Theoretical framework of Gated Communities in South Africa

Alexander Rehder

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Supervisor: Dr W P Pienaar

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirely or in part submitted it at any university for a degree

Abstract

Gated communities are a rapidly growing global residential occurrence and the long-term impact of this phenomenon on the urban landscape is of great importance to planners, local and provincial governments, urban decision-makers, and legislation policies. The assignment is a comprehensive literature study, because in South Africa only the CSIR (BOUTEK) recently attempted to explain this fairly new development type. Internationally extensive studies have been conducted in the USA and Europe, although only in the last decade.

In the study the term "gated community" is conceptualised, the general characteristics of gated communities, the pros and cons of the enclosed communities are discussed. The discussion focuses on the postmodern theory movement and how it relates to gated communities, with examples from the USA, especially Los Angeles. Additionally, the history of gated communities is discussed from Greek times to modern times and an overview is given of the international debate on gated communities. The debate emphasises important issues such as safety and security, exclusion, privacy, urban fragmentation and other issues.

The last chapter looks at the current situation of gated communities in South Africa and the effect that apartheid had on the urban structure. Gated communities in South Africa are unique compared to other countries and a summary is given on the positive and negative features of gated communities in South Africa. The fear of crime is growing in South Africa, and the number of gated communities or enclosed neighbourhoods are growing daily, and calls for in-depth studies of this phenomenon in South Africa. Although there seems to be an increasing trend in larger cities to enclose areas, requests for neighbourhood enclosures have also been received by smaller cities and towns. Most of the metropolitan areas tend to have policies in place, or are in the process of compiling policies to regulate road closures and gated communities.

Opsomming

Geslote gemeenskappe is 'n vinning groeiende globale residensiële gebeurtenis en die langtermyn impak wat hierdie fenomeen het op stedelike landskap is baie belangrik vir beplanners, plaaslike en provinsiale regerings, stedelike besluitnemers, en wetgewende beleide. Die werkstuk is 'n omslagtige literatuurstudie, omdat in Suid-Afrika het die WNNR (BOUTEK) onlangs probeer om die taamlik nuwe ontwikkelingstipe te verklaar. Internasionale uitgebreide studies is al gedoen deur die VSA en Europa, alhoewel net in die laaste dekade.

In hierdie studie word die term "geslote gemeenskappe" gekonseptualiseer, die algemene kenmerke van gelsote gemeenskappe, die positiewe en negatiewe eienskappe van gelsote gemeenskappe bepreek. Die bespreking focus op die postmoderne teorie beweging en hoe dit verwant is aan geslote gemeensakppe, met voorbeelde van die VSA, veral Los Angeles. Gevolglik word daar gekyk na die geskiedenis van geslote gemeenskappe vanaf die Griekse tye tot die moderne tye en 'n oorsig word gegee van die internasionale debat op geslote gemeenskappe. Die debat beklemtoon belangrike kwessies soos veiligheid en sekuriteit, uitsluiting, privaatheid, stedelike opbreking en baie meer.

Die laaste hoofstuk kyk na die huidige toestand van gslote gemeenskappe in Suid-Afrika en die effek wat apartheid gehad het op die stedelike struktuur. Geslote gemeenskappe in Suid-Afrika is uniek in vergelyking met ander lande en 'n opsomming word gegee op die positiewe en negatiewe eienskappe van geslote gemeenskappe in Suid-Afrika. Die angs vir geweld groei in Suid-Afrika en die hoeveelheid geslote gemeendskappe groei ook daagliks, en dus styg die noodsaaklikheid vir in-diepte studies van hierdie verskynsel in Suid-Afrika. Alhoewel dit wil voorkom dat daar 'n stygende tendens in groter stede is om areas te omsluit, is die aanvrae vir geslote gemeenskappe ook gekry van kleiner stede en dorpe. Meeste van die metropolitaanse areas neig om beleide in plek te hê, of is in die proses om beleide te struktureer vir die beheer van padsluitings en geslote gemeenskappe.

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

One of the defining characteristics of urbanisation in the last quarter of the twentieth century was the rapid spread of proprietary urban communities (Webster 2001:149). A proprietary community is a privately owned and privately governed estate in which a group of households or firms share communal facilities, which they pay for via, service fees or other devices. Proprietary communities are a global growing residential occurrence and several questions are asked, especially the long-term impact of this type of development on the urban future (CSIR 2001:1).

Ellin (1996:69) emphasises that large-scale plans for new "communities" since the 1970s have been incorporating features of the townscape movement, regionalism, contextualism, neo-rationalism, neo-classicism, historical electicism, and the historic-perservation movement in a variety of ways.

The *fear of crime* is growing in South Africa. And the more the fear is growing, the greater the reaction to address this fear (Landman 2000: 1). People who can afford prevention measures are prime proponents of the latest methods to keep criminals out. Many suburban whites live in jail-like homes guarded by vicious dogs, razor wire, and armed security guards summoned by panic buttons.

It includes master-planned communities (MPCs), gated communities, traditional neighbourhood developments, and pedestrian pockets. The emphasis on creating a sense of "community" is usually important to the developers and designers of gated communities. Gated communities, especially enclosed neighbourhoods, are a frequently discussed issue

in South Africa. Residents argue about it, police talk about it, newspapers write about it and many local authorities have to make decisions about it.

Gated communities are not only the responsibility of those residents who wish to enclose their areas or to live in secure complexes. Some types directly influence local authorities and their traditional public functions.

1.2 Problem statement

South Africa is unique and hosts a different set of characteristics to those of many other countries in the world. It therefore, requires a contextual approach to gated communities, as well as a clear understanding of the local dynamics (CSIR 2001:1 and Landman 2000:2). Specific spatial characteristics contribute to the particular urban pattern present in most South African cities. Urban environments are characterised by fragmentation and spatial dislocation, separation and mono-functional zoning, and by low-density suburban sprawl. Among other reasons, these spatial characteristics also contribute to opportunities for crime in many cases.

The pursuit of safety, which is very prevalent in South Africa, has led to the formation of neighbourhood associations, which take action ranging from the volunteer neighbourhood watches to hiring of private security companies. Usually this translates into street closures or gating of neighbourhoods.

This movement to privatise city streets or neighbourhoods into independent communities with surrounding walls and gates has incited controversy. And such measures are not restricted to residential areas. Retail areas have been using gates, private security guards, and video cameras to spruce security. The obsession with security has also inspired architects to design *defensible architecture*. Blakely & Snyder

(1997: 1-2) reveal three kinds of "fortressed" neighbourhoods, distinguished by the primary motivations of their residents.

The first group is called **Lifestyle communities** and these include retirement communities, golf and country-club developments, and suburban new towns. Gates provide security, but also separation for the leisure activities and amenities within. Second are **Elite communities**, where the gates symbolise distinction and prestige, both which create and protect a secure place on the social ladder. These include enclaves of the rich and famous, developments for the very affluent and executive home developments for the upper-middle class. The third type is the **Security Zone**, where fear of crime and outsiders is the foremost motivation for defensive fortifications. This category includes inner city perches, often in deteriorating areas; suburban perches, attempting to protect property and property values; and barricade perches, where street closures create suburban street patterns within a city grid (Blakely & Snyder 1997:2).

New developments large and small, as well as individual homeowners have been installing security systems and gates. These gates come in all sizes and shapes from relatively unobtrusive and unguarded gates, to those operated by security codes and remotes, to highly-patrolled and ornate gates which are surrounded by a variety of landscaping designs. In addition to security systems, gates, and moats, homeowners and community builders have been planting "security orientated gardens", which are intended to avert thieves by hiding the residence and by clumping thorny plants beneath windows and along property boundaries.

As the CSIR report (Landman: 2000:1) on enclosed neighbourhoods in South Africa clearly demonstrates that limited research has been done on enclosed neighbourhoods or gated communities in South Africa. Consequently, there is very little or no information available to assist

local authorities with decision-making regarding enclosed neighbourhoods.

With the above realisation that limited information exists on the issue of gated communities in South Africa it is the purpose of this assignment to give a comprehensive literature review on available sources regarding this growing topic.

1.3 Goals of the study

There have not been many attempts to define gated communities in the international literature. No definitions have been applied in South Africa. The following assignment is an attempt to start formalising such a definition and to act on explaining this "gated debate" in South Africa. Numerous questions are frequently asked regarding gated communities. Such as the following:

- The legal implications regarding the enclosure of public space;
- The privatisation of public functions such as road maintenance and its implications for taxes;
- The fragmentation of urban areas;
- The values of properties or houses within enclosed areas;
- The loss of social connection and contact and increasing social exclusion and separation;
- The perception of safety versus actual reports of crime decreasing in gated communities; and
- The role of private security within enclosed areas.

The study aims to define the term "gated community" and to form definitions on what a gated community is. In the assignment the topic is discussed according to examples from the USA. Concepts like crime, security village, postmodern theory, enclosure, neighbourhood and fragmented urban landscapes form the integral part of this research.

Mainly the goals are to capture existing and available information on gated communities in South Africa and then to assist future planners and other interest parties in the decision-making process regarding this topic.

1.4 Method of Research

Considering the gated community phenomenon as a relative new introduction to the planning landscape of South Africa the method of research consists mainly of a broad and extensive literature review. Applicable policies and legislation regulating and managing gated communities and its development in South Africa are discussed. The emergence, importance and impact of gated communities or security villages in the USA are analysed and used as references to the South African context.

Empirical research consists of interviews with planners and related officials and examination of case studies relating to the research topic. To make the study more interesting an array of photos and plans on gated communities are included. The backbone of this study are reports from BOUTEK and the CSIR Division of Building and Technology. These integral documents are of the first empirical literature to be published on enclosed neighbourhoods and related issues in South Africa. An important role rests on these above-mentioned published papers in describing the contemporary scenario of security villages and/or enclosed neighbourhoods in South Africa.

A prevalent factor in this study is the lack of empirical data in South Africa on the feasibility, emergence, urban impact and future of gated communities!

Chapter 2:

Background: What is a gated community?

2.1 Definitions

The phenomenon of gated communities is a sign of a maturing city, where multiple housing concepts exist within the same neighbourhoods. According to Robert Davis (Drake 1995:3-5) a development co-ordinator of one the firms which leads the gated community "boom" in USA says the following: " The people living in these gated communities are the trend setters, they are the people who dictate what the housing of the future will be." According to the Economist (2001:25-26) and Shea (1999:20) a gated community in America is not as a buckling trend, but a growing development to support and to join. In many of the fastest growing parts in the USA, urban development is being driven by "master-planned communities" or gated communities of some sort or another. As Shieder (1996:26) agrees: "master-planned communities is just the latest in a series of evolutions in urban America and amenities such as a tennis club, green belts or on-site schools are big selling attractions. In big cities half the new homes sales are in association-managed communities. Altogether, some 47 million people, one in six Americans, live in 18 million homes in 230 000 communities and pay around $35 billion in fees every year. Around 1, 25 million people serve on community association boards.

Master-planned communities are an important component of an emergent new urban geography, a 'post-suburban' form that stems from the development of the *service economy* and the *materialism of the service class*. Post-suburban America is fragmented and multi-nodal, with mixed densities, and unexpected juxtapositions of forms and functions (Knox 1992:207).

Gated communities attract city dwellers that want to purchase their own homes but also want to reduce or eliminate time on yard maintenance. These buyers don't necessarily downsize the square footage of their homes, but they do give up the responsibility of caring for a yard. The controlled-access feature provides the feeling of a more secure environment than a traditional single-family home in an open neighbourhood. Many buyers are particularly interested in the safety features when they visit a model home. The safety factor is a big draw, because many of the buyers are empty nesters who travel a lot. It's very mind-relieving for them to know their homes will be looked after while they are gone (Drake 1995:1-3).

Though gated communities in the United States (where it originated) can be traced to the 1850's, when private streets sprang up in St. Louis, they remained rare until the 1960s. As data compiled by Blakely and Snyder, show, they have increased rapidly since. Currently, about 80 percent of new urban housing developments in America are gated. Since suburbanisation in the United States has always involved economic and social segregation, what about these developments is actually different? As noted, they are defended by walls, and entry is often restricted by gates (sometimes guarded). Their residents share responsibility for common areas and for enforcing an often dizzying number of rules and regulations, which they do through homeowner associations (Judd 1998: 505).

With these features, gated developments obviously segregate people living within their walls from others even more profoundly than most exclusive jurisdiction can, they thus accentuate patterns of segregation.

With these above comments in mind, it shows that gated communities have particular characteristics and can be defined as follows. Blakely and Snyder (1998:62) focus the reader on that there are many different kinds of gated communities and many reasons people build gates and choose to live behind them. Some are protecting themselves from

crime on their very doorstep, others are fearful that crime may one day reach their streets.

But in many ways, gated communities speak less to the need for protection from crime than to the desire to define and protect stable, uniform preserve. At all income levels people are drawn to gates for prestige, image, status. Some are looking for privacy. Some want to privatise, buying and controlling their own common space and services. Some want a country club, an exclusive place to enjoy their favourite forms of recreation. All want control – over their homes, their streets, their neighbourhoods. An essential aspect of this control is the *ability to exclude outsiders, the general public, from their communities.*

2.2 Enclosed neighbourhoods and security villages/complexes

In South Africa one, broadly distinguishes between two types of gated communities at this stage, namely enclosed neighbourhoods and security villages. See Figure 1.

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        │     GATED       │
        │  COMMUNITIES    │
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│  Enclosed    │   │    Security      │
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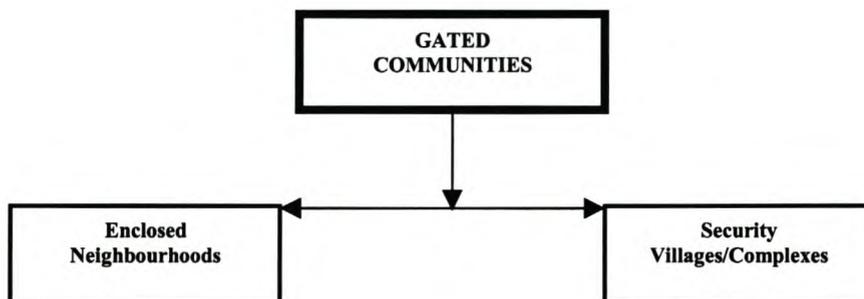
Figure 1: Flow-chart of gated communities in South Africa

- **Enclosed Neighbourhoods**

They refer to existing neighbourhoods that have controlled access through gates or booms across existing roads. Many are fenced or walled off as well, with a limited number of controlled entrances/exists and security guards at these points in some cases. The roads within

these neighbourhoods were previously, or still is public property and in many cases the local council is still responsible for public services to the community within (Landman 2000:3).

- **Security Villages/Complexes**

These are private developments where the entire area is developed by a (private) developer. These areas are physically walled or fenced off and usually have a security gate or controlled access point with or without a security guard. The roads in these developments are private, and in most of the cases, a private management body does the management and maintenance.

Gated communities thus refer to a physical area that is fenced or walled off from its surroundings, either prohibiting or controlling access to these areas by means of gates or booms. Or as Tijerino (1998:322) explains: "they are residential areas where public access is restricted; thus, public space is privatised." In many cases, the concept can refer to a residential area with restricted access so that normally public spaces are privatised or the use there of is restricted. It does not, however, only refer to residential areas, but also include controlled access villages for work (office blocks), commercial and/or recreational purposes (many shopping complexes and malls). Gated communities can include both *enclosed neighbourhoods* and *security villages* (CSIR 2001:1)

Figure 2: **Gated community: Front gate complex with booms and guard house. (Welgevonden Estate, Green Oakes, Stellenbosch)**

Figure 3: Gated community: Front entrance with booms, no guards but with remote speakers and microphones. (Winelands Estate, Bel 'Aire, Somerset-West)
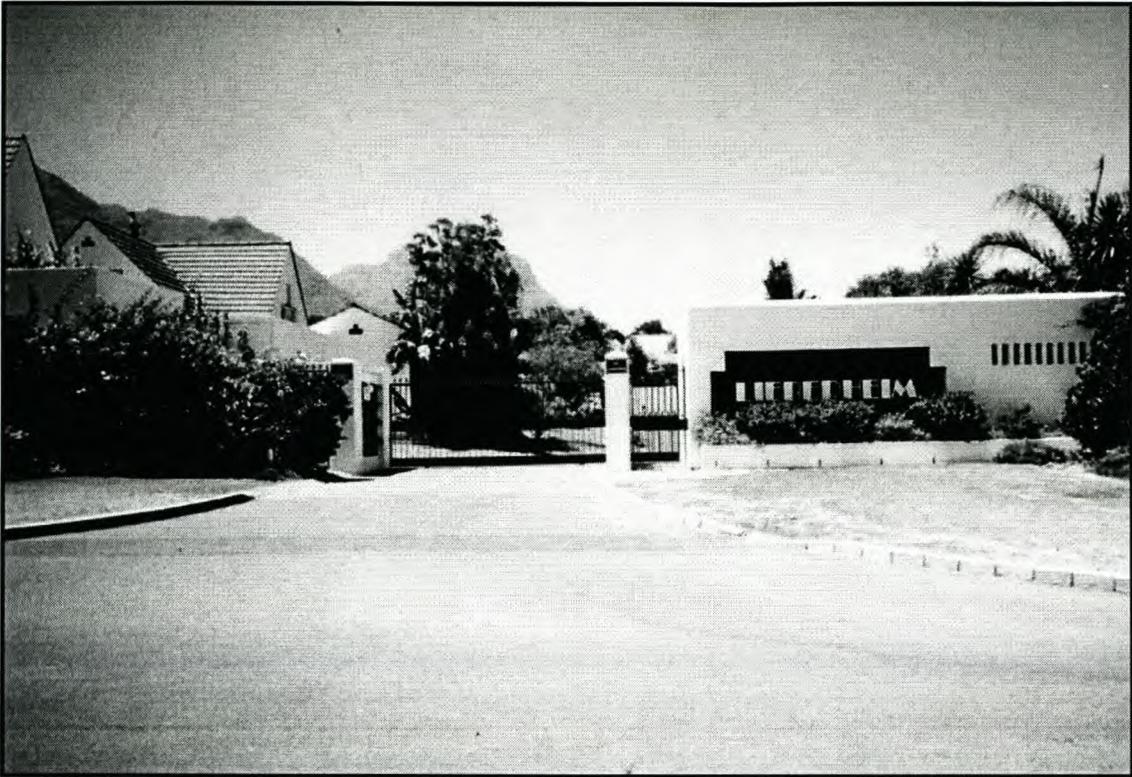
Figure 4: Enclosed neighbourhood: Entry gate with no guards but with security system and microphones. (Lieberheim, Paradyskloof, Stellenbosch)
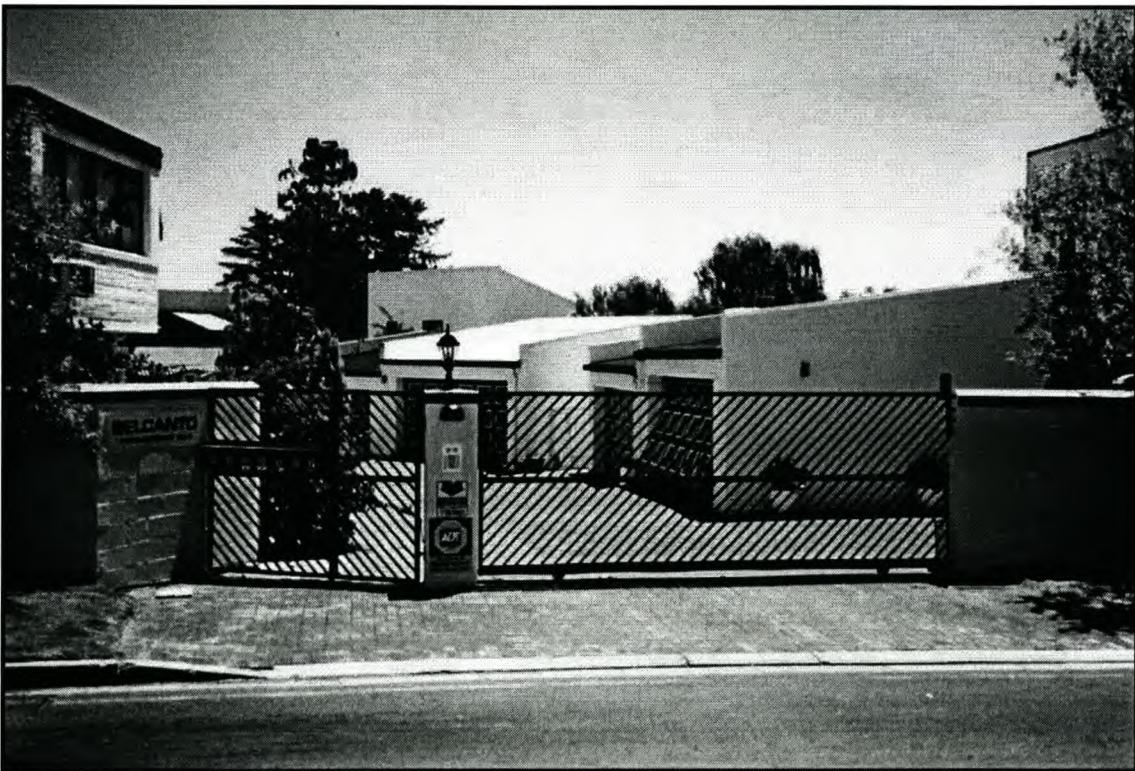
Figure 5: Enclosed neighbourhood: Entry gate with no guards but with security system and microphones. (Belcanto, Die Boord, Stellenbosch)

2.3 Common characteristics of gated communities

The packaging that is so characteristic of private master-planned communities can thus be seen as a parallel to the packaged nostalgia, refinement, heritage and sophistication found in the gallerias, shopping malls, office villages, mixed-use developments and festival settings of the postmodern city. They are a product of stagecraft, proscenia for the enactment of consumption-orientated lifestyles. As such, they are part of the socio-cultural polarisation of the contemporary city, spaces in which estrangement along lines of class and race is heightened even further than in traditional suburbs (Knox 1992:208-209).

All gated and fenced residential communities (or enclosed neighbourhoods) have several things in common. Chris E McGoey (2001:1-4), popularly known as the "crime doctor", elaborates on the elements that are common to gated communities. McGoey is an authority on crime tendencies, building regulations, neighbourhood planning and gate management and access control regarding gated communities. Here follows a summarised list of his findings on the subject.

♦ Gates and fences provide the perception of security, safety, and privacy. In affluent residential neighbourhoods, privacy means exclusivity and therefore increased property values.

♦ Large apartment properties often add gate systems as an amenity to attract new residents. Gated communities are desirable to most prospective residents and to most property managers because they can charge a premium for rent. The main purpose of a gate, on a low-crime property, is *not* to deter or prevent crime but to provide the perception of security and exclusivity. A gated community is like a **private** club where access privileges are required. Privately owned golf courses, health clubs and other recreational facilities are among

the few social spaces in suburbia but they are not accessible to all members of the public. Even children's play is becoming privatised, with many businesses that rent managed indoor settings for entertainment. These settings include: discovery or adventure "tours" in buildings and game arcade centres (Southworth & Parthasarathy 1997:18).

♦ Other apartment communities add gate systems as a **barrier** to keep criminals off the property and away from rent paying residents. The intention is to reduce crime and retain residents by erecting a significant barrier to unauthorised foot and vehicle traffic. Gates are often considered as a cheaper alternative to hiring and managing security guards. Gate installation companies promote this in their marketing and stress the added benefit of liability protection. Jim Freer (1998:8-7) comments on certain vehicle access systems (American company, Hidden Eyes Inc.) that replace or complement guards at gated communities. At entry gates there are kiosks with a video monitor, cameras, speakers and microphones controlled by a microprocessor. As visitors pull up to the gate, they are greeted by an attendant at the off-site central station and then who places a call to the resident. After they are granted access, visitors' images and the image of their license plate are stored digitally. Cameras enable attendants at the central station to monitor parking lots and other areas. According to him reasons to invest in guest vehicle access control systems are because gated communities keep going up and the economics of remote systems are appealing to residents.

That is however *not* always sound advice. Gates can also be a barrier to emergency services like the police or fire departments. It is extremely important to have a system in place that allows quick access to them. Fences and **working** gates definitely reduce unauthorised vehicle and foot traffic on a property especially late at night and early in the morning. For many properties, **traffic** reduction alone is enough to reduce much of the parking lot crime.

Note the emphasis on "working" gates. Swinging gates (manual operated gates) in a volatile community will have problems being operational 24 hours per day. This can lead that anybody, including persons with vindictive or of criminal nature, can open and close the gates.

The effectiveness of gates and fencing depends on the nature of the property and the management controls in place. Gates and fencing works best on a stable property with non-criminal, mature residents. Formidable fencing and gates, by design, **restrict access** and therefore provide both a physical and psychological barrier for criminals. Good signage is necessary to announce that this is private property and to post your trespassing policy. Sure, one can tailgate onto a property behind someone else but this requires effort and exposes the criminal to a potential witness.

Criminals want to come onto an apartment property anonymously and blend into the community of strangers. Criminals like quick escape routes and don't want to become trapped behind fences or gates should they be discovered. Many criminals will **bypass** a gated community for one that is not gated simply because of the restricted access.

♦ *Gated communities should not claim to be able to prevent all crimes.* Gates and fences is just another tool to help a property manager fight crime. More tools are usually required to do the complete job. Support by residents and management is required to maintain an effective gate system. Management needs to **educate** the residents how to properly use the gate system and how to report abuse and damage. Management needs to screen residents and enforce community rules to prevent criminal types from residing on the inside. Residents need to report or challenge unauthorised persons using gates and not give out gate codes unnecessarily.

Master-planned communities (another American term for gated communities) provide at least two possible mobility advantages: First, many have a mix of housing, shops and jobs (i.e. they are fairly self-contained), and thus encourage short trips within the community, and potentially more trips by foot, bicycle and transit. Secondly, since they tend to be *socio-demographically homogeneous* and have large concentrations of wage-earners, they are well-suited to ride-matching for commute trips outside the community – i.e. forming successful carpools, truck pools and subscription bus services.

Thus, planned communities provide interesting "laboratories" for examining the links between physical planning and travel choices, a topic that has sparked considerable debate in recent years (Cervero 1995:1,2).

Considering the immense impact they are likely to exert on the social and political fabric of urban areas within the next few years. gated communities have attracted remarkably little scholarly attention. The foundation for this literature was laid by Marc Weiss in the book, *The Rise of the Community Builders* (1987) (Judd 1998:50).

Chapter 3:

Against and For Gated Communities in a Postmodern Discourse

3.1 Different positions towards gated communities

Gated communities have aroused an active debate internationally over last few years. The comments range from well-researched books on the subject to different role-players giving their opinions or taking up a specific position for or against gated communities in urban areas. Landman (2000:6) refers to three recent books published in the USA that explore this phenomenon by looking at the characteristics and dynamics of several gated communities in the United States.

These authors try to understand the reasons behind its occurrence and the impact that the presence of such establishments can have on the larger community and urban environment as a whole. They do not, however, take a specific position for or against gates. They are sympathetic to those who wish to live behind walls and gates and highlight their preferences. On the other hand, they warn against the possible dangers of gated communities and end with several suggestions for building better communities and a harmonious and integrated society without erecting fortresses (Landman 2000:6-7).

3.1.1 ANTI-POSITION towards gated communities

Here the issue is debated from a social perspective, focusing on the harsh realities that the poor are faced with in a city where the powerful rule and divide, resulting in the contemporary processes of spatial segregation in Los Angeles. Gated communities are viewed

as just such a form of ultimate segregation and militarisation of public space (Landman 2000:6).

Rhoda Richards (1996:1-3) comments that gated communities began cropping up in the late 1980s in America in retirement villages and in affluent communities. Behind the gates, residents attempt to create a private utopia by privatising the public space within the development, setting up their own governments, and paying for basic city services, such as garbage pickup. By the late 1980s, the gated community concept had trickled down to new developments in middle-class suburbia. Residents in these communities used environmental barricades (gates, fences, walls, landscaped dams and rivers, and strategic placed green belts of trees and various shrubs) to enhance and protect property values.

Are developers and planners creating a prison or a security zone? As the trend wends its way into working class and low-income communities where crime is acute, the gates and other barricades have taken on a new name: *Security Zone*. Virtually every new development that springs up from a vacant lot today is surrounded by a gate or some barrier, and some older housing developments are being refitted with gates or other barricades. At a time when more Americans are segregating themselves based on race and class in an 'us against them' climate, the gated 'hood or ghetto'-trend furthers the "fortress mentality" that gated communities represent (Judd 1998:506).

While the high fences may keep trouble out, they might also keep help out (Lorrayne 1997:25-26). For example: The gates may take too long to open properly for the fire brigade or police vehicle(s) to enter. Or the problem with just one gate, is that it can lead to congestion, inefficiency and unnecessary time-wasting activities.

Dale Maharidge (1994:26-28, 35-36) refers to gated communities as "walled neighbourhoods" or "guarded communities" and mentions of Hispanic Americans living in neighbouring areas as suppliers of cheap labour for predominately white Californian households in walled communities. *Orange County* (an extremely affluent area) typifies California, as the society of the future if gated communities becomes the town planning norm. Orange county is a motherland of conservatism, but the state tourism agency touts it as the most "California-looking of all the Californias, the most like the movies, the most like the stories, the most like the dream. It can be particular undreamlike, however, when you are broke! Chapman (1998:20-21) wrote an article in the *Orange County Business Journal* where he uses Orange County as an thorough investigated example for what investors should know about master-planned communities. The complexity of long-term, large-scale development projects, combined with investors' relative lack of familiarity with the unique aspects of a master-planned community, make it imperative for developers to provide their equity partners with a thorough, articulate investment evaluation and ongoing status reports.

Across the Californian state whites form "pockets" of enclosed communities surrounded by immigrants (especially Latin-Americans), deserts, and mountains. There are several dozen of these exclusive white "islands" scattered south of San Francisco and they are surrounded by less developed areas whose residents are predominately black, hispanic or asian. In the East (e.g. Florida) of the United States the reverse is happening, minority communities are commonly ringed in by white gated communities. Here the minority groups form the "islands" and live only in certain demarcated areas, whilst the mostly white gated communities surround then and offer very limited or no access for the blacks, hispanics or asians.

The whole idea of whites' fears of increasing Hispanisation of suburbs creates a physical divide between races and different cultures. According to Mr Maharidge this undermines the basic principles of democracy and will create tension. "The isolation of walled communities will only increase as generations of children grow up in them and accept their reality. Walls are a result, not a cause, of society's problems-at least for now. But I've been to Third World countries and have seen how the rich have lived behind walls for generations. *Removed from reality*, they cannot see why wars start against them" (Maharidge 1994:30-31).

It is a bad idea anywhere, but they can be detrimental to poor communities. Gates always imply some degree of isolation. Isolation is more desirable and less damaging the higher up the economic ladder you are. With the elite, the gates imply status, exclusivity, and prestige. Gates at a public housing development imply crime and danger. It's stigmatising (Richards 1996:3 and Blakely & Snyder 1997:6).

As Carol Tucker (1998:22) says:" We are a society that is seeking to bring people of all income levels and races together, but this (gated communities) is direct opposite of it. How can a society have a social contract without having social contact?" She also comments that gates may foster a false sense of security and according to her research the police reported that crime was likely to come from people living within the gates as from outside.

3.1.2 A PRO-POSITION for gated communities

To hear critics tell it, gated communities are antisocial American-style anomalies that play on irrational fears of crime, especially among the elderly. But there is no arguing with the demand for gated communities, not only in the USA, but also in South Africa. These close-knit "villages" seem to satisfy longings for a sense of

community and security. Safety is an important issue, because the female residents feel safe to walk or stroll around in the middle of the night (Lorrayne 1997:26). As Edgington (1996:5-6) says:" … a gated community is one idea that makes people feel more secure."

On the other end of the scale is Fred Foldavry (1994:2-3) debating on the economies of private communities and he supports his findings with empirical studies of actual communities. The focus is on justifying gated communities from micro-economic premises, launching from a technical discussion of what economist term "public goods" (collectively consumed goods and services). The main argument is that gated communities are a more efficient mode of urban development because they allow collectively consumed goods (civic in nature) to be supplied by the market. Foldavry's argument explains that people have a right to obtain the best the market can offer (including civic services) and, in turn, offer the market the best from their side in terms of quality of life and value for money and investment. Gates, according Foldavry, allow just that (Landman 2000:7).

Is it worth it to stay in a gated community?

Generally, residents feel their developments are safer and that the gates are responsible. Another supposed benefit of gated neighbourhoods is the sense of community they generate. McCarthy (1997:11-12) calls it the creation of a sense of place and proposes a mix of commercial and apartment properties that are surrounded by gates and walls. For the builders (referring to the respective municipality) the gated community image and location may be just the right marketing tool to boost the house market value.

One might expect greater spirit or tighter co-operation between residents in gated areas because they have such clear boundaries, as well as homeowner associations and other vehicles designed to

include members in the social structure of the community. Blakely and Snyder (1998:2) found no indication that they achieve this goal. Instead, most people report a middling in the levels of community and participation in governance and socialisation.

But participating in organised groups is not the only way for neighbours to interact. Many Americans (and South Africans) take for granted the informal act of chatting with a neighbour while out for stroll. For those in newly gated communities, it's a long-denied treat. Residents remark on the safety for children because of the minimal traffic and that the roads are not blocked by congestion. The enclosure allows homeowners more opportunity to engage in conversation, 'people know each other better'.

For those inside the gates, life may be a little more comfortable. For others, however, gated communities symbolise a larger social pattern of segmentation and separation designed to disassociate and exclude. For instance, America is increasingly separated by income, race, and economic opportunity. These trends compound parallel trends toward fragmentation and privatisation, providing a new rationale for the gated community based on shared socio-economic status (Blakely & Snyder 1997:2-3).

Reasons to stay in gated communities are obvious. Gated communities offer plenty leisure activities and amenities inside. **Retirement communities** offer senior citizens the chance to engage in a wide range of activities close their homes. Activities like swimming pools, golf courses, restaurants and shops, landscaped gardens and parks, various other sports (including lawn bowling, croquet and tennis), and clinics are available to people. All these services or activities are offered in a secure and safe environment. Naturally, not all gated communities can offer all or some of these above-mentioned services (Tucker 1998:22-24).

Everyone can see today, in any city in the world, that there are extremes of wealth and poverty, each concentrated in one or more sections of the city. The wealthy areas seem pretty well insulated from the city around them, sometimes in high-rise towers, sometimes at suburban-type neighbourhoods. The poor areas, on the other hand, seem marginalised, unconnected to the economic and social life of the city around them. The concentration is voluntary for the rich, involuntary for the poor, it would seem. And there are other sections of each city that are neither very rich nor very poor; among them, differences can be perceived, not only of richness, but perhaps also of housing style, of culture, of language, of street pattern, of public places (Marcuse 2000:270-271).

All of these differences, these divisions of the city, seem quite natural and common-sensical to most of us, most of the time. But there disturbing aspects to some of them, too. Poor areas seem to be getting poorer, rather than being in transition to improvement, and they seem, in many places, to be disproportionately occupied by members of minority groups, usually distinguishable by their colour. Cities today seem fragmented, partitioned – at the extreme, almost drawn and quartered, painfully pulled apart. Although, divisions in cities have always existed! It is not the fact that they are divided that is the particular characteristic of the partitioned city today; rather, it is the source and manner of their division. Some divisions arise of economic functionality, some are cultural, and some reflect and reinforce relationship of power, some are combinations of all three (Marcuse 2000:272-273).

Division by economic function, broadly defined, is a generally accepted necessary division within a city. *Zoning* is today the accepted legal embodiment of such divisions. Be as it may, separation by function, by use, is generally accepted today as in general an appropriate division within a city. Other forms of divisions seem more problematic, however. We may name four

divisions as of growing importance and concern today: divisions occur by *class*, *race* or *colour*, *ethnicity*, and *lifestyle*. These separate sources of divisions are often commingled, and even more often confused (Marcuse 2000:272-273).

Walled or gated communities are a growing feature of urban settlement patterns throughout the world, and reflect separation along each of the above-mentioned lines (Smith 1992:14-17). Only those living within them or their announced and welcomed visitors, are allowed in; usually private security is provided to enforce restrictions not only on entry but also on activities within. For example an estimated four million live in such communities in the United States, with the figure climbing to 15 million if all forms of privately regulated living communities are included. If one adds highrise apartment buildings with security arrangements regulating entry, essentially vertical walled communities, the number grows even larger (Marcuse 2000:272-273).

But the bases of separation between each of these parts of the contemporary city – ethnicity, lifestyle, class, and race – are not the same, and have very different impacts on the city. As a general rule:

- Divisions by class and race tend to be hierarchical, socially determined, rigid, exclusionary, and incompatible with a democratic city life – although often legitimated as cultural divisions.
- Divisions by ethnicity and lifestyle tend to be cultural and voluntary, individually determined, fluid, non-exclusionary, and consistent with a democratic city life (Marcuse 2000:272).

Class is a much-debated concept, but for current purposes, the understanding of the division of space in cities, two characteristics

are central: income, and power (Fainstein & Harloe 2000:257-258). *Income*, because much (not all!) of the allocation of land to different users is made in the market, in which those with higher incomes able to pay higher prices will prevail in their choices over those with lower incomes, and power, because that large part of land allocation not determined solely by the market, e.g. governed by zoning rules, owned or controlled by the state, subject to tax payments or entitled to subsidies etc., is determined by relationships of power in the state and the economy.

These two characteristics, which largely go together, are not bad indicators of class; they correlate quite consistently with "higher" and "lower" in almost any ranking of classes, but are somewhat more ambiguous in the exact lines of demarcation between them. Using these criteria, then, we may almost speak of *separate cities within most cities today.* This social polarisation, spatial segregation, decentralisation, and loss of utopian visions are the typical elements of a postmodern society. As such, master-planned communities are also part of the 'postmodern turn' that has been inscribed in the built environment not only through architecture but also through mere building. In this context, gated communities are clearly part of a postmodern of reaction, a swing away from the asceticism of modernism (Knox 1992:208). In a postmodern society, the gated communities play an integral role in the planning landscape. Thus, it is very important to understand the fundamentals of the postmodern theory and the impact it has on the flourishing of gated communities in the planning field (Harrison 1995: 30-34).

3.2 Postmodern theory and gated communities

3.2.1 Definition of Postmodern theory

Philip Harrison (1995:26-27) states the following: "During the past few decades a new and profoundly destabilising movement has

threatened to overrun the great intellectual and artistic traditions inherited from the nineteenth century Enlightenment. This movement, commonly referred to as postmodernism, confronts planners in South Africa (and other parts of the world) with stimulating but uncomfortable challenges. Postmodernism is the antithesis of modernism. **Modernism,** as a broad paradigm of thinking and action, flows from the Enlightenment and has its central organising theme the inevitable human progress. Modernism replaced the traditional order with bureaucratic rationality and capitalist economic relations and introduced themes such as the intrinsic rationality of human beings, technological mastery over nature and superiority of scientific method and knowledge.

Postmodernism is presented as a competing worldview, a challenge to modernism. It emphasises human consciousness, symbolic meaning, and the importance of language, local differences, cultural and gender diversity. The term postmodernism is used promiscuously to refer to a multitude of ideas, but Michael Dear (2001:1-2) and (2000:71-72) believes that there are three principal references in postmodern thought:

1. A series of distinctive cultural and stylistic practices that are in and of themselves intrinsically interesting;
2. The totality of practices, viewed as a cultural ensemble characteristic of the contemporary epoch of capitalism (usually distinguished by the term post-modernity); and
3. A philosophical and methodological discourse antagonistic to the precepts of Enlightenment thought most especially the hegemony of any single intellectual persuasion.

One of the most innovative aspects of the recent debates on the postmodern condition is the notion that there has been a radical break from past trends in political, economic, and socio-cultural life. Some analysts have declared the current condition to be nothing

more than business as usual, only faster - a "hyper-modern" or "super-modern" phase of advanced capitalism. The following table shows a simplified comparison between modernism and postmodernism elements that relate to gated communities.

Table 1: Various elements of modernism and postmodernism

Modernism	Postmodernism
Centering	Decentering
Authority	Eclecticis
Distance	Participation
The "one"	The "many"
Community	Dissemination
The real	The hyperreal
Utopia	Heterotopia

(Source: Harrison 1995:27)

Dear (2000:141-143) refers to the term *"postmodern urbanism"* and by that, he emphasises the importance of places of postmodernity. He describes postmodern urbanism as a self-conscious and selective revival of elements of older styles, though he cautions that postmodernism is not simply a style but also *an attitude, a frame of mind*. Postmodern townscapes are more detailed, handcrafted and intricate. They celebrate difference, polyculturalism, variety and stylishness. Their elements are:

1. *quaintspace*, a deliberate cuteness;
2. *textured facades*, aimed at pedestrians, rich in detail, often with an "aged" appearance;
3. *stylishness,* appealing to the fashionable, chic, and affluent;
4. *reconnection with the local*, involving deliberate historical-geographical reconstructions; and
5. *pedestrian-automobile split,* to redress the modernist bias toward the car.

Soja (2001: 298-299) and Soja (2000: 38-40) establishes that at the outset there are no purely postmodern cities or completely urban regions, and perhaps there never will be. Continuities with the past, at the very least with distinctively modernist forms of urbanism and urbanisation, persist everywhere, shaping the spatial, social, and historical dimensions of contemporary urban life. Over the past thirty years, however, every city everywhere has been experiencing, in varying degrees to be sure, a recognisable and effectual postmodernisation. Just how extensive this empirical or material postmodernisation has been, whether its effects are positive or negative or both, especially how it should affect the practice of urban studies remain highly contested. Understanding the postmetropolitan transition and expanding development of postmodern urbanism thus requires a more open, flexible, and eclectic approach than has often been the case in urban geographical studies.

Dear (1995:40-41) says that in a *postmodern city* issues of social reproduction, community and the public interest consequently take a back seat; governments and populace collude in the decline of the commonwealth. The postmodern city is increasingly without a credible infrastructure. *Crime is rife.* The drug culture is recognised as a rational response by gang-members to the absence of mainstream employment. Health care for the poor is non-existent. The public schools are in shambles. Homelessness is pandemic in the region. And the welfare system is on the verge of collapse.

Soja (2001:37) refers to the term "**postmetropolis**" and its used to describe the past thirty years of urban restructuring as defining a significant postmetropolitan transition, as selective deconstruction and still ongoing reconstitution of the modern metropolis as it has traditionally been understood and interpreted. Implied in these terms is the emergence of what can be described as postmodern urbanism. In the next section, the term "postmetropolis" is used in describing the emergence and importance of gated communities in cities, especially Los Angeles, USA.

3.3 Governing space in postmetropolis

Given the exceedingly volatile cityspace produced by the new urbanisation process, with its unprecedented cultural heterogeneity, widening social and economic disparities in race, ethnicity, gender, income, sexual preference, age, and other social and spatial attributes. So, *what has prevented the postmetropolis from exploding more frequently and more violently than it has over the past decade?* The question is addressed by looking at the intensification of social and spatial control brought by new developments in the privatisation, policing, surveillance, governance, and design of the built environment and the political geography of cityspace (Soja 2000:299-301).

The postmetropolitan landscape has become filled with many different kinds of protected and fortified spaces, islands of enclosures and anticipated protection against the real and imagined dangers of daily life. Borrowing from Michel Foucault (2001:1); a philosopher who attempted to show that the basic ideas which people normally take to be permanent truths about human nature and society change in the course of history. Foucault offered new concepts that challenged people's assumptions about prisons, the police, insurance, care of the mentally ill, gay rights, and welfare, the postmetropolis is represented as a collection of *carceral cities.*

Carceral cities are an archipelago of "normalised enclosures" and fortified spaces that both voluntary and involuntary barricade individuals and communities in visible and not-so-visible urban islands, overseen by restructured forms of public and private power and authority (Soja 2000:299). Soja (2001:44-46) refers to Mike Davis book, *City of Quartz* (1990), that underlines this intensification of social and spatial control which has marked the metropolitan transition and sees the formation of an *ecology of fear* and the spread of security-obsessed urbanism. The hard side of this intensification has involved improved techniques of policing, surveillance, and territorial control, the multiplication of many different kinds of protected and fortified spaces, from what Davies calls sadistic street environments and

shopping malls to the proliferation of gated communities and the rise of privatised residential governments. Such fortressing of the city may reach its greatest intensity in the USA, but it is spreading everywhere in the contemporary world as still another dimension of globalisation.

Dear (2000:143-144) mentions a list (or taxonomy) of contemporary Southern California of postmodern urbanism. It includes the following elements: *edge cities, privatopia, cultures of heteropolis, city as theme park, fortified city, interdictory space, historical geographies of restructuring, fordist/postfordist regimes of accumulation/regulation, globalisation*, and *politics of nature*. The USA is taken as an example since it correlates with South Africa's problems in urban planning. Gated communities are rapidly increasing in South Africa, for the same reasons for what it started in the USA. America is a democracy, but the gated community industry is booming and South Africa's urban landscape was transformed with apartheid-city planning and created urban challenges in the 1990s, which are similar to the USA.

- **Edge cities**

According to Joel Garreau (Dear 2000:143-146 and Soja 2001:47-48) edge cities represent the crucible of America's urban future. Every single American city that is growing, is growing in fashion of Los Angeles, and LA is the so-called "great-granddaddy" of edge cities. The classic location for contemporary edge cities is at the intersection of an urban beltway and a hub-and spoke lateral road. The central conditions that have propelled such development are the dominance of the automobile and the associated parking; the communication revolution; and the entry of women in large numbers into the labour market.

Roberts *et al* (1999: 53-54) argues that whilst suburbia traditionally has been associated with a lifestyle dependant on stereotypical gender roles, with a male breadwinner commuting to the centre and dependant wife and children staying on the periphery. The new lifestyles associated with dual earner families have both responded to and provoked the emergence of edge cities.

In these new locations both halves of a couple can enjoy easy access to employment and leisure, whilst at the same time being able to live in a single-family house with a garden. There are three basic types of edge cities:

- *Uptowns*, peripheral pre-automobile settlements that have subsequently been absorbed by urban sprawl;
- *Boomers*, the classic edge cities, located at freeway intersections; and
- *Greenfields*, the current state-of-the-art, "occurring at the intersection of thousand acres of farmlands and one developer's monumental ego".

In the edge cities, "community" is scarce, occurring not through propinquity but via telephone, fax and private mail service. The *walls* that typically surround such neighbourhoods are social boundaries, but they act as community "recognisers", not community "organisers". In the edge city era, the term master-planned community is little more than a marketing device!

- **Privatopia**

In the reaction to the urbanisation of suburbia and the so-called Third Worlding of the inner city, the upper middle class (and above) have reasserted their social privilege by fleeing to their own fortified cells of affluence and insular lifestyles. Reflecting this escape from the city and its attendant civic rights and responsibility has been the phenomenal growth of what are called *CIDs* (*Common Interest Developments*), in which residents own or control common areas and shared amenities, and are bound by contractual agreements enforced by a private governing body, or community association.   The densest concentration of CIDs, themed housing developments, gated communities, and active homeowners associations (HOAs) are probably found in Southern California (Soja 2001:49-50).

Dear (2000:144) warns that far from being a benign or inconsequential trend, CIDs already define a new norm for the mass production of housing in the USA. Privatopia has been fuelled by a large dose of privatisation, and

promoted by an ideology of "hostile privatism". It has provoked a culture of non-participation. In the *Economist* (2001:27) it is argued that, European Utopias ("utopia" is the article's view of the marketing image of a gated community) tended to concentrate on changing the society around them, American ones preferred to go off and create a new world somewhere else.

Soja (2001:50-51) explains that the extraordinary collective privatisation of urban residential space has been interpreted in many ways. Some see it as a destructive erosion of public space and civic democracy, a "secession of the successful " that is contributing significantly to the resurgence of urban inequalities and polarisation. Others see it as brewing a major transformation in urban (and national) politics, with the residential community associations (RCAs) or homeowners associations becoming the residential version of the private corporation as a form of collective property ownership and banding together to create a powerful new political force. Still others see the empowerment of residential communities as potentially contributing, though coalitions of like-minded associations and NGOs, to a reassertion of interest in local and environmental issues and more forceful movements to serve the needs of the working poor.

- **City as theme park**

California in general, and Los Angeles in particular, has often been promoted as places where the American (suburban) Dream is most easily realised. It's the often noted qualities of optimism and tolerance coupled with a balmy climate that have given rise to an architecture and society fostered by a spirit of experimentation, risk-taking, and hope. Architectural dreamscapes are readily convertible into marketable commodities, i.e. saleable pre-packaged landscapes engineered to satisfy fantasies of suburban living. "Theme park" is a metaphor used to describe the emergence of such variegated cityscapes. Dear (2000:145-146) describes theme parks as places of simulation without end, characterised by aspatiality plus technological and physical surveillance and control. What is missing in this new cybernetic suburbia is not a

particular building or place, but the spaces between, i.e. the connections that make sense of forms. What is missing, then is connectivity and community.

- **Fortified city**

Southern California's obsession with security has transformed the region into a fortress. This shift is accurately manifested in the physical form of the city, which is divided into fortified cells of affluence and places of terror where police battle criminalised poor. These urban phenomena have placed Los Angeles "on the edge of postmodernism". The dynamics of fortification involve the omnipresent application of high-tech policing methods to the "high-rent security of gated residential developments" and "panopticon shopping malls." In the consequent carceral city, the working poor and destitute are spatially sequestered on the "mean streets", and excluded from the affluent "forbidden cities" through *security by design.*

- **Interdictory space**

Steven Flusty (Dear 2000:146-147) observed how various types of fortification have extended a canopy of suppression and surveillance across the entire city. His taxonomy of interdictory spaces identifies how spaces are designed to exclude by a combination of their function and cognitive sensibilities. Some spaces are passively aggressive space concealed by intervening objects or grade changes is "stealthy" and spaces that may be reached only by means of interrupted or obfuscated approaches is "slippery". Other spatial configuration are more assertively confrontational: deliberately obstructed "crusty" space surrounded by walls and checkpoints; inhospitable "prickly" spaces featuring unsittable benches in areas devoid of shade "jittery" space ostentatiously saturated with surveillance devices.

Flusty notes how combinations of interdictory spaces are being introduced *into every facet of the urban environment, generating distinctly unfriendly mutant typologies.* Some are indicative of the pervasive infiltration of fear into the home, including the bunker-style "blockhome", affluent palisaded "luxury

laager" communities, or low-income residential areas converted into "pocket ghettos" by military-style occupation. Other typological forms betray a fear of the public realm, as with the fortification of commercial facilities into "strongpoints of sale", or the self-contained "world citadel" clusters of defensible office towers. One consequence of the socio-spatial differentiation is an acute fragmentation of the urban landscape.

- **Historical geographies of restructuring**

Historical geographies of Southern California are relatively rare, especially when compared with the number of published accounts of Chicago and New York. Los Angeles remains for unclear reasons the least studied major city in the United States (Dear 2000:147). Historical geographies focuses of an area in how the urban history develops, changes and what evolution process it undergoes to form its current shape, size, status, political, economic and social characteristics, and its postmodern perspective.

- **Fordist vs post-Fordist regimes of accumulation and regulation**

Fordism: The social institutions of mass production, collectively referred to as Fordism, began to emerge in the USA early in the twentieth century and were at the centre of a decades-long process of social struggle which extended into the immediate post-World War II era. The name "Fordism" derives from the industry of car-mogul *Henry Ford*; an ultra-modern form of production and of working methods. Fordist production entailed an intensified industrial division of labour, increased mechanisation and co-ordination of large scale manufacturing processes to achieve a steady flow of production. Its a shift toward the use of less skilled labour performing, ad infinitum, tasks minutely specified by management and the potential for heightened capitalist control over the pace and intensity of work (Rupert 2001: 1-2).

One of most important underlying shifts in the contemporary political economy is from a Fordist to a post-Fordist industrial organisation (Dear 2000:148). *Post-Fordism* is associated with the decline of the Fordist era and the rise of

"flexible production". This is a form of industrial activity based on small-size, small-batch units of (typically sub-contracted) production that is nevertheless integrated into clusters of economic activity. Such clusters have mostly two manifestations: Labour-intensive crafts forms (in Los Angeles, typically garments and jewellery); and high-technology (especially the defence and aerospace industries). These so-called "technopoles" until recently constituted the principal geographical loci of contemporary (sub)urbanisation in Southern California.

Post-Fordist regimes of accumulation are associated with analogous regimes of regulation, or social control. The rise of neoconservatism and the privatisation ethos have coincided with a period of economic recession and retrenchment which has led many to the brink of poverty just at the time when the social welfare "safety net" is being withdrawn.

- **Globalisation**

Any consideration of the changing nature of industrial production sooner or later must encompass the globalisation question. There is no simple master-logic of restructuring, focusing instead on two key localised macro-processes: the overaccumulation in Southern California of bank and real-estate capital principally from the East Asia trade surplus; and the reflux of low-wage manufacturing and labour-intensive service industries following immigration from Mexico and Central America (Dear 2000:149). The city of Angeles used tax dollars gleaned from international capital investments to subsidise its downtown urban renewal, a process referred to as "municipalised land speculation".

- **Politics of nature**

Human habitation on a metropolitan scale of Southern California has only been possible through a widespread manipulation of nature, especially the control of water resources in the American West. Southern California tend to hold a grudging respect for nature living as they do adjacent to one of the

earth's major geological hazards (San Andreas fault line), and in a desert environment that is prone to flood, landslide and fire. On the other hand, its habitants have been energetically, ceaselessly, and sometimes carelessly unrolling the carpet of urbanisation over the natural landscape for more than a century.

This uninhibited occupation has engendered its own range of environmental problems, most notoriously air pollution, but also issues related to habitat loss and dangerous encounters between humans and other animals. The particular combination of circumstances in Southern California has stimulated an especially political view of nature, focusing both on its emasculation through human intervention and on its potential for political mobilisation by grass-roots movements (Dear 2000:149-150).

Dear (1995:41) sums up that the analogy between postmodern thought and postmodern urbanism is this: that the postmodern city is one in which traditional modes of control are evaporating, and no overarching new rationality has yet appeared as a substitute. In the meantime, emergent forms of economic, social and political relationships rush to fill the vacuum. It is the localisation of these effects that is creating the new geographies of postmodern society – a new time-space fabric.

Finally, Dear (2000: 149-150) proposes a so-called synthesis on proto-postmodern urbanism for Southern California. He describes it by a schematic figure that is powerful yet inevitably incomplete. The proto-postmodern urbanism process is driven by a global restructuring that is permeated and balkanised by a series of interdictory networks and the populations are socially and culturally heterogeneous, but politically and economically polarised. The residents are educated and persuaded to the consumption of dreamscapes even as the poorest are consigned to carceral cities, whose built environment, reflective of these processes, consists of edge cities, privatopias and the like. The natural environments also reflective of these processes, is being erased to the point of unlivability while at the same time providing a focus for political action.
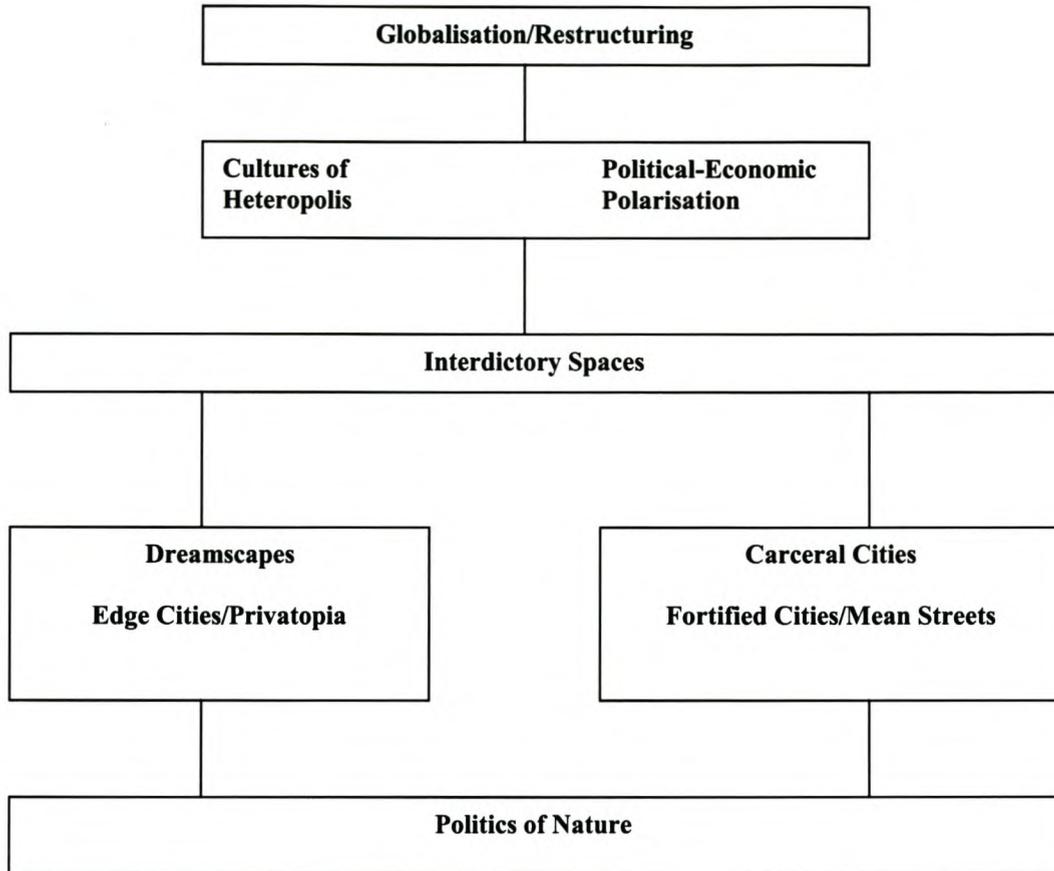
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│     Globalisation/Restructuring     │
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┌──────────────────┬──────────────────┐
│ Cultures of      │ Political-Economic│
│ Heteropolis      │ Polarisation     │
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│         Interdictory Spaces         │
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┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐
│   Dreamscapes    │  │  Carceral Cities │
│                  │  │                  │
│Edge Cities/Privatopia│ │Fortified Cities/Mean Streets│
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│          Politics of Nature         │
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Figure 6: A concept of proto-postmodern urbanism
(Source: Dear 2000: 150)

In Southern California, the city of Los Angeles is a excellent example of postmodern planning and home to many gated communities and their respective problems.

Case Study: Los Angeles

Most world cities have an instantly identifiable signature: think of the boulevards of Paris; the skyscrapers of New York; or the churches of Rome. But Los Angeles appears to be a city without a common narrative – except perhaps an iconography of the bizarre (Dear 1995:37). Los Angeles is a living laboratory of economic restructuring. The restructuring expresses itself in the city's increasing multi-ethnicity. Yet like most USA cities it is highly segregated both by ethnicity, race and class (Heskin 1992:133-134).

The security-driven logic of urban enclavisation finds its most popular expression frenetic efforts of Los Angeles' affluent neighbourhoods to insulate home values and lifestyles. New luxury developments outside the city limits have become fortress cities, complete with encompassing walls, restricted entry points with guard posts, overlapping private and public police services, and even privatised roadways (Soja 2000:312-313). It is simply impossible for ordinary citizens to invade "cities" of *Hidden Hills, Bradbury, Rancho Mirage* or *Parlo Verdes Estates* without an invitation from a resident. Meanwhile, traditional luxury enclaves such as *Beverly Hills* and *San Marino* are increasingly restricting public access to their public facilities, using baroque layers of regulation to build invisible walls. Some gated communities even impose a variant of neighbourhood "passport control" on outsiders.

Soja (2000:315) notes how contemporary architects and developers in Los Angeles are using the *ancient imagery of the marketplace and the voluntary residential community* to refashion the urban fabric around tightly enclosed, privatised, and monitored commercial and residential spaces. Evan MacKenzie (as quoted in Soja 2000:317-318) remarks on the growing importance and powerfulness of homeowners associations or community associations in America, and especially in Los Angeles. They represent more than just the privatisation of a few local government services. Homeowners associations constitute and facilitate privatisation of the land planning function itself and of the process by which it is decided where and how people will live in American urban areas.

In cities like Los Angeles, on the *bad edge of postmodernity,* one observes an unprecedented tendency to merge urban design, architecture and the police apparatus into a single, comprehensive security effort. The market provision of "security" generates its own paranoiac demand. "Security" becomes a positioned good defined by income access to private 'protective services' and membership in some hardened residential enclave or restricted suburb. Security is a prestige symbol and sometimes as the decisive borderline between the "merely well-off" and the "truly rich". Mike Davies (Soja

2000:300). refers to Los Angeles as "Fortress LA" because of all the emerging gated communities in and around metropolitan area. The creation of gated communities in LA is an integral part of the building of the "fortress city". Davies (Setha 2001:46) identifies the so-called militarisation of Los Angeles as a strategy for controlling and patrolling the urban poor that is made up of predominately ethnic – Latino and Black – minorities.

He stresses the important social role that government officials, professional planners, and community builders assigned to modern community planning. They believed that home ownership in well designed and socially diverse communities would strengthen ties that bound citizens to American society and to one another. Southern California's community builders (especially from Los Angeles) designed their communities to promote social diversity, but excluded racial diversity. Planners struggling with the same social and racial issues today might feel that an extended discussion of the role race played in suburban design would have been a useful addition to the text (Carey 1998:493).

Positive side-effects: There is also a more balanced critical discourse that explores not just the perils to democracy but also the new possibilities arising from the home-grown revolution and the new spatial apartheid. Across the country and Los Angeles (in particular), there have been *spillover effects* from the homeowners' movement and indeed from the renewed political emphasis on micro-governance. Perhaps never before have the poorer communities of Los Angeles, once described as the quintessential non-place urban realm, become so politically involved in their immediate neighbourhoods and localities. This has begun to generate a grassroots, cross-class, and intercultural spatial consciousness and activism that is focused, as with most homeowners' association, to promote certain issues. These issues include: greater self-governance, improved quality of life, controls over speculative private development, increased protection against environmental hazards, greater representation in planning decisions, better protection against crime and violence, improved and affordable housing, and more generally the

reassertion of the local against the growing external forces of globalisation and urban restructuring (Soja 2000:320-321).

Chapter 4:
History of gated communities and design principles

4.1 A brief history on the origin of gated communities

Gated and walled cities are as old as city building itself. Systems of walls and class division are deeply ingrained in historic Europe as a means of wealthy people protecting themselves from the local population (Low 2001:46). The Romans built some of the earliest forms of gated communities around 300 B.C. in England. Before the arrival of the Romans there were effectively no towns and so urban centres had to be created by the implantation of colonies and the encouragement of local towns. Roman soldiers were given land in tribal areas after the expiring of their service terms and to maintain order in the countryside. Their families clustered near or within the manor (or villa), and erected walls and other defences. Mostly the surrounding walls were seldom there to protect occupants from external invaders, rather to guard against local villagers who might turn on the lord of the manor at any time (Landman 2000:2, Blakely & Snyder 1998:63-64, and Owens 1991:124).

The Roman military must have played an important part in the urban planning process of Britain early city. This close relationship is demonstrated in clonies like Camulodunum (Colchester), Glevum (Gloucester) and Lindum (Lincoln). Verulamium (St Albans) is typical of the Romanised native town of Britain that achieved municipality status and had extensive fortifications and well-constructed stone gates. With an elaborate forum (central multi-purpose square), grid-plan streets and various public buildings the defences protected the occupants from invaders as wells as from the surrounding rural areas (Owens 1991:125-126).

4.1.1 Greek *agora* and Roman *forum*

Greek and Roman cities were both heavily focused on the so-called multi-purposed squares. The Greek *agora* was a combination of functions which included a place of assembly, a marketplace, and a setting for ceremonies

and spectacles. Originally, it was not more than an open space conveniently situated somewhere near the centre of the town. In course of time they grew up around such buildings as the meeting-place of the city council (*bouleuterion*), the offices of individual magistrates, temples and altars, fountain houses, law courts, and covered halls (*stoa*) for the use of merchants and citizens (Ward-Perkins 1974:11-13).

As with Greek cities the heart of the Roman built-up area was the *forum*. It was a formal open space of rectangular shape, colonnaded, decorated with statues and flanked by public buildings including the *basilica* (assembly or town hall), the *curia* (law courts), temples, municipal offices, tax collector and, sometimes, shops (Burke 1977:25-270). Once a Roman city was established, there were, certain measures of control over its subsequent development. A very important factor was undoubtedly the clear demarcation between public and private property.

Examples of these demarcation procedures go right back to the first Greek colonies (ca. 700 B.C.) and the Romans powerfully reinforced it by a system of municipal registration. There are scattered references to municipal legislation on such matters as street widths, the maximum heights of buildings and the circulation of traffic. For instance, all but certain essential wheeled traffic was excluded from Rome between dawn and dusk (Ward-Perkins 1974:34-35).

The agora and the forum are good examples of enclosed spaces in urban areas which has certain private characteristics. Access to the enclosed space was usually by the way of footpaths under monumental arches; wheeled traffic was normally denied (Burke 1977:27-28). Already a sense of privacy is established which later can lead to more exclusivity for a certain class of citizens.

4.1.2 Medieval walled towns

After the fall of Roman empire in 476 A.D., the process of urbanisation ceased. It was revived in the tenth and eleventh centuries but the result was

a haphazard growth of towns and streets. Feudalism was the new political, social and economic system that offered what most people most wanted: security and means of livelihood (Burke 1977:41). The components of the medieval town were normally the wall, with towers and gates, streets and related circulation spaces, the market place, the church and the great mass of general town buildings and related private garden spaces (Landman 2000:2).

The wall: A town wall became necessary when the fixed wealth of a settlement required protection, and perhaps only then. The defensive walls were usually built in a circular form, except where shorelines or rivers interfered and a semicircle might appear. Circular forms also reduced costs. The construction of city walls, their towers and their gates were always a matter of great expense, and a circular enclosure required the least wall construction to contain a given area of buildings and open spaces. A typical medieval town was a market town and conducive to an organic urban growth, that grew gradually and at times rapidly. The typical town consisted of narrow, irregular lanes, various different widths of streets and a central market plain (Morris 1979:71-73).

These so-called adaptive or organic towns grew spontaneously according to many different factors. Factors include; favourable trading location, skilled craftsmanship producing a steady flow of goods, and experienced merchants able to place them in profitable markets were the salient factors for town growth, but equally important was the right to hold a market or fair. The *bastide* was the exception rather than the rule for medieval town development. Towards the end of the thirteenth century Edward of Aquitane, France built a series of "defence towns" (bastides). They were mostly for defensive purposes and had a strategic location (Pienaar 1999:7-9).

During the wars, the walls around medieval towns fulfilled a defensive purpose, while in peacetime they established a boundary, which allowed taxes to be charged at the tollgates. Outside the walls, where traders waited until the gates were opened in the morning, open space was made for trading. When these settlements outside the wall grew populous and prosperous, the

city government was forced to consider the construction of an additional wall that would include them. Gates were also important and vulnerable elements in the fortifications of medieval cities, even when the opening was only to permit a river to pass through the city (Landman 2000:3-4).

Planned towns were planned in the pre-Norman era, St. Alban and Durham. They still displayed a virtually unchanged early medieval layout, but had a more rectangular shape and where streets were shaped in geometrical fashion (Burke 1977:47). The castle, supplemented later by the fortified manor-house, was the nucleus of the early medieval communities and the miniature unit of local government. Expansion took the form of a village just outside the castle walls, villagers tilled the land or performed other services for the lord. Morris (1979:80) refers to *burgs* (boroughs) which essentially military and administrative centres but they constituted attractive "pre-urban" nuclei around which many towns developed. Protection from invaders or wandering bandits in the rural areas was then again sought inside the castle walls (Burke 1977:42).

Sense of community: An important characteristic of these walled cities was that the wall enclosed the entire town or village and therefore served to enhance and emphasise a sense of unity (Landman 2000:3). In the Middle Ages, there was a strong tendency to organise into groups. Firstly, it was done because for security reasons, but later it expanded to other activities. *Guilds,* were formed among merchants, artisans and also just for recreation. The latter led to the forming of the "freemasonry" where the members form an exclusive organisation for religion, brotherhood, spiritual well-being and just for sociable togetherness (Pienaar 1999:8-9). Merchant guilds organised and controlled the town's economic life by imposing conditions of sale, restricting to their own members the right to trade in the town and charging tolls on goods dealt in by non-members (Burke 1977:43).

The medieval urban community, enclosed and protected by walled fortifications, was inward-looking and hostile to the outside world. Inside the town gates a person belonged to the community; outside, apart from daily

visits to the fields, it did not belong, it was an outlaw. Insularity and lack of contact with and trust for "outsiders" bred a consciousness of citizenship and a corporate sense of belonging which was perhaps the clearest characteristic of medieval urban life (Burke 1977:63-64).

4.1.3 The Renaissance: Italy sets a pattern

The revival of interest in the classical art forms of ancient Rome and Greece, of this time period, has led to important changes and inspirations of European painting, sculpture, architecture and urbanism. The application of gunpowder urged the need for the designing of fortification systems capable of resisting increasingly powerful assault weapons. Architects and planners all sought to make cities impregnable as well as beautiful. The radial-concentric design was a very popular concept for defence purposes and hundreds of meticulous plans were drawn up. Radial-concentric planning was The radial-concentric layout was advantageous in that if an enemy breached the walls, or if citizens rose up against their rulers, it would enable cannons mounted in the central market-place, or "place d'arms" to fire down every radial street (Burke 1977:71-74).

The characteristic achievements of Renaissance town planning lay less in the creation of new towns than in the improvement of existing towns and the adaptation of their medieval, or even older, forms to new urban order (Burke 1977:78). The *Economist* (1992:25-27) emphasises that walled cities, popular in medieval and Renaissance Italy, are making a comeback in suburban America. *Leisure World*, a gated community or gated town, stands on the edge of Laguna Hill in southern California, where new shopping malls and motorways have been carved out of parched land. Guards at its gates check the identities of those who come and go. Cinder-block walls topped by barbed wire surround it. It is patrolled night and day. Former recognition of its status may not be far off. Leisure World's elderly residents are engaged in a fierce debate over whether to incorporate it as a self-contained city.

Communities like Leisure World are creating a new layer of private government in America and the controlling community (home) associations will grow rapidly. The rise of community associations is a response to middle-class fears of crime, rising pressure on land (which makes communal living more attractive) and threatens the existence of the local government in the traditional sense. Powerful community associations may be a menace, ally or both to the local government. The same people who will resolutely vote down any government tax increase will willingly cough up the mandatory monthly assessments levied by all community associations. In other words, people know their money is being spent on them. To compare *Leisure World*, which is a gated community, with fortified cities of Renaissance Italy is possibly explained by the *three types of enclosed spaces* found in these cities.

Enclosed space

The English word is "square" and in Italy its "piazza" and in France its "place". On their basis of their traffic functions, Renaissance urban spaces can be grouped under three broad headings. First, *traffic space,* forming part of the main urban route system and used by both pedestrians and horsedrawn vehicles; second, *residential space*, intended for local access traffic only and with a predominately pedestrian recreational purpose; and third, *pedestrian space*, from which wheeled traffic was normally excluded. Renaissance spaces frequently served aesthetic and symbolic purposes, either as a open place for the erection of a statue or a monument, or as a forecourt in front of an important building (Morris 1979:126-127).

Spatial enclosure was effected with civic or religious architecture, residential buildings (usually in terrace form) and market and related commercial buildings. The open square had never disappeared, but by the same token it had never, even in the Middle Ages, been used entirely for residential purposes. The counting house and the shop were then part of the house. In the seventeenth century it reappeared with a new urban purpose namely, that of bringing together in full view of each other, a group of residences occupied

by people of the same general calling and position. These are typical the first signs of privacy and exclusivity in an urban area (Morris 1979:127-128).

- *Enclosed space: Traffic space*

Before the nineteenth century increases in urban traffic there were few instances of formally designed spaces at intersections of main streets. Most were located on the urban parameter. The Place de la Concorde , which also performed this traffic function at the eastern end of the Champs Elysées on the edge of central Paris, was a unique form of space, combining civic buildings along its northern side and landscape elements on the other three sides. Most of these traffic spaces were surrounded by impressive residences and containing the statue of Louis XIV.

- *Enclosed space: Residential space*

The creation of an enclosure with no more monumental object than that of uniformity within itself, is perhaps the most attractive contribution of the whole Renaissance period. Such enclosures were almost all of a residential nature; wheeled traffic was limited to serving the individual dwellings. The residential squares as in London or Paris (Place des Vosges), usually containing a planted central area, provided a basis for urban family life which were held in the highest esteem by mid-twentieth century planners, overwhelmed, seemingly, by mass housing problems. However, only a small minority of urban homes had such an advantageous situation. Residential spaces are a characteristic of *controlled* seventeenth and eighteenth century growth in Britain (Morris 1979:128).

- *Enclosed space: Pedestrian space*

A number of extremely important enclosed spaces were either completely closed to wheeled traffic, or arranged so that pedestrians were not unduly affected there – eg. wheeled traffic was not continuous across the space or was restricted to one side only. The majority of these spaces served as

forecourts or public assembly areas in front of important civic, religious and royal buildings. The most important examples are Italian: In Rome it's the Piazza of St Peter with colonnade enclosed spaces and in Venice with the Piazza of St Mark where surrounding enclosing buildings had civic, commercial and religious functions.

4.1.4 American enclosed areas

- *Early American enclosed areas*

The first walled cities were Spanish fort towns in the Caribbean. In the USA the early settlements of Roanake and Jamestown were walled and defended to protect colonists from attack. But with the virtual elimination of the indigenous population, the need for defensive walls ceased to exist. However not until the latter half of the nineteenth century did the first purely residential gated community appear. The era of robber barons introduced gated communities to the USA when the very richest sealed them off from the *hoi polloi*. One of earliest gated communities was *Tuxedo Park*, built in 1885, it was behind barbed wire and gates. It was an hour by train from New York and the Park was designed with wooded lake views and an "admirable entrance." In the same period, private gated streets were built in St. Louis and other cities for the mansions of the rich (Low 2001:46, Landman 2000:3-4, Blakely & Snyder 1998:63). During the twentieth century, more gated compounds were built by members of the East Coast and Hollywood aristocracies.

- *Late twentieth century gated communities*

In general, gated communities in the United Sates remained rarities until the era of master planned retirement developments of the late 1960s and 1970s. Communities like *Leisure World* were the first places where the average American could find seclusion and privacy. Gates soon spread to resorts and country club communities, and then to middle-class subdivisions. The 1980s saw the proliferation of gated communities around golf courses designed

primary for *exclusivity, prestige* and *leisure.* Importantly, it was in the 1980s that gated communities were built mainly out of fear, as the public became increasingly preoccupied with violent crime (Landman 2000:3-4 and Blakely & Snyder 1998:63).

Low (2001:46-47) identifies a number of reasons for the increase of gated communities in size and number. "Gating" is a response to the late twentieth century changes in urban North America. Economic restructuring during the 1970s and 1980s produced a number of social and political changes as a consequence of uneven development resulting from rapid relocation of capital. The shift to the political right during the Reagan years, and the mixture of conservatism and populism in U.S. politics, intensified an ideological focus on free market and capitalist values tilting power, wealth, and income toward the richest portions of the population. While the income share of the upper 20% of Americans rose from 41,6% to 44% from 1980 to 1988, the average after-tax income of the lowest dropped 10,5% from 1977 to 1987, producing a two-class system of "haves" and 'have-nots" based on these structural readjustments.

Gated communities are also increasing in other countries, for example in Canada. In an extreme form, many fortified enclaves can be found in countries such as Brazil (especially Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo), Chile and Russia (especially Moscow). The increase in violence, insecurity and fear in Sao Paulo (like in Johannesburg) is changing the city's landscape and the patterns of daily life, people's movements and the use of public transport – as crime and violence discourage people from using the streets and public spaces. They make no longer use of streets or public spaces, which are abandoned to the homeless and the street children (Landman 2000:4).

Whatever the reason, gated communities have become a living reality in many cities across the world and are seen by many as the only way to secure a reasonable way of living in an urban environment, whatever the term "urban' may mean to them (Landman 2000:5,8). Gated communities have become for many reasons the solution that they sought in order to live a safe, peaceful

and controlled life. Gated communities generally evoke quite a response, whether from enthusiastic proponents or fired-up opponents. In the process many issues are addressed to support their views.

4.2 Overview of most important issues regarding the international debate on gated communities

There are six main concerns that can be distilled to provide an overview on the international debate on gated communities.

4.2.1 A sense of community

In the often anonymous world of today many people hope that the closed, private streets behind gates will lead to a more open, friendly, and cohesive community within. According to Shieder (1996:26-27) the sense of the community is the key selling point of master-planned communities. Proponents of gated communities argue that by allowing residents of neighbourhoods to establish and protect their boundaries and to control access to their territory, these residents of gated communities will develop a sense of identity and security, which is vital to strong communities. The perception is that people behind gates are part of the same socio-economic group, have similar interests, and even similar values (Landman 2000:8-9). As Shea (1999:22-23) emphasises that feeling safe usually starts with the sense that community has a clear boundary. When people know their neighbours, a built-in sense of security results, especially when residents are doing some policing by noticing who is in the neighbourhood. One objective of master-planned communities is to help foster friendships with neighbours. People find it easy to meet each other and gather together in public spaces. The physical landscape encourages socialising.

Nasar and Julian (1995:178-179) explain that many professionals in planning, architecture, historic preservation, and crime prevention promote the development of a sense of community as *cure for many urban ailments*. Advocates of neo-traditional planning and related movements claim their

plans will restore a sense of community, which they claim has been lost in traditional suburbs. While a few question the beneficial effects of a psychological sense of community, some object to the emphasis on local community. They see some local communities as exclusionary havens for the privileged, and they fear the focus on community development in neighbourhoods may distract attention from the broader political economy.

Gated communities are also distinguished by the degree to which they are designed to *manage* community. Residents buy more than a house which suits their needs and preferences when they buy into a gated community. They also buy into a set of private amenities and services that are exclusively theirs. *Community is a commodity in these developments.* Residents are buying a lifestyle, an environment, a set of services, and a structure for interaction with their neighbours (Blakely & Snyder 1998:68). To give projects a sense of community or identity, planners of new villages (gated communities) sometimes make up fictitious histories for them. These fictitious "stories" are intended marketing attractions and include elaborate tales (nothing or partly based on historical facts) that refer to "lost cities", lost civilisations etc. Another way of giving a development an identity is to reserve prominent sites at the end of major avenues or on hills for landmarks such as historic monuments, public buildings, and churches (Knox 1992:211).

Evidently, a sense of community cannot be created by physical boundary or wall alone. In some cases gates and fences can even discourage a sense of community. Cantor and Weidenman as referred to by Landman (2000:8-9) see it as "disruptive to as sense of community" and the city of Fort Collins and Santa Fé gated enclaves are not permitted. In order to maintain a community feeling and spirit, gated communities should not be permitted. Gated communities may even cause disruptions between residents and lead to the division of the community. Conflicts may arise on debating issues in the gated community itself, like increasing property taxes or increasing maintenance costs.

Another interesting reason for conflict in a gated community is the example of well-known black RAP artists, with names as C-Murder, Master P, Snoop Dogg etc., who resided in a exclusive predominately white community in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. This Country Club experienced problems of resentment and animosity towards the RAP artists and their fellow black friends by certain whites, because of the violent nature of the music's lyrics and certain important rules on parking and security that the RAP artists and friends didn't adhere to. But on the other hand, the RAP artists contributed to the community by donating money to schools and other educational programs (Stossel 1999: 16-17).

Trust is seen by many sociologists as one of the main components to increasing a feeling of neighbourliness and caring; a feeling that people will look out for one another.

4.2.2 Safety and security

The general perception is that crime has become random, that all strangers are dangerous and that no place is safe. Residents of some gated communities firmly belief they are safer. But Blakely and Snyder as quoted in Landman (2000:9-10) say that not all gated communities are safe. The perception that gates reduce crime is just a perception, they have only a marginal effect. Gated communities are not so hard to penetrate and they are not going to stop criminals. The authors do state that some gated communities show a drop in crime, but some closed streets or neighbourhoods show no change at all in their crime statistics. As McGoey (2001:5) says, gates and fences are merely tools to help a property manager fight crime, but many more tools are required to do the complete job.

According to Blakely and Snyder as referred to in Landman (2000:10) gated communities don't always provide freedom from the fear of crime. According to their research gated communities may reinforce people's fear and a quote by Dennis Judd (1998:505) suggest that: "the trappings of security that impregnate the new walled communities must (remind) the inhabitants,

constantly and repetitively, that the world beyond their walls is dangerous." Low (2001:47-48) adds that the psychological lure of defended space becomes more enticing with increased media coverage and national hysteria about urban crime. A "culture of fear" is created but reality may not be so grim or devastating as the newspaper and television portray. Many feel vulnerable, unsure of their place and the stability of their neighbourhoods. This is reflected in an increasing fear of crime that is unrelated to actual crime trends or locations, and in the growing numbers of methods used to control the physical environment for physical and economic security. Justified or not, fear is altering suburban life. It is beginning to change the way suburbanites (nearly half the USA population) spend their money, how and where they live, how they drive, where and when they shop, dress, how they dress etc. (Farnham & Welsh 1992:42-43).

Landman (2000:10) refers to John Fischbach, city manager of Fort Collins who states *that communities become paralysed through fear and distrust and soon you got a shattered sense of community that, indeed, is unsafe.* Crime can be displaced by enclosed neighbourhoods so that the surrounding areas are more affected and the residents in the gated communities simply do not mind, as long as their area is safe. As Tijerino (1998:326) says, the crux of crime displacement is that defensible applications do not reduce the overall rate of crime, instead they relocate to the nearest undefended area. Research has shown that vandalism is impulsive and spontaneous. For example, if the opportunity for criminal activity is not present, rather than moving to a new location, the event simply may not occur.

4.2.3 Social exclusion

An illusion of stability and control are for many people an attraction in gated communities. Residents want to control the crime, traffic, protect their investments, create privacy and be free from strangers, disruptions and intrusions. It is not wrong to protect yourself, but it raises the question about the impact on surrounding communities and the broader social dynamics of the town or city concerned. Residents of some gated communities have

pointed out that they still try to maintain links with the world outside their community. Residents openly proclaim that they only wish to look after themselves and be part of their own community. To many, their homeowners association dues are like taxes and any responsibility ends at the gate. This reflects a mentality of taking care only of yourself and your immediate neighbours. It poses a stance of social exclusion and for that matter, social exclusion (Landman 2000:10-11).

Tijerino (1998:323-324) points out that walled communities result in social fragmentation. Not only are potential criminals excluded, but also general users of urban space. The idea of social exclusion and fragmentation brings up another important issue: *the matter of elitism.* It creates the very image of elite space and it reflects exclusivity. According to Blakely and Snyder (Landman 2000:11-12) the purpose of gates and walls is to limit social contact, and reduced social contact may weaken ties that form social connections. Gated communities do, in effect, often succeed in empowering certain communities at the expense of other neighbouring areas or the larger city.

Exclusion imposes social costs on those left outside. It reduces the number of public spaces that all can share, and therefore limits the contacts that people from diverse groups might otherwise have with each other (Landman 2000:12-13). Others consequences lead to divisions between city and suburbs and also rich and poor. A gated community may address some crime problems and offer a quality of life to its residents, but ultimately these communities are still situated within a larger urban area and it is the impact on the broader urban environment that needs careful consideration.

4.2.4 Urban segregation and fragmentation

The purpose of gated communities or enclosed neighbourhoods is to restrict or prohibit access to a particular demarcated area. Access is restricted through fences, walls, gates, or booms/barricades. So there is a physical separation from the specific area and its surrounding environment and thus

leads to the creation of zones or pockets of no/restricted access within the urban fabric, leading to a very coarse grain. In addition, it forces travellers, both motorists and pedestrians, to take an alternative route, which in many cases can prove to be much longer and more time-consuming. Gated communities, therefore, not only have an impact on the daily activity patterns of people, but also on the urban form and functioning (Landman 2000:13).

Landman (2000:13) found strong indications of fragmentation. According to them metropolitan areas become increasingly spatially fragmented and segregated by race, class and land values. It is an old pattern and tradition that is only being implemented in a new way. Landman(2000:14) is of the meaning that gated communities are descendants of decades of suburban design and public land use policy. With suburbia already posing many problems in terms of the long-term sustainability of cities, the urban future with increasing numbers of gated communities might in itself pose a question or two.

4.2.5 Urban planning and management

The impact of gated communities on the larger urban environment brings up issues of services, the nature of roads, general urban maintenance, the function of public safety and the role of private homeowners associations. Gated communities also touch on the issue of maintenance and that goes hand in hand with the whole issue of public versus private space. In normal circumstances the local authority or municipality is responsible for the maintenance and upgrading of roads, streetlights etc. in urban areas. But what happens if an area is enclosed? Then the homeowners' association would, in effect be responsible for all services. However, it remains to be seen what will happen when serious deterioration of facilities starts to occur and the cost of repairs escalates. It is possible that the gated communities could become a mechanism to privatise public space and transfer the traditional role of local government to resident bodies (Landman 2000:13-15).

In many cases the traditional role of local governments is threatened by continuously growing forms of private micro-governments. Private residential communities, such as homeowners' associations, retail communities (including leisure complexes) and industrial communities (including industrial parks) are all forms of private municipal governance. They all supply civic goods (protection, cleanliness, environmental improvement, etc.) privately, through the levying of some sort of payment. In many cases residents buying into a gated community are expressing a preference for contracting with a private supplier of certain civic goods *rather* than contracting with the local government (Landman 2000: 15). Gated communities carry with them the potential for withdrawal from large-scale public discussions. Gated communities with strong residents' associations also carry the potential of creating powerful private governments that could threaten the existence of local government in the traditional sense. The underlying governance system a gated community requires, and not the gate itself, is an important feature.

Gated communities are run by self-governing homeowner's associations (HOAs). In many developments the common space is privatised. Each property owner shares legal ownership of the streets, sidewalks, and other common facilities, including gates, with their fellow homeowners. Elected boards control and maintain this common property, and each home comes bound with covenants, conditions and restrictions (Landman 2000:15). Road/neighbourhood enclosures could lead that certain traditional roles of the local authority are neglected (Landman 2000(b)18). These include the following:

- The needs of all residents in the city;
- The implementation of long-term urban strategy;
- The general public good;
- To provision and development as well as maintenance of public open space for the use of all urban residents; and
- To assurance that all residents will be able to use public space.

4.2.6 Financial benefit

The first aspect that concerns the aspect of financial benefit to homeowners in gated communities relates to *possible tax deductions or tax rebates*. Many homeowners associations of gated communities are pushing for more favourable tax treatment of the association fees homeowners pay for trash collection, street maintenance, recreational facilities and other amenities. Some are also resisting local taxation and are lobbying for rebates from local taxes, arguing that their residents do not use all the local services and are paying for services themselves.

A further aspect concerning financial benefit to residents of gated communities is the whole issue around property values. Some proponents strongly argue that enclosed areas preserve or even increase the value of properties in that area. Increased property values are part of the market appeal for gated communities, because the gates offer privacy, security, various amenities and exclusivity. In contrast, others hold different views. Some developers maintain that houses in gated communities neither sell for any more than houses in other neighbourhoods nearby nor hold their value better during downturns. Blakely and Snyder (Landman 2000:16-17) point out that greater control over the neighbourhood is presumed to mean greater stability in property values. In their study of gated communities in the USA they found no evidence that gated communities either command a price premium or maintain their values better than non-gated communities.

Nonetheless, the perception that gates can increase or help maintain property values is very strong and many residents expect an increase in property values over time. However, nobody can dispute the fact that a big part of the attraction of gated communities revolves around the potential financial benefits from increased property values within such an area (Landman 2000:17).

It can be argued that it is not the right of people to live in gated communities or the existence of individual communities. The real danger is that gated

communities will become common in the cities and fragment cities (Landman (2000:17). As well-to-do families move into gated communities, traditional neighbourhoods weaken, and more affluent families feel that the only way to maintain their standard of living is to move into gated community themselves. And so the phenomenon escalates.

Chapter 5:

South African context

5.1 South African Dynamics

South Africa is unique and offers a very particular combination of factors that has the potential to influence neighbourhood enclosures. South Africa is classified as a middle-income country with a population of 40,6 million people. The country has one of the highest per capita incomes in Africa, but the second highest inequality coefficient in the world after Brazil. The poorest 40% of households (equivalent to 50% of the population) receive only 11% of the income. In turn, the richest 10% of households (equivalent to 7% of the population) receive over 40% of the total income (Landman 2000(b):4).

South Africa: Policies and legislation

There is no general policy in place regarding neighbourhood enclosures in South Africa. A few local authorities have developed their own policies or are in the process of formulating a policy. For those who are pressured into decision-making regarding enclosures, the general trend is to either put some form of policy in place to allow temporary road or neighbourhood closure, or deny it in terms of existing local authority polices. In general, the content of the limited number of policies in place more or less covers the same issues, ranging from the application procedures to the period these enclosures would be valid approved. The *Eastern Metropolitan Local Council (EMLC)* of the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council (GJMC) is one of the few local authorities in South Africa that has a comprehensive policy regarding road or neighbourhood closures for security purposes in place. In this policy the council describes the application procedure for road and/or neighbourhood enclosures, the process of approving or denying these applications and the legal implications of enclosures (Landman 2000(b):13-14).

5.2 The Apartheid city

The urban pattern of the extremes between rich and poor are manifested in most of South Africa. Town planning approaches and political ideologies can be very powerful as in the case with South Africa. Under the apartheid regime the imposition of racial segregation dislocated communities and entrenched inequality in the built environment, marginalising much of the population. In the cities, the intention was to create self-contained localities that were racially distinct and financially independent, with separate public amenities, administration and infrastructure. Numerous townships were built on the peripheries of almost every South African city and town, with informal settlements growing around them. These areas were separated from the well-developed, traditionally white neighbourhoods (through buffer-strips in the form of green belts and rapid transport routes) around the CBD areas, where most of the facilities were located. It is this city form that became known as the "apartheid city": a product of separation policies and government control that dominated the country for almost forty years (Landman 2000(b):4-5 & Turok 1994:243-245).

Township areas on the city periphery were mainly designed for low densities, with single, unattached houses on separate plots. The settlement layouts were designed to enable authorities to control access to these areas, and residential zoning was rigidly applied and enforced. Few commercial and recreational facilities were allowed, with the consequence that township areas became purely places to sleep. All this has implications on the effective functioning of cities and the potential for the occurrence of crime in the built environment. Today, South Africans are faced with a grim reality. Our cities reflect a sad picture: an inherited footprint of the past Landman (2000(b):7). South African cities are characterised by fragmentation and spatial dislocation, separation and mono-functional zoning and low-density sprawl. The result is a city of inequity and in many cases an environment of fear.

Here follows a list of implications that create crime levels to rise, because of the legacy of apartheid town planning. These implications have a direct influence for an increasing number of mostly white South Africans (includes as well a growing number of affluent black South Africans) to move into gated communities or enclosed neighbourhoods for security and safety reasons.

- The city structure reinforces inequalities, with the poorest having to travel furthest to access employment and other opportunities. This heightens the vulnerability of such commuters to victimisation.
- The dormitory status of most residential localities means that these areas are virtually deserted during the day, increasing the vulnerability of both property and residents.
- Conversely, and as a consequence of mono-use zoning regulations, most inner city areas are deserted after business hours. This makes it easier for increased crime to exist after business hours
- One effect of the separation of land uses (i.e., areas zoned as purely residential or purely commercial) is that people using inner city areas become more susceptible to crime, and businesses depart. This has an impact on the whole of the inner city. E.g. Hillbrow in Johannesburg and Albert Park in Durban; these suffer decay which leads to depressed rentals and degraded living environments.
- Urban sprawl is also a cause of an unsafe city and results from the fragmented, suburban form in which open land separates pockets of development (formerly as a way of enforcing Group Areas legislation). This increases the vulnerability of people crossing such open spaces and also presents opportunities for criminal activity and subsequent escape.

(Shaw & Louw 1998:8-9).

These security measures create fortified enclosures that imprison the inhabitants themselves. The need for security without this sense of being imprisoned, combined with a search for a village or country feeling, has also given rise to luxury security villages on the urban periphery. Many of these

small "villages" even include shops, schools and other recreation amenities such as golf courses, hiking trails etc.

5.3 Crime in South Africa

Another important factor influencing the occurrence of enclosed neighbourhoods in South Africa is the crime rate in this country. Today, despite a slight decrease or stabilisation in most serious crimes (e.g. murder), the crime rates remain unacceptably high. Reaction to the high crime rate is unavoidable. The way in which it occurs, however, varies. Many communities have little faith in the police to protect them. Perception exists that the criminal justice system and the police are failing in their protective duty. The result is an increased use of private security by the more affluent, and the establishment of vigilante groups by the poor (Landman 2000(b):6).

Fear of crime in South Africa is experienced not only by the rich, but also by the poor, who seldom have any resources to address the impacts of crime (Shaw & Louw 1998:11-13). Many parts of South African cities and towns will remain unsafe, or be perceived to be unsafe, for some time to come. Increasingly, the higher income groups are taking refuge in fortified villages, secure office complexes and protected shopping centres. Today, it is generally accepted that certain types of crime can be limited if the environment is designed appropriately. Crime prevention through environmental design principles incorporates the following: surveillance and visibility, territoriality and defensible space, access and escape routes, image and aesthetics, and target hardening (CSIR 2000(b):5-6).

Modern urban families are trying to keep themselves safe by turning their houses into fortified bastions and their neighbourhoods into walled towns (Landman 2000(b):5-7).

5.4 Enclosed neighbourhoods in South Africa

Enclosed neighbourhoods and road closures are a growing phenomenon in South Africa, especially in the Johannesburg area. One local authority in the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Area has recorded 360 road closures. The CSIR conducted a study by sending questionnaires to 100 local authorities across the country. 53% had requests for neighbourhood enclosures and thus were forced to deal with issue of enclosed neighbourhoods and 45% of these requests (taking into account only the local authorities who received requests), were approved (Landman 2000(b):9-10).

Only one third of those areas that received requests for neighbourhood enclosures had any formal policy in place regarding gated communities.

Table 2: An example of the number of requests that a few cities and towns received (December 1999 – January 2000).

Larger cities (> 500 000)	Medium cities/towns (<500 000 – >100 000)	Smaller towns (< 100 000)
Northern metropolitan local council of Greater Johannesburg 35	Bethlehem 10	Port Shepstone 10
Germiston 23	Krugersdorp 4	Stellenbosch 2
Benoni 16	Potchefstroom 3	Bloemhof 1

(Source: Landman 2000(b): 11)

A factor that stands out is that the local authorities in Gauteng tend to be much more amenable to this idea of gated communities than those in other areas in the country. Reasons can be more increased media attention, more

financial backing than other provinces and increased pressure from local residents and councillors (Landman 2000(b):12-13).

Chapter 6:

Conclusion

Internationally, the debate on gated communities is creating quite a stir. The vastness and richness of articles, documents and internet-websites on a fairly new subject is evidence of the great need to discuss the issue and the range of different opinions existing on the subject. A few aspects have become apparent out of the literature and research. Gated communities have increased rapidly over the past decade and have become a widespread phenomenon, especially in the USA. They are not only limited to the wealthy class, but many middle class families are opting for this lifestyle. Insofar, different types of gated communities appeared that address a variety of needs, ranging from safety, privacy and stability to recreational needs such as golf courses, parks, water features and sport facilities. Landman (2000:18) affirms that in some respects the phenomenon may include the need for better services and maintenance of the local area or neighbourhood in concern.

According to the study, gated communities have become an important urban phenomenon that is and will continue to play an important role in terms of the urban future in general. It is not likely to disappear overnight and the long-term implications still remain to be seen. Landman (2000:18) states that implications such as an increased fear of crime, social exclusion, urban fragmentation and separation, problems in terms of urban management and financial benefit to a privileged minority, have the potential to influence and inform urban decision-making and design in a dramatic way.

The South African context

South Africa is unique, but the international review has established a sound base for similar research in South Africa and has assisted to define the most important issues that arise from such a debate. Landman (2000:18) specifies

that international lessons and assumptions should, however, not be transferred unconditionally from one country to another. Here follows a set of characteristics that sets South Africa apart from the world and consequently gives a different approach in handling the "gated community-uprising":

- A unique diversity of urban residents living together in South African cities.
- A specific political and socio-economic environment present in urban environments.
- A high crime rate and the particular crime patterns.
- Proportionately high levels of fear of crime.
- Low levels of trust in the police in many communities.
- The legacy of apartheid in creating a heritage of fragmented and separated urban environments.
- A suspicion towards the capacity and delivery of local governments in South Africa, and their ability to deliver.
- The increasing and appalling extremes between the rich and the poor.

Given the fact that the fear of crime is growing in South Africa, and the number of gated communities or enclosed neighbourhoods are growing daily, and calls for in-depth studies of this growing phenomenon in South Africa. These studies may include new planning legislation policies for the creation of gated communities or the improvement of the better incorporation of residents in- and outside gated communities. Although there seems to be an increasing trend in larger cities to enclose areas, requests for neighbourhood enclosures have also been received by smaller cities and towns. Most of the larger areas (mainly metropolitan areas) tend to have policies in place, or are in the process of compiling policies to regulate road closures. Most of the problems experienced in terms of gated communities also occur in the larger cities.

In Gauteng, the tendency to enclose roads and neighbourhoods seems to be much higher than in other provinces. This can possibly be attributed to the high levels of fear of crime in this province. Increasingly, residents of neighbourhood enclosures contract private security companies and

independent non-profit organisations to manage and control the areas, as well as to patrol them in some cases. No consensus regarding the pros and cons on gated communities has been reached, which highlights the need for further research (Landman 2000(b):25-26).

Positive features of gated communities:

- Can reduce crime permanently or temporarily, by the existence of walls, fences and gates that safeguard the residents against criminals.
- Can reduce the fear of crime or provide psychological relief. Inhabitants feel automatically safer because of the tightened security, they feel protected, they are less scared and far more relaxed and this leads to a better psychological state.
- Can lead to an enhanced sense of community or sense of place. The physical gated boundary binds residents into a community. Allowing gated communities to establish and protect their boundaries and control access to their territory, the residents will develop a sense of identity and security, both of which are vital to strong communities.
- Can increase a sense of ownership, responsibility, privacy and importance. The homeowner associations give their residents more power or leverage over their needs in the gated community. Privacy arises from being part of the gated community and not the rest of town/city.
- Can enhance property values, more financial benefits for local government. Actually, there does not seem to be consensus regarding the impact of enclosed neighbourhoods on property values. Some people believe that it would lead to increased property values and that means more money for the municipality.

Negative features of gated communities

- Creating a false sense of security. Fences and gates do not necessarily mean it is safer than before and residents become negligent by leaving cars unlocked and front doors wide open.

- Displacing crime. Crime may not occur in the gated community or enclosed neighbourhood, but outside the community or the surrounding areas may experience now more crime.

- Reducing response times of emergency vehicles. Gates, walls and tight security at the front entry create problems (e.g. longer time) for emergency vehicles to enter the enclosed complex. In many cases the shortest route to a specific point in need of attention is closed and residents close routes without informing the police and emergency services, which causes them to end up in dead-ends.

- Dividing communities. Increased social fragmentation could prove harmful to the overall vision of unity and peace among different groups of the population.

- Causing conflict and tension between urban residents. Enclosed communities has been labelled as racist and compared to apartheid influx control. Gated communities could create another barrier to interaction and may add to the problem of building social networks that provide an opportunity for social and economic activities.

- Increasing the fear of crime is a reality in South Africa. Many suburban whites live in jail-like homes guarded by vicious dogs, razor wire and armed security guards summoned by panic buttons. The reality is that crime affects people and their perceptions, it influences their use patterns and lifestyles. In some cases people rarely leave their gated communities, because of the fear of crime and also their needs are catered for in the gated community. Some gated communities got their own shops, entertainment centres, sport facilities etc.

- Causing social exclusion. Many residents are concerned about taking care only of themselves and their immediate neighbours. This is leading to social segregation and exclusion.

- Increasing urban fragmentation and separation. Enclosed neighbourhoods can exclude undesirable new residents, as well as casual passers-by and those people from their surrounding neighbourhood. This practice also seems to be a reflection of a broader tendency towards fragmentation, and the resulting loss of connection and social contact.

The concern for the city as a whole is no longer of major importance. By its nature a gated community physically separates a specific area from its environment and creates zones or pockets of restricted access within the urban fabric. Gated communities, therefore, have an impact not only on the daily activity patterns of people, but also on the urban form and its functioning.

- Causing difficulties with regards to maintenance and services. Costs involved in the establishment and maintenance of these areas may be very expensive. Apart from the initial capital costs (application fees and costs of physical infrastructure), residents are also liable for the payment of ongoing running costs such as for the management and maintenance of the area.

The international debate on the issue of gated communities can act as a good guideline in terms of questions to ask and matters to look into in this country. Well-researched studies of gated communities can go a long way to assist role-players, especially local governments to make informed decisions. Many local authorities are faced with the task to make decisions around this phenomenon. However, clear-cut answers are few. In many cases this is due to a lack of information or detailed research. One should not only consider short-term implications of neighbourhood enclosures, but should also bear in mind that they could have their greatest impact over the long term.

Therefore, there is a need for more in-depth research into the phenomenon of gated communities in South Africa. The CSIR Building and Construction Technology is currently embarking on detailed research projects and a have website in order to provide factual information and assist decision-making regarding gated communities. This will provide the necessary opportunity for continuous learning, sharing of information and creating awareness. Important information such as this will be invaluable and of immense help to town planners and all the other related interested parties. Many residents are increasingly moving towards neighbourhood enclosures or gated communities for various reasons and thus the town and regional planners must consider the consequences.

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