Gentrification and Globalization: the emergence of a middle range theory?

Tim Butler

King's College London

Abstract

In this paper I argue that gentrification, despite the many arguments over its continuing validity as a concept, retains its key importance in understanding processes of class change. In some respects the concept has grown middle aged and become over endowed with its own history and I suggest that it needs to retain a focus on the implications of macro social change for individuals. In particular, gentrification needs to be decoupled from its original association with deindustrialization processes in metropolitan centres such as London and with its coupling to working class displacement. In recent times, gentrification has been identified with non metropolitan cities in countries such as Britain, capital and other major cities around the world and increasingly in rural locations. The recent interests in processes such as 'gated communities' and, to a lesser extent, studentification are part of the changed landscape of gentrification which I also propose is now occurring over huge regions dominated by global metropolises; the influence of London over the southern half of England is a good example. In particular, I argue that gentrification provides a good example of a 'middle range theory' which is able to link global processes and flows to the construction of identities in particular localities. With the decline of social class as an overall explanation of cultural, social and spatial behaviour, this notion of gentrification as a form of 'elective belonging' has considerable potential of uniting geographical and sociological approaches to agency and structure. I illustrate this by drawing on three recent studies on the relationship between people and places.

1. Introduction

Gentrification, like so much, is now widely accepted as a global phenomenon and its manifestations are now being regularly reported across the globe (Atkinson and Bridge 2005). Indeed the sub title of Atkinson and Bridge's edited collection *Gentrification in a Global Context: the new urban colonialism* reflects the widely held belief that the phenomenon is now responsible for the emergence of an 'urban

other' across the globe. This assertion should probably have had a question mark at the end because the hunt for the urban frontiers of gentrification by academics on their travels sometimes remained rather less clear cut than might have seemed at first sight. Eric Clark (2005) and Luděk Sỳkora (2005) both confide that the frontiers of gentrification in Malmö and Budapest respectively were not as sharply drawn as Neil Smith might have understood them to have been. What emerges clearly from this collection of articles about the world wide search for gentrification, is that there is something there in most parts of the world which we would recognise as some form of the phenomenon but that it is not like a bottle of Coca Cola with a registered trade mark that can be hauled off the shelf in any global housing market. To some extent, the extent of its manifestation depends on the degree of social and economic polarisation, the nature and traditions of urban design and finally the degree to which the city in question has been subject to invasion by the international service class diaspora. Perhaps unsurprisingly, if you go looking for gentrification you tend to find it whereas, if your concerns are different, you may find less evidence of it. Fujitsuka (2005) is able to write a chapter for a book on gentrification about its manifestation in Kyoto

> Like many cities in the west [however] gentrification re-emerged after the mid 1990s in Japanese cities, almost at the same time as Smith (1996) relates the process in New York City. A second wave of gentrification was further driven by the preceding depreciation of land-values and existence of unoccupied sites which drove the process in inner city areas. (Fujitsuka 2005: 143-4)

Fujitsuka proceeds to give a lively and apparently convincing account of a gentrification process in Kyoto. Fielding (2004) in an article arguing that Japanese cities have no 'social geography' and which is in part also based on a case study of Kyoto claims that there is almost no gentrification in Japan

> …although, there are individual gentrifiers investing in older properties in Japanese cities, and small scale redevelopment projects promoted by local authorities, there is little evidence of the large-scale spontaneous neighbourhood transformations of the kind now so common in western cities (14 but check journal)[1]

It is not my point here to argue who is right – indeed there is much that is common to the two studies – but simply that, to some extent, 'if you seek, ye shall find'[2]. Nor is it my intention to deny the world wide emergence of forms of gentrification. Like many others doing gentrification research, I have duly noted its emergence together with neo liberal forms of governance, as I have travelled to cities as apparently different as Buenos Aires and Brisbane. I hesitate however to generalise about it as a new form of neo-colonialism or indeed as the vehicle for a new urban global strategy by capital (Smith 2002).

> This is … a matter of conflating concept with phenomenon. It is more accurate to say that the concept of gentrification is now global, diffusing as the geographic foci of gentrification research has expanded. The extent of occurrence of the phenomenon from a global historical perspective remains however largely uncharted (Clark 2005: 260)

As Clark goes on to argue (262) its effects vary; it can be the kind of violent and confrontational kind of displacement identified by Neil Smith but it can also be more benign. The lack of confrontation in many European and particularly Scandinavian countries has to do with the particularly inclusive nature of their governance and welfare regimes – although as Clark notes, this is now in danger of changing.

What tends to be missing in many of these 'global spread' (or frequent flyer) types of analysis of gentrification is an understanding of the local social relations in which the gentrification process is taking place. Not only does the gentrification of New York ((Smith 1996) differ from that of London (Butler and Robson 2003) and major Canadian cities (Ley 1996) but also it can vary in its manifestation within a metropolitan city (Butler and Robson 2003). In recent years a number of studies of gentrification in, for example, provincial British cities (Lambert and Boddy 2002; Bridge 2003; Dutton 2003; Lyons 2003; Dutton 2005) and across the globe (Atkinson and Bridge 2005) has emerged which points to a wide variation in manifestations and motivations. What also emerges from these studies is that scale and context matter – as Bridge (2003) points out in his study of Bristol; the city simply does not have the scale to embrace the variation in social habitus and sense of belonging that might be found in a global metropole such as London. What does not emerge however from these studies is that there is any necessary link between what is understood as gentrification and particular forms of behaviour and relations between the different

social groups involved. This, I wish to argue, depends on a much closer focused understanding of what it is that particular groups feel has changed for them with the onset of global neo liberalism, social and economic uncertainty and a general detachment from the norms and values with which they were raised and may now be of little guidance in raising their own children (Sennett 1998). This forms the major part of the discussion in subsequent sections of the paper but before reaching that I need to set out what might be seen as the common ground for our understanding of gentrification 'in a global context'.

From the time the concept was coined[3], gentrification has been concerned with the social and spatial implications of changes in the urban environment themselves caused by larger socio-economic forces:

> One by one, many of the working class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle-class - upper and lower - shabby modest mews and cottages … have been taken over when their leases expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences. Larger Victorian houses, downgraded in an earlier or recent period - which were used as lodging houses or were otherwise in multiple occupation - have been upgraded once again … Once this process of 'gentrification' starts in a district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the working class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed. (Glass 1964: xviii)

Although the context has changed since Ruth Glass identified the first stirrings of the gentrification process in London in the 1960s, in what is rapidly becoming one of the most quoted passages in the study of the urban, the underlying process remains essentially as she described it. Most commentators accept that is essentially a class concept – which is particularly relevant at a time when people (and the sociologists who study them) do not relate to the concept of class as one that informs their lives although they recognise 'it' as around and about them (Savage 2000). So what is gentrification trying to explain?

Much of the debate about this of course centres around the question of definition which, as Slater, Curran and Lees (2004: 1144-5) point out, has veered around its appearance, extent, physical manifestations and meanings. In the end they argue, gentrification is about 'nothing more or less than the *class dimensions of neighbourhood change* – in short, not simply changes in housing stock, but changes in

social class' (1144 – emphasis in original). Clark (2005) reminds us that is an essentially simple concept and few could disagree with this definition:

> Gentrification is a process involving a change in the population of land-users such that the new users are of a higher socio-economic status than the previous users, together with an associated change in the built environment through a reinvestment in fixed capital. The greater the difference in socio-economic status, the more noticeable the process, not least because the more powerful the new users are, the more marked will be the concomitant change in the built environment. It does not matter where, it does not matter when. Any process of change fitting this description is, to my understanding, gentrification (Clark 2005: 258)

The critical words at the end are 'it does not matter where, it does not matter when' although the time-space issue may be important in understanding the different motivations and perceptions of those who gentrify.

From the start then, gentrification has enabled us to link macro level changes (e.g. deindustrialisation or globalisation) to their micro level manifestations (e.g. neighbourhood change) (Hamnett 2003: b). The problem is that the concept has become somewhat reified and abstracted from what it does best which is to enable us to link changes at the level of 'system integration' to those of 'social integration' (Lockwood 1964). This is what Glass and those who studied the early changes of gentrification in London were doing in the 1960s. This, in my view, is what those who are charting its progress across the globe should be doing today and we should expect to find a good deal of variation; a good example of this is Silvana Rubino's (2005) account of the actors and contexts of gentrification in four Brazilian cities which paints a rather different picture than that expected in the global north. My concern is not that the concept has become 'diluted' as so much change becomes subsumed under the gentrification brand but that we are losing sight of what it is that needs to be explained or at least understood. The great strength of gentrification research has been its ability to throw light on how changes in the external economy have affected the relations between people and the places that they live in. Whereas we might once have explained that simply, and largely accurately, in terms of social class, this is no longer possible (Blokland and Savage 2001).

Gentrification has in principle brought together the disciplines of geography and sociology although neither discipline might recognise this. Whilst the former has, in recent decades, focused on the consequences of global flows, the latter has tended to become embroiled in explicating the ethnographies of 'local' identities. Where we have not advanced our thinking has been in failing to understand the processes by which such flows and constructions of identity interact. This used, as it were, to be done for us by social class (or at least so we were led to believe), now it appears we have to do some of the work ourselves. It has been suggested that places in general and cities in particular become important as media for growing these cultures of identity (Florida 2002; 2005). Whilst it is self evident that people increasingly 'think global but act local' the means by which they achieve this are rarely, if ever, made explicit other than by reference to further concepts such as hybridity, glocalism and so forth. It is precisely here that gentrification can usefully present itself as a 'middle range' theory as a major contribution to understanding the link between global processes, people and places. However, if it is to achieve this then it needs to be catholic in its acceptance of what gentrification might be and where it might occur.

In order to do this we need, as Clark (2005) suggests, in his concluding chapter to the Atkinson and Bridge volume, to keep it simple. Gentrification has tended to put on weight in middle age, become subject to a good deal of introspection and itself become subject to a process of gentrification. Gentrification is essentially about how social classes 'make out' in different spaces- both of which have changed out of almost all recognition over the forty years of its academic life.

In the remainder of this article, I wish to argue that sociological studies of social class and identity and geographical ones of gentrification have been slowly groping towards each. There result is the formation of a 'middle range theorization' which seeks to understand how people have reacted to what they have differentially, and often simultaneously, experienced as a range of threats and opportunities that are often bundled up as 'the forces of globalization'. Their perceptions of these may vary but rarely do they seem to think they can carry on with their lives as they experienced them during childhood, adolescence and the transition to adulthood. They may or may not worry that their actions have generative affects which is usually negative for other social groups in terms of displacement and exclusion. Gentrification, for many and this may include those who have themselves been displaced higher up the chain, has

been the means by which they have achieved an 'accommodation' to their perception of a changed world by seeking out others like themselves. The latest, and perhaps clearest, manifestation of this has been the phenomenal growth in scale and diversity of 'gated communities' firstly in north America but more recently in cities of the global south and now Europe (Blakely and Snyder 1997; Atkinson and Flint 2004; Grant and Mittelsteadt 2004; Low 2004). The rise of gated communities is forcing gentrification research to take a very critical self examination of itself.

I suggest that gentrification needs to be rescued from becoming a concept that is continually re-discovered in yet uncharted territory by arguing that we should expect the nature of that territory to be continually changing as a result of the interaction of global and local forces within and beyond the global metropoles in which it was first discovered. In this respect, I suggest that whole city regions in highly prosperous areas can be seen as becoming gentrified with new forms of displacement whilst the more traditional forms of urban and rural gentrification are themselves being displaced, at least in the case of Britain, to what Dorling and Thomas (2004: 258) term the 'archipelago of the provinces'. New forces are emerging, such as gating or 'studentification' (Smith 2005) which are driving the gentrification process.

Following a discussion of the changing geographical scale and trends in social class, I then draw on three recent studies to argue that the gentrification process is increasingly about the way in which people select and identify places to live. Partially at least, these can be seen as ways of coming to terms with the globalization process. These studies all share a concern with the ways in which people are creating or seeking out a social 'habitus'. All three studies look at how different groups deploy their variously endowed stocks of economic, social and cultural capital to create places with which they can identify and feel at home – in some cases creating 'in groups' by identifying 'out groups' for example. Broadly, I argue that all three studies demonstrate the ways in which conceptions and constructions of place identity have replaced or at least supplemented those of occupationally derived identities of social class. Finally, I draw some conclusions which suggest that this approach to gentrification enables it to be seen as 'middle range theory' which allows us to link the processes of globalization, on the one hand, with residential choices and processes of 'identity formation', on the other.

2. Changes in the geographical and sociological scale of gentrification

> Our conclusion is that the country is being split into half. To the South is the *metropolis of Greater London*, which now extends across all of southern England in its immediate spatial impact. To the North and West is the *archipelago of the provinces*, a series of poorly connected city cluster islands that appear to be slowly sinking demographically, socially and economically (Dorling and Thomas 2004: 7)

Social geography– despite the cautionary 'no matter where, no matter when' issued by Eric Clark – forms an inevitable backdrop to any discussion of gentrification. In the case of Britain, the claim is that London with its gravitational pull has created two nations. This gives rise to two distinct geographies of gentrification in which we can expect to find traditional studies of inner urban (and rural) gentrification shifting to the northern archipelago whilst, in the south, the whole metropolis can be regarded as 'ripe for gentrification'. This may require some methodological imagination on the part of scholars who have built careers studying it in its traditional habitat.

Figure 1: London and the rest of England (from Dorling and Thomas p187)
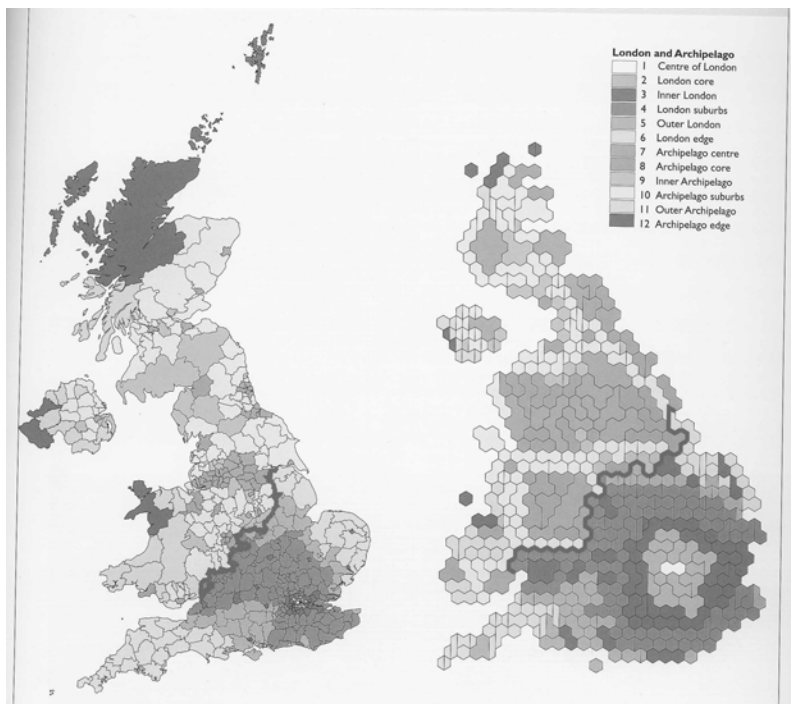
There is nothing particularly new about the argument that Britain, or at least England, is dominated by London nor that there is a north-south divide. J Caird (1968) in his influential account of British farming written in 1852 identified a line running from the Severn to the Trent (the Caird Line) to the east of which agriculture was almost entirely arable whilst to the north and west it was mixed. This line looks remarkably similar to the one drawn by Dorling and Thomas to divide the boundary between the metropolitan London area and their archipelago of northern city islands.

The map and cartogram reproduced in Figure 1 are based on what the authors believe to be the trends that they have identified in the 2001 Census. They describe how they derived this conceptualisation of contemporary Britain in the following terms

> We drew a line separating the new London metropolis from the rest of the UK. Beneath that line lies the metropolis. Its core is in the core of the Capital, where the population is most densely concentrated, increasing, becoming younger and where finance is centred. The core is surrounded by the new inner London, an extenuation of what was outer London and which functionally includes cities as far away as Bristol and Norwich. London's suburbs now extend to North Somerset. Outer London now reaches as far as Exeter and Dover. The edge of London is along the coasts of Cornwall and Suffolk. To the north of the line is the archipelago that has numerous centres surrounded by core areas, inner areas, the new suburb s of these northern and Welsh islands, their outer areas and remoter edges. The archipelago is an amalgam of places, which have most in common in not being in the London metropolis. They are the places [in this atlas] where in general the population is less concentrated, is often reducing in numbers, becoming older away from its centres where southern youth venture North to university before returning South. They are the centres of industries that have died or are dying. They are places that now still exist because there remains a population there to be served. (Dorling and Thomas 2004: 187)

The pull of London[4] (as we commonly understand it) on the region is so strong that it requires us to think of it as a 'functional urban region' across which people range relatively freely driven by desires about where to live, fears about the quality of their children's education, ability to get jobs, concerns about environmental degradation and the social environment amongst other factors. It is no longer the case that London

itself is the only magnet for those professional middle class families wanting two professional full time careers. Hoggart and Hiscock (2005) show that, whilst there is a greater concentration of 'pure' service class households at the very top in inner London, the overall pattern of two service class earners per household is not much different between inner London and the rural fringe and both are higher than outer London and its surrounding suburbia. The 2001 Census shows that just under 10% of people work at home and that approximately 1% of households own a second home (a figure regarded as being under-enumerated by many). In some cases, this may be a holiday home, in others it might be a pied-a-terre in London or elsewhere from which one (normally the male) partner returns at weekends. Much of Central London (for example the Barbican estate) and the West End are populated by such households. In my study of Docklands, 40% of those interviewed had a second home; Crilley et al found a similarly high proportion even in the early years of the Docklands redevelopment (Crilley, Bryce et al. 1991).

Figure 2: Distribution of second homes in England and Wales

Figure 2 provides an indication of where second homes are distributed across the south of England – the data is derived from that supplied by Experian. The darker the

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area, the higher the number of second homes by post code area. What this demonstrates is that these are located, for the most part proximate to but not immediately near to the motorway network which largely connects them to London.

Inner London has the highest concentration of top social class positions, particular amongst those in the professional categories; this becomes somewhat 'diluted' in outer London, and then rises for the Greater London Urban Area and the South East. It should be recalled that these data refer to where people live, not work, which suggest that the process of inner London gentrification is remains active but also that many other such positions are now distributed across the South East and the south of England more generally. Many will, of course, commute into London from its outer fringes and South Eastern England and a few from further afield.

Marketers, advertisers and those in the private sector who use social segmentation to sell consumer and other goods have long used a different form of social categorisation termed by the Office for National Statistics as Approximated Social Grade; this is assumed to equate well with market behaviour. One advantage of using this statistic to look at broad patterns is its simplicity: it points to broad contours which don't then become nuanced by sub classes. The Census has converted people into these categories (Table 1)

Table 1: Approximated Social Grade derived from CAS066

	Greater London Urban Area	London	Inner London	Outer London	England & Wales
ALL PEOPLE	6499388	5632491	2180508	3451983	40666546
Percentages					
AB. Higher and intermediate managerial/administrative/professional	26.73	26.46	27.79	25.62	21.97
C1. Supervisory clerical junior managerial/administrative/professional	33.01	33.02	31.54	33.95	29.67
C2. Skilled manual workers	11.24	11.00	8.92	12.31	15.12
D. Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers	14.12	14.29	14.58	14.11	17.16
E. On state benefit unemployed lowest grade workers	14.90	15.23	17.16	14.01	16.08
	100	100	100	100	100

Cells in this table have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data.

The main interest demonstrated in Table 1 is the differences between Greater London Urban area and the rest of England and Wales. There is a bigger concentration of AB and C1 in the GLUA than the rest of England and Wales whilst C2, D and E are all lower. The implied trend towards a post industrial economy in GLUA is to some extent confirmed by the fact that the lower proportion of manual workers in the region is not also accompanied by state benefit and lowest grade workers. There is however one important exception to this which is inner London where E at 17.16% is not only higher than the rest of London by nearly two percentage points but is also higher than England and Wales. This therefore partially supports both the Sassen (1991) claim and the Hamnett (1994) critique about the nature of social class polarisation in London; it suggests that, whilst there is an occupational upgrading in London and particularly inner London, there is also some evidence of a larger group of people dependent on state benefits living in inner London. Within London there is a greater concentration of AB than elsewhere in the GLUA and England and Wales. Interestingly, although the differences are relatively small, the lowest concentration of AB workers in GLUA is in Outer London with only a relatively small difference between inner London and the GLUA figure. C1's, on the other hand, are more concentrated in Outer London than elsewhere. This would suggest a focus on services work in the GLUA region but a focus of higher end work in inner London, at least in terms of where the people choose to live. The same distribution applies to C2 skilled manual workers whereas unskilled workers are slightly more likely to live in inner London (14.58%) although the proportion is not nearly as high as in England and Wales (17.16%). When we look at the more detailed data available in NS-SeC tables, this claim is not sustained – only routine sales workers are disproportionately represented in Inner London as a place of residence (Butler, Hamnett et al. forthcoming).

These figures should all be treated with caution as it is likely that the concentration of D and E groups are a function of housing market (and the stock of social housing) as much as labour market concerns. By the same token, C1 and C2 are likely to be attracted to outer London by the availability of cheaper housing to buy. Nevertheless these figures give a quick snapshot of the concentration of better off households in

inner London and the GRUA compared to the rest of the country with a continued high proportion of those at the bottom end of the consumption scale.

Table 2 drawn from the NS-SeC table 31 from the 2001 Census paints a broadly similar if more detailed and nuanced picture. The table compares the same four spatial scales: inner, outer and Greater London urban area and England and Wales. The table is presented in terms of proportions of the total population in each spatial area.

Table 2: Social Class in London and England Wales (UV31 NS-SeC)

	GLUA	IL	OL	London	E&W
People	6099182	2096540	3203792	5300332	37607438
1.1 Large employers and higher managerial occupations	4.52	4.90	4.09	4.41	3.43
1.2 Higher professional occupations	7.52	9.05	6.76	7.67	5.03
2. Lower managerial and professional occupations	22.31	22.71	21.91	22.23	18.59
3. Intermediate occupations	10.41	8.26	11.53	10.24	9.39
4. Small employers and own account workers	6.59	5.48	7.00	6.40	6.98
5. Lower supervisory and technical occupations	5.16	4.18	5.52	4.99	7.15
6. Semi-routine occupations	9.14	8.41	9.45	9.04	11.68
7. Routine occupations	5.85	5.49	5.99	5.79	9.07
8. Never worked and long-term unemployed	5.49	7.99	4.72	6.01	3.73
Not Classified	23.00	23.54	23.02	23.22	24.94
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

The table confirms the broad claims made in relation to Table 1 about the concentration at both ends of the social scale – with the similar and vitally important proviso that these figures refer to where people choose, or have no choice than, to live. London and particularly inner London has far more residents in the highest social categories but particularly '1.2. Higher professional' occupations where its proportion is 9.05% compared to 5.03% for England and Wales. This dips in the outer London boroughs (to 7.52%) and then rises in the Greater London Area which is a larger grouping surrounding outer London. In the middle of the social class distribution there is a slight but discernible tendency to live in outer London or Greater London but the

figures are still higher than for England and Wales. Amongst manual and routine workers however the London effect disappears supporting the arguments that London draws in people from not so much from the rest of the globe but rather the rest of the country to its higher grade jobs (Buck, Gordon et al. 2002; Hamnett 2003).

Figure 3: Large Employers and higher professionals and managers
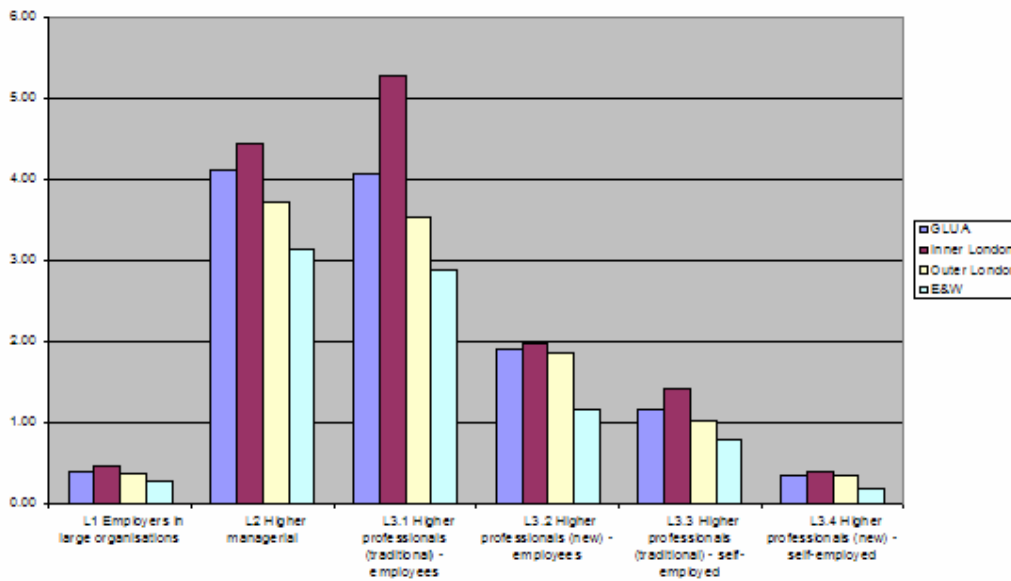
When we examine group 1, it is in the size of its traditional professionals that London and particularly inner London stands out, this is shown clearly in Figure 2. Although the proportion of new professionals in inner London is slightly higher than for the rest of London, this group (employed or self employed) does not appear to gentrify inner or outer London disproportionately like traditional professionals although they are considerably better represented in the London region than the rest of England and Wales. Further work might indicate that many of these people commute to the high tech centres on the outskirts of London particularly to the West rather than working in its command and control centres in the centre. Some of these 'types' are probably similar to the 'postmoderns' proposed by Savage et al (Savage, Barlow et al. 1992) with their hybrid consumption patterns and relatively low cultural capital. They are likely to work in London's high tech belt to the west in Berkshire and to enjoy 'California Sports' which involve being out of the city (Savage, Dickens et al. 1988). In a more recent study of Manchester, the same author suggests that the nearest equivalent to this group live in villages outside Manchester where they have good

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access to the northern countryside which they play in at weekends (Savage, Bagnall et al. 2005).

Looking at the lower end of the social hierarchy, we find some support for the pattern identified in Table 1. There are higher proportions of those who have never worked or are long term unemployed in inner London than elsewhere in London or indeed more strikingly than the rest of England and Wales. What is not supported is the suggestion that there is a disproportionate representation of routine low paid workers in inner London or the region more generally.

People are now making more such moves over the lifecycle. Going out of London, often to the north as Dorling and Thomas suggest, to university, returning in their early twenties to London, maybe setting up home in rented accommodation and then moving into owner occupation in a flat either in the inner London zone or further out. If children come then a new set of anxieties may hasten a move to London's outer fringes or further afield (Hertfordshire, Dorset and Essex were often cited as a possible points for departure when the secondary school transition was about to occur(Butler and Robson 2003: b)). This is a development of Fielding's notion of the south east as an 'escalator region' in which young professionals gain skills and experience in London and then move out of the region in middle age to less stressed but more apparently senior positions (Fielding 1992). After the children have left school and gone to university many talk of returning to London. In both the establishments in London where I have recently worked colleagues have commuted from as far as York, Leicester, Bristol and Sheffield on a semi permanent basis often daily basis. Others will have weekend or holiday homes in Dorset, Norfolk or the Welsh borders. These lifecycle moves are now quite normal – driven by the exigencies of the labour market, the housing market, education markets and probably most importantly a sense of 'belonging' for particular communities.

The moves in and out of London (and other cities) are highly age specific as recent, and as yet unpublished, work by Champion demonstrates. Using special tables from the 2001 census, he shows *inter alia* that a large number of 16-20 year olds leave London for university (quite possibly in the north) far outnumbering those of a similar age (more accurately probably 18-20) coming to London to study at undergraduate level. There is then a comparatively larger inflow of 20-24 year olds – with twice as many arriving as leaving with those who left to study returning together with other

graduates from around the UK. This is followed by outflows from the 25-44 year group and the a larger one from those over 45. London is the only significant city with more inflows than outflows amongst the higher managerial and professional group (the others being Derby, Brighton, Reading and Northampton) – London is the only city with a larger inflow than outflow of lower managerial and professional workers.

This suggests that the London metropolitan region, as defined by Dorling and Thomas, which stretches across the southern half of England and into the borders of Wales and most of the southwest may be undergoing a gentrification process similar changes to that which had its origins in London during the 1960s. In particular, there is growing evidence that the ethnic composition of London is being dramatically reshaped in ways which were probably unimaginable in the 1970s. Already, between 1991 and 2001 the ethnic minority population of London has increased by half from 19% to 29%. At the same time, the balance between inner and outer London has been shifting; minority ethnic populations now being less concentrated in the inner city and clustering in the outer suburbs and even venturing into areas of the surrounding South East (Watt 2004).

The city was undoubtedly the midwife to gentrification but has in recent years been in danger of suffocating it. By tying gentrification to a particular locale: normally the city but also the countryside (Phillips 1993; Phillips 2002) and even the suburbs and outer fringe (Hackworth and Smith 2001; Wyly. and Hammel 2004), the concept has continually put itself in danger of becoming embroiled in the wrong side of a turf war. In a situation in which new places are being created – whole global city regions or gated communities for example – and inner cities are being tamed as altars of consumption and privileged living, it is very dangerous to tie theories or concepts of class and residential change to particular locations. Given the existence over the last twenty years of new places, new classes and new identities, the call by Clark quoted at the beginning of this paper for a simple definition of gentrification as being about social class change becomes crucial if the concept is to retain its use as the building block for a theory that mediates the social and the spatial.

Its death has been much exaggerated over the last 15 years albeit for very different reasons – leading one writer to suggest that 'maybe the loss of momentum around gentrification reflects its inability to open up new insights, and maybe it is time to allow it to disintegrate under the weight of these burdens' (Bondi 1999: 254). Others

argued that it was essentially a 'life cycle' or 'cohort' effect which would not survive the baby boomer generation. Their experience of middle age particularly in the context of the serious crisis of the service sector in the early 1990s and continued difficulties in accessing high quality schooling it was argued would hasten its death knell (Bourne 1993; 1994). A series of articles have identified its upward and onward trajectory since the major economies emerged from recession in the mid 1990s (Lees 2000; Hackworth and Smith 2001; Hackworth 2002; Phillips 2004). Whereas Hamnett (2003: b) has argued that the ongoing gentrification of London represents a continuing shift from an industrial to a post industrial economy in which we can expect, despite short term dislocations and inequality, a longer term social upgrading, Lees has taken a somewhat different perspective. She, like Wyly and Hammel (2004) in the United States for example, has focused on what she sees as the qualitative change of gear that was marked by the emergence of the service economies of major global cities such as London and New York from the recession of the 1990s. In this she focuses not so much on the move from an industrial to a post industrial economy but on the new players and spatial contexts which have emerged – race, migration, urban policy and particularly what she terms 'super-gentrification'. Whilst for Hamnett, gentrification is above all a long term process of class change, for Lees gentrification brings in a whole new series of actors which she sees as symptomatic of wider changes in which not only new class groups emerge but so do issues of ethnicity and migration which have major implications for the ways in which we see the city and its social and cultural relations (Lees 2004). Whilst these arguments are important (notably her observations that most researchers have tended to see minorities simply as the victims of gentrification through displacement and have been blind to their active participation), the key issue is that of super-gentrification (which is an issue of class) which she has identified in her study of Brooklyn (Lees 2003) and more recently Islington (Butler and Lees forthcoming). This is important for three reasons; firstly because it marks a critical change in the urban class structure with the emergence of a numerically not insignificant group who are able to accumulate through annual bonuses and other one off but regular payments sufficiently large amounts of capital to transform parts of the urban housing market. Secondly, it ensures that the process of urban change remains one of gentrification for the reasons stated by Clark because it continues to displace existing residents, although in this case they may themselves be middle class first or second generation gentrifiers. The

third reason that the emergence of this group is important is because they operate across a wider spatial scale often buying up not only previously gentrified urban property but also second and sometimes third homes in the surrounding region and perhaps overseas thus transforming those housing markets and bringing them into a single metropolitan housing market. Whilst the super gentrifiers may be able to operate across several of these markets at the same time, others with fewer resources move across them during the lifecycle depending on the stage of household reproduction they are at.

4. Coming to terms with the global: three studies, one approach

In this section, I draw on three recent studies of London (Butler and Robson 2003), Rotterdam (Blokland 2003)and Manchester (Savage, Bagnall et al. 2005) to illustrate what I would argue are three examples of gentrification – although only of them actually used the word – of how people and places seek each other out[5]. Between them they work through, in different ways, the issues of gentrification research, sociological explorations of community and the creation of local identities.

 My own work (Butler and Robson 2003) attempts to plot a geography of gentrification in inner London in which both the 'metropolitan habitus' and their devolved 'mini habituses'(Bridge 2003) are crucial elements in the construction of some middle class identities. This argues that inner London, despite its large and persistent social inequalities, is a large gentrified city. Blokland's (Blokland 2003) study of an area of Rotterdam looks at how an area 'makes out' when it loses its bonds of occupational class and these become replaced by others based on ethnicity, friendship and nostalgia in which people seek out meanings which were previously provided by their class position, or specifically in Holland by institutionalised divisions around religion. Finally, Savage et al's (Savage, Bagnall et al. 2005) study of four areas in and around the city of Manchester not only provides confirmation that there is a distinctive process of class settlement 'in the north' but more importantly that it is based around a notion of 'elective belonging' in which as suggested by my own study of London, people seek out a specific habitus by choosing a place in which to live doing so through a differential deployment of cultural, economic and social capital. Savage however takes this further than the other two studies by proposing that it is this sense of 'elective belonging' by which people 'manage' the link between the forces of a global economy and the need for individual

belonging at a time when the cultural associations of occupational class have all but disappeared for most of the population. He demonstrates that Bourdieu's concept of the habitus is an essentially spatial one which creates a series of 'spatial divisions of consumption' which accommodate to people's economic capabilities and their sense of wanting to 'flock' with people like themselves.

5.1 London

This research was based in six areas of inner London, one of which was a cluster of three sub areas in Docklands - for a full discussion of the research strategy and findings see (Butler and Robson 2003). The research design required that the areas were chosen not just because they represented different 'stages' in the gentrification model (Hackworth and Smith 2001) but because they were thought to attract or be attractive to different sections of the 'urban seeking' middle classes (Lockwood 1995). This partly arose out of earlier research undertaken in Hackney (Butler 1997) which had identified not only what I later term a 'metropolitan habitus' (Butler 2002) but also that there were important differences found amongst the middle class in two different research areas in Hackney[6]. It also arose out of the work brought together in *Social Change and the Middle Classes* (Butler and Savage 1995) which examined competing explanations of the middle (or as it was then usually termed service) class in a range of different settings. What the work on Hackney showed was that place mattered – both in terms of its connotations (Hackney was not posh conservative middle class) but also that it acted as a magnet for 'people like us' (PLU's).

The final chosen research areas were Barnsbury (now into its third wave of gentrification and a key consumption site for North London), Between the Commons in Battersea (a similarly well established site in south West London), Telegraph Hill in New Cross (well established but much more reclusive than the other areas with no consumption infrastructure), Brixton (much more recently gentrified and with a frisson of 'edginess' and ethnic otherness that was its attraction) and London Fields (in the Dalston area of Hackney which was not only relatively undeveloped commercially but also self consciously paraded its continuities with Hackney working class traditions).

Interviews were conducted in each area with approximately 75 respondents in a relatively tightly defined neighbourhood. On the basis of the data generated from these interviews, it became clear that the initial hypothesis arising from the earlier

research in Hackney was confirmed. Each area had a distinctive habitus although all conformed to the broader notion of a 'metropolitan habitus' which distinguished them from each other and from the middle classes living elsewhere in the UK whether in major metropolitan conurbations, provincial towns and cities, peri-urban areas (including those of London) or the rural periphery (Butler and Robson 2003). There is a remarkable cohesion about these self-engineered communities in inner London. Respondents often came from similar backgrounds and reflected an idea of a community 'in the mind' which they brought to these areas which then became a source of comfort to them in which they 'cloaked' themselves – hence the notion of them being mini-habituses.

Respondents in Barnsbury sought a notion of a community which was rich in social capital laid down by previous generations of gentrifiers who had invested heavily in the local schools although they themselves were now unable to do so – because of perceived failings in the school system and their busy lifestyles. Nevertheless, the idea of Islington as the mixed urban community in which everybody rubbed along and invested their social capital in it was a strong and enduring theme about why they moved there. Respondents migrated to Islington from around the country via Oxbridge and the legal profession. By contrast, respondents in Battersea were drawn from the 'home counties' of the South East and came via private schooling to managerial positions in the City of London - attracted to Battersea by its well ordered market economy and highly developed consumption infrastructure. 'Eating out' rather than 'joining in' was the dominant ethos (Butler and Robson 2003).

In Telegraph Hill, the notion of the urban village - in contrast to the disorganized and violent city which lay at the bottom of the Hill (containing some of the 'roughest' areas of South London (Robson 2000)) - was at the heart of most of the narratives of attachment that were relayed to us by respondents. Everybody (of the middle class that is) knew each other; strong networks were formed around the primary school which carried over into choices about secondary education and beyond. There was a strong rhetoric about social inclusion, as in Islington, but it was almost entirely inwardly directed into the social networks on which many residents relied heavily and reflected in some of the local institutions such as (in addition to the School), the local park and the annual music festival which all served to display the sense of middle class inclusiveness (Robson and Butler 2001).

In Brixton and London Fields there were superficially similar narratives about the place 'in the mind' although the places were very different – with Brixton's attraction lying partly in its reputation as a centre for alternative and multicultural hedonism, whereas London Fields shared with Telegraph Hill the absence of an infrastructure of consumption. In Brixton, the overwhelming sense of the area and its attraction was its place as the centre for Britain's African Caribbean population and the memory of the Front Line along Railton Road from the 1991 'riots' (Scarman 1982). Almost without exception, it was this multiculturalism and sense of diversity that attracted people to the area, what we termed 'Brixton in the mind'. In fact, these communities have very little to do with each other and pass across each other with almost no contact, leading to a situation which we describe as 'socially tectonic' (Robson and Butler 2001) – less dramatically, this describes the social structure of all these gentrified communities.

Thus in all of these areas (Docklands is a different story and has been omitted, largely because it is a community created by a marketing hype i.e. a ready made narrative of icons from a past age suitably sanitized for busy lives), there is an idealised narrative of the area which attracts similar people (PLUs) and then ties them to the area. This however does not come across in terms of the usual categories of sociological analysis. This insight draws on three main sources in attempting to explain how many of these outwardly successful middle class people attempt to ground their lives and those of their families. Firstly, it uses the concepts of differential forms of capital, habitus and field in the work of Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1984); secondly, it borrows from Ray Pahl's (1975) accounts of how managers and their families moving into the new commuter villages of Hertfordshire simultaneously idealised the rural village whilst transforming it into their own image; finally, it borrowed from Richard Sennett's (Sennett 1998) account of the ways in which many of today's most successful consultants fear they are destroying the basis of their own social reproduction. I identified different narratives of attraction and norms of behaviour in each area, which had in common a desire by different sections of the middle classes to find places in which they felt comfortable both in relation to their fellow (middle class inhabitants) and to the external and increasingly commercialised sets of social relations.

5.2 Rotterdam[7]

Blokland (2003) is also concerned with investigate the tie between people and places; her entrée however is via an engagement with some of the key debates of post war

urban sociology (such as the work of Herbert Gans and Robert K Merton) in which she argues that the issues raised by these books have not become lost in the mists of time but have become, if anything, more complex – central to these debates was the issue of community. There has, she argues, been a longstanding assumption that 'community' (the sociological 'we') has been tied 'like Siamese twins' (p6) with 'neighbourhood' (the building block of much urban theory). In the past, working class communities were tied spatially to their places of work, however with the declining importance of class, religion, and mutual dependence, on the one hand, and the rise of affluence, welfare and consumerism on the other, she argues we need to think through what now ties people to places. People are now, to a much greater extent than in the past, able to make choices about where to live and how to relate to where they live. How, how much, and if at all, they invest in their 'neighbourhood' are increasingly matters of choice.

Her study stands apart from others – including the two discussed here – in that the original research she conducted took the form of a community study which looked at the interactions between social groups rather than the perceptions of one particular (and privileged) group. The work took place in Hillesluis - a once working class inner city district of Rotterdam – and is a discussion of the links between people, work and place.

The study begins by asking if we can no longer tie community and neighbourhood together because of the disruptions of place, space and class by capitalist restructuring, could we ever? Drawing on the work of contemporary geographers, such as Massey and Harvey as well as class Chicago School accounts, she emphasises the role of place but in relation to power and not simply geographical space. She concludes that 'location does not of itself produce community' (p10). In her view, neighbourhood relations (like urban sociology itself) cross many categories and are distinguished by 'physical proximity rather than social characteristics' (p13) and the inability to predict their potential for social identification. This, according to Blokland, is precisely why 'a neighbourhood is not the same as a community. At most, 'communities make use of the location to varying degrees' (ibid). In addition however, to the 'grid of social relations' available in the neighbourhood there are two additional aspects which are the 'spectrums' of privacy and of access – the former ranges form 'anonymity through familiarity to intimacy', whilst the access spectrum

runs from 'public to institutional to private'. It is these spectrums which have changed over time and over which people now exert far more choice than previously. They are also the basis out of which, Blokland claims, people construct the 'we' and 'they' of community – by, for example, constructing 'in groups' and 'out groups'. This argument is further elaborated in respect of Weber's theory of rational behaviour and Durkheim's notion of *mores* and the conscience collective (in both its forms of mechanic and organic solidarity).

This argument proceeds by way of a worked example from Hillesluis told, for the most, part through the lives of her respondents. Some had been born in the nineteen teens and grew up during the poverty and totalitarianism of the interwar period, survived the deportations and starvations of Nazi occupation and then basked in the affluence of the post war period before retiring into an increasingly anomic old age. More recently, the area has become home to migrants, particularly from Morocco and Turkey as well as to middle class gentrifiers and post 1969 drop outs seeking an authentic inner urban experience and/or cheap rents in a neighbourhood where people largely leave them alone. There is also the 'Common Sense Association' who write poignant but increasingly hopeless and helpless letters to the Queen and politicians about how their once posh area, referred to as the Gold Coast, no longer gives them the kind of social recognition that it once conferred. The overall theme is how out of force of choice or circumstance, people make sense of themselves and where they live in a situation of rapid social change. For much of the twentieth century, the institutions of religion or class provided two trajectories that could be followed through the neighbourhood which were, to all extent and purposes, irrevocable decisions once they have been made – or ascribed. Whilst this didn't actually solve the problem of understanding the relationship between place and people, it helps explain why it was largely a non issue for many sociologists.

In the last twenty years however, with the large scale collapse of industrial employment, the people-place dilemma can no longer be answered by reference to such simple class or religious divides. Blokland spends much of the study working out how people come to identify with 'imagined communities': these emerge through the expression of similarity and difference in which notions of 'friendship' play an important role in choosing peer groups – in place of kinship, co-religionists, colleagues or comrades. All of these relations have become increasingly privatised

and commoditized with the development of technology (individual mobility for example) and affluence. Communal relations that were once dependent on transactions based around reciprocity have been replaced by a set of structured choices based around markets and often actualised through relations of consumption rather than those of belief or production. In a telling chapter on ethnicity, that draws on Lewis Coser's conflict theory, she examines the ways in which ethnic diversity plays out amongst the older residents who need to create divisions precisely in order to foster cohesion where the previous bonds of work, religion etc have disappeared – 'us workers' versus 'them Christians' or 'them rich folk' or even 'them capitalists', as she puts it (p129-30)

'Once communities are privatized, does neighbourhood cease to matter?' she asks (p154). The short answer is no but it does so in very different ways. The old certainties are replaced by new flexible associations of friendship, lifestyle and new imagined communities who exist, at least for those displaced by these changes, through their shared memories of the past which don't include young people, minorities and everyone else 'out there'. For many of these other groups, the neighbourhood is not a physical location but an 'emotional involvement' (p157)

> The neighbourhood residents, whom they referred to as 'the people on this street' or 'they' did not pertain to Joop and Jenny's reference group. Although they enjoyed talking with their neighbours on occasion, they felt a considerable social distance' (p162-3)

This description of gentrification, although the word is barely used, would apply equally well in Hackney or Brixton in London and Brooklyn in New York or King's Cross in Sydney and, according to Blokland, is indicative of the way in which many groups now regard the neighbourhood from which they construct their own imagined communities.

5.3 Manchester

A broader and more theoretically ambitious attempt to mediate between the global flows of economic change and the construction of social identities is to be found in the work of Mike Savage. In his most recent work *Globalization and Belonging* (Savage, Bagnall et al. 2005), Savage and his associates argue - in the context of a study of four essentially middle class towns around Manchester (Wilmslow, Cheadle,

Ramsbottom, Chorlton) - that it is a sense of 'elective belonging' which characterises the differences between the different middle class groups which make up the populations of these towns. Taken together Savage argues that they make up a 'northern white middle class' (208). Each group however has, as it were, its own habitus which, whilst in itself a relatively fixed concept, operates across a series of 'fields' such as work, leisure, residence. Savage argues that Bourdieu's conception of the habitus is essentially spatial[8]

> people are comfortable when there is a correspondence between habitus and field, but otherwise people feel ill at ease and seek to move – socially and spatially – so that their discomfort is relieved … mobility is driven as people, with their relatively fixed habitus, both move between fields … and move to places within fields where they feel more comfortable. (Savage, Bagnall et al. 2005: 9)

The trick, as it were, is for people to triangulate these fields spatially so that they live with 'people like themselves'.

In Savage's study, it is those who exercise choice to move, 'the incomers', who are more socially integrated and at ease with their localities –which become their habitus of choice - than 'the born and breds' who often remain there precisely because of their lack of choice. This finding turns on its head the assumption of many years of community studies about the role played by middle class incomers in trying to become accepted (eg (Pahl 1965). For example, Savage et al suggest that those living in the working class or lower middle class area of Cheadle have least sense of belonging precisely because they have belonged there so long.

Savage et al develop this into a more thoroughgoing attempt to synthesise processes of global and local interactions. They criticise four approaches for their failure to specify sufficiently the ties of mediation:

1. those who see the local merely as a defensive response;
2. those who imbue their everyday practice with narratives drawn from a global awareness;
3. those who contrast global elites versus a local mass;
4. the locals versus cosmopolitans dualism.

Each approach may have some saliency in understanding the motives of those occupying a particular place or habitus but none have an overarching explanatory

value. Having used all four approaches to explain variations within the gentrification of London (Butler and Robson 2003), the weakness of these approaches is that is that they shun an over-arching explanation of *choice* in favour of a 'horses for courses' approach.

In constructing their argument about 'elective belonging', Savage et al note (following a long tradition in Sociology e.g. (Goldthorpe, Lockwood et al. 1969) that as societies become more complex and mobile, individuals become more privatised and that globalisation is leading to greater social differentiation. Within the differentiated social fields (work, leisure, residence, friendship) that their respondents operate across, they claim that 'residential space is a key arena in which respondents define their social position' (207) – noting that it is the greatest fixity in relation to other fields in terms of defining one's sense of 'social location' and allows access to other fields (work, culture and crucially education)

> One's residence is a crucial, possibly *the* crucial identifier of who you are. The sorting processes by which people chose to live in certain places and other leave is at the heart of contemporary battles over social distinction. Rather than seeing wider social identities as arising out of the field of employment it would be more promising to examine their relationship to residential location. … in all four areas there are striking congruences between the capitals of the residents and their sense of feeling at home. Chorlton appeals to those with cultural capital and moderate amounts of economic capital. Wilmslow appeal to those with large amounts of economic capital and moderate amounts of cultural capital, while Ramsbottom is favour by the upwardly mobile without large amounts of cultural capital (Savage, Bagnall et al. 2005: 207)

It is therefore around the sense of place, and an often very local sense of place, that identities are forged and formed which may be ones of class but are rarely expressed in these terms. Savage et al argue that this non articulation of class may in fact be indicative of its continuing power (152). The other powerful influence is that of region: whilst not sharing a sense of regional identity as such, respondents 'bench mark' themselves as being neither in London at a national level nor the city of Manchester at a regional level but do see themselves as part of a white but amorphous non metropolitan middle-class diaspora that incorporates other parts of the Anglo

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centric world. To this extent they are part of the north – but the precise notion of its cultural geography remains fuzzy.

5. Conclusions

I have proposed that gentrification and urban flight are concomitants of a tendency towards 'mobile privatization' which has accompanied deindustrialisation. We are no longer able to associate gentrification with class based theories of neighbourhood change in so far as they are based around existing notions of class and urban neighbourhood. Whilst class in a weak sense, i.e. an imputed relationship to the ownership of the means of production, may remain strong in an increasingly brutal capitalist global economy, it is weak and implicit in most people's perceptions of their cultural associations and belongings (Savage 2000). However as people flock together in terms of residential choice (or because of the lack of choice), seeking out (if they can afford it) comfortable places as their chosen habituses, the processes which the gentrification literature has identified over the past 40 years will continue. For this reason, we need to disentangle the methodologies and theories involved in gentrification research which have been admirably catholic from their ties to an increasingly displaced sense of place – the inner city is no longer the pit of despair but the altar of conspicuous consumption and some established suburbs are now finding themselves to be the new theatre for displacement and class change. It has been argued that gentrification now operates as a third generation concept (Hackworth and Smith 2001) in 'third space' (Phillips 2004). Islington continues to be gentrified not because there is a continuing displacement of the working classes (that has probably reached its natural limit – although they may continue to be replaced in social housing by middle class renters (Watt 2005)) - but because a new class who Lees (2000; 2003) has termed 'financifiers' are engaging in a novel form of gentrification creating their own forms of space. This process, if it can be identified in Islington (see Butler and Lees forthcoming), is indicative of the evolving range of class practices associated with 'elective belonging' which are continuing with the evolution of the south of England as a single globalized metropolitan space[9].

Our best chance of continuing to understand this process of evolution is by deploying the tools honed in three generations of gentrification research but only having discarded the theoretical presuppositions and methodological fixities which whilst they might have been novel thirty years ago, and workable at the end of the 1980s are

now in danger of stifling further research into processes such as gating, super gentrification and studentification which are occurring across the spatial scale, by different generations, different social classes and with different motivations. Clearly they will all involve a degree of displacement but what Blokland's study has shown is that the interactions between groups are complex and all involve some degree of place making. To the extent that the displacement becomes what I have termed 'socially tectonic' (Robson and Butler 2001); we need the ability to chart these parallel worlds in which social groups move past each other often in the same places in newly formed global regions. This is a prime task of the geography of gentrification. This is a rather different mapping exercise to that of understanding traditional and relatively unmoving social structures in which gentrification research was born. However, if it rises to this challenge, gentrification can insert itself very successfully between globalization and the emergence of local identities. In this sense therefore, it should be regarded as a middle range theory.

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Notes

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[1] This came to my notice because Tony Fielding was kind enough to send me a copy of his article when he read the call for papers at the AAG Conference in Denver claiming that gentrification was a 'global phenomenon', saying 'not in Japan'.

[2] Peter Saunders in reviewing a book by Gordon Marshall et al on Social Class in Britain made the observation that 'if you ask a lot of questions about class then you tend to get a lot of answers about class'. Savage et al in their recent book on the middle class thus avoided asking about social class in order to see whether it emerged in people's narratives, holding back from asking any specific questions until towards the end of the interviews.

[3] This is not to suggest that gentrification began in the 1960s but for once we have a 'made in Britain' concept which does not seem to have travelled easily outside the Anglophone world. The Haussmanization of Paris in the 19th Century and the revanchism to which it gave rise was an early

form as were the transformations of Manchester noted by Engels in the *Conditions of the English Working Class*. Even earlier the rebuilding of Spanish cities on Inca cities in Peru and elsewhere in Spanish America would be recognisable as a form of urban colonialism.

[4] The growing interest in geo-demographics (such as Mosaic or Acorn) points to a broadly similar picture of the social demographics of Britain as that painted by Dorling and Thomas. For example, a map showing the distribution of the group called *Symbols of Success* would broadly mirror the map produced by Dorling and Thomas and reproduced in Figure 1. This group comprises approximately 10% of all households and is top of the 11 Mosaic groups for wealth and second for the proportion holding a degree.

[5] Graham Crowe used the term 'people and places' as the title of his review of two of these books in *Sociological Review* 2004

[6] The sense of this habitus is perhaps closest to the cosmopolitan-local distinction drawn by Merton Merton, R. (1948). Patterns of influence: a study of interpersonal influence and of communications behaviour in a local community. Man in the City of the Future. P. Lazarsfeld and F. Stanton. London, Collier-Macmillan. in his work on Rovere in the United States in the late 1940s. Merton distinguished between those whose horizons were restricted to Rovere (locals) and those who lived in the Great Society (of the American dream). By analogy, I argued that my respondents amongst London's middle classes saw themselves living in the Great Society which is largely a global one of which London forms a central part; they compare themselves to the 'local' middle classes whose lives are constrained by the local boundaries of their non global societies.

[7] Some of the material in this section was published as a review of Blokland's book in the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* vvvv

[8] He draws parallels in this discussion to Doreen Massey's concept of 'spatial divisions of labour' – suggesting that the habitus is, as it were, a spatial division of consumption. Given my previous criticism of Savage for the way in which he ignored issues of space in his formulation of processes of class formation, I find this approach highly attractive.

[9]

Buck, N., I. Gordon, P. Hall, M. Harloe and M. Kleinman (2002). *Working Capital: Life and Labour in Contemporary London*. London, Routledge. Argue that London's dominance as the UK's major city is more a function of its national than global role; this argument is convincing in terms of the data they present but nevertheless should probably be regarded more as a corrective to some of the more fanciful and unsubstantiated claims about the mediations between a globalizing international economy and one of its major staging points.