, when I was a kid: no robberies, open doors, no fence. This has changed in Montevideo and in the whole world but here [in his new neighborhood] we can have something similar." But Fernando did not move only because of insecurity or the nostalgia for a lifestyle he remembers from when he was a kid. He also moved because property values have been fluctuating in North Carrasco. In a context of economic instability, not everybody is able to maintain his or her properties the same way. Thus, according to him, "you have some stunning blocks and blocks that have some horrible houses. They are not bad houses, but they are old, or houses of people that could never finish them. This does not happen in this neighborhood."

Fernando's story illustrates the main apparent and underlying motivations of residents of gated communities in Montevideo. *Lifestyle, property values*, and *security* reasons are very relevant in residents' reasons for moving. 'Building community' does not feature in making their decision, although it does become relevant for some afterwards. The motivation to build community is commonly reported in the US (Low 2003; Blakely and Snyder, 1997) but it might be specific to America. In her study of São Paulo, Caldeira (2000) also plays down the role of that motivation . The role of *exclusiveness* or *status seeking* is unclear. On the one hand, advertisements emphasize prestige symbols, such as a golf course, as a marketing strategy.[19] On the other hand, exclusiveness does not appear as an explicit motivation orienting residents' actions, and since most of them were not upwardly mobile, there is no reason to think they were hiding it.

Moving to a gated community seems to be, primarily, a lifestyle choice. Improving quality of personal and family life is the most frequent motive. Most respondents declared they were seduced by a greener and quieter life, far (but not too far) from the 'chaotic city', and more suitable for raising children in freedom. In fact, children seem to have a strong effect on the decision. It might appear paradoxical that people associate living inside a gate with more freedom. However, they make this association in opposition to what they perceive as the real jail: the

City. Actually many of the positive features respondents find in their new neighborhood are constructed in opposition to the City. The City is what is left behind, the place for work and consumption. For them, the house is the place for reproduction and leisure. The City is unpredictable, insecure, asphyxiating, dirty, polluted, unhealthy, artificial, and ugly. It has too much traffic, its inhabitants are always defensive and running, and families do not have enough space or time to share. The new neighborhood is more predictable, safe, clean, healthy, natural, and beautiful, and traffic is not a problem. There, people are not defensive and families can enjoy all that beauty and space. Besides residents, developers and advertisements also emphasize this contrast to city life. Figure 2 shows the promotion of an anti-urban and traditional-family-oriented life style as a marketing strategy.

[Figure 2 about here]

While this anti-urban narrative was present in all respondents' accounts, they did not learn to enjoy this more "natural" lifestyle at the same time. While most used a continuity narrative, some use a narrative of rupture, mirroring their class trajectories.[20] The gated neighborhood reminded most respondents of the upper class residential suburb in which they were born or the countryside where they were either born or used to spend their vacations as children (some residents mentioned their families had ranches). Like Low (2003) found for the US, the new neighborhood represents a nostalgic view of a lost past. Only for those few who were upwardly mobile, this more "natural" and spacious lifestyle is a learned account. Javier, a developer, father of two, and resident of one of the most spacious gated communities illustrates the meaning of a 'natural' lifestyle. Again, the romanticization and comparison with the childhood neighborhood appears in his narrative.

> Here the lifestyle is very different. It's like in Carrasco when I was little, where there was much less traffic, and children could ride our bikes without any danger. Houses used to leave their doors open, and many things that make your everyday life….let alone contact with nature. This is an ecological development. We still have teros [an indigenous bird type] And since there are artificial lakes, we also have garzas [another type of bird] We have swans, otters, alligators…we have lots of things that do not exist in the city, and here they coexist with people (…) You see apereás [a native rodent], hares, partridges…it's like being in the middle of the countryside, but we are only 10 minutes from Carrasco.

The second decisive factor in respondents' decision to move, present in most cases according to the literature, is maintaining or increasing property values. As Fernando's story illustrated, moving gives residents a greater control over their property values and that of their neighbors. In the open city prices can fluctuate for many reasons, no matter how much individual owners invest in the maintenance of their properties. Crime, squatting, public services and spaces' deterioration, and other owners or renters' investments in their houses, are all reasons out of the control of the individual owner. Residents of gated communities perceive their property value is safer within the fence. [21]

Finally, fear of crime, which generally appears in the literature as an important cause for gated communities (Caldeira, 2000; Coy & Pöler, 2002; Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Low, 2003), also plays a role in Montevideo. Paradoxically, the effectiveness of the gate in reducing crime and fear is unclear (Atkinson et al., 2004; Wilson-Doenges, 2000; Low, 2003; Helsley and Strange, 1999). Only few respondents mentioned security as a motivation for their move, but when I explicitly asked about security, most residents agreed that it had been either crucial or a plus in their decision. Only three residents said security did not have anything to do with

their decision. Veronica, a physician who received me in a huge but warm living room, expressed the role of security in her moving decision:

> We were saving to buy a new house. I wasn't looking specifically in a private neighborhood. What I wanted was something close to where we lived [North Carrasco] because I did not want to move far from the school that the children were going to since they had their friends there. Security was important only because of this neighborhood since it has one of the highest numbers of robberies. But it's not that I naturally care about security in all areas of my life.

Veronica was not the only one using 'modifiers' or explaining their notions of security. Some said they wanted to have the same security they already had while living in an apartment building. Some explained they were only worried about security because their new neighborhood was in an isolated area. Only few mentioned their concern for security was associated to an experience of having been a victim of crime. Residents seem to use these modifiers to make their motivations appear more reasonable or more "ordinary" (e.g. by mentioning that apartment buildings also have security). As we can see in figure 3, the physical appearance of these neighborhoods is less ambiguous. They all have surveillance mechanisms, like entrance gates. Most advertisements emphasize security as the main advantage of the neighborhood.

[figure 3 about here]

The meanings associated with the notion of security are many. In general, respondents defined it in opposition to the city and in relation to a "small town" feeling. Far from remaining in the world of ideas or attitudes these feelings structure residents' actions and interactions. Having surveillance and security devices has consequences in respondents' everyday lives. They repeatedly mentioned feeling more at ease in their new neighborhood and doing things they would have never done before (e.g. leaving things outside, forgetting about locking doors, less supervision of children when they play outside, leaving the house empty when going on vacation, not putting bars on windows or individual fences around their houses, and so on). Residents feel safer regarding property crimes and feel their children are safer regarding traffic accidents. Personal harm does not seem to be an issue they feared in their past life as urban dwellers.

But there are more latent or implicit meanings of security. Residents feel safer because the poor or dangerous populations are less visible, and because the visible poor are "good people", "hard working" or "honest" poor, as Fernando portrayed them. An implicit assumption is that danger is outside, and that the enemy can never be inside the gate. Other residents are peers. They cannot be the source of danger. They might drive faster than they were supposed to (as some complain), but they are not going to rob, or cause any type of harm. Being a resident makes you immediately more trustworthy than an outsider. What is inside the gate is predictable, ordered, known, certain, friendly, stable and all those features are defined in opposition to what is outside the gate. Residents feel they have more control over their environment and that makes them feel safer. Thus, some residents experience an amplification of their private space into an entire social world, which includes leisure activities and control over children's movements and socialization, and shuts out class others. The neighborhood becomes a contained and safe agency of socialization for children, and the site for the collectivization of private family functions. Javier illustrates the intimacy of the within relationship experienced by some to the point where being watched is not a problem.

> And when people first come they say 'oh, no, people can see you from all over the place', but then when they move here, they see that it doesn't matter that people can see your place, because who is watching you is generally a friend, a person that you see in the club, a

person whose children play with your own. So, you lose that [fear]. In other places, if people can see your house it means they can watch you and then rob you. Here, the security factor becomes secondary.

What can we learn about class and segregation from these findings? What do these three main motivations –lifestyle choices, property values, and security- tell us? Gated communities are a way to maintain and improve cultural, economic and social capital. Searching for a neighborhood that guarantees a particular lifestyle is associated with the cultural aspect of class, the values and practices that generate and reproduce class and class divisions. Searching for stable or increasing property values is an attempt to maintain the economic aspect of class. Finally, by moving, residents secure social capital, by localizing part of their broader network. Far from given, accumulating and maintaining social capital requires effort. Social capital depends on the size of the network of connections an agent can mobilize, and on the volume of capital that these connections have. In Bourdieu's words (1986: 250), "the network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term." In general, middle and upper classes' networks tend to be extensive rather than local (Allan, 1989, cited in Butler and Robson, 2001) and this was true for my respondents too. However, gated neighborhoods offer residents the possibility of a localized or anchored network of neighbors with high volumes of capital. Residents already had important amounts of these three forms of capital before their move, and in this sense, their housing decision is a strategy of class reproduction. By moving, residents gain in stability and institutionalization of already important endowments of capital. These class strategies, together with fear, are oriented towards introducing certainty and control in a changing world. The gate guarantees the stability and the security that the open city lacks. In this sense, the move is a strategy of the affluent to cope with the uncertainties and stresses of a changing world.

CONCLUSION
This study shows a case of the interplay between social class and urban space. It shows how the demarcation, use, and discourse of space can be constitutive of class or a mode of class reproduction.

Although the link between gated communities and segregation may seem obvious, I find that is variable and therefore should not be assumed. In Montevideo segregation already existed before the move. For most residents, moving to a gated community was not a qualitative change in the way they experienced or made sense of their social and geographical locations. Given the (so far) low presence of gated communities in Montevideo, and given residents' already class bounded interactions, there were no big changes for the city or residents levels of segregation.

This has at least two methodological implications for future research. First, to assess the effect of gated communities on segregation, we need longitudinal information. Second, instead of searching for presence or absence of an effect, a better question is *under which conditions* gated communities increase residential and/or social segregation. We can hypothesize that in cities where residents of gated communities are upper mobile and/or lived in heterogeneous neighborhoods before moving, segregation will increase. The same would occur if residents used to share public services and spaces with lower social classes and their move caused withdrawal from those spaces.

The study of motivations shows that respondents' were not very original or "idiosyncratic." On the contrary, their motives are similar to those researchers have found in other contexts. I have interpreted these motivations as a way to reproduce class and cope with urban uncertainty. This interpretation coincides with Butler and Robson's (2003) reading of gentrification in inner London. Drawing from Sennett (1998), the authors understand gentrification as a way to mitigate the corrosive and destabilizing personal effects of the global economy among the middle classes. Sennett describes the effects of new technologies, new work arrangements, and flexible contracts on the growing middle and upper middle class employed in the service sector. He finds an increase in their alienation from work and family. This generation of workers, Sennett notes, grew up in a much more stable world than the one in which they have to work and live today. Their parents might have had less education and performed manual jobs but they enjoyed much more stability than they do. They have to develop their own strategies to deal with rapid change. Sennett's ideas and Butler and Robson's (2003) own application of them, have an interesting parallel with the residents of gated communities in Montevideo if we focus not only on the stresses caused by work but also on those generated by the urban life. Most respondents grew up in a more stable world in quiet and peaceful affluent suburban neighborhoods of the city. For them, moving to a gated community was a way to avoid an unpredictable city. [22]

Gated communities in Uruguay and gentrified neighborhoods in London are cases of a broader category: moving decisions of the affluent (particularly the upper service classes) in contemporary cities. Gentrifiers of inner London, the *global city* (Sassen 1991), are not that different from residents of gated communities in Montevideo, a much smaller, and poorer city, far from global and located in one of the most underdeveloped regions of the world. [23] Regardless of the differences in absolutes levels of income, the relative class location of both groups of residents is similar. Their class dispositions (Bourdieu, 1984) shape their housing decisions similarly. What varies is the availability of housing choices that their respective cities have to offer as well as the specific cultural capital of both groups. Perhaps this is one of those cases in which dissimilarities in superficial spatial outcomes hide similar underlying dynamics (Sassen 1991, 2002), but this will require comparative research.

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Endnotes

[1] I have borrowed the expression "golden ghetto" from Giroir (2003). I am using the word *ghetto* more as powerful metaphor than as a sociological concept. Wacquant (2004) and Marcuse (1997) have helped clarify the sociological meaning of *ghetto* as an involuntarily spatially concentrated area. Clearly gated communities do not fit this definition. Since their confinement is voluntary, and their residents occupy a position of superiority in power, wealth and/or status in relation to neighbors or the city average, we should refer to gated communities as *fortified enclaves* or *citadels* (Marcuse 1997).

[2] For another exception, see St. John (2002). For similar arguments about the need of studying patterns of affluence see Massey , 1996; Musterd and de Winter, 1998; Sampson, Morenoff, and Gannon-Rowley, 2002.

[3] Theoretically, there are two types of segregation: geographical (or residential) and social (White 1983; Rodriguez Vignoli 2000, Sabatini et al. 2001). While the former refers to the uneven distribution of social groups in space, the latter refers to the absence of interaction between social groups as well

as to the existence of barriers or prejudices that enable that interaction. Residential segregation does not always go hand by hand with social segregation. If they do or not is always an empirical question. In a caste society, for instance, where social segregation is extreme, sharing neighborhoods would not increase social interaction between castes (White 1983). This claim paralells the skepticism towards mixed neighborhoods policies as a universal means to generate upper mobility among the poorest households (see Musterd, Ostendorf, and De Vos, 2003; Ostendorf , 2002).

[4] Anderson's (1999) research questions in *Code of the Street* helped me shape these questions. His questions reflect his willingness to play back and forth between the macro and the micro, and this was precisely my objective.

[5] The expansion of gated communities in the US started in the late 1970s with retirement villages in southern Florida, Texas, Arizona, and California, but now they have people of all ages. They started being only for the very affluent whereas now part of the American middle classes has access to them (Blakely and Snyder 1997).

[6] Hampton and Wellman (2003) describe how the internet has also reopened the "community question". Many feared that this innovation would isolate individuals diminishing face-to-face interactions.

[7] Romig's (2005) multi-scale study of Scottsdale, Arizona, cannot be easily classified in the first or the second groups in which I have divided the literature. Romig starts with the common assumption that gated communities "connote people's desire to withdraw from the public sphere and a seeming erosion of community across urban space" (p. 68). However, this picture becomes more nuanced when he reports finding some residents committed to establish bonds with the oustide world (p. 82).

[8] I found three types of neighborhoods that vary in their physical environments and price. This paper, however, will emphasize the commonalities. I interviewed 3 residents in Jardines de Carrasco (the most expensive one, located in the city,) 3 residents of two of the cheapest ones (La Asunción and Quintas de Carrasco,) and 9 residents of the middle-priced ones, located in a rural area outside the city. I briefly describe the neighborhoods later in the paper.

[9] Portes, who chose Montevideo for a comparative study of cities in Latin America due to the exceptional features of the city in relation to the region, already in 1989, detects the "latinoamericanization" of this city as a consequence of the 1980s economic crisis. This trend continued as the other more recent studies document.

[10] Almost all the developments are outside the city limits –although within the metropolitan area- in the neighboring province of Canelones. Unlike Montevideo, this province has (recently and because of lobbying from developers and residents) legally allowed the existence of private neighborhoods.

[11] Maps are available by contacting the author.

[12] Considering both respondents and partners, 18 had finished university or other kind of higher education (some had post-graduate diplomas), 7 had incomplete higher education, and only three had secondary education. This situates them among the most educated in the country. In 2002, the percentage of people 25 years old or older who had entered (not necessarily finished) higher education was 13.7 for the whole country (INE).

[13] To put this in perspective, only 14% of the Uruguayan children were enrolled in private elementary schools in 2000 (INE 2002).

[14] For a recent picture of the Uruguayan class structure in comparative perspective, see Portes and Hoffman (2003).

[15] I have already mentioned economic capital in terms of income, in relative terms to the population of the city. Cultural capital includes informal interpersonal skills, habits, manners, linguistic styles, educational credentials, information, tastes, and lifestyles. As stated above, respondents were highly educated, and sent their children to private schools. Besides, some of them enjoyed *tastes* that are not randomly distributed in the wider population, like playing golf. Social capital consists of networks of connections, and although this study did not measure this explicitly, we can infer a high endowment from people's occupations and from people's residence. In turn, symbolic capital refers to prestige: to the use of symbols to legitimate the possession of varying levels and configurations of the other three types of capital. We may interpret the fence as one of those symbols.

[16] 6 respondents come from Pocitos, 6 from Carrasco (South and North), 1 from Punta Carretas, 1 from Barra de Carrasco, and 1 from Solymar. If we rank the 62 neighborhoods in the city according to average income per capita from the lowest to the highest, Carrasco South is number 62, Punta Carretas is number 61, Pocitos is number 59, and North Carrasco (which combines very affluent households with very poor ones including squatter settlements) is on average number 51 (Cervini and Gallo 2001).

[17] Many of the claims about increasing segregation come from exclusively crossectional data, and this is problematic for inference. For instance, Roitman's (2005) study of a gated community in Mendoza convincingly concludes that social distances are strong between residents of the gated community and residents of surrounding neighborhoods. However, this crossectional evidence alone does not support the claim that "consequently, social distances become *more* marked and the feelings against the other group become *stronger* [my italics]" (p 319.) This might be true but we need information about previous levels of social and residencial segregation to believe it.

[18] Butler and Robson (2003) found that the housing decisions of inner London gentrifiers also have great relevance for residents. Their reflections on this were extremely useful to shape this paragraph.

[19] Luymes (1997) reports similar findings for the US case based on his analysis of the marketing rhetoric of advertisements.

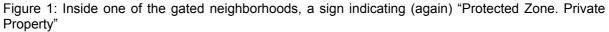[20] Svampa (2001) makes the same distinction for the Argentinean case.

[21] However, this is not always true. Land prices in some of the gated neighborhoods have gone down with the 2001 Uruguayan economic crisis.

[22] Despite knowing they belong to the service economy, I do not have enough evidence to assert the vulnerability at work that Sennett emphasizes.

[23] To point just as some the similarities, not only are the educational and class profiles of inner London gentrifiers and my respondents very similar, but both groups show class stable trajectories. The demographics are more varied for them, though. Although still young adults, London gentriefiers' average age is higher. Besides, they found much more variations in family arrangements than I did (e.g. single person housheolds).
According to Butler and Robson, inner London gentrifiers are also class endogamic in their interactions. Strikinkly, they also find a focus on children as a justification or motivation for the move.

Figure 1: Inside one of the gated neighborhoods, a sign indicating (again) "Protected Zone. Private Property"

Figure 2: Cover of a special magazine with "everything you need to know in order to choose" to live in a gated neighborhood. *El Observador*, 07/20/2001.

Figure 3: Entrance gate.