

“Bringing Inequality Closer: A comparative outlook at socially diverse neighborhoods in Chicago and Santiago de Chile”

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Bringing Inequality Closer: A comparative outlook at socially diverse neighborhoods in Chicago and Santiago de Chile¹

ABSTRACT

This article compares two socially diverse neighborhoods in Chicago and Santiago de Chile, in order to understand the relation between physical proximity and several dimensions of socio-spatial integration. I conducted a case-study complementing qualitative and quantitative techniques, and differentiating theories and policies from their respective contexts. The main discovery, for both cases, is that proximity between different social groups is not a precondition of better opportunities, better intergroup relationships, or a lower exclusion from the housing market. On the contrary, lower status groups present: i) limited job opportunities, ii) limited access to quality education, iii) highly difficult relationships with higher status groups, and iv) excluding processes of housing and political economy. This illustrates the wide separation between discourse and reality regarding social mix, and the difficulty of reversing the outcomes of poverty concentration through mere physical proximity. Socially mixed areas present a powerful symbolism of desegregation, but they work more as a mechanism of atomization and control than as a tool for integration. Taking this into consideration, some critical approaches to deal with segregation are outlined at the end.

1. INTRODUCTION

CHICAGO. At Eva's Café, a fashionable coffeeshouse at Sedgwick Street, upper-middle class, white yuppies sit in cushy chairs with their Apple laptops. A fireplace warms the ambience while a winter storm can be seen through the large windows. But what can also be seen is the perfectly opposite situation by the other side of Sedgwick; one of the two prison-like entrances of Marshal Field Apartments, a large subsidized housing project, inhabited by approximately 1,500 poor African Americans, who are harassed by the police and avoided by whites when they are out in the streets.

¹ This article summarizes the doctoral dissertation completed in July 2014 at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), guided by Professor Janet Smith, and winner of the **Barclay Gibbs Jones Award** for best dissertation in planning, given by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP), and the **Outstanding Thesis Award**, given by UIC.

SANTIAGO. *The hilly geography of La Loma, an old squatter settlement in La Florida, allowed a local leader to show me the new landscape of their surroundings; an upscale urbanization like never before, plagued of gated communities with their own common amenities, new stores and private schools, and security cars everywhere. With the construction of gated communities, their own streets were closed as cul-de-sacs, leaving just one entrance for the old squatter. This settlement, whose inhabitants worked in agriculture in the nearby areas, stands isolated from the rest and with its past erased.*

Socially mixed neighborhoods are strange creatures of urban development. They run against historical trajectories of residential segregation and carry a powerful symbolism of a fairer future. But as the short snapshots show above, this is a change in form but not in content. Socially mixed areas change the form in which segregation, discrimination and differentiation are exerted and reproduced, to the extent that they seem to disappear. But the forces that lead to these mechanisms of social exclusion (the content) are alive in both global-north and global-south neoliberal cities. In contexts of growing and generalized inequalities, a change in one mechanism of social differentiation (i.e. segregation to social mix) reorders the pieces, but does not change the game.

This article summarizes an ambitious journey. First, it is intended to bring more clarity about the slippery concept of 'integration' in the urban realm. And second, it is aimed at deepening on the theoretical assumptions and political rhetoric of the idea of social mix and on contemporary integration policies. To do so, I start from a simple question; *how can social relationships be modified by a change in spatial configurations? Or in other words, how does physical proximity between different social groups trigger other processes of integration (functional, relational, symbolic)?* To answer these questions, this article is composed of four sections. First, I describe the relationship between the concept of integration, the policies intended to that goal (historical and current), and some problems in the study of socially-mixed neighborhoods. Second, I analyze the cases of Cabrini Green in Chicago and La Florida in Santiago, in terms of the four dimensions of socio-spatial integration (physical, functional, relational and symbolic). Third, I discuss differences and similarities between the cases, highlighting major empirical findings. Finally, I finish with theory and policy implications and some critical approaches to deal with segregation.

2. THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATION, POLICIES FOR INTEGRATION AND PROBLEMS IN THE STUDY OF SOCIAL MIX

Despite the widespread use in policy discourses, there is a general lack of clarity about the concept of integration ([Ruiz-Tagle, 2013](#)). The word is usually employed to designate the opposite of segregation, but without an understanding of its conceptual implications. Integration is a fuzzy concept, mainly because its internal meaning implies a double-edged sword. The etymology of 'integration' shows that the word could mean 'integration' and 'integrity' at the same time ([Arnal, 1999](#)). That is, integration (joining to new elements) carries the risk of breaking the system's integrity (intactness), and complete integrity leaves out all other elements ([Arnal, 1999](#)). Moreover, the different disciplinary uses of the word 'integration', in biology, mathematics, psychology, economics or political science, show potential benefits, neutral effects and potential damages ([Ruiz-Tagle, 2013](#)). On the positive side, integration could mean the elimination of barriers and the opening of closed systems. Among neutral effects, there is the simple mixing of parts in the same space. And on the negative end, there is the loss of identity, rupture of integrity, or disintegration by incompatibility.

In social theory, there have been three traditions in the study of integration ([de Alcántara, 1995](#)). From functionalist sociology, and related discussions on structure and agency, integration is taken as a '*neutral*' description of relationships ([Durkheim, 1997](#); [Mouzelis, 1992](#)), linked to consensus and social organization, and separating systemic integration from social integration. From post-World War II progressive sociology, the idea of integration represents a *positive* value linked to inclusion and citizenship ([Strobl, 2007](#)), going beyond poverty as a lack of resources. And from critical scholarship in the US, before and after the Civil Rights Movement, integration has a *negative* connotation for the consequences of forced desegregation policies, mainly at schools and housing, which is captured in the idea of 'integration exhaustion' ([Cashin, 2004](#)).

In terms of policy, the origins of the idea of socially-mixed neighborhoods date back to the Victorian era in England ([Sarkissian, 1976](#); [Sarkissian, Forsyth, & Heine, 1990](#)). From those times, two branches of Victorian thinking supported the idea. On one hand, romantic-conservatives idealized the pre-industrial village, the values of small towns, and the social

control of the community. On the other hand, utilitarians affirmed that mixing would work better than overcrowded and segregated industrial cities ([Sarkissian, 1976](#)). However, none of these branches were worried about decreasing inequality. Later on, Ebenezer Howard and his Garden City Movement, were in favor of segregation at lower scales, but considered Garden Cities as a representation of the whole society. Next, English social reformer Octavia Hill also entered the debate, proposing the idea of a spirit of emulation (similar to W.J. Wilson's role models), and supporting social mix between the educated and those to be culturally uplifted ([Sarkissian, 1976](#)). From the US, Lewis Mumford propagated the idea of social mix, as an opposition to segregation. He sustained that mixture is an essential function of the city, which will allow cross-cultural fertilization ([Sarkissian, 1976](#)).

After World War II, the idea of social mix was revived. Classlessness ideologies reached urban planning, with a focus in regenerating communal life. However, the details of the mixture and means to achieve it were not clear at all ([Sarkissian, 1976](#)). During the Cold War, western democracies reaffirmed the idea of mix in terms of removing barriers to opportunities, under the new welfare economies. In the US, Jane Jacobs celebrated the vitality of heterogeneous neighborhoods, close to the idea of the old village. In addition, there has been emphasis on social mix from planning and legislation from the second half of the twentieth century ([Sarkissian, 1976](#)). However, the US black left has contended that integration policies threaten the solidarity of old communal ghettos, and act as a mechanism of atomization. More recently, two milestones marked the 1990s in the US. First, there was a re-entry of urban design; New Urbanism appeared as a movement that wanted to participate in the development of HOPE VI's mixed-income communities, contributing with their normative prescriptions ([J. Smith, 2006](#)). And second, there was a revival of social mix, reappearing as a new consensual wisdom in planning debates ([August, 2008](#)). Social mixtures started to be applied mostly to redevelop existing low income communities. And although the rhetoric still points to the historic progressive ideals of equality of opportunity, these recent applications have been more in line with neoliberal governance ([August, 2008](#)).

In more abstract terms, four key concepts have been understood by the literature ([DeFilippis & Fraser, 2010](#); [Joseph, 2006](#)) as the major assumptions for present social mix policies. First, the idea of *social networks as 'social capital'* emphasizes the importance of the return of middle class residents to inner cities. Thus, social mix would facilitate that lower status residents

include higher status neighbors in their networks, who would provide better access to resources and opportunities. Second, '**social control**' affirms that the presence of higher status residents will lead to behaviors that are acceptable to middle class standards, in terms of norms, and increased order and safety ([Joseph, 2006](#)). Third, '**role models**' implies that higher status neighbors would show themselves as example of hard work and success, which would be imitated by lower status neighbors. That is, the assimilation of a middle class culture ([Joseph, 2006](#)). And fourth, '**geographies of opportunity**' points to the generation of a new market demand and political pressures given by the arrival of middle classes, bringing a higher quality of goods and services ([Galster & Killen, 1995](#); [Howell-Moroney, 2005](#); [Joseph, 2006](#)).

Contemporary social mix policies have been applied in the US ([Goetz, 2003](#)), several countries in Europe ([Bolt, Phillips, & Van Kempen, 2010](#)), Australia ([Arthurson, 2012](#)), South Africa ([Lemanski, 2006](#)), and they are emerging in Latin American countries like Chile ([Brain, Cubillos, & Sabatini, 2007](#); [Sabatini, Brain, & Mora, 2013](#)). The general critique to all these examples points to the wide gap between policy rhetoric and the reality of its social outcomes, and to the deficiencies of its theoretical assumptions. The rhetoric of social mix policies, exposed by politicians and supported by a few scholars, affirms that simple proximity between different social groups would create a virtuous circle of benefits for the poor. Regarding the empirical base, although [Joseph \(2006\)](#) has shown some evidence on the mentioned assumptions for social mix (social networks, social control, role models, geography of opportunity), several authors ([Arthurson, 2012](#); [Sarkissian, 1976](#); [Sarkissian et al., 1990](#)) insist that the evidence is very little and that the case for social mix relies on modest theoretical claims: that is, more on normative pretensions than on theoretical certainties.

I affirm that there are three problems crossing some segregation and integration studies. First, there is an excessive fixation on the spatial causes of social problems. The literature on poverty concentration and neighborhood effects (see [Galster, Cutsinger, & Malega, 2008](#); [Sampson, Morenoff, & Gannon-Rowley, 2002](#)), leads to an inevitable assumption that the problem is essentially spatial (i.e. segregation as a cause for pathologies), and that the solution should be designed accordingly ('integration' for positive social outcomes). Second, there is an individualist focus when accounting for the causes of social problems (e.g. role models), which points to individualist solutions and to an underestimation of power relationships ([DeFilippis & Fraser, 2010](#)). The assumption here is that once physical proximity between social groups is

achieved, individual relationships will help the poor in overcoming their own problems. In other words, physical proximity is presented as an end in itself; that is, as an equalization between propinquity and integration. And third, studies on socially mixed neighborhoods (either planned or unplanned) present a wide dispersion of topics², illustrating the different goals for which the idea of 'integration' has been intended. Thus, there is not a clear and comprehensive explanation of the complexity of socio-spatial integration.

From a more comprehensive viewpoint then, I conceive socio-spatial integration as a relationship comprised of four dimensions ([Ruiz-Tagle, 2013](#)); i) **physical**: proximity between different social groups, ii) **functional**: effective access to opportunities and services, iii) **relational**: non-hierarchical interactions, and iv) **symbolic**: identification with a common ground. The purpose of this study therefore, is to observe the experience of disadvantaged groups living in proximity to higher status neighbors in different contexts, and to see how this experience could trigger multidimensional processes of integration.

3. SOCIAL MIX IN BOTH SIDES OF THE EQUATOR: CABRINI GREEN IN CHICAGO AND LA FLORIDA IN SANTIAGO

As examples of socially mixed neighborhoods, I chose the Cabrini Green-Near North area in Chicago, and the La Loma-La Florida area in Santiago de Chile. The focus of the study was on the multi-dimensional experiences of integration (physical, functional, relational and symbolic) and on the overlaps of integration and segregation. Figure 1 below shows the location of both sites in each city, over a map of neighborhood diversity.

² There are studies on the perception of physical impacts ([e.g. Joseph & Chaskin, 2010](#)), studies on the overall benefits for poor people ([e.g. Fraser & Kick, 2007](#)), studies on the cohesion between different social groups ([e.g. Arthurson, 2002](#)), and studies on social interactions ([e.g. Rosenbaum, Stroh, & Flynn, 1998](#)), to name a few.



Figure 1. Location of the studied neighborhoods in their metropolitan areas

NOTE: The two maps show an Index of Neighborhood Diversity in each city. The lighter colors show the most segregated areas (either upper or lower status) and the darker colors show the most demographically diverse areas.

SOURCE: self-elaboration from US Census 2010 and Chile's Census 2002

The data for this paper was drawn from one year of qualitative research. In each case study, I used three types of data sources: i) 50 interviews to low-status and higher-status residents, and institutional actors, ii) field notes from 60 hours of observation of public meetings and several spaces of inter-group encounter, and iii) 'spatial inventories' of 20 hours of mapping in which I located the traces of the symbolic presence of each group.

The Cabrini Green-Near North area in Chicago

Cabrini Green was a huge public housing project within the wealthy Near North Side, inhabited by a wide majority of poor African-Americans. After decades of concerted efforts of social, economic, and political disinvestment ([Goetz, 2013](#)), most of the project has been demolished, generating displacement of many poor blacks, and it is being transformed into a diverse area colonized by new-urbanist, mixed-income developments. Besides, there is a contested future, since the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) and the City of Chicago are not clear about what to

do with the large amounts of land that still remain vacant in the area. Cabrini Green and the neighborhood around it present a long history of diversity, segregation, racial struggles, and recent attempts to erase its history (Bennett & Reed, 1999). Figure 2 shows the limits of the area and the location of different types of affordable housing.

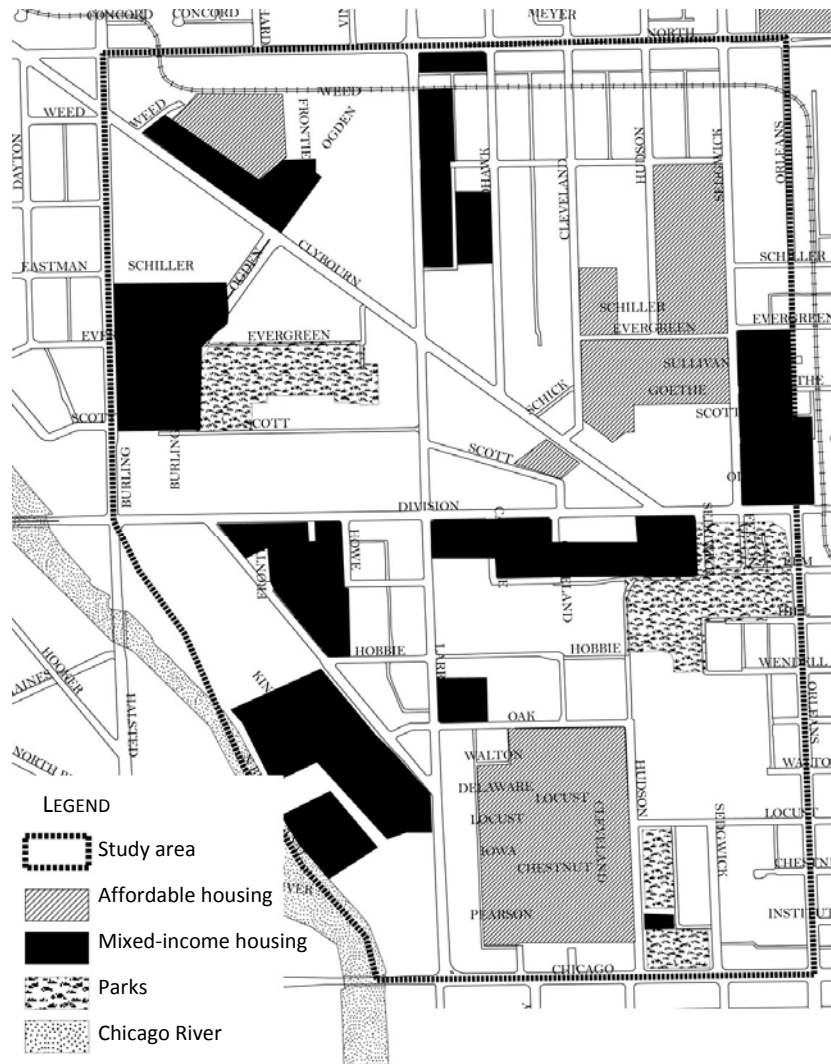


Figure 2. Different types of affordable housing

SOURCE: self-elaboration

At present, holding a population of almost 10,000 people, this area presents racial, socioeconomic, and housing-type diversity. In racial terms, the area is 52% black and 37% non-Hispanic white. In socioeconomic terms, 54% of households are part of the first and second income quintiles of Chicago Metropolitan Area, and 36% are from the fourth and fifth

quintiles. But not all blacks are poor in this neighborhood; 15% of black households are part of the three wealthier quintiles. And regarding housing, there are a number of situations. For the poor population, there are public housing units, subsidized units in mixed-income developments, and Section-8 units in non-governmental projects. And for the middle and upper-middle class population, there are rental and condo units in mixed-income developments, and other multifamily and single family housing units. Figure 3 shows some of the housing developments and table 1 shows the demographic changes in the last decade.



Figure 3. The Row Houses (old Cabrini, left side) and Parkside of Old Town (mixed-income, right side)

SOURCE: Author's photographs.

Table 1. Demographic changes in the Cabrini Green – Near North area, 2000-2010

	2000	2010
Total population	10,290	9,645
Percentage black	86.7%	51.7%
Median income (in 2011 dollars)	\$24,450	\$32,500
Percentage with income over \$50,000 (in 2011 dollars)	27.7%	44.9%
Percentage homeowners	12.1%	27.8%
Percentage of families that are poor	54.3%	42.4%

SOURCE: 2000 US Census, 2010 US Census at www.census.gov

Here I summarize the case based on the mentioned four dimensions of socio-spatial integration. In terms of the *physical dimension*, I can say that the Cabrini Green-Near North area does not present residential segregation, measured by traditional indexes. Poor blacks live in close proximity to very wealthy neighbors, most of them white. However, the problem of segregation has adopted other, very salient, forms. A first example is local schools. Although most upper-income residents do not have school-age children, most of those who have, put their kids in private, selective enrollment, magnet or charter schools, which have been established in recent years. In other words, they have avoided neighborhood schools, whose students are almost 100% black, and almost 100% low income. In the times of Cabrini Green, there were five neighborhood schools receiving the children of its residents; Truth, Schiller, Byrd, Manierre and Jenner. The first four have been closed and their building structures have been converted into private, selective enrollment and charter schools, leaving just a few options for poor residents (Jenner is the only one still open). A similar story happened with local high schools, with closed institutions, structures demolished and new selective enrollment schools created.

A second example of this new segregation is the use of public space and churches. Different groups in this area interact mostly with their own kind. Low-income blacks use public space to socialize and meet new people. On the other hand, high-income people not only avoid blacks whenever possible, but also use public space with pre-existing networks of friends, coming from their more extended networks. In other words, public space in this neighborhood is not an instance of cross-socialization for the two groups. There is also a saturation of churches in the area (nine churches for a territory of 10,000 people), all with different congregations and targeting different social groups, which has detached them from a once relevant role of social cohesion in the neighborhood. In fact, some residents think of churches as "*the most segregated institution*".

In terms of the *functional dimension*, there have been intense changes in this neighborhood. First, given the arrival of upper status residents, a whole set of upscale private services has arrived, from the mentioned private schools and white churches, to new coffee shops (e.g. Starbucks), restaurants (e.g. Panera Bread) supermarkets (e.g. Dominicks), banks, computer stores, fitness centers, and so on. Needless to say, although they are open to the public, none of these establishments are targeted to poor blacks. Second, the arrival of upper classes has

also put pressure on institutional changes. As mentioned, the public school system has been forced to improve, although through charter, magnet or selective enrollment options. The police force has doubled their efforts to maintain safety, working jointly with private security teams of mixed-income and affordable housing projects. And the CHA has enhanced their approach for the maintenance of housing units and common spaces of their projects, but this time externalizing the management to the private developers. In other words, the institutional changes have come through privatization of services, and more segregation and repression of poor blacks.

And the most important of the expected changes has not arrived to this area. One of the main assumptions of mixed-income housing, and of demographically diverse neighborhoods in general, is that there would be more and better opportunities for the lower-status population. However, the reality here could not be farther from that. Blacks in the neighborhood show an unemployment rate of 29.6% (compared to a 1.9% for whites), which has not changed since the arrival of upper status residents. The majority of the jobs available in the neighborhood are service industry jobs, in the several stores that have been established in recent years. However, the percentage of the workforce living and employed in the Cabrini Green-Near North area is extremely low (between 2.5% and 4.5%). Keisha, a low income black resident, describes the low quality of service industry jobs:

...for low-income or anyone at this point in the market... the only jobs that seem to be available are service jobs... and service, I mean... at any grocery store, a little restaurant, or something... are the jobs which would not afford anyone to come up... the jobs that teenagers used to have as part-time jobs, are now being held by adults, and even elderly... or just say older workers, so... no, I don't think, in this area (...) anyone to find any really good paying job...

Regarding the **relational dimension**, intergroup relationships are marked by fear, distrust and avoidance. Although there has been a transversal organization, the Near North Unity Program (NNUP), the general feeling among upper status and lower status groups is of a highly distant relationship. Moreover, the middle class has been gaining cohesion and power, which is exerted to put pressures on the local government in order to prevent more public housing and low income population. And at the same time, poor blacks have been isolated (physically and

organizationally) and are thus losing their power. The proximity between unequal groups is leading to tension and discordance, increasing, and not reducing, their prejudices against each other. A discussion in a public meeting between Rachel, high-income white, and Aisha, low-income black, summarizes this prejudices and mistrust:

Rachel: there's a liquor store that we've been trying to close down (...) and they're still dealing drugs and stuff by there(...) when you try to get rid of them... that's an enormous thing that literally took years to get rid of that(...) Why can't CHA [Chicago Housing Authority] (...) do something to get rid of the Row Houses and get rid of the... to do something that help the police with the crime?

Aisha: (...) the people who are staying in front of the liquor store, of course they're selling cigarettes!!! and not drugs!!! get to know your community a little bit!!!

The most important outcome of physical proximity in this area, is its utilization as a mechanism of atomization and control. Rules and regulations in mixed-income projects are set by the developers and then redone by the condo owners' associations. And this is where most of intergroup problems emerge, with very unbalanced power relationships. Janice, a black public housing resident in one of the new mixed-income buildings, describes this one-sided enforcement of rules:

...so many rules... things you can do, things you can't do... like, I can't barbecue in front of my house (...) but you can... or, if I'm playing loud music, I'm out for eviction... if you're playing loud music, you'd get a fine... if the company complains about... "my neighbor is too loud"... I'm out for eviction... you'd get a warning... if someone leaves my unit and get arrested, and they say he last visited me... I'm out for eviction, you're not...

Thus, the unwritten objective of these rules and regulations is to keep low-income blacks under the strict moral mandates of upper-middle class residents. In other words, if these upper-class residents were to buy a housing unit there, and sharing several spaces with low-income blacks, it was because they were aware of the severe screening processes that public

housing residents had to endure, and because they will have the power to create and enforce various rules and regulations to supervise the behavior of their lower status neighbors.

And in terms of the *symbolic dimension*, there is a contested and fragmented identity in the neighborhood. Despite the lack of contact, one could think that different social groups could identify with the same area, in order to at least recognize the presence and existence of 'the other', and their mutual right to be part of a common territory. But in Cabrini Green, the local community is fragmented between established and newcomers, due to their different times of arrival, but mostly due to their opposed interests. For example, there are different names for the area, depending on which group claims ownership of it; old lower status residents hang on to the historical name, and wealthier newcomers have tried to install a variety of neighboring names (e.g. Old Town, River North, Near North, etc.). Lower status groups identify themselves with the entire neighborhood; despite they do not feel that the new amenities are theirs, they maintain an attachment to the whole area. However, upper status groups just identify with themselves and with their spaces, and consider lower status residents as a 'nuisance'.

As mentioned at the beginning, this socially-mixed neighborhood presents a strong symbolism of desegregation. Socioeconomic diversity is said to be positive among most interviewees, with just a few extreme exceptions. The most common reference to diversity among my interviewees was a kind of 'happy talk' ([Bell & Hartmann, 2007](#)), which highlighted it as a universally positive value. But when discussions went from the abstract to the concrete, that happiness became frustration. In addition, there is more conflict than pride from living in diversity. Upper-class residents are not willing to change their way of life for living in diversity, and think that poor blacks are the ones that have to adjust and "*abide by the rules*". Pride about diversity emerges only if there are no issues. On the side of high-income residents (either white or black), their expectations were very different from what they are actually experiencing. They have a feeling of failure for their investment and want to change everything to their own ways. On the side of poor blacks, there is a high appreciation for diversity, but the actual conditions they have to bear for it in the neighborhood are not very attractive. The sense of being pushed, screened and controlled everywhere is highly pervasive. Indeed, some low-income blacks would prefer to live more segregated (united and free), than in diversity (isolated and constrained).

The La Loma-La Florida case in Santiago de Chile

I selected a case in La Florida municipality (Santiago) because in some way this is 'a mirror of Chile' (De la Jara, 2003), in terms of its recent social, cultural, economic and urban transformations. In the last two decades, La Florida grew fragmented between a south-west sector that received most social housing projects, and an east sector, formerly semi-rural, that received middle class settlements. The present configuration of La Florida thus, is of wide contradictions; between the large real estate projects (commercial, residential, educational, private health services, etc.) and the poverty and deficits of urban facilities. As an intersection of these two worlds, I chose the area surrounding La Loma. Figure 4 shows, on the left, the limits of the selected area and the location of social housing and gated communities, and on the right, the socioeconomic distribution of the population.

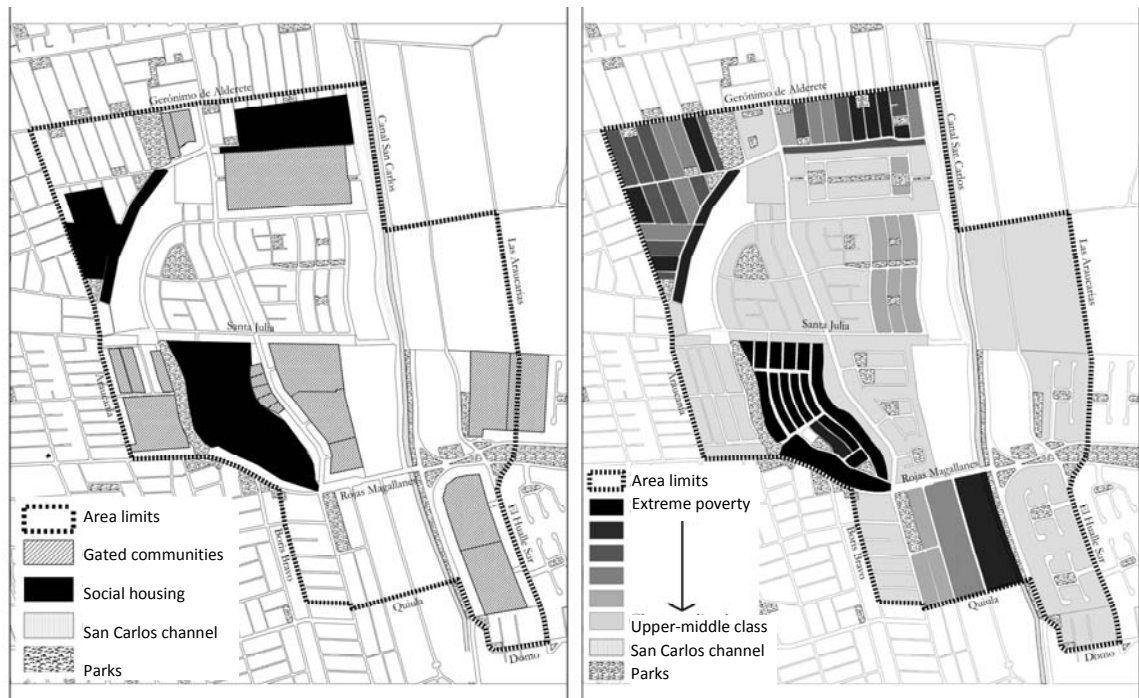


Figure 4. Social housing and gated communities (left), and socioeconomic distribution (right)

SOURCE: left, self-elaboration. Right, estimation from Census 2002

The area surrounding La Loma began to be populated more than 50 years ago. The semi-rural settlements of Lo Cañas and Santa Sofía were established between the 40s and 50s, and in 1970, the agricultural workers of the area decided to take over the land of La Loma, which remained unoccupied by that time. The residents of La Loma built their own houses and just in

1995, they could install public drinking water and sewage, and obtained property deeds. From the 80s and 90s, the expansion of Santiago arrived to the surroundings of La Loma, with social housing projects and with middle class developments. But from the 2000s began a major transformation. Gated communities and neighborhoods for upper-middle class families started to be built, which has changed drastically the quality of public and private services in the area, and mostly, the relationships between neighbors and with the local government of La Florida. At present, with a population of almost ten thousand people, this area presents a wide socioeconomic diversity; 33% belongs to the richest income decile in Chile, and 18% to the four poorest income deciles. Figure 5 and table 2 show pictures and a synthesis of the demographic changes, respectively.



Figure 5. Pictures of different housing projects and services in the area

SOURCE: Author's photographs

Table 2. Summary of demographic changes, 2002-2013

	2002	2013
Total population	8,871	10,656
Area (hectares)	133.11	
Density (inhab/ha)	66.65	80.07
Extreme poverty	3.70%	2.70%
Poor	18.00%	14.80%
Lower-middle class	18.40%	15.90%
Middle class	34.60%	33.70%
Upper-middle class	25.30%	32.90%

SOURCE: Census 2002 and estimation from 2013

Likewise, here I summarize the La Loma-La Florida case based on the mentioned dimensions of socio-spatial integration. In terms of the *physical dimension*, and similar to the Cabrini Green case, there is a high degree of proximity and an almost non-existent residential segregation, according to traditional indexes. As a public official from La Florida municipality described it, there is an “*astounding diversity*”. However, the social mix of this neighborhood was not created by a mixed-income policy³; it was a 'land deregulation accident', in which gated communities colonized a poor area of the periphery. Thus, the scale of the mixture is not as close as in Cabrini Green. Nevertheless, this level of proximity has its problems as well: most points of contact between social groups are prevented through other forms of segregation. The first problem to highlight is the different ways of physical closure. A couple of separation walls have been built in the neighborhood: one separating La Loma from a park to the west, and the other separating this park from a gated community on Araucanía Street. Those walls have been erected several times, from the gated communities and with assistance of the municipality, but youngsters from La Loma have torn them down every time they can.

Furthermore, several streets have been left as ‘cul-de-sacs’, even if the Regulatory Plan of La Florida mandates that they should have continuity. Coincidentally, these ‘cul-de-sacs’ appear

³ There is an intense academic and political debate about implementing mixed-income policies in Chile, and actually there are a few *proyectos de integración social* (social integration projects) already built. This type of projects could have been the perfect comparison with Cabrini Green, but the projects are too new, not much statistical information was available to collect, and not much literature was available to discuss.

in border areas between different social groups. Moreover, gated communities themselves become areas of restricted access, even for middle class residents whose house faces an open street. Eduardo, who has a house outside of the fence of a gated community, but which belongs to the same housing development, explains the situation he has suffered.

There are some that are discriminative (...) they are the ones inside the gated community with the ones facing the street. It's like... if my son goes to play with them, he's discriminated... not because we're different, with more or less resources than them... but they're like... they do their world apart. They believe the ones inside are different from the ones outside (...) when we bought our house, all these squares inside, the playgrounds... they were for all [of us], they were of the community. Can you see? Then, now if I want to enter, I'd have to have keys or have access...

A second problem to highlight is, again, school segregation. The possibilities that the neighborhood offers for social mobility and intergroup relationships are limited by the strong school segregation that exists in Chile. The majority of residents in the area have their children in 12 establishments that are within or around the studied area. There are four tuition-free municipal schools, five state-subsidized private schools (charging between U\$50 and U\$100 for monthly tuition), and three fully private schools (more than U\$200 for tuition). The payment of tuition to these establishments represents between 15% and 40% of household income. In terms of quality, municipal schools have the lowest test scores, with state-subsidized schools in the middle, and private schools at the top. School segregation divides families of the neighborhood between different establishments. From the lower class, the majority attends municipal schools (tuition-free), and a few attend state-subsidized schools, with a state scholarship. And among middle class residents, some attend state-subsidized private schools, and most of them, private schools.

In terms of the **functional dimension**, there is an important level of exchange of goods and services, as several studies on socially mixed areas in Chile have already shown ([Sabatini & Salcedo, 2007](#); [Salcedo & Torres, 2004](#)). There are lower status residents working as maids⁴,

⁴ Having domestic service is very popular among middle and upper classes in Chile and in Latin America, due to the low wages of domestic workers.

gardeners, construction workers, and the like, in upper status houses. Besides, there are several small stores, like grocery shops, liquor stores, shoe repair and the like, established in lower status houses. And they have received some of the benefits of an expanded market, with a higher purchasing power. However, there are several nuances to take into account: i) many domestic workers come from areas that are out of the neighborhood, ii) many workers living in the neighborhood work outside of it, iii) there is an important distrust from upper status residents to hire their own neighbors, iv) many middle class households do not have domestic service, and v) the possibility of accessing domestic service jobs depends on the level of internal cohesion among social housing settlements, which facilitates the circulation of job-related information. In addition, there are middle class houses with grocery stores as well, and several middle class residents prefer to avoid lower class spaces (and their stores).

In sum, there are some job opportunities, but the proximity between groups is not a necessary condition for poor residents for finding a job in the neighborhood. Besides, the available jobs are all low paid, unskilled jobs, which in material terms maintain economic inequalities, and in symbolic terms maintain subordinated social relationships. In other words, the available jobs maintain the material and symbolic status quo. This, coupled with the high levels of school segregation in the neighborhood, configure a difficult situation for social mobility. Similar to Cabrini Green, new amenities and private services have arrived, together with upper status residents, including schools, supermarkets, restaurants, gyms, and the like. However, several low income residents do not feel the benefits, even to the point of affirming that *"the neighborhood would be the same with or without middle class residents"*. They do not feel the new amenities as theirs, and sometimes they end up using their own self-subsistence commerce.

Regarding the ***relational dimension***, intergroup relationships are also marked by fear, distrust and avoidance, mostly from the middle class. There is no relevant relationship beyond the mentioned functional exchanges. While the lower class is established as a cohesive community, middle class residents are just a set of disconnected individuals who are apathetic, distrustful and not participative. Lower class residents (and their spaces) are blamed for every bad event that happens in the neighborhood, especially for crime. Agustina, resident of La Loma, describes this discrimination.

They believe they are exclusive, that they are professionals... sort of... owners of cars, owners of this... then, there is much negative things from them to us (...) I mean, they say like 'the criminals of La Loma'... while not all people is criminal...

But the distrust of the middle class even extends to their own intra-group relationships; they do not know each other, they do not use the neighborhood and its spaces, and everybody in the neighborhood could be a potential criminal. Rafael, resident in Llanos de Lo Cañas gated community, has this sensation of isolation.

Neighbors are... there is no relationship... let's say it... like certain activities as group between neighbors, like visiting each other, no, no. Everyone maintains their life independently with its own people... respecting each other, but there is no social relationship of internal friendship, or instance of communication (...) one knows some people more than others, but is not a social network that is pointing to some objective...

A second dividing line is the need for social differentiation from upper status residents. The middle class has historically tended to stress the differences with lower classes. And this has several reasons. In material terms, lower class residents can look very similar to middle class ones, given the massive access to consumption goods in last decades, and the relatively low levels of racial differentiation. In cultural terms, within the history of classism in Chile, hiding one's own social origin has been a strategy used by middle and upper-middle classes in order to be accepted by the elite. And in institutional terms, from the neoliberal reforms, the state apparatus has implemented targeted policies to attend only the most needed population, generating a sharp fragmentation with the population that is just a few steps above in the social ladder, which in turn generates some resentment among the middle class. A third dividing line is the lack of relevant institutions or organizations that connect both groups. Social service organizations are inexistent in this neighborhood because, as it also happens in Cabrini Green, the average income is higher than in traditional poor areas. And the state, either by its different centralized agencies or by the municipality, is just worried about the lower class. Thus, the middle class does not have the support of the state and does not have a connecting institution with the lower class.

And in terms of the *symbolic dimension*, similar to what happens in Cabrini Green, there has been an intentional erasure of old community signs. There are no references to the old semi-rural settlements, to the historical landmarks, or to the social housing developments. In gentrification debates, it has been said that gentrifying neighborhoods use 'some' of the old symbolic elements of the area to attract particular segments of the middle class that have cultural affinities with the urban, post-industrial life. In socially-mixed neighborhoods like Cabrini Green and La Loma however, the "symbolic economy" ([Zukin, 1995](#)) acts in a way that attempts to erase most references to the past, in order to build a new image that is marketable to a wider spectrum of the middle class. Thus, this would be a type of gentrification that moves away from traditional narratives of the cultural return to inner cities.

A second point to highlight here is the unclear identity of the neighborhood for its residents. The lower class feels that changes are not for them, and the middle class feels that the neighborhood is not totally owned. Given the mentioned intergroup relationships, it is understandable that both groups have confusing and vague feelings about their own environment, and that their proximity does not generate any symbolic commonality between them. And a third point that is particular to the La Florida case, is the hostile messages sent by the security infrastructure. Despite authors like [Sabatini and Salcedo \(2007\)](#) have minimized the role played by fences in Chile's socially-mixed areas, it is important to highlight the motivations for property owners to put their fences, and the symbolic effects for neighbors and passersby. Closures are used to protect residents, and the degree of closure generally signals how unprotected the owners feel. But fences also have a deterrent effect, as does any security device. And many times this effect is more important than the mere physical closing. The deterrent effect constitutes a specific message towards all strangers, regarding the owner's house. In the case of this neighborhood, if the middle class have almost no social networks, then not only residents from poor settlements are strangers. Everyone is a stranger and a potential criminal, and the message of fences and security devices is aimed at all of them. Figure 6 shows different types of fences among middle class housing.



Figure 6: Different types of fences among middle class housing

SOURCE: author's photographs

4. DIFFERENCES, SIMILARITIES AND MAJOR EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

Differences between cases

The cases studied here are certainly different, which complicates any effort of comparison. The Cabrini Green-Near North area has been a highly notorious public housing settlement, which was built in an inner-city location of Chicago from the 1950s. Instead, the La Loma-La Florida area has been a much more silent case of urban development, built in a peripheral area of Santiago from the 1970s. But beyond these general differences, I want to structure the analysis based on three structural factors that influence the causes, the dynamics and the consequences of residential segregation. First, *social stratification systems* mark the causes of segregation in terms of the number, strength, and importance of horizontal and vertical lines of inequality in each society (i.e., race, ethnicity, class, and so on), which creates a system of social relationships. Second, *housing allocation systems* (or 'political economies of

neighborhood change') mark the dynamics in which segregation is materialized in terms of residential mobility, the functioning of the housing market, policies for affordable housing, historical practices of segregation, and so on. And third, *welfare systems in space* influence the consequences of segregation in terms of the institutional context that surround neighborhoods, such as local education and health services, the administrative division of the state and its jurisdiction on social matters, the funding and management of public spaces, the functioning of the local police, and so on.

In terms of ***social stratification systems*** thus, there are several distinctions. First, there are different race-class intersections. In Chicago, the lower status group is poor and black, and the upper status group is wealthy and majority white. In Santiago instead, although there are some differences in skin color (the poor are browner and the rich are whiter), the main distance is about class. In both cities, both groups have a wide historical social distance, but the overlap of race and class in Chicago makes its social mix much more complex. Second, coming from the first, there are different forms of discrimination. The main force of discrimination is racism in Chicago and the main force in Santiago is classism. While racism is a set of prejudices based on a physical trait (skin color), and which has recently changed from explicit to implicit ([R. Smith, 1995](#)), classism is a system of symbolic mechanisms of differentiation to define group membership, borders and social distances ([Contardo, 2012](#)). Thus, discrimination in Chicago was difficult to unveil among interviewees, but once disclosed, 'the other' was clearly defined. In turn, discrimination in Santiago was much more explicit in discourses, but the definition of 'the other' was less structured. And third, there is a different role of the middle class and their claims for the neighborhood in each case. In Chicago, the middle class is highly participative and sometimes shows a significant level of cohesion, which comes from a tradition of (white) middle class involvement in local issues. In Santiago in turn, the middle class is apathetic, non-participative and disorganized. They have only reacted, very strongly, to stop the construction of more social housing in the area. Anyway, the common factor at play for both cases is the relationship of the middle class with the state apparatus, which is extended below.

Regarding ***housing allocation systems***, this is where the highest differences reside. Large cities in the US are characterized by what I call a 'continuous' or 'organic' type of neighborhood change, distinguished by its fast pace (i.e. speed of change), small scale of developments (i.e.

extent of change) and short term (i.e. durability of change). In Chilean large cities it is all the opposite; there is a 'discrete' type of neighborhood change, with a slow pace, large scale and long term character. These differences, applied to the specific cases, have important implications. In Cabrini Green, there are higher levels of real estate demand, residential mobility and population turnover than in La Florida. And each of these issues has its consequence: the real estate demand generates exclusionary pressures on the poor population, especially when there is vacant land available; and residential mobility and population turnover complicate the possibilities of establishing intergroup relationships and organizations due to the relatively shorter stay of upper status residents. A second important difference is marked by the levels of homeownership in each city and in each case, which is particularly significant for lower status groups. Poor families in La Florida are almost all homeowners, despite the size and quality of their units, while in Cabrini Green, poor households are all renters. And this represents a double-edged sword, because there are advantages and disadvantages. The renting situation in Cabrini Green, allows the maintenance of units by the management company, which at present have the units in very good standing. In La Florida instead, with few resources from homeowners, the maintenance is poor. And both situations impact on the stigmatization of their physical spaces. The flip side of this is that La Florida households are free to occupy their units as they want, even with the possibility of opening small, semi-formal grocery stores in their front gates. In Cabrini Green in turn, the management companies have severe restrictions on the use of the public housing units and on several aspects of the behavior of its residents.

And in terms of *welfare systems in space*, there are considerable differences in the institutional context of each case. First, there are different levels of territorial conflict for public schools. In Chicago, neighborhood schools have attendance areas which, depending on the quality, modify the demand for housing in those zones. In Chile instead, schools are open to students from any part of the city and country. Thus, it is the demographic makeup of a particular neighborhood which defines the demand for some of the three mentioned school types. A second point is the level of public investments. Here, the condition of being a planned or an unplanned mixed neighborhood marks a big difference; while Cabrini Green receives resources for mixed-income housing, for public schools, for parks, for public transportation, and so on, La Florida does not receive any particular investment, excepting a social housing project that has not been built due to the opposition of the middle class. Third, the

institutional framework of public spaces is highly different in both contexts, in terms of how they are planned and built, and in terms of how they are maintained. In Santiago, parks are leftovers of the private construction of housing developments and their size is extremely small, while in Chicago, large parks have been planned and built by the municipality. In Chicago, there is a Chicago Park District that is in charge of maintenance and recreation activities in each park, while in La Florida there are just some gardeners, hired by the municipality, that mow and water the lawn, without any involvement in activities for the neighbors. Both reasons (size and maintenance) explain in part why there is an almost inexistent use of public space in La Florida, especially from upper status groups. A last point to highlight is the relationship between the state apparatus and the middle class. From the 1980s, targeted policies in Chile concentrated all social protections on the poor population, including education, healthcare, and housing, and excluding the middle class, which started to use privatized services. Thus, the relationship with the state, and the protection from it, is almost inexistent in Chile. In the US, despite all the neoliberal changes, the state still has a permanent relationship with the middle class, and there is a frequent involvement in planning through participatory processes.

Similarities between cases

Despite the nuances mentioned above, it is interesting to see that there are similarities in several topics. In terms of **urban development**, there is a similar density, socioeconomic change and stability. Although there are multi-family buildings in Cabrini Green and single-family houses in La Florida, both cases have similar levels of density, which reaffirms a known claim saying that neighborhood diversity is to some extent related to density. In addition, both cases have presented processes of upward socioeconomic change, since they have passed from homogeneously poor to socially-mixed. Finally, both cases present a relative stability of their neighborhood diversity, although through different mechanisms (public property of subsidized housing in Cabrini Green, and high homeownership levels in La Florida). Then, these are not cases of temporary diversity within a large process of gentrification. In terms of **job opportunities**, there are evident similarities. Both cases present limited opportunities, which are almost inexistent in Cabrini Green, and highly subordinated in La Florida. Both cases present barriers of discrimination and prejudice; race-based in Cabrini Green and class-based in La Florida. Besides, the few jobs created do not offer effective avenues for upward social mobility; they are characterized by its informality, precariousness, low wages and

subordination. Then, these jobs preserve the status quo in material and cultural terms, maintaining poor and excluded groups in inferior positions.

Regarding **educational opportunities**, the stories are similar as well. There is limited access to quality education for lower status residents in both cases, due to the low quality of schools receiving poor students. In addition, there are historical and recent processes of schools segregation in both cities. Historically, Santiago has schools that are class-segregated between public and private from the 1980s, and Chicago has schools that are race-segregated between white and non-white from the early 20th century. And recently, Chicago has had a diversification of public school types (magnet, charter, selective enrollment) and a propagation of private schools. In any case, the segregation of local schools put a strong barrier in front of poor residents, which is detrimental for their opportunities and for their social cohesion with the middle class. In both cases, but more intense in Chicago than in Santiago, there has been school closings (relocating their students) and privatizations. Regarding **intergroup relationships**, both cases present serious problems. Upper and lower status groups feel highly distant from each other; they do not know about 'the other's life, customs and problems; upper status groups are afraid of crime coming from their neighbors, and avoid them in public space, especially when there are more visual differences (racial traits or class hints). Stigmatization operates in both cases, but with a different content: while poor black individuals are avoided in Cabrini Green ('human' stigmatization), the case is against poor spaces in La Florida (territorial stigmatization), given the relatively low racial differences. In addition, several intergroup attitudes have worsened by living in close proximity. There are opposite levels of social cohesion between upper and lower status groups, opposite feelings of security, and opposite degrees of place attachment. In other words, the 'contact hypothesis' ([Allport, 1954](#)) has not operated in Cabrini Green and La Florida. It has been all the opposite, which has been called 'negative contact' ([Paolini, Harwood, & Rubin, 2010](#)), 'environmental spoiling' ([Ebbesen, Kjos, & Konečni, 1976](#)), or 'conflict hypothesis' ([Häußermann & Siebel, 2001](#)).

In terms of **housing and political economy** finally, both cases present exclusionary pressures from real estate and the middle class, in order to prevent the construction of more social housing and to prevent the increase of lower class population in their neighborhoods. The arrival of upper classes has brought new amenities, through private investments, and

institutional changes in public entities, such as schools, the police and housing authorities. In fact, one of the few benefits of social mix has been the upgrading of the quality standards of social housing, due to the indirect pressures of the middle class for generating an 'acceptable' neighborhood to live. Nevertheless, the amount of social housing units 'accepted' is limited, which in turn generates shortages that impact local and metropolitan housing markets for the poor.

Major empirical findings

Here I summarize the major findings about socially-mixed neighborhoods in short and clear statements.

- A. Physical proximity between different groups (social mix) works more as a mechanism of atomization and/or control than as a policy for diverse and peaceful coexistence, leaving no relevant benefits for the poor.
- B. The arrival of upper classes brings more amenities and generates institutional changes, but not upward social mobility for the poor.
- C. Intergroup relationships are marked by fear, distrust and avoidance.
- D. There is a contested and fragmented identity, coming from a higher material and symbolic competition (i.e. local resources and place identity).
- E. Despite the overlap with integration, new forms of segregation emerge and tend to prevail, and thus inequality persists.
- F. Social mix is a confusing urban arrangement in which the symbolism of physical proximity conceals the persistence of inequality and several active forces creating segregation.

5. CONCLUSIONS: THEORY AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS, AND CRITICAL APPROACHES FOR SEGREGATION

There are four areas from which I can extract theory and policy implications. First, regarding the *multi-dimensional experience of integration*, some authors have affirmed that socially-mixed neighborhoods perform two civilizing roles ([Uitermark, 2014](#)): first, local governments find a way of decreasing the quantity of 'problematic' individuals, which is particularly true in Cabrini Green; and second, the state uses the middle class as a mechanism of discipline, which happens to some extent in the middle class/domestic servants relationship in La Florida. Furthermore, as other authors have demonstrated ([see Ostendorf, Musterd, & De Vos, 2001](#)), social mix does not reduce poverty. On top of this, local governments are not investing enough resources in poor neighborhoods and are far more responsive to the claims of the middle class. Moreover, socially-mixed neighborhoods present more tension, discordance and increasing prejudice, which is in line with what was found long ago ([see Chamboredon & Lemaire, 1970](#)). Finally, these neighborhoods could be understood as '*communities without community*' ([Amin, 2002](#)), since social networks do not intersect, interactions only occur for some common goods, there are different levels of place attachment and different cultural customs.

Second, in terms of *experiences and discourses of diversity*, there is wide separation between the political rhetoric and the social reality of socially-mixed neighborhoods, which has been criticized in the last decade ([August, 2008](#); [Blanc, 2010](#); [Bolt et al., 2010](#)). All interviewees pass from a 'happy talk' ([Bell & Hartmann, 2007](#)) about social mix to an intense frustration with its actual outcomes. As the title of this article suggests, social mix makes inequality visible, but it is difficult to say that it is positive by itself. The invitation to create diversity is just a small concession, but it does not touch the roots of what creates inequalities between groups. The idea of diversity, and diverse urban coexistence, clearly conceals power differentials ([Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998](#)), since the positive language of desegregation hides race and class inequalities. Third, '*neighborhood effects*' research has been intimately related to social mix policies ([Kintrea, 2013](#)). The idea of neighborhood effects implies that additional social problems are (supposedly) generated by the spatial concentration of poverty, and which cannot be deducted from poverty itself ([Sampson et al., 2002](#)). Thus, here I ask the following question: is social mix reversing the outcomes of concentrated poverty? (i.e. positive neighborhood effects). The answer is complex, since this is not a question of balanced or unbalanced demographics. Instead, more than demographics, several authors insist that

institutions work against social exclusion in segregated neighborhoods, thus breaking the direct relationship between concentrated poverty and further social problems ([Dangschat, 1994](#); [Simon, 1992](#)). Then, without meaningful institutions in diverse neighborhoods, there are similar levels of exclusion. That is what is happening in Cabrini Green, where poor blacks have almost the same rates of unemployment than before mixed-income projects were built. Thus, the problem is not just the concentration of poverty, but the overlap of different forms of segregation, accumulated stigmatization and institutional abandonment ([Wacquant, 2008](#)).

Finally, there are several things to say about *social mix policies*. As I have mentioned, socially-mixed neighborhoods are strange creatures of urban development, which carry the contradiction between the positive symbolism of desegregation and a context of growing inequalities, or between the progressive rhetoric of social mix and processes of welfare retrenchment and social fragmentation. Given this situation, social mix policies have been highly ineffective to provide more social justice, in several parts of the world. Thus, social mix represents a new phase of neoliberal policies, disguised as progressive under the discourse of diversity. First, it produces gentrification and displacement ([Goetz, 2013](#)). Second, it leaves affordable housing provision to the market. Third, it externalizes the management of social housing. Fourth, it carries the implicit belief that opportunities would trickle-down. And fifth, it leaves racism unquestioned. In addition, there are two important limitations: only one portion of the poor is accepted, and; the existing (if any) job opportunities are just a comparative advantage for the poor in socially-mixed areas, but it cannot be used as a policy to decrease general levels of unemployment.

Some decades ago, Lefebvre and Harvey observed contradictions in the capitalist city, in terms of the centralization of power and the decentralization of poverty (i.e. segregation), thus creating the basis for confrontation, making the system unstable, and undermining the reproduction of social relations ([Harvey, 1989](#); [Saunders, 1986](#)). In present days however, the current developments of social mix stand as the improvement of those contradictions. As [Uitermark \(2014\)](#) describes it, social mix can be portrayed as a dual policy of rent extraction and social control.

Critical approaches for dealing with segregation

There are two approaches that can be highlighted here; on one hand, [Young \(1999\)](#) suggests to counteract the persisting disinvestment and lack of resources in poor neighborhoods; and on the other hand, [Marcuse \(2006\)](#) recommends to deal with inequality and prejudice at a general level, not just in poor neighborhoods. The first approach deals with territorial inequality, and the second deals with general social inequality and poverty. In my view, a critical approach should join Young's and Marcuse's views, and address the mentioned three structural factors of residential segregation; social stratification systems, housing allocation systems and welfare systems in space.

In terms of **social stratification systems**, an overall anti-segregation policy should attack the sources of inequality and prejudice (racism and classism) at a national level. In other words, this implies actions both on the 'material side' (power) and on the 'cultural-symbolic side' (status); the first calls for policies of economic redistribution and affirmative action, and the second for serious changes in the educational, cultural and communicational realms. In terms of **housing allocation systems**, an effective policy should prevent and counteract both the concentration of wealth and the concentration of poverty, at a metropolitan level. As [Marcuse \(2006\)](#) affirms, policies should not be just directed to poor, conflictive neighborhoods, but to the whole spectrum of urban life. Finally, in terms of **welfare systems in space**, an overall policy should have actions at two levels. At a national level, the creation of universal systems of protection that reduce the impact of inequality should be promoted ([Marcuse, 2006](#)). And at a metropolitan level, a territorial redistribution of opportunities and resources should be encouraged (*i.e. moving 'resources-to-people'*, see [Young, 1999](#)). The first level attacks general social inequality and the second level attacks territorial inequality. Thus, as long as poor areas are improved, and the stay of poor people is assured (*i.e. no gentrification*), this would also attract higher income families, possibly lowering the levels of segregation. Therefore, by addressing the causes, dynamics and consequences of segregation decisively, and at different scales, more appropriate policies can be built.

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